CHARLES UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Institute of Political Studies

Department of International Relations

Dissertation Thesis

2024 Mgr. Kristián Földes

CHARLES UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Institute of Political Studies

Identity and state action – The case of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia during the European Schengen crisis

Dissertation thesis

Author of the Dissertation: Kristián Földes

Supervisor: doc. PhDr. Jan Karlas, M.A., Ph.D.

Year of the defence: 2024

Declaration

1. I hereby declare that I have compiled this thesis using the listed literature and resources only.
2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.
3. I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes.
4. During the preparation of this thesis, the author used QuillBot in order to ensure proofread and smooth reading of the text. After using this tool/service, the author reviewed and edited the content as necessary and takes full responsibility for the content of the publication.

In Prague on   Kristián Földes

20.08.2024

References

FÖLDES, Kristián. *Identity and state action – The case of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia during the European Schengen crisis*. Prague, 2024. 261 p. Dissertation thesis (Ph.D.). Charles University, Faculty of Social Sciences, Institute of Political Studies, Department of Political Science. Supervisor doc. PhDr. Jan Karlas, M.A., Ph.D.

Length of the Thesis: 50336 characters

Abstract

This thesis explores the political responses of Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic to the Schengen crisis in 2015. It specifically examines how the leaders of these countries constructed the collective identities of refugees and used the crisis as an opportunity to assert their national sovereignty. Employing a constructivist perspective in International Relations (IR) theory combined with Critical Discourse Studies, this dissertation analyses how the crisis was portrayed as an imminent threat to cultural identity and national safety. The research combines Qualitative Content Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis to investigate parliamentary debates and prime ministerial statements, aiming to reveal narratives that portray refugees as potential risks to the nation's stability. These narratives played a crucial role in providing reasons to oppose the EU's refugee redistribution mechanism, the quota system, and resisting influence from supranational entities. The research findings indicate that political leaders in Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic regularly portrayed refugees as potential threats to national security, economic burdens, and cultural challenges. This discussion not only strengthened the nation's authority but also brought together domestic audiences in opposition to external demands from the European Union. Specifically, the leadership of Hungary utilised a strongly nationalist narrative, positioning itself in contrast to what was presented as an

excessively intrusive EU policy. Similarly, Slovakia and the Czech Republic capitalised on refugee identities to uphold a position of opposition against the quota system.

Abstrakt

Tato práce zkoumá politické reakce Maďarska, Slovenska a České republiky na schengenskou krizi v roce 2015. Konkrétně zkoumá, jak představitelé těchto zemí konstruovali kolektivní identitu uprchlíků a využili krizi jako příležitost k prosazení své národní suverenity. S využitím konstruktivistické perspektivy teorie mezinárodních vztahů (IR) a Kritických diskurzivních studií tato disertační práce analyzuje, jak byla krize zobrazována jako bezprostřední hrozba pro kulturní identitu a národní bezpečnost. Výzkum kombinuje kvalitativní obsahovou analýzu a kritickou diskurzní analýzu při zkoumání parlamentních debat a prohlášení premiéra s cílem odhalit narativy, které uprchlíky vykreslují jako potenciální riziko pro stabilitu národa. Tyto narativy hrály klíčovou roli při poskytování důvodů k odporu proti mechanismu přerozdělování uprchlíků v EU, systému kvót a odporu proti vlivu nadnárodních subjektů. Z výsledků výzkumu vyplývá, že političtí představitelé v Maďarsku, na Slovensku a v České republice pravidelně vykreslovali uprchlíky jako potenciální hrozbu pro národní bezpečnost, ekonomickou zátěž a kulturní výzvy. Tato diskuse nejen posilovala autoritu národa, ale také spojovala domácí publikum v opozici vůči vnějším požadavkům Evropské unie. Konkrétně vedení Maďarska využívalo silně nacionalistický narativ a stavělo se do protikladu k tomu, co bylo prezentováno jako příliš vlezlá politika EU. Podobně Slovensko a Česká republika využily identitu uprchlíků k prosazení opozičního postoje vůči systému kvót.

Klíčová slova

Schengenská krize, Slovensko, Maďarsko, Česká republika, kolektivní identita, sekuritizace

Identita a jednání států - Případ České republiky, Maďarska a Slovenska během evropské schengenské krize

Acknowledgement

My sincere gratitude goes out to everyone who helped me along the way as a PhD student, which ultimately brought me to this point where I am able to complete my research and turn it into a thesis. I would like to start by expressing my gratitude to my supervisor, Associate Professor Jan Karlas, whose direction and counsel during the course of my studies made it possible for me to present this thesis—while it may not be flawless—and within the allotted time period for defence. Being an outsider within Charles University's educational and institutional framework from the start of my studies forced me to push myself beyond my comfort level, so to be honest, it wasn't an easy road. However, it was my supervisor who granted me the chance to be under his supervision and ultimately allowed me to successfully complete my studies with greater achievements than I had initially envisioned.

My appreciation also goes out to Prof. Teun van Dijk and Dr. Aliaksei Kazharski, who reviewed this thesis, for their insightful feedback and suggestions that helped to transform it into a manuscript that I could personally consider an accomplishment. I would especially want to thank Professor Teun van Dijk, whose academic career has encouraged me to pursue future academic endeavours and convert this thesis into a much more significant work.

Undoubtedly, it must be acknowledged that my thesis would not have reached its current state without the valuable contributions of my esteemed colleagues from Charles University who engaged in deep academic discussions with me and provided me with their unwavering emotional support, which served as a catalyst for my drive and determination to successfully complete this thesis. I would like to express my gratitude to future doctor Jonathan Collins, who, for the majority of my PhD studies, was both my closest friend and greatest source of inspiration. Additionally, I would like to express my gratitude to Markéta Kocmanová Ph.D., whose extensive expertise and thought-provoking discussions have directed me towards uncharted areas of research. I must not overlook the rest of my PhD cohort, to whom I am indebted for their support. It is through the collective efforts of this exceptional group that one may truly accomplish their objectives. This applies directly to the following individuals: Anna Kotvalová, Jan Mazač, Eliška Pohnerová, Kledian Myftari, Tereza Plíštilová, Kateřina Urbancová, Adéla Sedlecká, David Plášek, Martin Huňady, Fabio Iguavita Duarte, Jan Dostál, and many more. Occasionally, people have the belief that pursuing a PhD is a solitary effort. However, I disagree with this notion as my colleagues consistently made sure that I never felt alone.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

Over the past twenty years, there has been a noticeable increase in the occurrence and severity of crises, including both financial and refugee-related issues. The recent events have required a reassessment of the political and security strategies of the European Union (Riddervold et al., 2021). If appropriate policies are not implemented, the European Union (EU) may face a crisis similar to the one it suffered in 2015. Russia's heightened assertiveness and invasion of Ukraine can be linked to the European Union's reluctance to take resolute measures (Giuli & Oberthür, 2023; Veebel, 2020). The likelihood of future increases in immigration is emphasised by the expected surge, which is impacted by climate change and ongoing geopolitical crises (Skjærseth, 2023). The cohesion of the European Union is in danger unless there is a focused effort to enhance its ability to tackle these issues by promoting greater integration in important policy domains. This thesis seeks to make a valuable contribution to the scholarly discourse on the process of integrating the European Union (EU) and the accompanying difficulties it entails. It provides insights into the tactics of political elites that the community might learn from to strengthen its ability to withstand future crises.

In this thesis, I label the political crisis of 2015 as the Schengen crisis since it does not marginalise or exclude minorities and people in need. Consequently, I have excluded the frequently used allusion to the migration or refugee crisis, which was commonly employed by political elites and the media. The events leading up to the 2015 Schengen crisis had a significant impact on the unity of the European Union (Riddervold et al., 2021). The European Union member states had a predicament when there was a surge in the number of asylum seekers crossing their external borders. This resulted in significant rifts among the member states, particularly between the recently admitted central European member states and the more established western European members.

From an International Relations standpoint, this crisis can be analysed through various lenses, including security considerations, humanitarian consequences, political and economic impacts on EU member states, and societal changes such as the sudden rise of far-right extremist tendencies within member state societies. This thesis primarily examines the political dimensions of the crisis, specifically exploring the perspectives of political leaders in Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic, which are EU member states in Central Europe.

The rationale behind choosing these three countries is their close closeness in terms of shared characteristics such as population size, economic strength, historical history, and social conditions. However, what sets them apart is their capacity to provide distinct interpretations of the same subject: specifically, why each of these states opposed the cohesion of the European Union and its member states and advocated for an alternate approach.

The precursors of the crisis were detected well before its eventual escalation (Riddervold et al., 2021). The economic crisis in 2008 and 2009 led to significant cultural changes and a greater need for political changes in the nearby territories of the European Union, namely in northern Africa and the Middle East. These demands arose during the Arab Spring (Kurpebayeva, 2020), a sequence of rebellions against the governments of different nations. The upheavals erupted in Tunisia in 2010 and quickly spread over the entire region, ultimately leading to revolutions. Libya and Syria were the most affected countries, experiencing significant consequences. Both nations were engulfed in long-lasting civil wars, leading to the disintegration of their societies and the displacement of a large number of people, ranging from hundreds of thousands to possibly millions. These individuals first sought shelter within their own nation and later sought asylum in other nations, with Turkey being the most notable choice.

The European Union member states originally reacted to these changes by implementing measures against the authoritarian regimes in northern Africa and the Middle East, aiming to establish

stability in these nations (Asseburg, 2013). Regrettably, these interferences lead to further escalations and regional rivalry with other global and regional powers like Iran, Russia, and Saudi Arabia. As an increasing number of individuals escaped their home nations and sought to pass the external borders of the European Union in order to seek refuge in member states, the conflict acquired a new aspect. In 2014, the European Union and its member states were shown to be entirely ill-equipped for the circumstances, which anticipated the events that would transpire in 2015.

Over one million refugees originating from countries such as Yemen, Syria, and Libya entered and subsequently departed from the European Union via its external borders (Figure 32). There were two primary routes: one involved travelling by sea from Libya to Italy, while the other involved a combination of land and sea travel, passing via Greece, the Balkan states, and eventually Hungary, Austria, Germany, and Sweden (Benedikter & Karolewski, 2016; Börzel & Risse, 2018a; Brljavac, 2017; Triandafyllidou, 2018). As a reaction, the European Union and its institutions implemented a new set of policies aimed at providing support to the most affected countries, primarily Italy, Greece, and Hungary (Figure 32), who had received the largest number of refugees during the initial phase of the crisis. In April, the European Commission put out a comprehensive strategy to tackle the problem, which would be implemented throughout the summer of 2015 (Grech, 2017). The Commission proposed a redistribution mechanism, commonly referred to as the quota system, as a primary option. This mechanism would aid countries by dividing asylum seekers residing within their borders among EU member states based on a predetermined redistribution key (Grech, 2017).

The Schengen crisis offers an interesting phenomenon in the field of International Relations, as it reveals how political elites in the selected nations of the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary responded to the crisis and justified their actions (Bąk-Pitucha, 2023; Belkina, 2019; M. Braun, 2019; Koß & Séville, 2020; Nyzio, 2015). The rationale presented in the theoretical portion is based on IR theories that explain how national preferences are expressed through identity constructs related to

social objects like asylum seekers, the European Union, and national identities. To fully comprehend the intricate formation of identity constructions (Checkel & Katzenstein, 2009; Christiansen et al., 1999a; Delanty et al., 2011; Dovidio & Antweiler, 2019; Postelnicescu, n.d.; Risse, 2018; Schimmelfennig, 2018b; Zehfuss, 2001) examined in the case studies analysed during the Schengen crisis, it is essential to obtain a thorough understanding of the theoretical framework of European integration as outlined in scholarly articles. Furthermore, it is imperative to comprehend this phenomenon, as the crisis presented a significant obstacle to the European Union (EU) in this specific area.

The political decisions taken by the politicians in the nations being examined had a direct impact on the integration process, specifically in relation to the rules concerning asylum in the European Union (Černý, 2020; Lavenex, 2018; Nagy, 2016; Simonovits, 2020a; Trauner, 2016; Vestergaard, 2020). Significantly, a crucial determination was made to decline the acceptance of asylum seekers from the nations that were most severely affected. The subsequent disagreement on the redistribution process indicates a more profound level of political decision-making. The ensuing dispute on the redistribution process highlights a more profound level of political decision-making understood here as acts. Political leaders formulate decisions in direct response to certain issues. In this scenario, decisions are made based on perceptions and how these influential individuals constructs and re-constructs the identity constructs of the social objects through their discourses.

Contemporary International Relations (IR) theories consider that actions are contingent upon the interpretations attributed to the objects or subjects engaged in decision-making (Frost, 2021; R. Jackson & Sørensen, 2015; Lundborg & Vaughan-Williams, 2015). Moreover, meanings arise from discourses rather than existing autonomously. To comprehend action, one must possess a comprehensive comprehension of the triangle interplay among acts, meanings, and speech (Albert et al., 2008; Frost, 2021; R. Jackson & Sørensen, 2015; Marttila, 2016). This thesis expands upon the

existing conceptual framework by investigating how the formation of refugee identities during the Schengen crisis impacted the political choices made by the ruling class in the studied instances. This study will use case studies to apply qualitative analysis in order to operationalise the ideas of actions, meanings, and discourse. The analysis will scrutinise policy documents, speeches, and media portrayals in order to comprehend the construction and contestation of identities within the broader European context.

Moreover, the thesis aims to enhance the ongoing discourse on European integration by highlighting the significance of identity constructs in influencing political environments. The Schengen crisis subjected the EU's dedication to the concepts of solidarity and unrestricted movement to examination, while also revealing conflicts in defining membership within the European Union. In September 2015, the European Union finally implemented the redistribution mechanism, following a decision to vote on it during a Council of the EU meeting (Council of the EU, 2015f). The countries examined in this thesis opposed this decision, as well as the acceptance of refugees according to the redistribution criteria established by the Council's resolution. The objective of this thesis is to comprehend the intricate sociological and, specifically, political dynamics in these nations, as well as to elucidate the origin of their political decision-making. Given this information, I aim to address the following research enquiries:

1. How do political elites construct the identities of refugees who arrived in Europe, and what social categories do they assign to them?
2. How have the national identities of Slovakia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic shaped their responses to the EU's refugee relocation and resettlement plans during the 2015 crisis?
3. How do the identity constructs of refugees legitimize the denial of asylum applications and the European Union's policies to redistribute asylum seekers among European countries?
4. What thematic categories do political elites assign to the political crisis?

To address these research enquiries, this thesis utilises a qualitative interpretive approach, specifically employing Qualitative Content Analysis (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2023; Mayring, 2022; Schreier, 2012; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009) and Critical Discourse Analysis (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 2001; Riasati et al. 2011; Wodak & Meyer, 2002) of parliamentary discussions. Qualitative Content Analysis involves coding data obtained from legislative debates in two distinct manners. The legislative debates are initially categorised by the political actors who mention the situation, and subsequently by finding contextual elements in the debates that are explicitly linked to the Schengen crisis. The subsequent empirical section employs Critical language Analysis to demonstrate how political elites shape the identities of refugees throughout the crisis. This is achieved by analysing specific excerpts that exemplify the overarching narratives found in the language of parliamentarians and governmental spokespeople. In addition, Critical Discourse Analysis illustrates how contextual themes play a role in shaping political elites' comprehensive comprehension of the situation (Hart, 2011a; van Dijk, 2008). The discussion chapter examines how the language methods employed by political elites in shaping identities can elucidate the state government's complete rejection of the quota system.

This thesis is significant for several reasons, with the most crucial being the comprehensive examinations of three countries and the valuable comparative insights they offer. This perspective not only enhances our comprehension of the activities taken by political elites, but also emphasises the disparities among member states of the European Union. Moreover, the wide range of empirical data creates opportunities for further comparison research. Current scholarly literature often analyses the problem from a limited viewpoint or concentrates on particular nations and their political stories. However, there is a clear absence of comprehensive studies that encompass all three countries. Moreover, this thesis enhances the wider discussion on political representation by illustrating how governments shape various identities through their political speech.

The thesis is organised in the following manner. The text commences with a comprehensive introduction to the crisis and the subsequent actions taken by the European Union, its institutions, and its member states. This is followed by a delineation of the responses of the states under examination to the crisis. In addition, the literature study examines the theoretical comprehension of European integration, focussing on the preference formation of individual states. In this context, preference formation refers to the act of rejecting the quota system. The literature review is succeeded by a theoretical chapter that delineates the theoretical underpinnings of the research, followed by a methodological chapter that demonstrates the use of Qualitative Content Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis in this research. Following that, the study presents three case studies and their empirical results, which are then followed by a critical discussion of the findings. The concluding chapter addresses supplementary research opportunities within this field.

1.1.   Crisis in the context of EU integration

The European Union has experienced significant changes since the major economic crisis of 2008, which was the greatest in recent decades. The budgetary issues encountered by the states have shown the underlying weaknesses of the European project, widely known as "Pandora's box". However, soon after addressing some of the negative effects of the economic crisis, the EU faced a more substantial issue. In 2015, the lack of concern from the international community in dealing with the civil war in Syria and the conflict in the neighbouring area led to the establishment of the terrorist group Islamic State and a large number of refugees, surpassing any prior crisis. The EU has experienced an increase in the number of refugees entering its borders as a result of its economic growth and, importantly, the lengthy period without any hostilities.

Undoubtedly, the concept of migration has emerged as a central topic in political discourse and has garnered significant attention from political scientists and experts in the field of international

relations. The 2015 Schengen crisis greatly increases its importance as a factor that influences certain political decisions. Furthermore, it has cultivated an unprecedented political polarisation among various political forces worldwide. Although the media has mistakenly referred to it as the migration crisis or refugee crisis, it has become a crucial subject in political debates. The refugee issue, similar to Brexit, can be analogised to the spill-back effect, as elucidated by Schmitter (1970). The crisis resulted in political tensions that led to the emergence of leaders who aimed to disrupt the institutions of the European Union and fundamentally change the course of European integration.

The EU Member States have demonstrated a complete lack of preparedness in response to the Schengen issue. Because the problem is getting worse and none of the 28 Member States have enough resources to handle it on their own, the EU has been forced to find a solution together. The member states faced a new situation as the previous accords within the EU mostly focused on the economic aspects of integration, allowing clear and logical decision-making. It soon became evident that specific countries were directly affected by the crisis, resulting in tens of thousands of refugees. Transit zones posed issues for other countries, while certain states served as the primary destinations for the influx of refugees. Ultimately, there were states that remained unaffected by these issues and were seen as bystanders. The diversity among the states has only increased the complexity of the negotiations.

In contrast to 2013, 170,000 more refugees sought safety in Italy in 2014 (Frontex, 2015). In Greece, there was a less severe but nevertheless obligatory situation, with a 105% surge between 2013 and 2014, totalling 50,000 individuals (Frontex, 2015). The situation seemed to deteriorate more in the year 2015. Based on data from Eurostat (Eurostat, 2015), some 185,000 individuals seeking asylum arrived in the territories of European Union member states in the first quarter of 2015. While the number remained relatively stable from the last quarter of 2014 and the first quarter of 2015, there was a notable 86% surge in the number of applicants compared to the first quarter of 2014. The

predominant source countries were Kosovo (26%), Syria (16%), and Afghanistan (7%). The majority of refugee applications from Kosovo, amounting to 90%, were submitted to two countries: Hungary, with 22,800 applicants, and Germany, with 21,100 applicants. Germany bore the highest burden, accounting for 40% of all applicants, while Hungary ranked second with 18% of applicants (32,800 persons). Several other countries achieved rates below 8%. Hungary had the highest number of applications per million residents, with a total of 3,322 (Figure 33). In contrast, the Czech Republic had a ratio of 34, the Slovak Republic had a ratio of 9, and the Republic of Poland had a ratio of 38, which were the lowest ratios. Approximately half of the Syrian citizens, specifically 13,800 individuals, have submitted applications for asylum in Germany. Regarding Afghans, the proportion was distributed (2/3) among three nations: Hungary (4000), Germany (3000), and Austria (1600). The following figures aid in distinguishing the circumstances in which the case countries of this study had to tackle the crisis. Although Hungary experienced significant impacts, the other states analysed did not rank highly on the list.

The European Council addressed the problem in the Mediterranean on April 23, 2015, through its first response to the refugee crisis (European Council, 2015a). The meeting was organised based on the result of a combined meeting of the Foreign and Home Affairs Councils that occurred on April 20, 2015. During the summit, the leaders reached a consensus on four fundamental principles for responding to crises. These principles include combatting traffickers, enhancing the presence in the Mediterranean, blocking illegal migration flows, and boosting internal solidarity and responsibility (European Council, 2015a).

From the very beginning of this meeting, there was a significant focus on collaborating with third countries to stop the increasing surge. The debate regarding the answers to the worsening crisis began after the Commission released a detailed strategy to tackle migration known as the European Agenda on Migration (European Commission, 2015a). While not all member states unanimously

supported the entire content, the Agenda served as the key text that guided all the discussions and provided the fundamental blueprint for addressing the problem. The document presented during the Council meeting on April 23rd (European Council, 2015b) outlines ten particular issues that require immediate attention. Initially, the Commission suggests enhancing Frontex's capability, namely in the Triton and Poseidon missions, which have taken over the former Italian Mare Nostrum mission. The Agenda also prioritises combatting smugglers and their networks, who exploit vulnerable individuals seeking refuge for their own financial benefit.

The third and fourth chapters address the most critical aspects of the Agenda, which involve the transfer of incoming waves of refugees from the member nations most impacted and the resettlement of those requiring assistance. This strategy thereafter becomes the contentious source of the impasse in the negotiations. The Commission acknowledged the necessity of establishing a relocation program for individuals who have a legitimate claim to international protection (European Commission, 2015a). According to the scheme, the member states would have the duty of handling individual asylum claims. The Agenda now includes a provision for the establishment of an automated mandatory relocation mechanism, to be implemented if deemed essential in the future. The criteria for distributing relocations were determined by four factors: population size, GDP, the average number of asylum applications per million people from 2010 to 2014, and the unemployment rate. The allocation of individual keys for the monitored nations is as follows: the Czech Republic (2.98%), the Slovak Republic (1.78%), the Republic of Hungary (1.79%), and the Republic of Poland (5.64%). The Commission also endorsed the relocation of 20,000 individuals annually who are classified as displaced persons. An allocation of fifty million euros has been earmarked from the European Union budget to provide support for this initiative. The source cited is the European Commission (2015a).

The European Commission released a report on May 27th, 2015 (European Commission, 2015b) that expands on the European Agenda regarding migration. According to the report, a

provisional system for moving 40,000 individuals in Italy and Greece has been established. The initiative exclusively pertained to individuals from Syria and Eritrea who met the criteria for international protection. As per the concept, each state was supposed to receive 6,000 euros per individual, with the expenses being linked to the relocation of individuals. Furthermore, alongside the relocation, the Commission has put out a proposal for a resettlement scheme targeting 20,000 individuals from non-EU countries who qualify for international protection as per international legal standards. From a budgetary perspective, a sum of 50 million euros has been allocated from the European budget to cover the expenses associated with the relocation.

In accordance to the relocation key, the separate countries were assigned the task of distributing 24,000 migrants in Italy and 16,000 in Greece. The nations included in the survey were allocated the following number of representatives for Italy: the Czech Republic (797 individuals), the Republic of Hungary (496 individuals), the Republic of Poland (1595 individuals), and the Slovak Republic (471 individuals). The distribution of allocations in the Greek program is as follows: the Czech Republic received 531 allocations, the Republic of Hungary received 331 allocations, the Republic of Poland received 1064 allocations, and the Slovak Republic received 314 allocations. The Czech Republic was tasked with assisting 525 individuals, Hungary with 307 individuals, Poland with 962 individuals, and the Slovak Republic with 319 individuals as part of the approved relocation plan (European Commission, 2015b).

During the European Council meeting on June 25-26, 2015, the leaders of the Member States agreed to endorse the relocation and resettlement plans that were previously considered in the EU Council meeting on June 15-16, 2015, and outlined in the European Agenda on migration. The conclusive determination was announced on July 22nd as part of the "Resolution of the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on relocating from Greece and Italy 40,000 individuals in evident requirement of international protection" (Council

of the EU, 2015a). The European Council's conclusions highlighted the imperative of arranging the Valletta summit in November 2015, along with the importance of enhancing collaboration with Turkey. One of the two decisions approved in 2015 was the proposal to transfer 40,000 individuals.

After the significant events that occurred throughout the summer, the Commission made the decision on September 9th to develop an additional relocation plan (Council of the EU, 2015b), based on the existing plan. According to the latest proposal, member states were required to transfer an additional 120,000 individuals from Italy, Greece, and Hungary. The objective was to transfer a total of 15,500 individuals from Italy, 50,400 from Greece, and 54,000 from Hungary. The redeployment was to occur using the identical criteria as the previous process. In order to pay the expenses associated with relocation, the Commission has committed a total of 780 million euros from the European budget to meet the requirements of the member states. Afterwards, the Commission additionally proposed a plan to establish a permanent relocation system that relies on solidarity among the Member States of the European Union. The Commission also revised the European list of secure countries of origin in the report. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey have been included in the list (European Commission, 2015c). The proposed permanent relocation plan has encountered significant opposition from the V4 countries (Visegrad Group, 2015).

The autumn has emerged as a pivotal phase in addressing the crisis. A non-formal summit of leaders from member states occurred on September 23rd, during which the leaders affirmed the necessity of implementing more measures to stop the worsening crisis (Council of the EU, 2015e). Prior to the informal meeting, the Justice and Home Affairs Council convened to deliberate and cast votes on the interim measures regarding international protection for the benefit of Italy and Greece. These measures mandated that member states relocate 120,000 individuals from Italy and Greece. The suggested plan entailed the prompt relocation of 66,000 individuals, with the remaining 54,000 to be

relocated one year after the decision was adopted. The approval of the decision has become a pivotal catalyst in the crisis due to the opposition of numerous countries and the manner in which it was adopted. Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Romania specifically voted against the adoption, while Finland chose to abstain (Šabić, 2017).

After the important decisions made in September, the member states of the EU convened for a vital conference in Valletta. The Justice and Home Affairs Council convened on October 8th and 9th, 2015 to examine the repatriation policy and relocation of 160,000 individuals. The Commission issued a report on October 14th, detailing the advancements made in the implementation of the agreed measures(Council of the EU, 2015c). The Commission specifically referred to the allocated sum of 9.2 billion euros from the budget to cover the expenses associated with the crisis. Furthermore, it stressed the importance of restoring a fully operational Schengen system, which suffered considerable damage due to the implementation of border controls by many nations.

The annual meeting held in Valletta, Malta on the 11th and 12th of November, organised by the Council of the EU (2015d), aimed to thoroughly examine the causes, origins, and intensification of migratory flows. Aside from EU leaders, the summit was also graced by delegates from the African Union. The Action Plan (Valletta Summit on migration, 2015a) and the Joint Declaration (Valletta Summit on migration, 2015b) aimed to tackle the underlying reasons for migration by putting into action the EU Emergency Trust Fund (Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, 2015) that had already been developed. The EU's decision reflects its recognition of the connection between the progress of the African continent and the movement of migrants to the EU. An essential strategy was to enhance the utilisation of programs like Erasmus Plus for the inhabitants of African nations. Cooperation on return policy, readmission, and reintegration has significantly halted. A Foreign Affairs Council meeting was place on November 16-17 to analyse and assess the outcomes of the Valletta summit (Council of the

EU, 2015b). The ministers also deliberated on enhancing collaboration in ensuring the security of the Balkan route.

Despite the existence of an agreement between the European Union (EU) and Turkey to address the humanitarian crisis in Turkey resulting from the Syrian war (Council of the EU, 2015d), the Action Plan was not put into effect until the EU-Turkey summit on November 29th. The European Union has allocated 3 billion euros to Turkey in order to tackle the situation and avoid its migration to the European continent. The Member States at the European Council on 17-18 December also endorsed the Action Plan. The agreement with Turkey was widely endorsed by the V4 nations as well.

1.2.   Positions of the V4 group

The 2015 Schengen crisis was a significant event in European history that had a profound impact on the future relationships between member states of the European Union. It also triggered heated discussions on the redistribution and relocation of refugees/asylum seekers. The European Commission's proposal for the redistribution and resettlement of refugees from the most affected states encountered substantial resistance, particularly from the Visegrad Four (V4) countries—Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia — who strongly opposed mandatory quotas (Czyż, 2017; Duszczyk et al., 2020). The opposition resulted in a political crisis inside the EU, as the V4 nations perceived the reddistribution scheme as a danger to their national autonomy and safety (Stepper, 2016; Wiczanowska, 2017). Slovakia and Hungary lodged a legal challenge against the Council's decision made in September to the Court of Justice of the European Union, with the aim of suspending the relocation mechanism. Poland initially supported the adoption, but a change in administration later that year caused it to change its position and oppose the mandatory quotas. Both the prime ministers of Slovakia and Czech Republic categorically refused the idea of permanent redistribution

mechanisms, and Hungary withdrew from the plan prior to the vote. The resistance of the V4 (Visegrád Group) played a crucial role in the ultimate abandonment of the relocation proposal (Duszczyk et al., 2020). Their position was shaped by the increasing nationalist and populist attitudes prevalent in these countries (Belkina, 2019). The crisis underscored the schism between liberal and conservative factions within the European Union, with Brussels and certain Western European nations advocating for relocation, while the V4 and other parties opposed it (Malakhov & Kascian, 2020). The conflict resulted in legal disputes and tense relations among EU member states (M. Adamczyk, 2017; Ivanova, 2017).

The 2015 Schengen crisis posed substantial difficulties for the European Union, specifically concerning the Schengen area and programs for relocating refugees. Hungary, led by Viktor Orbán, became a formidable adversary to the migration policy of the European Union (Bojar, 2016). The state built border barriers along its frontiers with Serbia and Croatia and conducted a referendum in 2016 (quota referendum) to reject EU refugee quotas, however it was deemed invalid due to insufficient voter participation (Gessler, 2017; Halmai, 2016). Hungary's opposition to immigration was further strengthened by government efforts that portrayed refugees and asylum seekers as either an economic or, more frequently, a security risk (Bocskor, 2018). The opposition of the Visegrád Group had a considerable impact on EU policy, leading to a shift from mandatory to voluntary redistribution plans (Duszczyk et al., 2020). The implementation of these measures, in addition to the reestablishment of border restrictions by other member states, gave rise to apprehensions that were referred to as the "Schengen crisis" (Ceccorulli, 2019). It is important to mention that Hungary's response to the crisis has been described as a heavy focus on the securitisation of social issues and a shift away from its former cooperative relationship with the EU (Nagy, 2016). Viktor Orbán became a symbol of opposition to a cohesive European approach to the crisis, and he received substantial support from

other actors, like Robert Fico. Despite the alleviation of certain constraints through the EU-Turkey Deal, Hungary's opposition remained resolute.

In addition, the crisis prompted the V4 nations to reaffirm their regional identity and adopt a posture opposing the dominant influence of EU migration policy, exposing a division between cosmopolitan and nationalistic solidarity (Bedea & Osei Kwadwo, 2021; Kazharski, 2018a). This underscored the clear individualities and past events within the V4, questioning the notion of a uniform group (Glied & Zamęcki, 2010; Vetrovcova, 2021). Political debate has led to a notable shift in public opinion in these states along the political spectrum, with a large increase in hostility to immigration, especially among persons who prioritise security (Cichocki & Jabkowski, 2019). The V4's approach can be described as a rejection of the open-door policy advocated by Germany, Sweden, and the EU. Instead, they promoted a more nationalistic policy orientation that prioritised sovereignty, cultural uniqueness, and tradition (Adamczyk, 2017; Glied & Zamęcki, 2010). Furthermore, the economic crisis that occurred in 2008 has already damaged the concept of solidarity in EU cohesion policies. The Schengen crisis has further highlighted the need to reevaluate solidarity and how it is put into practice (Czirfusz, 2021). This shift has resulted in a new discussion of solidarity concerning the refugee crisis in certain V4 countries (Bąk-Pitucha, 2023; Czirfusz, 2021), where political leaders have expressed solidarity but with certain conditions, such as the Christian background of Syrian refugees in the case of Slovakia.

Concurrently, the previously indicated increase in "sovereignism" within right-wing parties in the European Union (EU) demonstrated a longing to maintain national authority while still operating within the EU structure (Fabbrini & Zgaga, 2024). This pragmatic approach, marked by criticism of the EU's supranational nature, resulted in a rift where Western European parties were perceived as prioritising economic concerns, while Eastern European parties concentrated on cultural themes (Fabbrini & Zgaga, 2024). Populist parties, such as FIDESZ and SMER, have presented an alternative

perspective on sovereignty during economic and Schengen problems. This has led EU leaders to reconsider their existing practices of sovereignty.

The emergence of the Schengen crisis and the growing prominence of right-wing parties have given rise to an additional, hitherto unforeseen trend. According to scholars, the crisis had significant effects on the idea of "Central Europe" in the Visegrád Four (V4) countries. It caused a shift in their identities, moving away from the post-Cold War narrative of "reconnecting with the West" (Kazharski, 2018a). Instead, it resulted in a rise in Euroscepticism, nativism, and illiberal democracy. These changes were fuelled by the influx of refugees and xenophobia (Nader Nourbakhsh et al., 2020; Stojarová, 2018). With this regards, Hungary is currently seeing a notable shift towards illiberalism, while other nations in the Visegrad Group (V4) are also showing different levels of this change (Bustikova & Guasti, 2017). The illiberal regionalism of the V4 countries may be attributed to a combination of national identities, demographic considerations, and strategic disagreements with EU policies (Scott, 2020). However, it remains uncertain if this shift will be enduring and subject to change (Rupnik, 2018). It can be argued that this change might indicate the conclusion of the liberal age that began after 1989 (Rupnik, 2018) .

Upon a more detailed analysis of the case studies of the three selected counties, we may identify qualitative similarities and contrasts in the comparison. Starting in the Czech Republic, it is evident that while there was a small number of refugees accepted, the crisis had a significant influence on the Czech society and, particularly, on political discourse. The media coverage was mostly influenced by players at the national level, while there were indications of a shared European discourse emerging (Kluknavská et al., 2019). Multiple media analysis studies (Kovář, 2023; Krzyżanowski, 2018; Krzyżanowski et al., 2018; Průchová Hrůzová, 2021) have consistently shown that the media frequently depicts refugees and asylum seekers as potential threats to security, administrative obstacles, and societal obligations. This narrative is consistent with the perspectives of populist and radical

political factions, as documented by Jelínková (2019) and Urbániková & Tkaczyk (2020). This portrayal ultimately led to the endorsement of policies against refugees and, concurrently, heightened populism, thus normalising xenophobia (Daniel, 2020) and establishing a self-perpetuating loop that contributed to the increasing popularity of these political factions. Moreover, the media provided significant coverage of the topic, often magnifying the crisis and highlighting negative portrayals of immigrants and asylum seekers (Bartoszewicz & Eibl, 2022), so intensifying a feeling of moral panic (Sedláková, 2017). The securitisation and politicisation of refugees and asylum seekers were evident in the political debates on Twitter, particularly through the activities of the "We Don't Want Islam in the Czech Republic" movement (IVCRN) that prominently propagated Islamophobic discourse (Vallo et al., 2020).

The crisis triggered demonstrations against refugees, which were influenced by political chances and the dynamics of the movement (Navrátil & Kluknavská, 2023). Navrátil & Kluknavská (2023) present a thought-provoking contrast between the Czech Republic and Slovakia in their analysis of the anti-refugee protests. Although they had similar historical and political origins, there were notable differences in their mobilisation processes. In the Czech Republic, there was a greater occurrence and intensity of protests, with anti-refugee mobilisations dispersed around the country and pro-refugee mobilisations focused in Prague. Conversely, Slovakia experienced a lower number of protests, primarily focused on opposition to refugees, which took place primarily in major urban areas, with a notable concentration in Bratislava. Protests in support of immigration were virtually non-existent. This disparity can be comprehended as an expression of the divergent societal interpretations of humanism amidst the crises in both nations.

Additionally, legal issues emerged about the procedures for detaining individuals in detention centres and the examination of asylum applications (Černý, 2020). In a manner comparable to Slovakia, Czech politicians developed cognitive maps that associated refugees/asylum seekers with

radical Islam (Strapáčová & Hloušek, 2018).The Czech Republic consistently adopted a critical position towards EU refugee policies, specifically opposing relocation schemes throughout the entire crisis (Daniel, 2020; Votoupalová, 2019). However, there was a divergence in the communication approach between moderate politicians like Prime Minister Sobotka and radical MPs like Okamura (Wondreys, 2021). Far-right parties, including his Úsvit, redirected their attention from domestic minority groups, like as the Roma, to issues related to immigration and Islamophobia.

Moving to the second case of Slovakia, we can see a clear tendency differing from the Czech case, where influential mainstream political figures (SMER) exploited the issue of the Schengen crisis for electoral gain, fostering anti-migrant sentiment among the population simultaneously which enabled far-right parties to gain influence (Zvada, 2018) as for eample the rise of Marián Kotleba as a regional governor. Similarly to the Czech case, this led to the securitization of migration discourse, with politicians presenting migrants as threats (Štefančík & Kiner, 2021a). From the media point of view, the coverage echoed this trend, prioritizing security concerns over humanitarian issues (Kluknavská et al., 2019). This security-focused discourse was further solidified by a consensus among experts and politicians (Androvičová, 2017) consequently transforming public opinion in Slovakia to grow increasingly negative towards refugees and asylum seekers (Lincényi, 2017). Interestingly, the crisis also influenced Slovakia's foreign and security policies, increasing awareness of migration issues among political representatives and the public (Bolecekova, 2021), contributing to growing mistrust in the establishment (Polo, 2018).

Androvičová (2013) analyses four clusters of discursive shifts in Western Europe and subsequently in Slovakia before the crisis, which were driven by globalisation, economic conditions, and security concerns. These changes ultimately led to the observed phenomenon. Originally, based on her research, migration was portrayed as a movement of workers, backed by bilateral agreements to meet labour demands. During the late 1970s and 1990s, there was a change in perspective due to

economic crises and evolving public opinions. This resulted in the implementation of immigration policies that were more restrictive, with a focus on controlling borders and regulating the labour market. Despite Slovakia's initial isolation from these developments, it eventually caught up with the patterns in the early 1990s through the restructuring of its political system. The notable aspect here is the shift in discourse after the events of 9/11, as the focus turned towards emphasising security, resulting in Muslims being increasingly depicted as potential security risks. This led to an increase in anti-immigration rhetoric that characterised the atmosphere before to the Schengen crisis. It is noteworthy that Slovakia's dominant discussions are in line with the EU's securitarian approach, but adapted to suit the national circumstances (Androvičová, 2013; Štefančík et al., 2021; Štefančík & Kiner, 2021b).

This situation has been altered since the onset of the crisis in 2015, particularly after the European Commission implemented the migratory quota system. Kissová (2018) notes a notable change in the political discourse in Slovakia. Originally, refugees were primarily discussed in terms of their economic impact. However, over time, they came to be classified based on their religious and cultural backgrounds. Muslim refugees, in particular, were often unfairly linked to crime, terrorism, and perceived cultural dangers. This association was influenced by the pre-existing narratives surrounding the events of 9/11. Political figures such as Prime Minister Robert Fico had a significant role in justifying exclusionary measures and strengthening national sovereignty. The anti-Islamic public feeling persisted even after the conclusion of the Schengen crisis, fuelled by extremist right-wing groups such as ĽSNS. In contrast to Western Europe, where leftist political parties and NGOs generally lend support to human rights rhetoric, Slovakia sees a marginal position for such speech, mostly championed by a small number of NGOs. The dominance of SMER and its pragmatic approach has largely contributed to the prevalence of left-wing politics in Slovakia.

In Hungary, despite its role as a transit country, the government, under the leadership of Viktor Orbán, initiated a strong anti-immigration campaign. This campaign included hostile billboard campaigns and a national consultation that connected immigration with terrorism. However, it is worth noting that this anti-immigration rhetoric frequently contradicted the actual migration data. This successfully framed the refugee crisis as a significant and tangible danger, highlighting its symbolic and practical implications (Egres, 2018). In addition, migration was associated with conspiracy theories that included George Soros (Lamour, 2021). The government effectively disseminated its message of upholding European and Christian values through various media outlets, thereby influencing public sentiment to conform with its position (Bocskor, 2018; Földes, 2022; Lamour, 2021).

Prime Minister Orbán utilised historical trauma and anti-immigration sentiment to strengthen his position, by sponsoring the 2016 quota referendum, which aimed to reject EU refugee resettlement proposals. Although there was a lack of significant turnout, Orbán managed to strengthen his support among the populace (Gessler, 2017). Initially, the crisis exposed vulnerabilities in Orbán's semi-authoritarian government (Bojar, 2016), consequently the short-term refugee exposure increased anti-refugee voting and far-right support (Gessler et al., 2022) but long-term contributed to his FIDESZ party's ascent. Orbán's manipulation of the migrant narrative was made easier by his authoritarian control over the public sphere, which includes largely state-owned or state-influenced media. Additionally, he strategically utilised historical references to further his agenda (Dessewffy & Nagy, 2021). This resulted in the occurrence where the referendum campaign subsequently exerted a significant influence on internet media, with pessimistic attitudes prevailing in both pro-government and independent sources (Tóth, 2021). The reporting on migration in Hungary has become very emotional, with a strong emphasis on negative stereotypes and the portrayal of refugees as criminals (Bajomi-Lázár, 2019). Furthermore, the campaign popularised xenophobic perspectives, made them

more acceptable in public discussions, and heightened public acceptance of xenophobia, resulting in several Hungarians freely voicing anti-migrant emotions without encountering much resistance.

Additionally, it is evident that the Schengen crisis provided an opportunity for Orbán's government to persist in its goal of fostering a divided nation, by substituting anti-liberal narratives with anti-immigration ones. The FIDESZ government has recast migration as an exogenous menace, with a particular emphasis on non-European migrants, while simultaneously diminishing the significance of Hungarian emigration, which is frequently utilised as a point of criticism by opposition parties.

Czina (2021) highlights that Hungary, as a small Member State within the European Union (EU), prioritises its own interests by rejecting common European policy proposals to address the crisis. Instead, Hungary takes unilateral actions, such as building a border wall on its southern border. This demonstrates how Hungary, as a small state, effectively influences migration policy at the European level by acting as a norm entrepreneur.

1.3.   Ideologies surrounding refugee discourses

Before entering into the investigation of discursive and extra-discursive categories in the context of the three Central European examples, it is critical to address the following question. What beliefs are associated with anti-immigrant rhetoric? To examine political discourse on immigration, first assess the ideological stances of actors (van Dijk, 2019) who form refugee/migrant identities. comprehending them is critical for comprehending the socio-cognitive context of their discourse, as well as providing a foundation for understanding the frequently concealed latent meaning constructions that support their perspectives.

The discourse around refugees is built on many ideological views that impact public perception and policy decisions, as well as refugees' own lived experiences. Scholars have previously identified a

variety of ideologies that underpin global and local refugee discourses by investigating their political and social manifestations, as well as the discursive instruments used to produce them. In this part, we examine and compare numerous anti-immigrant ideologies, as well as ideologies with positive connotations to immigration.

First and foremost, in terms of immigration and refugee ideologies, we must evaluate nationalism (Anderson, 1983; Hobsbawm, 2012) and nativism (Riedel, 2020) in order to close the related but still distinct ideological positions that political leaders frequently employ when discussing immigrants and refugees. When it comes to nationalism, the nation state is prioritised, and political leaders led by this ideology emphasise sovereignty, cultural homogeneity, and the exclusion of their own nation from others. And actual policy decision-making nationalism results in tight immigration laws and border restrictions, and from a social perspective, it frequently generates xenophobia and the marginalisation of refugees (Krzyzanowski & Wodak, 2008; Rheindorf & Wodak, 2018; Wodak, 2015, 2017). Political leaders that advocate nationalist viewpoints frequently use us against them rhetoric to distinguish between the nation's own identity and the inconsistency of foreign and alienated people. Furthermore, this perspective leads to the expression of security concerns coupled with economic arguments about resource allocation and the need to limit immigration, which could lead to resource shortages and hurt the receiving country's population. Furthermore, political decisions based on this ideological attitude dementedly drive to harsher border controls and asylum processes that frame refugees as a threat to national security and cultural identity.

Not distant from this perspective is nativism, which not only emphasises the nation-state but also prioritises native-born residents as the sole receivers of state benefits (Anbinder, 2007; Quint & Higham, 1956; Zolberg, 2006). Again, politicians are asking for more restrictive immigration restrictions to preserve cultural and economic stability. What distinguishes it from nationalism is that it uses different discursive tools, such as a greater emphasis on the language of purity and preservation

(Kaufmann, 2019), while continuing to make assertions about dangers to cultural identity and economic competition narratives.

Representatives of the far right frequently use nationalism and nativism as ideologies. As Teun van Dijk points out, the extreme right does not have a single coherent ideology, but rather a fusion of numerous anti-immigrant philosophies. Representatives of the far-right (Mudde, 2019), as demonstrated in this thesis, consistently push for extreme nationalist nativist and anti-immigrant viewpoints, frequently based on xenophobic policies (Rydgren, 2008), regarding migrants as a threat to national integrity and cultural cohesiveness in states. Politically, they manifest as strict immigration laws and enforcement procedures, whilst socially, they encourage hate crimes and radicalisation against immigrants and refugees. Apart from advocating for the previously mentioned exclusion of refugees (Betz, 1993) from the majority population, representatives of these political positions use discursive tools such as demonisation, fear mongering, and conspiracy theories about demographic threats that refugees pose to the societies they claim to represent (Hage, 2012). These advocates' portrayal of refugees as an existential threat further securitises identity, particularly national identity.

All anti-immigrant positions and ideologies share the goal of securing the majority population, national identity, culture, or state from the threat posed by immigrants and refugees (Zúquete, 2018). For this purpose, these representatives of this political and social movement advocate for extreme political positions and extraordinary measures (Eatwell & Goodwin, 2018) that must be taken to pressure the more moderate centrist, moderate right, and moderate left political parties into harsher policy positions, with the goal of inducing or awakening public perceptions about immigration asylum laws. Politicians who securitise immigrants and refugees use threat and risk language, associating them with terrorism and advocating for a greater emphasis on criminality (Krzyzanowski & Wodak, 2008, 2016; Leeuwen Van & Wodak, 1999; Wodak, 2015, 2017). Furthermore, this attitude instils fear and isolation in order to attack public opinion by casting refugees as a security danger.

Political attitudes that oppose immigration and aid to refugees do not have to stem from radical ideological positions. To garner public support, populists often adopt economic pragmatism as a political position, emphasising both the benefits and costs of greater immigration (Borjas, 2016; Krikorian, 2008). Political inclination influences labour market access and social welfare measures, as well as social disputes over the economic contributions and disadvantages that immigration may impose on the state. Economic pragmatism's rhetorical weapons include cost-benefit analysis, statistical data on employment and welfare, and narratives of economic self-sufficiency, rather than relying on foreigners to support the state's labour market. Furthermore, economic pragmatism frequently collides with security concerns when used to justify restricted immigration policy.

From a more moderate position of criticism towards immigrants and refugees emerges the ideology of conservatism (Huntington, 2005; Scruton, 2018), which also advocates for more restrictive immigration policies and the preservation of traditional values and social order, frequently advocating for limited immigration to maintain cultural and social stability. Law and order, as well as traditional values, are central to this ideological position towards immigrants and refugees, which manifests politically in restrictive laws prioritising border security and, from a social perspective, fostering resistance to multiculturalism and integration policies, all while opposing more radical views expressed by nativist nationalist and far-right representatives. As a result, rhetorical techniques emphasise law and order, cultural preservation, and economic stability.

In contrast, some ideologies advocate for increasing immigration as a means of supporting economic growth and meeting labour market demands. Liberalism (Carens, 2013) is founded on globalisation and cosmopolitanism (Appiah, 2007; Held, 2010) and opposes nationalism and nativism by emphasising interconnectivity and international duties of economically developed governments. From the perspective of globalisation, representatives of this worldview portrayed refugee movements as part of a larger global process advocating for international cooperation and shared responsibility,

as well as promoting policies that recognise the global nature of refugee movements and encourage international collaboration through discursive tools such as references to global human rights frameworks, refugee economic contributions, and societal cultural enrichment. Aside from liberal positions, representatives of the centre and radical left advocate for inclusive and open immigration policies based on global solidarity, social justice, and anti-capitalist critique (Butler, 2004; Chomsky, 2013; Harvey, 2020; Sassen, 1999; Wallerstein, 2004; Zizek, 2017). Politically, these perspectives support eliminating restrictive immigration policies and providing significant social services to refugees, which they argue promote economic growth. Socially, they advocate for solidarity movements and anti-racist activism. These movements' rhetorical tactics include narratives of global inequity, solidarity, human rights, and anti-imperialism (Chomsky, 2013; Fraser, 2020), with the goal of emphasising the interconnectivity of global challenges and the moral necessity of wealthier states to support refugees worldwide.

Humanitarianism (Benhabib, 2004; Fassin, 2011; Kapelner, 2020; Pécoud & de Guchteneire, 2007; Ticktin, 2011; Walzer, 1984) and multiculturalism (Ejobowah & Kymlicka, 1997; Grillo, 2008; Kymlicka, 1996; Modood, 2013; Soysal, 1994) are two positions that advocate for compassion and the integration of refugees into the majority society of the state. While humanitarianism emphasised the moral obligation to help those in need by supporting policies that provide asylum and aid, as well as promoting public sympathy and volunteerism, multiculturalism advocates for policies that recognise and celebrate cultural diversity, encouraging inclusion and cross-cultural understanding. These two viewpoints employ a variety of discursive techniques, including emotive appeals, tales of suffering, moral imperatives, narratives of cultural enrichment, and mutual respect.

2. Literature review

The main aim of this thesis is to conduct a thorough analysis of the Central European countries, Slovakia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, which are generally referred to as the V4 group, and their responses to the Schengen crisis of 2015. Furthermore, the thesis seeks to analyse the changing dynamics between this group of nations and other members of the European Union, along with its institutions, such as the European Commission. My goal is to examine the precise discursive strategies employed by the political representatives of these nations to justify their political decisions for the resolution of the Schengen problem, both domestically and within the European context. In the forthcoming chapter, I provide a comprehensive literature analysis of theoretical frameworks that seek to elucidate the decision-making mechanisms employed by nations and the complex dynamics of crises. Firstly, I provide an overview of the theoretical methods that concentrate on understanding European integration as a vital component in international politics. This is particularly important because the crisis and its solutions bring substantial and unique challenges to this integration. In addition, I thoroughly investigate the theoretical understanding of the crisis and how these particular techniques might clarify the decision-making process of European countries, namely the ones I analyse in my empirical analysis.

The influx of refugees into the Union's territory led to a schism among its members on the suitable measures that states should adopt to tackle the issue and uphold cohesion. The 2015 Schengen crisis, similar to other crises like the global financial crisis in 2008, sparked worries about the direction of European integration, its processes, and the power of the individuals involved (Schimmelfennig, 2015). Therefore, the topic can be attributed to the analysis of European integration. The examination of European integration and its fundamental components carries significant significance within the realm of International Relations theory. The importance of this is underscored by the existence of multiple independent university programs throughout Europe (Ferrara & Kriesi, 2022; Maher, 2021).

Nevertheless, while the European Union holds a prominent position as the foremost international/supranational organisation worldwide, this does not mean that theories of International Relations, which are rooted in Western traditions, ignore the examination of other organisations, including those beyond the Western sphere. Although there may be dissenting opinions in critical literature, it is indisputable that the intricate nature of the European Union and its impact on state and inter-state interactions have generated increased scholarly interest in the field of International interactions.

Furthermore, the significance of the EU mentioned earlier has given rise to several theoretical frameworks that either concentrate on specific time periods in its past or aim to rectify the deficiencies of one another. Initially, three important "Grand theories" of European integration (Hooghe & Marks, 2018, 2019, 2020; Rocabert et al., 2019; Schimmelfennig, 2018b) arose and gained prominence in academic discourse. Neo-functionalists explained the process of European integration by referring to the early progress made by the European Union. They provided convincing explanations of the processes that started the integration of the six initial member states and encouraged states to continue working together in a wider variety of policy areas. Moreover, the shortcomings of neo-functionalism, as evidenced by the slower pace of integration in the 1970s, paved the way for the emergence of liberal intergovernmentalism. Although it gained recognition as a prominent theory of European integration, it also encountered criticism and the rise of a rival theory, comparable to neo-functionalism. Post-functionalism arose as a response to the regressive directions of the European project. It aimed to address the limitations of previous theories in explaining the significant crises of the early 21st century, such as the 2008 financial crisis and the subsequent Schengen crisis. Neo-functionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism were unable to offer satisfactory explanations for these events. The discourse became increasingly focused on enquiries pertaining to identity politics, prompting scholars to rethink

the previously held belief that identity played a negligible role in shaping the process of state integration.

It is important to mention that these three theories of European integration belong to the rationalist perspective on human behaviour (Bickerton et al., 2015; Hooghe & Marks, 2019; Wallace & Alexander, 1999) which is mainly based on rational choice theory (Lovett, 2006; Zey, 2015). Indeed, this statement holds valid, although there are a few subsequent neo-functionalist and post-functionalist writings that deviate from it. Researchers have long criticised the mainstream theoretical approaches to European integration for their limited emphasis on formal decision-making and institutions. These approaches overlook important social factors such as norms, identities, and discourses, which provide a more comprehensive understanding of integration dynamics (Adler-Nissen, 2016; Carstensen & Schmidt, 2016; Christiansen et al., 1999a; Diez, 1999a; Manners & Whitman, 2016). Additional consequences of this delimitation for the overall study program are significant shortcomings and a lack of resources in the ontological and epistemological aspects of research. One of the reasons why I conducted this study was because it addressed one of the limitations. My objective was to provide a significantly different explanation of the factors that impact a state's decisions to support or hinder integration efforts. Moreover, my objective was to address the deficiencies inherent in the current theoretical methodologies. Before introducing a more sophisticated theoretical framework that combines the aspects of critical and social constructivist theories, I will provide a summary of the mainstream approaches that have received negative feedback.

When examining these "grand theories" in terms of their chronology, it is evident that neo-functionalism was the first and most influential doctrine throughout the early years of the European Union's growth. Neo-functionalism has often been regarded as the dominant theory of European integration during the initial development of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the European Economic Community (EEC), and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom).

This view is supported by various scholars such as Niemann (1998, 2006), Niemann and Gutenberg (2016), Niemann and Speyer (2017), Niemann and Zaun (2017), Schmitter (1970), and Verhoeff and Niemann (2011). Neo-functionalism closely aligns with Mitrany's functionalist perspective, which posits that integration is a result of collaborative endeavours motivated by specific tasks (1994). The neo-functionalists deviated from Mitrany by emphasising the growing independence of supranational institutions and their influence on nation-states.

Haas and Lindberg both contended that when the level of interdependence among states grows and new functional forces arise, the loyalty of states undergoes a substantial change. Lindberg (Lindberg, 1963) explicitly argued for the establishment of a new supranational centre and projected that the process of integration would be regulated by an automated mechanism. Later intergovernmentalists perceived integration as a result of individual and distinct "isolated events," whereas neo-functionalists advocated for a linear path towards integration. Moreover, Haas and Lindberg (1958; 1963) emphasised the importance of elites as the primary catalysts for integrations. In addition, neo-functionalists defined the process of integration automation as a "spill-over effect", in which cooperation expands from one sector to another as a result of the growing requirement for intricate connections between states, driven by functional pressures. Subsequently, scholars differentiated among three kind of "spill-over" effects: functional spill-over, political spill-over, and fostered spill-over. Functional spillover occurs when the integration of one economic sector creates pressures and incentives for integration in another area. Political spillover refers to the phenomenon of shifting sympathies and political engagement towards a new central authority, such as a supranational organisation. This suggests that political players are beginning to acknowledge the benefits of transferring their actions and expectations to the supranational level. The phrase "cultivate its spillover" refers to the proactive engagement of supranational institutions in facilitating further

integration and exercising influence over the member states of an organisation, rather than simply receiving integration passively.

The limitations of neo-functionalism became apparent in the early 1970s, prompting its inventor to label it as "obsolete" (Haas, 2004). Neo-functionalists faced criticism for their inability to predict the empty chair dilemma. Furthermore, Jørgensen and Christiansen (1999a) argued that neo-functionalist researchers fail to recognise the significance of structure, even though functional spill-over relies on the presence of structure.

By the conclusion of the century, the theory had been universally accepted as outdated. Nevertheless, the successors of Haas and Lindberg introduced innovative concepts that had been disregarded by earlier experts. In addition, Sweet and Sandholtz (1997) introduced revisions to the theory by diminishing the significance of automatic loyalty transfer. Schmitter (1970), a student of Haas, has enhanced the theory by integrating external factors that can contribute to the process of integration. Arne Niemann played a crucial role in advancing neo-functionalism towards soft constructivism by incorporating socialisation and learning as factors that could lead to deeper integration.

Andrew Moravcsik's research in the late 1990s established liberal intergovernmentalism as a theoretical framework for European integration. Moravcsik (1999) gives five case studies in his book "The Choice for Europe" that illustrate different stages of European integration. These case studies form the basis of his theory. The idea quickly gained popularity in academic discussions and soon became the dominant framework for understanding how a state makes decisions and the factors that either promote or hinder integration. European integration in intergovernmentalism follows a three-step process (Andersson, 2016; Kleine & Pollack, 2018; Naurin, 2018) starting with the establishment of state preferences, then proceeds to asymmetrical bargaining, and finally culminates in the institutionalisation of results (Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig, 2018). According to Moravcsik, the most

important element is the liberal heritage that shapes tastes, which is impacted by domestic power dynamics. Actions that influence European integration first take place during the second phase, as explained by Gourevitch (1978), and then expand to the global stage. This approach has multiple noteworthy consequences. States, acting in a logical and unified manner, make choices about their foreign policy based on their own national interests. Preferences therefore highlight the imperative to tackle a worldwide issue that is affecting the regional circumstances. Moreover, the motivations of social participants at the national level are influenced by practical assessments of costs and benefits, rather than idealistic beliefs in harmonious interests. Moreover, in addition to harbouring a higher level of scepticism towards the excessive focus on automating integration through the ideas of the "invisible hand" or "spill-over" effect (Niemann, 1998; Wallace & Alexander, 1999), LI regards integration as a conscious choice made by the government rather than a simple advancement. Liberal intergovernmentalism, viewed ontologically, highlights the utilitarian nature of state acts (Kleine & Pollack, 2018). The approach described is individualistic, as it simplifies system structures to agents or groups within the state who are motivated by their own interests (Bhaskar Roy et al., 1998a; Lawson et al., 2007). Furthermore, this suggests that, according to LI, the global framework does not have any inherent importance in influencing choices within the interaction between the individual and the larger social system.

In the 21st century, there were substantial changes in the theoretical frameworks and objects of investigation in European integration. After the demise of neo-functionalism and the substantial criticism of liberal intergovernmentalism by Hooghe and Marks (2020), a new contender emerged. Post-functionalism, without totally disregarding the principles of earlier approaches, introduced a new and distinct term to the conversation - identity. Previously, Moravcsik considered the idea of identity to be less important than the study of European integration, whilst neo-functionalists used it without explicitly mentioning it. Post-functionalism introduced a captivating framework for investigating the

politicisation of European integration. According to Hooghe and Marks (2009, 2018, 2019, 2022), European integration has undergone a process of increasing politicisation. This implies that it has become a topic of more public debate and political contestation compared to previous times. Consequently, it has gained significant prominence in national elections and referendums. Politicisation arises from the increasing influence of national identity and public opinion on the direction of integration. Contrary to Moravcsik's argument, this perspective asserts that these factors often outweigh economic and functional concerns when it comes to deciding state preferences and integration outcomes. Moreover, it suggests that political decisions about European integration are influenced by conflicts based on identity, indicating that the integration processes involve not only economic advantages but also profound considerations of national identity and autonomy. Functionalism, similar to liberal intergovernmentalism, highlights the significance of domestic politics and integration dynamics. It specifically examines how domestic political parties, interest groups, and public opinion form state preferences and impact the integration process.

Given the existing research and the objectives of the thesis, I acknowledge and value the results and concepts established from earlier techniques. The approaches mentioned by Ferrara and Kriesi (2022) have been effective in clarifying specific parts of the European integration process. However, I disagree with these approaches as they completely ignore the significance of discursive aspects of identity and perceive the world through the perspective of positivist metatheory (Adler-Nissen, 2016; Carstensen & Schmidt, 2016; Christiansen et al., 1999a; Cozzolino, 2020; Diez, 1999a; Manners & Whitman, 2016; Martin-Mazé, 2015; Rosamond, 1999a; Saurugger, 2016; Smith, 1999). Even when accounting for the incorporation of identity (such as post-functionalists and partially neo-neo-functionalists), these scholars exclusively utilised qualitative data that they converted into quantifiable outcomes. Moreover, I argue that the quest of outcomes that can be applied to various situations results in more disadvantages than advantages. Moravcsik's liberal intergovernmentalism is in close

accordance with Waltz's idea of prioritising "elegant" theories over intricate explanations of the social environment (Waltz, 1986). However, the critics highlighted above stress the importance of greater inclusivity and the integration of different approaches to more effectively embrace the social phenomena of European integration and its specific aspects. In addition, I contend that these methodologies fail to consider a substantial quantity of easily accessible material by overlooking discourse analysis as a method of study.

Generalisations can often neglect key parts of information due to the intricate nature of the world (Jacobi & Freyberg-Inan, 2012; Rosati, 2000). This thesis advocates for a comprehensive approach that incorporates not only IR (meta)theories but also insights from social psychology, sociology, and discourse studies (Neumann, 2014; Rathbun, 2009; Rosati, 2000). Humans, in contrast to inanimate objects or animals, possess cognitive abilities and consciousness, making them incapable of being reduced to measurable components.

Furthermore, I argue that human constructs, such as states and their preferences, should not be merely diminished to variables (Gallagher, 2016). States rely on the existence of individuals and society, as they are the abstract expressions of humanity's ability to organise and manage its actions. Therefore, when analysing states, our main focus should be on the human and societal aspects (Oprisko & Kaliher, 2014; Wendt, 2004), as these provide the essential bases. The comprehension of states is derived from significances, connections, and conceptualisations, rather than from measurable quantities.

My thesis adopts a theoretical framework that expands upon previously established information and hypotheses discussed earlier. It not only integrates these theories but also tackles the existing research deficiencies, specifically regarding my emphasis on the 2015 Schengen crisis. Therefore, my goal with the thesis is to rectify these shortcomings and provide a thorough understanding of how political elites justified their decision-making process through a discursive

analysis of social reality. Furthermore, my objective is to formulate a coherent explanation that is consistent with the current body of scholarly work on the process of European integration.

2.1. Constructivism and European integration

In addition to the three aforementioned "grand theories" of European integration, a substantial portion of research stems from the constructivist tradition of International Relations theories. These scholars directed their attention towards studying identities and processes that may result in the merging of identities, namely in the shape of a European identity (Ruszkowski, 2019), in order to comprehend the factors contributing to integration among member states of the European Union. While neo-functionalists, especially in the recent works, have already shown interest in the process of socialisation, constructivist researchers have developed their method to fully use the potential of identity explanations.

Renowned constructivist researcher Jeffrey Checkel (2003) focused his research on the implicit socialisation processes occurring inside the internal architecture of European institutions, including the Council. The main objective was to determine if being a member of the Council and engaging in socialisation and learning processes associated with it have an impact on the identity transformation of individuals that can be categorised as Europeanization. In a similar vein to Checkel, Börzel and Risse (Börzel & Risse, 2005a, 2005b, 2012, 2018a; Risse, 2009a, 2010) examine the effects of Europeanization. However, rather than concentrating on national representatives and their transformation of identity due to European institutions, they take a different approach by investigating the consequences of Europeanization at the domestic level.

Viewed more broadly, Risse identifies three significant domains in which the study of European integration. These include the concept of "Europeanness", the relationship of the EU and

the meaning of European identity and thirdly the so-called "enlargement puzzle" (Risse, 2009b). The first body of work focuses on the topic of how much European identity may overlap with persons' national identities. Citrin and Sides (2004) conclude in their study that identities do not have to clash immediately, contrary to what proponents of zero-sum identities argue. Therefore, the authority of the EU thus does not require prioritizing of the nation and the idea of socially constructed collective identities holds. We may also include Elder, Glensen (2001), and Cederman (2001) among those who support this strategy. The second field centred on the idea of "Europeanness" investigates the relationships and potential "nested" structures that arise between various identities. Laffan (2004, 1998) demonstrates how Commission employees do not discount national identity while yet identifying primarily with Europe. In addition to the layered structure, scholars also recognise the notion of the "marble cake," which refers to the various ways that different groups interpret what Europe is (Marcussen, 1999). As a result, Europe thus acquires different meanings and salience for the French, Germans or Hungarians. Lastly, researching European integration can benefit from an examination of the expansion field. For instance, Schimmelfennig (2005) contends that the EU represents a vision of a security community that encourages nations to accede to its institutions.

While it is true that these approaches concentrate on a variety of topics that are somewhat unrelated to my own goal, they all offer an invaluable guide to the ways in which identities are vital to our understanding of European integration.

In addition to these constructivist works that focus on subjective interpretation, there is an increasing number of studies that adopt a discursive approach to this specific research agenda. For instance, Rosamond (1999) examines the framework of European discussions regarding globalisation, while Diez (1999) concentrates on the British national discourse about the integration of the United Kingdom into the European Union. Although Risse (2009b) acknowledges the efforts made to introduce discourse into the discussion on European integration, he concedes that these studies

primarily rely on Qualitative Content Analysis rather than linguistically oriented discourse analysis. By drawing heavily on the works of these scholars (Christiansen et al., 1999b; Jachtenfuchs et al., 1998; Larsen, 1999; Marcussen, 2000), the thesis aims to address this deficiency and provide novel perspectives on the ongoing debate.

Additionally, I intend to refer to the previously mentioned literature (Adler-Nissen, 2016; Carstensen & Schmidt, 2016; Christiansen et al., 1999a; Cozzolino, 2020; de Wilde, 2019; Diez, 1999a; Manners & Whitman, 2016; Martin-Mazé, 2015; Rosamond, 1999a; Saurugger, 2016; Smith, 1999) which advocates for a more expansive theoretical inclusivity with the goal of comprehending European integration and transcending conventional approaches by incorporating the analysis of discourse as an explanatory component of analysis. I refer to Saurugger's (2016) study of cognitive frames, which challenges the narrow focus on formal decision-making processes and institutions by demonstrating how actors express preferences and worldviews to provide understanding of European integration and crisis management. Additionally, I follow to Cozzolino's (2020) framework, which demonstrates how political discourse legitimises and shapes policy actions and illustrates how the use of discursive strategies may assist in understanding policy actions by utilising ideational power—defined by Carstensen and Schmidt (2016) as the ability to persuade others to accept and adopt one's viewpoints.

The existing constructivist literature provides a solid foundation of knowledge on European integration. These works, whether examining the varying importance and understanding of the concept of Europe or analysing national discourses about Europe, offer a valuable basis for my framework. The subsequent section of the thesis establishes the fundamental principles of my theoretical framework. It also serves as a subject of critique and explains my inclination towards deviating from traditional constructivist research in favour of a more post-structural discursive analysis.

2.2.   The Schengen crisis intersects with theories of European integration

The Schengen crisis in 2015 was one of the most serious and unprecedented crises in the history of the European Union, particularly in terms of dividing member states into two groups: those who supported the redistribution mechanism known as the quota system and those who rejected it as a crisis solution. From a theoretical standpoint, several authors focused on the question of how European integration theories can address the crisis and what the implications are for the union's future integration.

The applicability of the theories of European integration to the Schengen crisis have been frequently discussed by scholars of each branch of the "grand theories". In their constructivist account Börzel and Risse (2018a) discuss how traditional integration theory is only partially explained your response to the crisis. They argue that the dominant theories of European integration namely liberal intergovernmentalism, neo-functionalism, and post-functionalism only partially explained the differing view responses to the global financial crisis and Schengen crisis in 2015. While liberal intergovernmentalism and neo functionalism can account for the increased integration during the euro crisis they fail to explain the stalemate and disintegration observed during the Schengen crisis. According to them post-functionalism offers a plausible explanation for the paralysis during the Schengen crisis, however. On the other hand, it struggles to explain the deepening of integration during the global financial crisis despite rising euro skepticism and constraining dissensus. According to them both crises were significantly influenced by identity politics, but they manifested differently. In the case of the euro crisis, it was framed in terms of questions of order and solidarity within Europe whereas in case of the Schengen crisis the increasing number of refugees changed identity politics to a discourse of us vs. them. Finally, they suggest that attempts at depoliticization through strengthening

the powers of supranational organizations were successful during the global financial crisis but unsuccessful in case of the Schengen crisis.

Schimmelfennig (2018) also analyzes this the different outcomes of the global financial crisis and the Schengen crisis on the European Union and the progress of integration from a neo functionalist position. More specifically he focuses on variations in transnational interdependence and supranational capacities. In his account he claims that neo functionalism emphasizes variation in transnational interdependence and supranational capacity across different policy areas. In the global financial crisis high transnational interdependence and supranational capacity led the sufficient path dependence pushing member states towards more integration and contrary to that weak interdependence and capacity in the Schengen area allowed states to manage the refugee crisis through unilateral measures without creating a push for further integration. Furthermore, he claims that during the 2015 Schengen crisis governments faced weak transnational actors with refugees exerting pressure only through international human rights obligation and moral commitments. On the contrary during the global financial crisis market actors exerted strong pressure on governments in European Union. Consequently, the bargaining structure in the Schengen crisis allowed for more unilateral actions and less incentive for cooperation integration among EU member states as in the case of the global financial crisis.

The analysis of the 2015 Schengen crisis from a neo-functional perspective was provided also by Niemann and Speyer (2017) who argue that neo-functionalism enhances understanding of the crisis management especially in terms of the European border and Coast Guard regulation. Even though they the early literature on crisis observed intergovernmental tendencies in its management the paper argues that neo functionalism can significantly enhance the understanding of the refugee management especially in the case of the European Border and Coast Guard regulation. The crisis acted as a catalyst for establishment of the EBCG making it as a functional logical solution to the issues that the crisis

brought. Path-dependent factors such as economic and political costs and the symbolic importance of the Schengen prevented spillback and instead led to further integration.

Andersson (2016) assesses the limitations of liberal intergovernmentalism in explaining the development of the EU's supranational asylum and immigration policy. First of all, in his account he challenges the premise of liberal intergovernmentalism predicting no development of supranational asylum and immigration policy. Andersson Illustrates his case other social spillover on the detailed study of Sweden claiming that Sweden experienced a fundamental change and its perception EU supranationalism in asylum and immigration policies. Finally, the article concludes that liberal intergovernmentalism is not sufficient to conceptualize fundamental changes in the Swedish position regarding sub nationalism and migration.

Liberal intergovernmentalism was that the nexus of studying the impacts of the Schengen crisis in the article by Kleine and Pollack (2018) in which they assess how national interests shape the EU's collective response to crisis including the refugee crisis. The article emphasized the role of national preference formation, intergovernmental bargaining and institutional choice a new integration and claims them as being relevant in understanding the EU's response to the Schengen crisis. They further claim the member states response driven by their national interest can lead to incremental integrative responses albeit imperfect ones. They had met that the crisis brought to the forefront the issues of identity and mass politics challenging liberal intergovernmentalism's focus on economic and functional aspects of integration and that the theory struggles to explain mass mobilization around issues like admission of refugees. Finally the article suggests that liberal intergovernmentalism needs to evolve to better account for phenomena like the 2015 crisis suggesting the need to integrate identity politics and mass public opinion more fully into its analysis.

Smeets and Beach (2020) discuss the shift towards intergovernmental solutions in the EU crisis management including the Schengen crisis and introduces a New Institutional Leadership (NIL)

model. This shift is characterized by the enhanced role of the European Council and the tendency of political leaders to opt for intergovernmental solutions over community frameworks during the crisis such as the decision making over the quota systems there was discussed on the level of the European council and later the Council of the EU. What is interesting though they claim that intergovernmental actors such as the European Council has paradoxically made your reform process is less in the governmental. This is explained as the result of processes which offer better opportunities for institutional leadership. Furthermore, their model contrasts with liberal intergovernmentalism and new intergovernmentalism contending that this traditional theory is important aspects of institutional leadership in the EU.

Braun (2019) joins the debate from a post-functionalist position and highlights a shift from economic integration to identity and sovereignty concerns in the EU during the Schengen crisis especially in case of the V4 countries. The article frames the crisis as a post functionalist moment for the V4 and suggests a shift in focus from functional, economic integration to identity and sovereignty concerns. Braun also admits that the crisis led to increased politicization of European integration brought issues of national identity to the forefront. The response of the V4 significantly impacted the shaping of a collective identity of the group leading to a collective refusal to accept the EU quotas for refugees' relocation and the emphasis on strengthening border controls. Furthermore, the approach of these countries is seen as both a reaction to and a reinforcement of regional identity that differentiates them from other EU member states. Braun also shows how increased involvement of mass politics on integration issues can alter the dynamics of integration making identity a crucial factor influencing public opinion and political discourse. Finally, the V4's response indicates a more differentiated and heterogeneous European Union after the crisis.

Niemann and Zaun (2017) to get the highlight systemic deficiencies in EU asylum cooperation during the Schengen crisis and discussed the shift of responsibility towards third countries and the

reinforcement of power asymmetries within the European Union. They argue that the largest crisis in Europe since the Second World War highlighted systemic deficiencies in the EU asylum cooperation and leading to an international the crisis. Furthermore, they argue that relatively poor internal response to the Schengen crisis in terms of responsibility sharing get me understood in a way that states consider refugee protection as a zero-sum game translated into an uneven responsibility sharing. Furthermore, by adopting the European Border and Coast Guard agency (FRONTEX) the European Union shifted the responsibility towards third countries outside the EU. In this sense according to Niemann and Speyer (2017) neo functionalism is able to explain the dynamics of the crisis in a way that it acted as a catalyst for further sovereign transfers in the area of border protection. This shift however led to reinforcing power asymmetries between EU member states and highlighted the limitations of the response to addressing the core deficiencies of the Common European Asylum System. Finally, the article also challenges the notion of simplistic blame-game suggesting that public perception is aware that the poor crisis response cannot be solely blamed on EU.

Genschel and Jachtenfuchs (2018) identify in the article the EU's shift from market integration to integrating core state powers like border control highlighting challenges in this transition. The integration of this core state powers faces tight constraints due to the high propensity for zero-sum conflict and the need for centralized fiscal, coercive and administrative capacities. This shift made traditional policy options used in market integration either unattainable or this functional when applied to crises such as the Schengen crisis. They conclude that the main issue during the crisis was burden sharing in form of supporting states on the border and the most impacted host states including financial support and administrative assistance while admitting that financial and operational burden sharing remained modest indicating the challenges in managing such crises within the EU framework.

Furthermore, via a Special Issue Laffan (2016) explores the EU 's response to various crises including the refugee Schengen and focuses on politicization and identity politics. Here the crisis is

described as the second exogenous shock after the global financial crisis in 2008. Through there post-functionalist account this suggests that European politics due to the crisis have become more closely coupled leading to a "constraining dissensus that puts downward pressure on the level and scope of integration. Additionally, they claim that the crisis shifted the EU from a system of multi level governance to one of multi-level and perhaps trans-national politics.

In their work Adam and Hepburn (2019) study the Schengen crisis from a multi-level state perspective. Study emphasized the importance of understanding intergovernmental relations in the context of immigrant integration in multi-level states. Through case studies of Belgium Canada Italy and Spain they offer a comparative analysis of intergovernmental relations providing an insightful account into how multi-level states coordinate on immigration integration highlighting the differences and similarities in these approaches.

Lavenex (2018) critiques the EU's approach to the Schengen crisis highlighting the conflict between EU's normative aspirations and its political and institutional capabilities. This mismatch results according to her in an "organized hypocrisy" Where there is a concurrent reinforcement of protective claims and protectionist policies. Furthermore, the article identifies the crisis as a governance crisis of the common European asylum system emphasizing the ongoing decoupling between protective aspirations and policies. This illustrates the EU's vulnerability due to high normative ambitions and practical political limits.

The review of the aforementioned articles suggests that there are at least four research gaps that this thesis and its findings can help to fill: the role of identity politics; crisis framing by political elites; the dependence of quality outcomes on discursive practices; and, finally, differentiation in European integration. Building on Braun (2019a), I intend to demonstrate how political elites' narratives about "us vs. them," solidarity, and sovereignty influence member states' positions and responses to crises. This includes investigating how these narratives shape crises, politicize European

integration, and mobilize public opinion. Furthermore, by analyzing political elites' discursive practices, I hope to learn how crises are framed and reframed, influencing policy responses and integration efforts, and how discourse is used to negotiate, justify, or oppose integration measures such as the quota system during the Schengen crisis. Second, examining how narratives about national identity, sovereignty, and European values are mobilized to support or oppose specific policy measures has the potential to reveal new insights into the relationship between discursive practices and policy outcomes, which, in the case of the Schengen crisis, resulted in the rejection of the European Commission's redistribution mechanism. Finally, as Kleine and Pollack (2018) and, to a lesser extent, Adam and Hepburn (2019) demonstrate, differentiation in the process of European integration may be a result of the growing importance of political elites articulating national interests as a differentiation factor. In this sense, I hope to contribute to the debate about how political elites' narratives shape national identity formulation and how regional identities like the V4 influence this differentiation.

3.   Theoretical chapter

Before delving into the theoretical basis of this thesis, it is essential to review Alexander Wendt's constructivist contributions to the field of constructivist scholarship. His investigation into the distinction between "self" and "other" had a significant impact on the field of International Relations. While Wendt's work does not focus on the European aspect of state identity research, it can provide valuable insights into understanding the concepts of self and other.

Wendt (1999) sought to contest the prevailing neorealist and neoliberal studies in international politics by proposing a novel approach to elucidate the agent-structure problem (Berejikian, 1992; B. Braun et al., 2019; Wight, 2003). Until the 1980s, the prevailing ontological perspective in international politics was rooted in an individualistic conception of existence. Scholars excluded either the framework or the individuals responsible from their analysis in order to offer universally applicable explanations of specific phenomena. Wendt argued in his critique of the Waltzian paradigm that scholars should not view agents as ontologically primitive entities. He disregarded the categorization of the agent-structure problem and put forth an ontology that emphasised both agents and structure without simplification. This approach was subsequently referred to as a bridge that connects the constructivist ontology with methodological individualism while acknowledging certain characteristics from both perspectives.

Wendt significantly transformed the field of IR from a utility perspective in various ways. In addition to the endeavour to consolidate the ontological elements of IR, Wendt advocated for research guided by specific inquiries, asserting that ontology should not be subordinate to epistemology. Various aspects of our social reality necessitate the formulation of distinct inquiries and the application of diverse research methodologies. The emphasis on inquiries rather than pre-established variables is a fundamental element of my thesis as well. Furthermore, in relation to the previous argument,

Wendt's constructivism advocated for the inclusion of imperceptible phenomena in the explanation of international relations. Drawing upon Roy Bhaskar's scientific realism (1998b), the intricate nature of our world means that we cannot solely depend on observable causes that can be measured to explain state action. Here I affirm my decision to abandon the notion that explanatory aspects of the social world can only be perceived through our senses. I concur with Bhaskar and Wendt's assertion that abstract and imperceptible concepts, such as identity, can serve as explanatory factors. However, I differ from them in the way I understand identity. I view it as a discursive phenomenon rather than a simple, transfactual dualist object (P. T. Jackson, 2011).

Finally, Wendt's approach, by means of his dialectical synthesis, incorporated the concepts of self and other into the analysis of state actions. Wendt is acknowledged as one of the pioneering scholars who integrated the ontological principles of symbolic interactionism, affirming that an individual's identity is intricately linked to their interactions with others. Regarding identities, he defined four separate aspects of the self - personal, typological, occupational, and collective. These ideal-types pertain to various functions of identity and possess diverse explanatory capabilities.

It's worth to note, that Wendt's perspective on our social reality has faced widespread criticism from scholars (Adler-Nisse, 2016; Zehfuss, 2001) as well. Firstly, I believe that the most notable flaw of Wendt's constructivism is its continued adherence to positivism and disregard for discursive ontology. While emphasising the significance of identity in explaining actions, Wendt overlooked the potential of identities that are defined through discourse. In an attempt to rival Waltz's neorealism, he disregarded language as a crucial aspect of symbolic interactionism. Moreover, Wendt's promotion of constructivism recognised the potential existence of pre-social identity, specifically in the form of personal identity. Once again, this action is strongly linked to the viewpoint he adopted as a positivist. However, it is highly challenging to establish a pre-social identity when considering identity as a discursive practise. In this thesis, my objective is to address these shortcomings and propose a research

methodology that builds upon the foundations of Wendt's constructivism but applies them in a distinct way.

Although Wendt and his work serve only as a distant theoretical point against which my theoretical framework can be evaluated, the fact that his approach was at the forefront of constructivism in International Relations theory must be acknowledged. The following subchapters describe how my theoretical framework, which is based on constructivist scholarship, particularly authors who have studied European integration and the role of identities in it, can serve as a foundation for an empirical analysis of political elite discourses.

3.1. Reaching towards (re)-establishment of theories

Given the multidisciplinary nature of my research, the theoretical framework of this thesis is intentionally designed to encompass various theoretical schools and approaches, rather than relying solely on one. I present a nuanced perspective on social interactions and how they shape our perception of reality, which in turn influences our behaviour. The initial foundational element of my framework is derived from the intellectual legacy of classical American pragmatism.

Although symbolic interactionism emerged significantly from the works of Charles H. Cooley (1902) and George H. Mead (1934),it was Mead's student Herbert Blumer (1969) who collected Mead's ideas and coined the theory. These scholars intended to study human interactions and, more importantly, the origins of our actions as sociologists who also incorporated knowledge from fields such as psychology. They challenged then-popular sociological and psychological approaches that understood human action solely through factors (Blumer, 1969) and responded with an explanation that emphasises intersubjectivity and constructivist ontology of our reality.

The fundamental concept of symbolic interactionism posits human beings, as "acting organisms," possessing the unique ability to comprehend their surroundings and subsequently act

based on their understanding. These understandings are created by society and stored in comprehendible meanings. In line with subsequent works (Sayer, 2010), symbolic interactionism refutes the notion that our world is purely material and instead attributes importance to non-material ideational factors.

Furthermore, the intersubjectivity of meanings implies that meaning is not inherent in the objects it refers to, nor does it originate solely in our minds, as linguists such as Chomsky (Lees & Chomsky, 1957) have argued. Meanings are inherently understood to be products of social processes, and their development can only be found within the intricacies of social interaction. According to Blumer (1969), the concept of a chair is not individually constructed in our minds, but rather it is established through a shared understanding among people that a specific material object is referred to as a chair. Although these meanings are influenced by intersubjectivity, their application in specific situations also relies on the interpretation of individuals. A rock can possess distinct significance for a child, parent, or geologist. The intersubjectivity of an object relies on a mutually accepted method of referring to it. Symbolic interactionists primarily perceive language (Hewitt, 2003) as the fundamental means of referring to objects. Individuals engage in the creation of symbols or signs with the purpose of linking particular meanings to specific entities.

The symbolic interactionism theory's constructivist ontology is primarily evident in its perception of the world, particularly in its comprehension of the constituents of our tangible reality. In addition to positivist perspectives, symbolic interactionism encompasses the classification of objects, encompassing not only tangible or physical entities, but also intangible concepts such as identity, discourse, as well as common categories like love, faith, or power. Objects can be found and described in every aspect of our surroundings and thoughts. The essential requirement is the ability to denote an entity through the use of either spoken or non-spoken forms of communication. These objects collectively constitute our reality and should be considered when studying the world.

As previously suggested, the creation of meaning by individuals plays a significant role in shaping our reality and subsequently influences our behaviour. Meanings originate from social interaction and are shaped and altered through interpretive processes, which aid in understanding objects. This does not imply that individuals haphazardly attribute their own interpretations to all the objects in the world, as this would result in a breakdown of social order. Put simply, it signifies a consensus in society that the colour red is linked to the definition of the word "red." Consequently, individuals employ this significance within their own interpretive framework. Symbolic interactionism proposes two types of interaction in which individuals may engage. Firstly, non-symbolic interaction refers to actions directed towards others that do not involve the process of interpretation, such as reflex responses. Furthermore, symbolic interaction refers to the reciprocal process by which individuals interpret the behaviour of others and, in turn, are interpreted by others.

A so-called conversation of gestures begins with a stimulus that invites the other person to respond. The response functions as another stimulus to modify the first actor's action referred to by Mead as the triadic relationship (1934). As a result, the meaning of my gesture is present in the other's response. Consider a typical football game. A teammate receives the ball from another player. To play, both individuals must interpret what the other does or the social situation in which the ball is approaching the second player. They cannot act and thus play the game unless they have a mutual understanding of their situation and the objects around them. Blumer used the term "object" to refer to anything physical or abstract, including other people (Blumer, 1969).

The concept of self was perhaps the most important contribution of symbolic interactionism, and specifically Mead. People, unlike other objects that can only be referred to, are capable of becoming an object to themselves, thereby possessing a self, as previously implied. In practise, this means that people can give meaning to themselves, establishing a sense of identity that Mead referred to as "Me" (1934). The self is strictly defined in terms of a process, which presupposes that its nature

does not permit viewing the self as an unchanging substance. Because meanings change, our understanding of "Me" shifts in response to the situation in which we find ourselves.

The existence of a self-identity that is determined by the situation in which a person finds themselves raises the issue of identity sub-systems. As I mentioned in the introduction, the thesis is predicated on the assumption of identity sub-systems that can be identified and linked to human actions. These subsystems are thus central to my theoretical foundation at the microlevel. Stryker (1968) developed a theory of roles and nested it within symbolic interactionism. He was particularly interested in the roles that people assign to others as well as to themselves. He claimed that when people are objectified (Hewitt, 2003) within a situation, they act in terms of a role or a perspective from which the activity is carried out. The role is a subsystem of the identity that informs people about how they should act in a given situation. The various roles that people play, such as son, student, or friend, help to shape a person's identity. Certain roles become more prominent depending on the situation (Stryker, 1968), providing the actor with an answer on how to act.

Roles are not the only identity subsystems that this thesis is interested in as they only inform us about the self's interpreted identity in a given situation. To progress in our understanding of human actions, it is also necessary to comprehend interpersonal relationships, particularly the presence or absence of a sense of belonging to one another. As a result, the second relevant sub-system that is the focus of my research is social identity (Hewitt, 2003). Henry Tajfel was the first to introduce the concept of social identity into the field of social sciences. Tajfel developed his social identity theory (SIT) to study group interactions, drawing on social psychology and sociology.

While a role tells a person how to act in a given situation, social identity defines the line between us and others. We distinguish between people who are part of our in-group and those who are part of out-groups based on the meanings we assign to other people in our environment. We develop stereotypes to positively or negatively identify with others during this complex process of

categorization or "an ordering of social environment" (Tajfel, 1974). Inter-group conflicts frequently highlight the importance of social identity.

3.2.   Dialectical relationships as the second brick

The thesis adopts a multi-disciplinary approach by combining the socio-psychological perspective of symbolic interactionism with a well-established approach in International Relations. Post-structuralism offers a suitable starting point for examining the intricacies of European integration, while disregarding the lack of comprehensive theories discussed in the literature review. Post-structuralism, despite its origins in a distinct social science tradition, shares a similar perspective on identity with symbolic interactionism. Similar to symbolic interactionists, post-structural scholars recognize the relational character of identity. Since identity is produced and reproduced through discourse (Hansen, 2006a), it is considered a product of social interaction between people illustrated by their use of language. It is regarded as a result of social interaction, specifically through the way people communicate with language. Mead's understanding of identity as an intangible entity formed through socially constructed interpretations and rooted in language assumes its nature as a product of communication. In this instance, if significant symbols (Mead, 1934) are words that convey the significance of objects, language functions as the repository of "collective codes" (Hansen, 2006b) or a system of meaning (Hansen & Waever, 2002).

Prior to delving into the specific characteristics of post-structural theory, I will provide a rationale for its pertinence to the examination of European integration. Post-structuralists primarily examine security concerns and the construction of gendered identities. However, there is a substantial body of literature that explores identity politics in the European Union and the influence of Europeanness on the national identities of specific EU member states, as well as the reciprocal impact (Földes, 2022). Weaver and Hansen (2002) authored a notable study on the Nordic states, focusing

on the influence of their national identity on their membership in the European Union. They assert that the cultural and societal heritage of these national identities significantly influenced their decision to either integrate into the European structure or remain as a closely associated non-member, as was the case with Norway.

Post-structuralism revolves around the notion that identity is the primary factor that shapes our social reality, from a conceptual standpoint. Post-structural scholars view identity as being formed through the use of language and discourse, in contrast to constructivists. Language functions as an unstable system of signs that generates meanings and thus shapes identities. Another distinction from the constructivist standpoint lies in the perceived nature of identity. Traditional or "soft" constructivists perceive identity as a stable system, whereas post-structural scholars regard it as an ever-evolving process. The distinction is inherently based on the communicative nature of identity. Similar to discourse, identities must evolve over time.

Despite acknowledging that identities are socially constructed through language, there remains one lingering question: What are the prerequisites for the construction of identities? According to Campbell (1998a, 1998b), identities are not simply created randomly, but rather through a process of differentiation. This process involves separating one's own self-identity from others and establishing a stable identity. Therefore, it can be inferred that one's self-identity is contingent upon their relationship with others.

The distinctions that distinguish us from others contribute to the formation of our identity. Without the presence of others, there would be no basis for defining or constructing the self (Campbell, 1998a, 1998b). Post-structuralism recognises the act of defining boundaries between the self and the other through the use of comparisons or contrasts (Hansen, 2006b). These juxtapositions allow us to perceive our own identity in relation to the identity of others.

Furthermore, discourse serves as a connecting concept for these scholars, bridging the gap between constructed identities and human action. Identity both justifies and is shaped by human actions, serving as a means of constructing one's sense of self. These two concepts are interdependent, meaning that they shape and influence each other. The various discourses within our society serve as the connecting factor between them. Todorov (1999) offers a compelling account of how the fabricated identity of the indigenous population following the Spanish conquest of the Americas served to rationalise the genocidal actions and destruction of the Aztec and Inca civilizations. Similarly, Campbell asserts that George W. Bush's creation of the "Axis of evil" served as a justification for the military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq. These foreign policy actions also played a role in shaping the American national identity. In summary, Walker argues that the demarcation described above serves to illustrate the distinction between what is meant to exist within a certain boundary and what is outside of it.

The demarcation mechanism relies on the process of securitization (Buzan et al., 1998). This process involves presenting the identity of the other as a threat and using actions to justify the existence of the self. Politicians frequently employ securitization as a strategy to rationalise their policies. Securitization is a process that relies on the use of language to make statements that have the power to bring about certain actions or outcomes. Consider an instance of discussions centred around migration. Politicians initially portray migration as a menace to the "people," national identity, or state security. The object being threatened may often have multiple closely associated identities. A referent object is an object that is perceived as being endangered by an external object, such as national identity. The nature of the object is contingent upon the audience it is presented to or the specific context in which the statement is made. If the address is directed to the entire nation, it can have a more profound effect when the construction of national identity and security is emphasised as the object of reference. Alternatively, in certain situations where the intended recipients are confined to a specific space, the

object may be positioned in closer proximity to individuals. An illustration can be found in the security measures implemented within a specific community. Based on the examples mentioned above, it is clear that securitization offers the elites a versatile means of differentiation.

The essential element of the entire process is referred to as a speech act, which encompasses a collection of utterances that possess performative characteristics. Judith Butler, J.L. Austin, John Searle (Austin, 1962; Butler, 2009, 2010, 2011; Loar & Searle, 1982) and other scholars have previously proposed the notion that words and sentences serve not only as descriptive tools in our daily communication, but also possess the ability to perform actions. The words we employ at the commencement of an action, such as asking, asserting, questioning, or ordering, hold a prominent position. Speech acts are inherently connected to human behaviour.

In addition, language, with its inherent characteristics, is closely connected to the actions performed by human beings. Orders, warnings, and refusals not only convey our thoughts but also simultaneously carry out actions (Loar & Searle, 1982). Another commonly employed instance would be the statement "You are terminated." The CEO of a company's statements not only carry weight, but also have implications for the employee's job status. These examples demonstrate that our language has far-reaching implications that may not be immediately apparent.

As previously suggested, identities inherently involve the distinction between in-groups and out-groups. To restrict the scope of the deictic significance of "us," we need to understand its constituents. Thus, this process has significant ramifications for one's self stability. By elucidating the disparities, we can enhance our comprehension of our own identity, thereby engendering a sense of security as a by-product. Otherwise, the self would be subjected to continuous uncertainty regarding its existence, which would subsequently put us at risk (Conolly, 1991; Hansen, 2006b; Hansen & Wæver, 2003).

It is important to acknowledge that the demarcation is not a unidirectional path, and the possibility of coexistence or even merging of identities exists. Post-structural scholars cite the European community and its collective identity as an illustrative example. Post-structuralism aligns with traditional constructivist views by endorsing the concept of multiple identities. In contrast, shared identities are relatively distinct within the realm of international politics and primarily pertain to internal national or local matters.

The main objective of this thesis, from a theoretical standpoint, is not to address the deficiencies in mainstream theories of European integration. When attempting to delineate this gap, these theories primarily concentrate on the macro level of comprehending European integration and the motivations behind states' behaviour towards European institutions. However, they overlook a more thorough examination of the mezzo and micro levels of decision-making within a state. This thesis highlights the significance of examining the political preferences of governments when they engage in negotiations within the European Union, as emphasised by liberal intergovernmentalism. However, it goes further by emphasising the need to understand how these preferences are formed at a micro level. Specifically, it focuses on how political elites shape and attribute significance to specific policy issues, how they justify their policies at the national level, and how they ultimately reach a decision on a policy preference for a particular issue. Furthermore, while post functionalism includes the notion of identity in its comprehensive framework for comprehending European integration at various levels, it fails to acknowledge the theoretical and methodological possibilities of examining the discourse of political elites. Consequently, it overlooks the opportunity to gain insights into how the concept of identity is constructed at the individual level. Furthermore, while constructivism offers a framework for comprehending social reality through the lens of identity constructions, its focus primarily lies on the systemic or national level. However, as previously mentioned, it overlooks the significance of this course when it comes to individual-level analysis.

This thesis offers a comprehensive analysis of how identities are formed, and national preferences are established at their fundamental level by examining the micro-level discourses of individual political elites in national parliaments. This sub-chapter presents the integration of the scholarly knowledge from the aforementioned theoretical approaches. Its objective is to propose a research framework for examining the formation of social identities among refugees during the 2015 European Schengen crisis within the parliaments of specific Central European countries.

3.3. Merging two distinct approaches

The thesis combines specific conceptual elements and metatheoretical assumptions discussed previously to construct an explanatory model of human behaviour. While I use the term "model," I do not adhere to its quantitative interpretation. I neither construct a statistical model, nor do I propose a predictive tool that would imitate and potentially forecast phenomena. The term is employed to describe my use of a framework that conveys the fundamental aspects of my thoughts and draws upon the existing theoretical foundations of the field.

From a metatheoretical perspective, I concur with Wendt's refusal to resolve the agent-structure problem by isolating or disregarding either component. This issue also applies to the shortcomings of the "Grand theories". However, I do not fully comprehend Wendt's proposed solution either. I suggest an alternative and, according to the prevailing IR tradition, a novel approach to resolve the issue. I adopt the reflectivist tradition (P. T. Jackson, 2011), which emphasises the connection between discourse and identity. This approach does not separate agents and structure, but instead concentrates on the discursive constitutions and language. The perception of the world around us is shaped by social constructs that are inherently manifested in our use of language and other forms of communication. The existence of objects in our world, including people and their actions, is inherently connected to socially constructed identities. The subsequent portion of the thesis reveals

the pragmatic ramifications of this approach and its potential to enhance our comprehension of the world and human behaviour, without resorting to simplifying the agents or structures involved.

Firstly, I propose a framework that considers interactions within our society as the main way in which meaning is created. The existence of words and their meanings is contingent upon the consensus among individuals, a bilateral agreement, that particular sounds are associated with specific words (signs) and that these words are connected to a relatively consistent interpretation. These signs serve the purpose of making our world comprehensible and also act as a prerequisite for communication. Therefore, the term "cow" is associated with the visual depiction of an animal and the sound we produce when pronouncing it. The use of these signs is an essential component of a socially constructed reality.

While the agreement regarding the sign is determined by social construction, but the use and interpretation of the word are ultimately dependent on the individual's choice. Here drawing on Blumer (1969), I focus on the individual's comprehension of words and their frequent transformation into symbolic language. When a politician employs specific terminology with an accepted societal connotation in an unconventional manner (e.g., likening refugees to a disease), they frequently do so purposefully to shape their own perception of identity. Meaning serves as both a resource and a means for individuals to attain specific objectives, such as persuading the audience.

From a more tangible perspective, the theoretical framework is based on a triangular relationship that is deeply rooted in discourse and context. This relationship involves the self (the state identity being examined), the other (the identity that serves as a point of differentiation for the self in this case for example refugees), and the specific state action that arises from the interaction between the self and the other. Action is therefore comprehended as a result of the intersubjective connection between two or more identities (Hansen, 2006b; Hansen & Wæver, 2003; Hewitt, 2003). If the "other" is perceived as an adversary or competitor to the self, the actions taken should reflect that antagonistic

dynamic. Conversely, if "the other" is interpreted as referring to a social group with a common positive social identity, it is anticipated that actions towards this group will be favourable. My theoretical framework in this sense examines how political leaders construct different identities through their discourse, considering both their individual and collective perspectives. These identities are directly linked to the Schengen crisis, as they determine the collective identity of refugees and the national identities of the actors involved in the crisis. Specifically, I examine the collective identities of the three states I am studying, as well as the collective identity of the European Union. In addition, I also examine the manner in which social objects are formed, such as the Schengen crisis itself, different institutions at both the national and regional levels, and policies like the debated redistribution mechanism of the European Union.

In the context of social construction, I already outline that both the self and the other are formed based on the meanings attributed to them. The analysis will therefore focus on how political leaders frame both identities and the meaning units they assign to their construction. Discourse is the main conduit through which meanings about oneself and others are conveyed. The assignment of categories to both identities constructs them and establishes a dialectical relationship between them.

In addition, this analysis draws upon the works of post-structuralist scholars (Buzan et al., 1998; Hansen, 2006b; Hansen & Wæver, 2003; Waever, 2005; Wæver, 2018) and scholars in the field of Critical Discourse Studies (Dominguez, 1995; Hart, 2011b; Leeuwen Van, 2007; Leeuwen Van & Wodak, 1999; Lirola, 2014; Reyes, 2011; Rojo & van Dijk, 1997; Vaara & Tienari, 2002; T. van Dijk, 1993, 1997, 2011b; van Ostaijen, 2020; Wodak, 2017). These scholars argue that these meanings are assumed to be assigned with a goal – justification/legitimation of own actions and assurance of the identity constructions among the general audience. The relationship is believed to be reciprocal, as the identity attributes trustworthiness to the actions of political elites. The identity of the other and the

associated meanings are socially constructed through the symbolic interaction of language use. These meanings are determined by the individual's decision to connect them with a specific context.
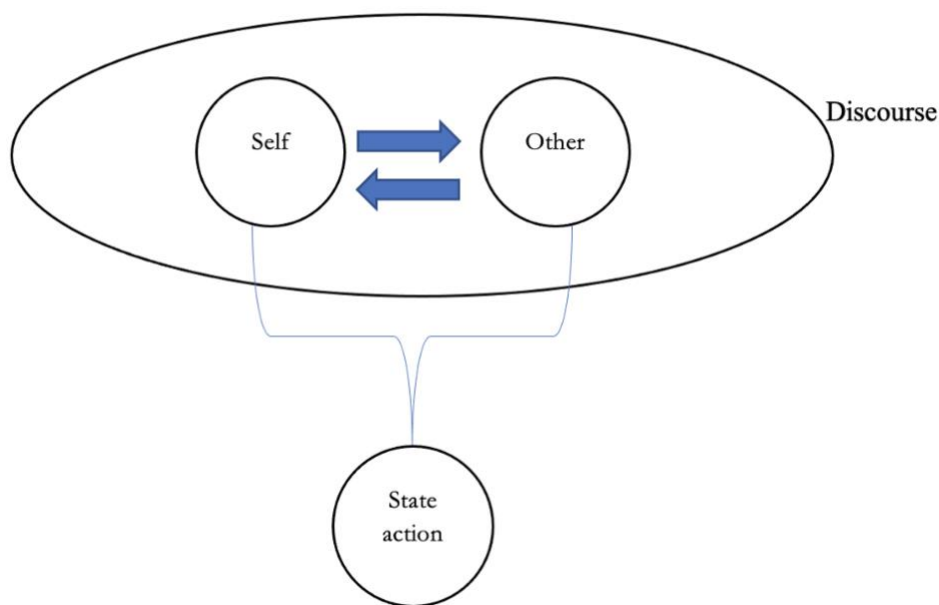
Regarding the overall framework, Van Dijk (1997, 2006, 2008, 2011a) asserts that as social scientists, our focus should not only be on the identity constructions within people's discursive practices, but we should also consider context as a vital element of analysis. Subsequently, the ultimate tier of the framework pertains to the circumstances surrounding the crisis. The context is not solely determined by the ideological preferences of the political elites. Additionally, the factors that influence the public's stance on migration include political party affiliation, the prevailing public sentiment, and the actual number of refugees who have entered the country. From a contextual perspective, it is important to consider the European dimension of the crisis, particularly the attitudes of the European institutions towards the governments of the V4 countries. Furthermore, it is crucial to acknowledge the historical backdrop of the country, as the enduring attitudes of the general populace towards migration can also influence the formation of the elites' identities, driven by opportunistic motives.

During the contextual analysis, I also examine the themes expressed by political leaders in their discourse on the Schengen crisis. This allows me to identify the topics that are closely associated with the crisis within its context.
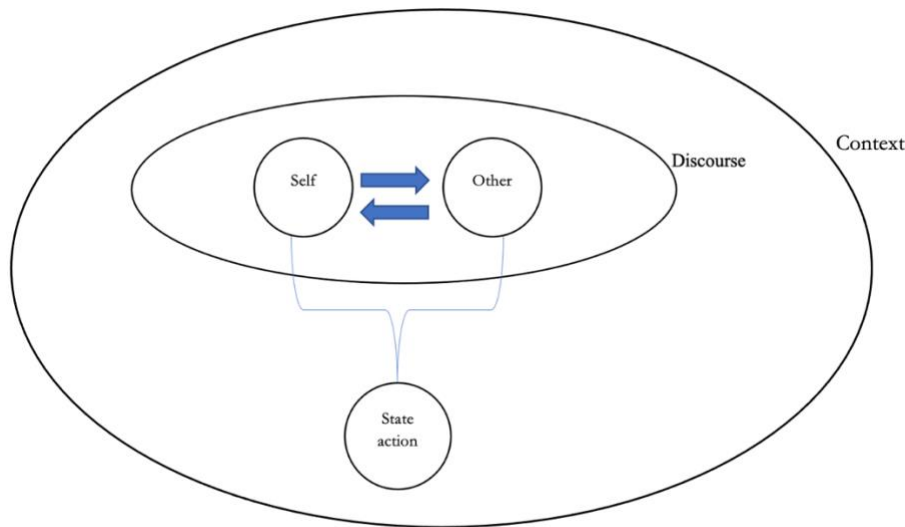
The subsequent portion of the thesis is devoted to the pragmatic procedures that must be carried out in order to analyse the cases within the previously outlined theoretical framework. Following the completion of the theoretical framework, the subsequent section directs its attention towards the research questions. The primary research question examines the social construction of identities, specifically the collective identity of refugees, as influenced by the political discourse of the parliamentary elites.

1. How do political elites construct the identities of refugees who arrived in Europe, and what social categories do they assign to them?

The initial research question inherently paves the way for subsequent inquiries. In order to analyse the impact of constructed identities on human behaviour, it is essential to gain a

comprehensive understanding of the specific entities discussed by the privileged class and how they are portrayed. The references (nominations; arguments; fallacies) that the elites associate with these objects are of utmost importance in this context. Therefore, the remaining research questions centre specifically on this matter.

2. How have the national identities of Slovakia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic shaped their responses to the EU's refugee relocation and resettlement plans during the 2015 crisis?

3. How do the identity constructs of refugees legitimise the denial of asylum applications and the European Union's policies to redistribute asylum seekers among European countries?

4. What thematic categories do political elites assign to the political crisis?

To complete this section and transition to the methods chapter of this thesis, there is one remaining conceptual issue that requires attention. As evident from the chapter on the theoretical framework of this research, my research is based on the premise that political elites' conceptualisation and social construction of collective identities of refugees/asylum seekers in political discourse holds the key to understanding the cases under study. In order to discuss the notion of collective "refugee/asylum seeker identities," it is essential to grasp the meaning of the concept of identity. Through extensive research in fields such as political science and critical discourse studies, it is evident that scholars occasionally interchange the notions of identities and images. I would like to discuss this matter and clarify why my study framework is based on the idea of identities as a collective social entity, rather than on the notion of images, which I perceive as being a more limited concept. When attempting to comprehend the notion of refugee and asylum seeker identities, we often examine how refugees' features, roles, and perceived attributes are constructed and portrayed in society. Thus, if we analyse this idea, it entails studying how political communication influences or mirrors the perception of refugees - who they are perceived to be, whether as victims, threats, economic migrants, or contributors to society (Holmes & Castañeda, 2016; KhosraviNik, 2006, 2010). In this context, we define identities and their social construction as the process by which political elites contribute to the political and public discourse, shaping a portrayal of refugees as a collective group. This portrayal is

collectively known as the collective identity of the refugee group, as projected through the discourse. Alternatively, we could employ the term "images" to describe the visual and metaphorical depictions of refugees in political discourse. These depictions, including metaphors, symbols, and general portrayals, are strategically utilised by politicians to shape a particular perception of refugees in the public. Using terms like "flood" or "wave" to describe refugees might create a perception of crisis or invasion, influencing public emotions and reactions (Charteris-Black, 2016; Ngo & Hansen, 2013). Therefore, in this research, the term "images" can be used as a conceptual framework as well. However, I propose using a more comprehensive term, such as "identity," to encompass the portrayal of refugees and asylum seekers beyond just metaphors and symbols. The upcoming empirical chapter demonstrates that the analysis relies not only on identifying metaphors and symbols, but also on examining argumentation strategies, rhetoric, and semantic and pragmatic elements of the discourse.

4.   Methodology

In general, the methodology of any research design in the field of IR is expected to be influenced by the research's metatheoretical and theoretical foundations. This thesis strictly adheres to the deeply ingrained approach. Essentially, the constructivist metatheory supports and, in my opinion, even requires the focus on the connection between identities that are constructed through communication and the outside world. My main idea is that the outside world reflects our collective agreement on how we interpret certain phenomena, which we call social construction. The fundamental basis of this world lies in the concept of meaning, which grants us the ability to understand. The consensus among individuals that a specific object has a universally accepted meaning is influenced by our cognitive processes. Meanings are comprehensive ideas that can be identified in conversation and conveyed through language, as opposed to the measurable factors of positivist metatheory.

Meanings are derived from both societal norms and an individual's subjective interpretation, as previously suggested. Therefore, according to the positivist perspective, meanings cannot be considered objective because they are subjective concepts. The study of meanings is inherently susceptible to subjectivity.

The methodology utilised in this thesis follows the guidelines proposed by Wodak and Meyer (Wodak & Meyer, 2002), who, in their investigation of the linguistic practices of the former Czech president Václav Klaus, presented a comprehensive framework for Critical Discourse Analysis consisting of 8 distinct stages. The preceding sections have already addressed certain steps, including the "*activation of prior theoretical knowledge*" (Wodak & Meyer, 2002). The thesis incorporates a methodology section comprising seven discrete steps. I deviate from Wodak and Meyer's chronology by first specifying research questions and formulating assumptions before working with the data. The research questions and assumptions are directly derived from the accumulated theoretical knowledge

and aim to offer a valid preliminary explanation of the data. Once the theoretical framework that integrates symbolic interactionism and post-structuralism has been established, the next step is to collect data, specifically textual data from parliamentary sessions and the speeches of prime ministers. During the initial phase of the research, it is crucial to have contextual data in order to comprehend the reasons behind the opposition of certain EU countries towards a shared redistribution and resettlement mechanism. In the absence of a more profound comprehension of these circumstances, there is a danger of disregarding significant interpretations of the data during subsequent phases of the analysis. According to Wodak and Meyer (Wodak & Meyer, 2002), the third step in analysing the extensive dataset is to prepare the data by downsizing it based on predetermined criteria. This process is further explained in the section dedicated to Qualitative Content Analysis and discourse analysis.

After the initial examination of the theory and data, the next step involves carrying out four thorough case studies. Given that the research does not place importance on comparing the cases, each of the four cases is carried out autonomously without any connection to the others. This section offers a thorough analysis of the qualitative data, encompassing the detailed codes linked to each individual case.

4.1. Qualitative Content Analysis

Although most people associate content analysis with a quantitative statistical methodology based on counting words or phrases, qualitative forms "*can be systematic, reliable, and valid as well*" (Krippendorff, 2018). Krippendorff (2018) even questions the need to differentiate between quantitative and Qualitative Content Analysis, claiming that "*all readings of texts are qualitative, even when certain characteristics of a text are later converted into numbers*" (Krippendorff, 2018). Because Qualitative Content Analysis is interpretative, it allows one to focus on the meaning of linguistic constructs, interpret the actor's understanding of the phenomena, and infer knowledge that does not directly stem from the text. The

meaning inferred by the scholar in this area of research is relative to the context, which means that the reliability of explanation may not be satisfying without the context of a given text. Because the analysis's reliability will be discussed later, I will begin with a detailed description of the specific steps that must be completed.

The benefit of Qualitative Content Analysis is that it sits between a quantitatively oriented and testable set of methodologies and interpretatively focused discourse analysis. It is a "*set of techniques for a systematic analysis*" (Mayring, 2022) of textual data that allows for the study of not only manifest content but also latent themes and core ideas that could not be identified and articulated by computer aided analysis. I'd like to highlight two of the previously mentioned ideas. To begin, the emphasis on hidden meaning in the text distinguishes content analysis from the previously mentioned discourse analysis, which is more concerned with "*forms of speech*"(Gee, 2005). Second, unlike discourse analysis, particularly CDA, which will be used in this work, Qualitative Content Analysis is not critical in its essence. It's understandable, given that the method is still based on more scientific research design. Third, the Qualitative Content Analysis research design aims to describe meaning, which is similar to thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998).The method's reliance on context, on the other hand, allows it to be applied holistically.

I have already talked about how crucial it is to incorporate latent meaning into text analysis. In particular, Ritsert (1972) makes the case for this method by pointing out that the complexity of the social world might obscure meaning in a purely manifest analysis. It's interesting to note that reductionism can ultimately result from quantitative manifest analysis. Therefore, it is essential to recognise the textual meanings concealed within narratives. The ability to create codes and categories inductively, which offers the researcher more flexibility throughout the investigation, is another distinction between this method and the quantitatively oriented content analysis. It permits the interpretation required to combine the technique with CDA.

76

The sampling process, which establishes the character and structure of the analysis, serves as the foundation for the first stage of its design. Since the goal is to concentrate on the discourse of political elites, I have selected purposive sampling (Sandelowski, 2000; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009)as my sampling technique. Using a Qualitative Content Analysis, I hope to build on an iterative process rather than a single analysis as in similar studies. First of all, because pivotal conclusions frequently necessitate repeated analysis, the inductive nature of analysis demands iteration. Only after multiple readings of the text are categories explicable. When no new or alternate meanings can be found, the process comes to an end. Standard terminology for this point, which denotes the conclusion of the analysis, is "saturation."

The nature of the data influences the data collection process, just like it does in many other qualitative analyses. The database contains transcripts of public speeches made by specific political leaders and members of parliament, with an emphasis on their speeches aimed at a broader audience. Government data sources, such as speeches and reports, will serve as the foundation for the dissertation's actual dataset. Transcripts of speeches, discussions, and addresses are available for free download on the parliamentary and official websites for each of the four cases. A data-set developed by the principal researcher (Foldes, 2020) and made available online already exists for the Hungarian case. We'll use a similar approach for our other case studies. The Hungarian case is based on the Parliamentary debates between 2014 – 2018 (Parlament, 2018) and the Prime minister's addresses in 2015 (2015a) ; 2016 (2016a) ; 2017 (2017a). The Czech case is based on data from the governmental website vlada.cz and the parliamentary sessions between 2013-2017 (Sněmovna, 2017). The Slovak case will be based on data from the parliament (Národná rada SR, 2016, 2020) and the governmental website vlada.gov.sk.

Ridder and others (Ridder et al., 2014) argue that in case of qualitative or interpretative content analysis, the first step in the process of coding must be a so-called immersion. Finding the text's basic

concepts, meaning units, and patterns through immersion is a fairly straightforward method of becoming familiar with it. The most time-consuming portion of the research is this one because it involves reading transcripts repeatedly. I do adhere to Wodak and Meyer's suggestion to reduce the data by determining the pertinent portion of the text for the analysis in order to increase the efficiency of the analysis. The downsizing involves looking for certain keywords in the text, such as "refugee," "migrant," and "EU," as well as their synonyms, "migrants," "migration," and "refuges." The surrounding of these keyworks that follow reveals the main section of the text that is the subject of the analysis. Table 3 displays the list of keywords.

According to Schreier (Schreier, 2012),the coding procedure is what makes the entire analysis unique. It would be challenging to produce any significant and trustworthy results that could explain the case under study without coding. Unlike academics who are interested in quantitative content analysis, I do not create a strictly predefined codebook for the coding process. Regarding the analysis's inductive nature, I only define a small number of codes ahead of time. These codes deal with the speaker's (the actor's) persona, whose words are being studied. The political party and ideological stance (left, right, or centre) pique my interest. In conclusion, I anticipate identifying multiple constructed other entities; thus, I have predefined a code for refugees/migrants and another code specifically for the European Union.

In the subsequent part, I intend to dissect the specific stages involved in doing Qualitative Content Analysis (Table 1). The analysis commences by collecting the requisite material for examination, specifically the transcripts of the parliamentary sessions. The transcripts can be encountered by the public on the official websites of each respective national parliament. Given the specified time period of 2014-2016, I have gathered individual transcripts of all parliamentary sessions from each national parliament. The duration of the Hungarian parliamentary term roughly corresponds to the defined research timeframe. The data in question is derived from the 40th

Hungarian parliamentary cycle, which commenced on May 6th, 2014 and concluded on May 7th, 2018. In the context of the Slovak Republic, the data is distributed over two consecutive parliamentary sessions. The first term began in 2012 and concluded in early 2016, while the second term launched in 2016. As previously stated, this combination of the two terms introduces a particular level of specificity to the data. In the first term, the government was comprised solely of the political party SMER-SD. However, in the subsequent term, the government was formed by four politically diverse parties - SME-SD, Slovak National Party, Siet', and Most-Hid (a Hungarian-Slovak ethnic party). The third case study is comparable to the Hungarian one, as the Czech parliamentary session spanned from 2013 to 2017.

After retrieving and organising the data into cohesive files, the next step is to upload each individual file into the MAXQDA programme (De Lerma & de las Mercedes Botija Yagüe, 2022; Gizzi & Rädiker, 2021). The software recognised and categorised incidents based on each national legislature. There are also differences in the qualities of the transcripts in the data. The three situations differ primarily in structure. Individual parliamentary sessions of the Slovak parliament are transcribed on a daily basis. In the Czech and Hungarian cases, however, each transcript corresponds to a separate legislative session.

The initial action conducted in the MAXQDA software during the debates and negotiations of laws by Members of Parliament (MPs) was to define and isolate the precise areas of the transcripts that pertain to the topics of migration, Schengen crisis, and asylum. To accomplish this goal, the analysis begins with a thorough keyword search with the goal of condensing the data into a more cohesive collection that primarily matches with the study objectives of this thesis. Prior to the investigation, a pre-existing vocabulary was used to do the keyword search. The dictionary contains relevant keywords related to the research topic. The sections (paragraphs) that contained at least one term from the dictionary search were marked as dictionary search in the following phase of the

delimitation procedure.   As a result, the large volume of data was divided into more manageable portions that could be thoroughly analysed.

Following the keyword search, the analysis proceeds according to the instructions of Drisko and Maschi (Drisko & Maschi, 2016), Kuckartz and Rädiker (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2023), and Weber (Weber, 1990). These authors propose beginning any type of content analysis by reading the text thoroughly and deeply.   In this way, researchers can become acquainted with the topic under consideration while also refining the boundaries of the units of analysis.

After carefully analysing the text, the divides between each unit of analysis (in this case, paragraphs) were adjusted based on the explicit and underlying interpretations relevant to the particular case.   In the provided scenario, if a politician addresses various topics in their speech and just a specific segment of the text is deemed pertinent to the research objective, then the analysis is only concentrated on that particular section of the transcript.   In another situation, where the address solely revolved around migration, the entire transcript was encoded.   During this initial investigation, the codes were associated with specific Members of Parliament (MPs). Each coded text was ascribed to the precise Member of Parliament from whose speech it originated.

After coding the complete transcript and adjusting the coded segments depending on their explicit and underlying meanings, the next step in the analysis was to extract the results from the MAXQDA programme.   The outcomes were extracted and stored in an xlsx. file.

In the succeeding step of the study, our focus is on examining the themes that are present within the previously updated coded portions.   The results of the initial phase were categorised into distinct text files based on their association with the MPs.   Afterwards, these textual materials were moved to a distinct project in MAXQDA, where they are methodically organised according to the MPs' sequence, their corresponding political affiliations, and the states they represent. In this subsequent step, the technique of inductive coding is aggressively pursued.   After conducting a

detailed analysis of the text, the individual paragraphs are classified according to the specific concepts they represent. Ultimately, these repeating notions are classified into more intricate categories referred to as meta-themes [EU, security, migrants]. Subsequently, these themes are examined and visually depicted in the empirical study.

The aim of these two levels of research is to uncover and understand the fundamental process by which political elites create significant meanings, and to illustrate the importance placed on studying social categories such as migration, migration crises, refugees, and state interest. The initial level scrutinises the distinct contributions made by individual parliament members to the public discourse on the subject matter. The second level of analysis goes further into the underlying connotations and examines the themes associated with the topic under investigation. Furthermore, both the overt and implicit interpretations contribute to understanding the rationale behind governmental actions taken against European institutions, specifically the European Commission. This includes the formulation of legislation that opposes the Commission's proposals, such as the rejection of asylum seekers and their relocation from highly impacted countries to less impacted ones.

Furthermore, the text analysis reveals the structure through which political elites create meaning. This study lays the foundation for future exploration of discourse, with a primary emphasis on the linguistic components of verbal communication. Finally, the analysis is concluded with the interpretation of results in the chapters specifically dedicated to analysing the parliamentary discourse in each individual case.

Data Collection	Collecting public transcripts from parliamentary sessions (2014-2016).
Data Preparation	Organizing collected transcripts into cohesive files.
Coding (Step 1)	Keyword Search: Identifying relevant sections on migration, refugees, asylum using a pre-defined vocabulary list.
Coding (Step 2)	Refine Coding: Reading transcripts thoroughly, adjusting units of analysis based on content, coding specific sections or entire speeches, and assigning codes to specific MPs.
Analysis (Step 1)	Exporting Data: Extracting coded data from MAXQDA to an xlsx. file.
Analysis (Step 2)	Thematic Analysis: Categorizing coded data by MPs, using inductive coding to identify recurring concepts, grouping concepts into higher-level themes (meta-themes), analysing and visualize themes in the empirical study.
Analysis (Step 3)	Critical Discourse Analysis: Interpretation of the discursive constructions made by political elites via selected extracts
Outcomes	- Understanding Identity Construction
	- National Interests & Decision-Making
	- Justifications for Actions against EU Commission
	- Structure of Meaning-Making through Discourse Analysis

Table 1Porcess of Qualitative Content Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis

4.2.   Discourse Analysis

Discourse holds a distinct position within the framework of CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis). In this sense Teun van Dijk (T. van Dijk, 1993, 1997, 2011a, 2011c) argues that discourse can reveal the underlying mechanisms of our social reality. Two intriguing concepts proposed by CDA scholars have the potential to enhance my analysis with explanatory power. Firstly, the assumption is that discourse confers power upon those who create it. The interconnection between discourse and power has been extensively examined by numerous scholars (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985a; T. A. Van Dijk, 1997) and is

considered to be indivisible. Individuals who have authority over the creation of power have the ability to modify narratives, interpretations, and consequently the comprehension of individuals within the same social category (in-group). This capability grants its recipients authority over individuals manifested via symbolic power (T. van Dijk, 2011c). When a social group consistently hears something being presented as true, it will eventually internalise it as a widely accepted belief, ingrained in their collective memory (T. A. Van Dijk, 1997). Consequently, the group's members will base their actions on this shared understanding. The condition described above is regarded as a dominant influence over the exchange of ideas. Politicians possess the unique authority to shape the narratives within the discourses of a specific nation. Wodak categorises them as symbolic elites due to their skill in constructing discourses centred on specific symbols. The aim of the discourse analysis in this thesis will thus concentrate on examining the influence of symbolic elites and their methods in shaping national discourses regarding self-identity and otherness.

Regarding discourse analysis, discourse is not a self-contained entity (Wodak & Meyer, 2002, 2009). It is influenced by changes in time, space, and situation (Birner, 2013; Hart, 2011a). Over time, the semantic structures of a discourse can change as new constructions of our world emerge, accompanied by new assigned meanings. Individuals frequently reinterpret words and incorporate them into various contexts. Likewise, the interpretations may be modified by different geographical locations. The interpretation of discussions on democracy and the semiotic frameworks that shape them may vary slightly between the United States and Europe. Moreover, instances where individuals (re)interpret the significance of words modify discourse as a whole. For instance, in biological contexts, the term "crane" denotes a bird species and is associated with its visual representation. However, in construction contexts, the same term refers to a machine specifically designed for lifting heavy materials. Based on this concept, I aim to comprehend and elucidate the changes and their implications by examining the discourse of the symbolic elites.

It is imperative to establish clear definitions for the terms discourse and text, as some scholars fail to differentiate between these terms, leading to ambiguity in their analysis. In this thesis, I distinguish between discourse and text, with the latter being specifically defined as a result of *linguistic actions* (Wodak & Meyer, 2002, 2009), whether in the form of visual, written, or oral communication. Discourse, on the other hand, refers to a collection of both verbal and non-verbal actions that are interconnected by a specific subject. We know medical, student, climate change discourses. These structures can serve as sub-topics within other discourses, such as when political discourse acts as a sub-topic within a broader societal discourse concerning specific communities.

Following the establishment of the fundamental components of my analysis, the subsequent section concentrates on the specific procedures that collectively contribute to the discourse analysis. The second textual analysis in this thesis examines the semantic and pragmatic levels of text, which complements the latent content analysis performed using the MAXQDA software.

The methodology employed in this thesis closely adheres to the research design suggested by Wodak and Meyer (Wodak & Meyer, 2002, 2009) who, among other things, utilised five discursive strategies in their investigation of climate change out of which I employ three. Firstly, I analyse the nominations within the discursive practices of political leaders and members of parliament. In this analysis, I examine how social actors and. objects are constructed in the discourse along the deictic spectrum of "us" versus "them," and how political elites linguistically (re)construct these constructions.

In addition to examining the category of refugees, I analyse the formation of the European Union as a social object. The study of nominations examines the references made to the inclusion of constructed actors, the utilisation of (ideological) anthroponyms such as "Marxists" and "liberals," and the deictic distinction between different groups (I, we, they...). The nominations encompass a broader range of individuals beyond just actors. The discursive practices also encompass the formation

of concepts such as "nation," "Europe," "Christianity," and others. These constructions function as a contextual completion. Furthermore, nominations encompass the verbal representation of phenomena such as the Schengen crisis, the Syrian war, the broader Middle East conflict, and the conflicts of authority between supranational institutions and member states within the European Union.

When examining nominations, there is an additional element that must be incorporated. To accurately analyse the speech of actors under study, it is essential to categorise the references that form the basis of their nominations into negative and positive categories. This stage builds upon the second strategy of predictions. Examining absences within discourse is also of utmost importance. Which actors, who would typically be included in the discussion, are absent? The presence of omissions in the text has the potential to reveal the underlying ideology of the individual or group responsible for it.

The third strategy suggested by (Wodak & Meyer, 2002, 2009) is based on the examination of argumentation strategies. I am particularly interested in studying topoi (Boukala, 2016; Wodak, 2015, 2017; Wodak & Meyer, 2002, 2009; Wodak & van Dijk, 2000)and argumentation fallacies in texts, and how these linguistic categories contribute to the establishment of the actor's discursive constructions. These strategies encompass assertions of veracity and righteousness through which the actor seeks to rationalise their actions. The purpose of topoi is to serve as a connection between the argument and the conclusion, or the claim.

Moreover, after examining the social identities of individuals and social objects, the subsequent phase of the analysis involves comprehending the argumentation strategies employed to justify the specific decisions made by the political elite, which are derived from their discursive constructions. The scholars of Critical Discourse Studies have extensively examined legitimation strategies (Hart, 2011b; Leeuwen Van, 2007; Leeuwen Van & Wodak, 1999; Lirola, 2014; Menshawy, 2020; Reyes,

2011; Rojo & van Dijk, 1997; Vaara & Tienari, 2002; Wodak, 2017). In this thesis, I will utilize these methods to comprehend the rhetorical strategies employed by political leaders to justify their decisions. The legitimation process relies on specific linguistic categories that are identified and interpreted within the text, serving as a strategic tool for political leaders to gain legitimacy. The following list [Table 2] of analytical categories adheres to the theoretical framework proposed by van Dijk (van Dijk, 2011c).

From a pragmatic standpoint, I search for these analytical classifications in the texts under examination in the empirical chapter. I proceed to analyze and interpret the outcomes, and subsequently establish connections between them in the section dedicated to summarizing the empirical findings. I prefer not to categorize my interpretations of the cases, but rather provide an explanation of how political elites construct specific social objects through this process. Additionally, I aim to elaborate on how the legitimization of their decision-making is rooted in these identity constructions. In the empirical section, each analyzed theme identified through Qualitative Content Analysis is further divided into layers. These layers consist of exemplary extracts that serve as samples of specific narratives found in parliamentary discourse. Every subject that is taught in relation to specific identified themes is examined through multiple samples of these extracts, which are initially presented and then interpreted.

Positive self-representation	Actors employ the semantic tool of positive self-representation to establish a favorable perception of their own identity. This semantic tool is frequently associated with unfavorable other-representation.
Negative other-representation	Political actors employ other-representation as a strategy to cultivate a pessimistic perception of certain groups or individuals.

Metaphors	Metaphors are instances of rhetorical devices in which a word or phrase is employed to depict an object or action that it does not directly denote. Metaphors possess the capacity to shape understanding and viewpoints in intricate yet significant manners.
Irony	Irony is a rhetorical device that involves using a phrase to convey a meaning that is the opposite of its literal interpretation. I heavily depend on the audience's capacity to discern the disparity between the literal interpretation of the words and the true intention or circumstance being depicted. Within the realm of political elites, this device is frequently employed to portray actors or social phenomena in a highly unfavourable manner.
Topoi	Topoi are commonly used argumentative patterns that are employed to support or enhance statements and assertions. They function as the essential elements of arguments.
Comparisons/Polarization	Comparisons are a type of rhetorical device in which the actor intends to evaluate and contrast different groups, often attributing positive or negative characteristics to them.
Lexicalization	Lexicalization occurs at the local or stylistic level of discourse with the purpose of highlighting the discursive characteristics linked to a social entity, either in a negative or positive manner. Lexicalization refers to the identification of words or phrases that often carry emotional connotations.

Evidentiality	Evidentially is a semantic tool used by actors to present plausible arguments supported by data in order to validate an argument.
Victimization	Victimisation is a semantic tool used by individuals or groups to create a false perception of threat towards their in-group, thus providing justification for their actions against another group.

Table 2 Discourse properties

5.   Empirical part

Prior to analyzing the individual coded segments in each instance, the initial portion of the empirical analysis chapter focusses on interpreting the results of the Qualitative Content Analysis for each case. This analysis examines the allocation of narratives among coalition and opposition parties, highlighting its impact on the discourse within parliament. Furthermore, the results of the Qualitative Content Analysis are given as theme fields that were identified in the discourse of various political elites, such as governmental representatives and lawmakers. The chapter is structured as follows: Firstly, I will assess the persons and their degree of engagement in dealing with the Schengen situation. In addition, I will analyse the distribution of coded segments among political parties across three levels: opposition, coalition, and government. Moreover, I will evaluate the allocation of sectors among political parties across the complete political spectrum as represented in the parliament. Finally, I will examine the distribution of segments over time, taking into account both the initial and subsequent levels, in order to obtain a longitudinal viewpoint over the duration of the study. After the initial analysis, a more comprehensive portion delves into the empirical analysis utilising Critical Discourse Analysis. This part entails the presentation and analysis of specific extracts from political discourse. The purpose is to showcase and examine the discursive methods utilised by elites in the construction of narratives. These snippets provide a representative sample but do not include the complete dataset.

5.1.   Constructing the "other" in the parliament(s)

Several fascinating patterns were discovered during the Qualitative Content Analysis of the Hungarian parliamentary sessions. Firstly, there is a clear balance in the process of discourse generation between the coalition and opposition parties. According to Figure 19, the opposition party has played a major role in creating narratives about the Schengen crisis, the way refugees and asylum seekers are portrayed, and other crucial individuals involved. More precisely, 49.3% of the coded portions that

were detected can be traced to the opposition party. Nevertheless, both the coalition party and the government cooperated in the creation of this course by contributing to the latter portion of the recognised coded portions. This implies that there is a state of balance between the two groups, demonstrating that the distinct methods of articulating views are evenly distributed over the entire political spectrum. This is illustrated in the chapter on empirical analysis, where it is clear that the various subjects discussed do not show any substantial differences between the opposition and coalition parties. Only a small fraction of the discovered coded portions diverge from the overarching narrative in the Hungarian parliament. These deviations arise when the opposing party strategically employs certain issues to critique the ruling parties, specifically in regards to perpetuating unfavourable prevailing narratives about refugees, the European Union, and quotas. Are uniformly allocated across all political parties.

Moreover, Figures 26 and 27 illustrate that over the whole period of investigation, the parliamentary discourse constantly exhibited the aforementioned phenomena, with no legislative session exhibiting a distinct dominance of either the opposition or the coalition parties. According to Figure 20, the political party Jobbik, which is classified as far-right, has the most impact on the creation of narratives among political parties. Jobbik accounts for 26.40% of the coded segments. Jobbik predominantly spreads negative narratives about refugees and actively participates in the process of alienating them. As previously stated, the government had a substantial influence on the development of discourse during the Schengen crisis. According to the research, 24.8% of the coded segments were identified as being spoken by governmental personnel, notably ministers or secretaries. Furthermore, the Fidesz party emerged as the third most prominent player, representing 18.4% of the total coded segments. The remaining parties made little contributions to the creation of narratives through discourse. The socialist party opposition party MSZP represented 11.2% of the shares, the liberal opposition party LMP represented 8.6%, the conservative coalition party KDNP represented 6.9%,

and the Independents represented 3.1%. Figure 27 further illustrates that the distribution of parties corresponds to the broader separation between the coalition and opposition, as depicted in Figure 19.

The results of the Qualitative Content Analysis carried out on the Slovak case reveal an uneven allocation of coded segments across the different political parties in the parliament and government members. Figure 21 illustrates the distribution of coded segments among the actors analyzed in the Slovak parliament. The results of the content analysis showed that a substantial proportion of the parliamentary discourse was generated by the opposing parties. The opposition parties constituted 66.80% of the complete coded transcript, signifying that they were the main contributors to the narratives concerning the crisis in the Slovak parliament. To elaborate on the previous statistic, it is evident that the government is responsible for 18.30% of the total coded segments. The political party SMER-SD, which held power from 2014 to 2016, is responsible for approximately 14.70% of the total coded segments (Figure 22).

Additionally, Figure 29 depicts the allocation of coded segments among the political parties in the parliament and the Slovak cabinet for the whole duration of the study. Based on the data, the opposition parties were the primary contributors in the parliamentary discussions of the Slovak Republic for the whole study period. With the exception of ten sessions where government representatives had control over the discussion on the Schengen crisis, and three sessions where the government party accounted for 100% of the coded segments, it is clear that the discourse on the crisis and the formation of identities for refugees, the European Union, the V4, and other actors and social objects mainly focused on their significance for the opposition parties' electoral campaigns. This will be evident from the section that analyses the specific subjects discussed in the parliamentary discourse of the Slovak Republic. A significant chunk of this episode was devoted to criticizing the government.

Upon analyzing the coded segments, I observed a somewhat balanced distribution between two conservative opposition parties, namely OĽANO with a 23% share and KDH with a 19.10% share (Figure 22). On the other hand, government representatives made up 18.3% of the whole parliamentary discussion. The political party SMER-SD, which holds exclusive control, accounted for 14.30% of all documented transcripts in the parliamentary debate on the Schengen situation. The SaS party, which is classified as centre-right and liberal, was the sole party that contributed more than 10% to the entire coded corpus. The two remaining political parties, namely the centre-right SDKÚ-DS, which held the leading position in the previous parliamentary period, and the minority party Most-Híd, made contributions to the overall discussion on the crisis, representing 6.70% and 7.60% of the entire corpus, respectively.

The allocation of power shows that conservative political parties, who often emphasise Christian values, have a substantial impact on shaping the discussion about the Schengen problem and the development of collective identities among refugees and other socioeconomic groups. Despite its fundamental ideas being focused on defending the rights of minorities and ethnic groups, the minority party Most-Híd had a limited role in the legislative discourse.

Figure 29 depicts the distribution of coded segments across each parliamentary session. The data clearly and indisputably shows that the two conservative parties, OĽANO and KDH, constantly maintained their overwhelming position during the whole course of the study. Occasionally, the remaining factions of the political spectrum made contributions to the discussions in separate legislative sessions, with certain factions exercising authority over specific sessions.

Analysis of the Czech parliamentary session transcripts indicates an unequal distribution of coded segments across government MPs, coalition parties, and opposition parties (Figure 23). Approximately 57.60% of public debate is influenced by coded portions that represent opposing party members in parliament. These portions express their stance on the Schengen problem, focusing

92

particularly on topics like as the development of refugee identity and related subjects. Furthermore, the discussion emphasizes the involvement of influential groups such as the European Union, NATO, V4, and other international organizations in their efforts to find a solution to the situation. Government officials have made the second most significant contribution to the discussion on the crisis, comprising 32% of the total coded segments. Ultimately, the collective opposition parties only represent a mere 9.40% of the coded segments pertaining to the topic. The allocation of responses between opposition parties and government leaders was crucial in fostering a significant discussion on the Schengen crisis and its various subtopics. One could claim that the representatives of coalition parties in parliament made insignificant contributions to the formation of the elite discourse.

Figure 25 depicts the allocation of coded segments across the investigated timeframe, spanning from the beginning of 2014 to the end of 2016. Except for the session on December 12th, 2014, the data clearly demonstrates that the opposition parties had a significant influence on the conversation. In the second phase of analysis, the distribution of coded segments among political parties (Figure 24) reveals that the far-right political party Úsvit has the highest proportion of coded segments, accounting for 28.20%, followed by the centrist party ODS with 15.40%. The centrist party TOP09 and the communist party KSČM each accounted for 7% of the coded passages in the public conversation. The distribution of coded segments across the government parties was as follows: The ANO2011 party accounted for 4% of the coded segments, the ČSSD party, which is the main governing party, accounted for 2.10%, and the KDÚ-ČSL party, which is the third coalition party, accounted for 3.30%. According to this distribution, it indicates that the initial statements made by politicians on the far right had a significant influence on shaping the public discourse.

Furthermore, as implied above, Figure 25 depicts the allocation of coded segments among political parties over various legislative sessions spanning from early 2014 to late 2016. The data shows that the number of coded segments related to the far-right political group ÚSVIT remains stable

during each legislative term. A similar problem occurs when analyzing the allocation of coded segments linked to the centrist opposition party ODS. TOP 09 holds a prominent position in two legislative sessions in comparison to other political parties. Nevertheless, the participation of these lawmakers in the remaining sessions is greatly restricted. The data suggests that the Communist Party had a minimal impact on the production of discussion during the parliamentary sessions. Nevertheless, it continuously ensures the distribution of encrypted portions. The proportion of encoded parts within the political party ANO2011 alliance suggests an imbalanced contribution to the elite discourse. In addition to three legislative sessions, this party published only a limited number of remarks regarding the research topic. During the examined two-year timeframe, the coalition parties ČSSD and KDÚ-ČSL made insignificant efforts to address the subject.

Upon examining the distribution of coded segments across the parties during the whole study period, it is evident that the administration and the far-right party ÚSVIT exerted a significant influence on the issues pertaining to the Schengen crisis in the majority of parliamentary sessions. Moreover, it is evident that both the Communist Party and the center-right party ODS have continuously produced noteworthy contributions. Although the TOP09 party has made significant contributions in individual sessions, the other parties have a lower frequency of participation in parliamentary discussions.

The comparative examination of parliamentary discourse on the Schengen situation in Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic demonstrates various levels of political engagement. In Hungary, there exists a well-balanced narrative that encompasses both the coalition and opposition factions, with the far-right Jobbik party exerting a notable influence on the discourse. In contrast, Slovakia and the Czech Republic exhibit a distinct predominance of opposition parties. The opposition dominates the conversation in Slovakia with a significant contribution of 66.80%, whilst in the Czech Republic, opposing parties provide 57.60%. The far-right Úsvit party holds considerable

influence in the Czech Republic. The noted discrepancy emphasizes the varying degrees of political division and the influence of far-right ideology in the parliamentary discussions on the situation, which mirrors the distinct national approaches to addressing the Schengen crisis.

Ultimately, the comparative research illustrates the significant impact of political engagement, particularly from far-right groups, on the development of refugee identities. In Hungary, the discussion is characterized by a combination of equilibrium and division, with substantial contribution from the far-right Jobbik party. This gives rise to a disputed narrative realm where refugees are frequently depicted in terms of a 'we against them' dichotomy. Conversely, in Slovakia and the Czech Republic, there is a significant presence of opposition and far-right narratives, primarily propagated by parties like Úsvit. These narratives depict refugee identities as a source of crisis, peril, and a threat to societal cohesion. Consequently, this discourse has the potential to foster negative stereotypes and marginalize certain groups.

5.2. Comparison of the thematic analysis in the parliaments

During the second part of the Qualitative Content Analysis, the primary aim was to determine the reoccurring subjects that were mentioned by various political leaders in legislative sessions during the specified time period.
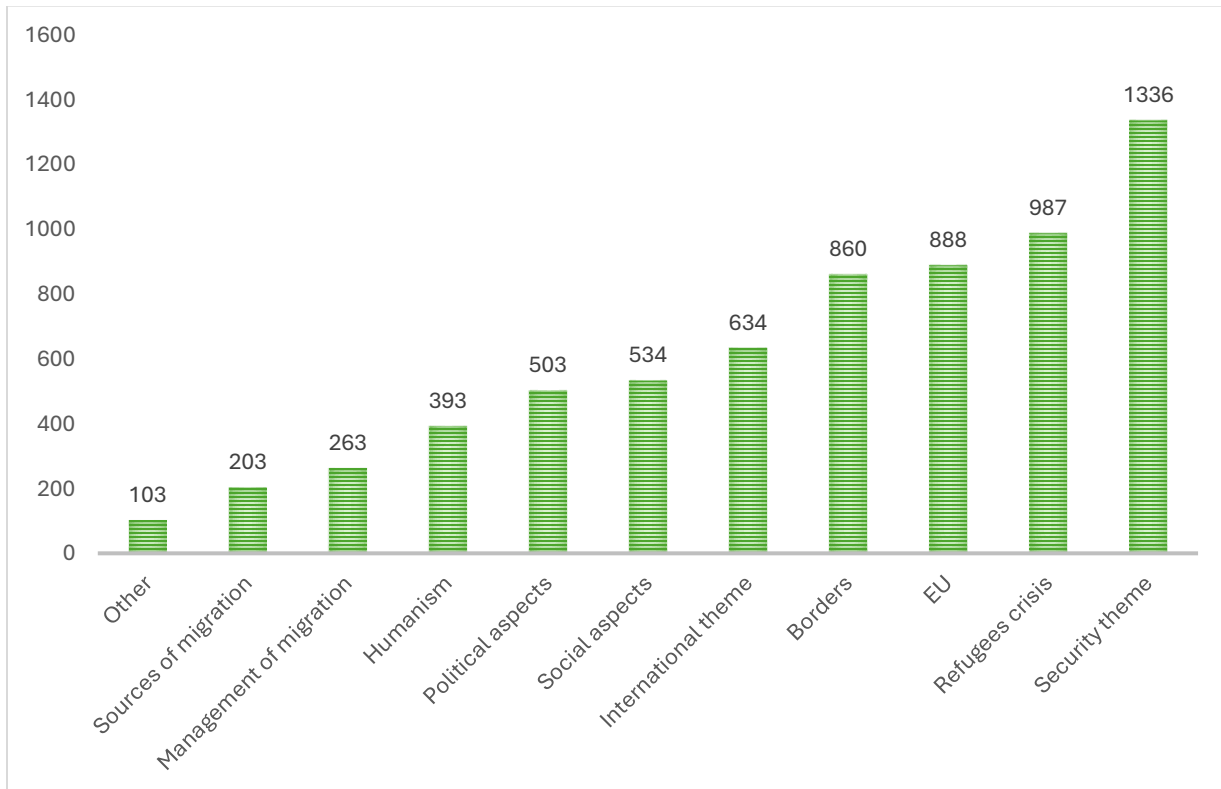
Figure 1 Themes identified in the overall parliamentary discourse of the three case studies

The main theme that arose from the text analysis in the Czech instance is focused on "security", as seen in Figure 2. In addition, the issue that received the fourth largest number of recognized coded segments was the specific theme of the "refugee crisis", which was directly mentioned a total of 217 times by parliament members and government representatives. Moreover, within the meso region, there are six themes that exhibit comparable ratings. The covered issues encompass political and social dimensions, borders, migration control, humanism, and the European Union (EU). In addition, the international theme, sometimes referred to as the global theme, has a

96

lower score (231) compared to the other EU and the security themes. In summary, the research analysis found that the remaining three topics, specifically the theme categorized as "other" and the subject referred to as "source of migration", were cited fewer than 27 times.
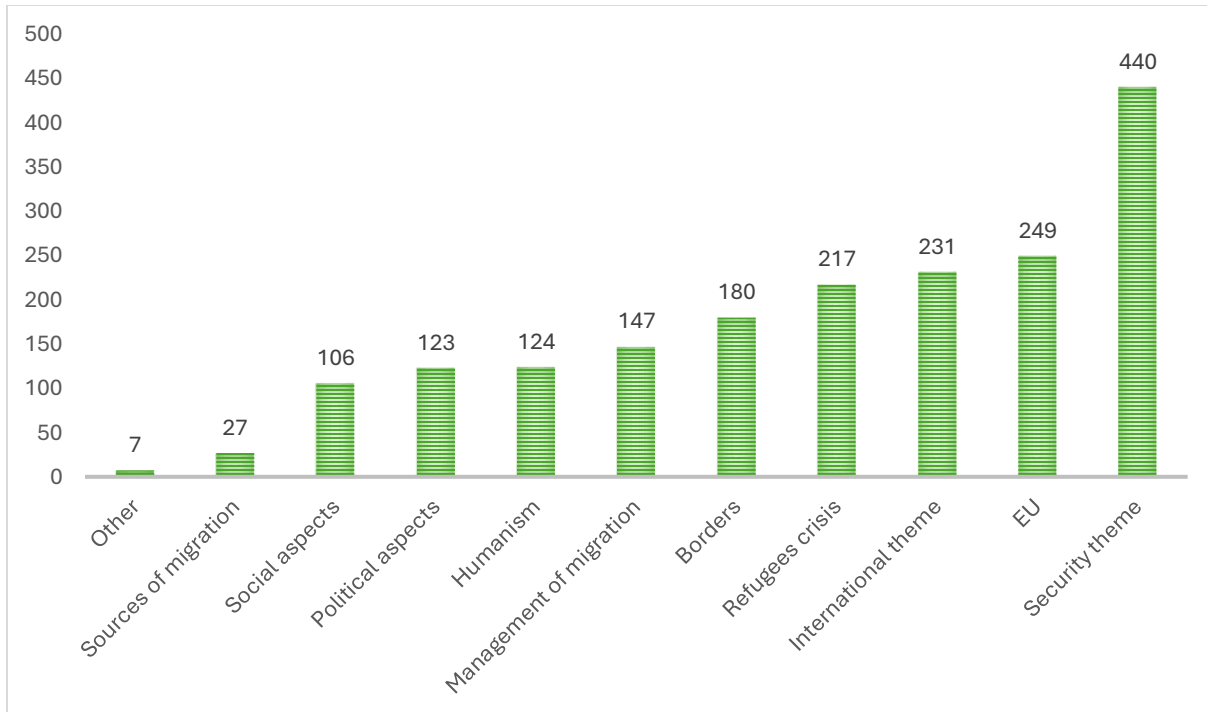
Figure 2 Themes identified in the Czech parliamentary discourse

Upon analysing political addresses, it becomes evident that elites placed a higher importance on addressing security concerns that arose from the crisis. Their secondary objective was to shape the perception of the crisis through the use of language and communication. The political leaders also prioritised the vital responsibility of ensuring border security. This refers to both the external borders of the European Union as a single entity, as well as the internal Schengen borders that separate its various member states. Moreover, the political aspect includes the matter of security, specifically emphasizing the potentially harmful principles of multiculturalism and the necessity to protect national sovereignty.

The Czech case of the refugee crisis placed significant importance on health and healthcare matters related to the repercussions of the Schengen problem. There is a purposeful endeavor to

fabricate a spurious health menace associated with the migrants, with the aim of rationalizing the refusal to accept any endeavors to accommodate refugees in the Czech Republic. This phenomenon is closely linked to the far-right political group ÚSVIT, whose legislators portrayed immigrants as a potential menace to the Czech people, citing fears around the transmission of diverse diseases.

The theme "EU" comprises a wide range of critiques expressed by member nations of the European Union. These worries emphasize the negative consequences of implementing the quotas, which are a redistribution mechanism recommended by the European Commission. Moreover, they clearly outline the reasons why the Czech Republic opposes this system. The Czech MPs voiced their dissent towards the European Union and repeatedly highlighted the EU's shortcomings in implementing and enforcing quotas across all member states. Furthermore, a substantial number of the encoded portions pertain to the referendum petition concerning the Czech Republic's withdrawal from the European Union.
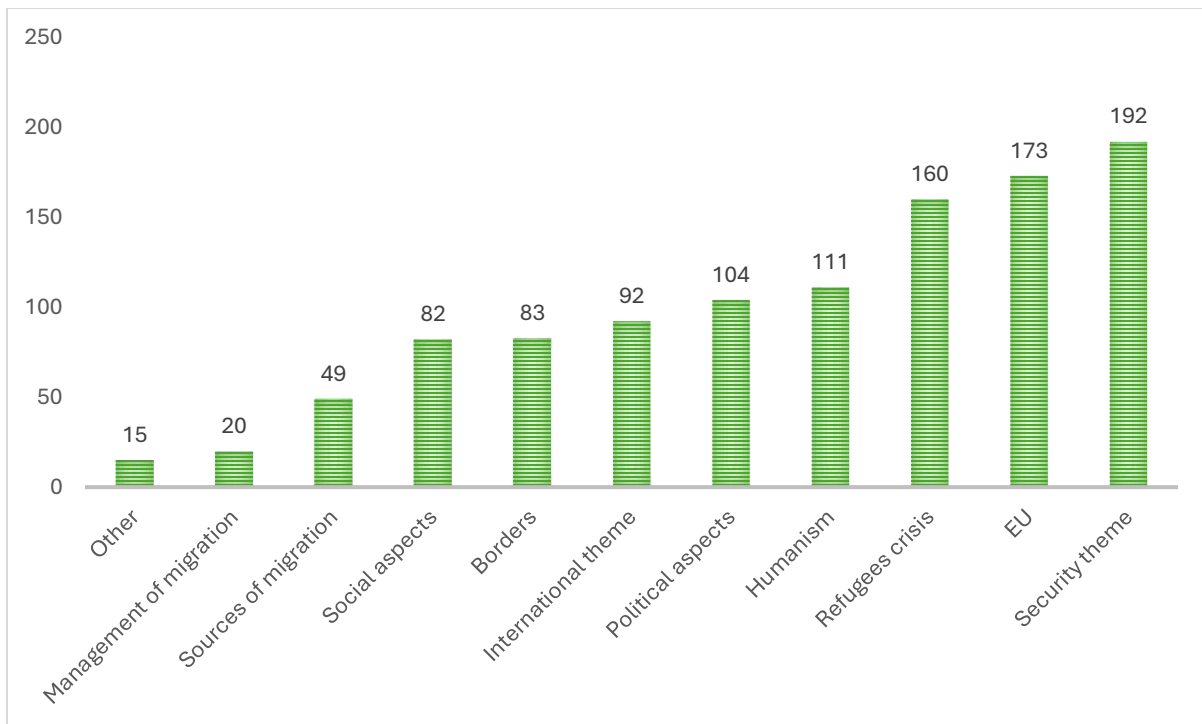
Figure 3 Themes identified in the Slovak parliamentary discourse

Although the topic of "security" (Figure 3) is of utmost importance in both the Slovak and Czech situations (in the Slovak case it is 192 entries), there is a minor difference in the relative distribution of themes. The "EU-related" topic and the "refugee crisis" subject have almost identical scores, indicating that the political elites in the Slovak case were primarily focused on the advancement of an EU narrative. Another difference may be found in the decreased focus on the topic of " management of migration" in the Slovak instance, which was only mentioned in 20 coded segments, compared to the 147 mentions in the Czech example. This fact suggests that Slovak legislators gave less consideration to the issue of crisis management. However, many of the recognized themes display resemblances.

In contrast to the situation in the Czech Republic, the refugee issue predominantly revolves around and includes the rhetorical depiction of refugees as either illegal or economic migrants. The term "economic migration" is cited 38 times, "illegal migration" is stated 29 times, and "asylum seekers" is only addressed 18 times. The clear disparity demonstrates that the attempts to portray migrants in a bad light well exceed their mere objective categorisation as individuals seeking asylum.

Like their counterparts in the Czech Republic, Slovak legislators primarily focus on attacking the European Union and its handling of the crisis when discussing EU-related issues. A significant fraction of the detected coded segments specifically addresses the redistribution system and its negative impacts on Slovakia and the broader European Union. After examining the statements of the Slovak prime minister, it is clear that quotas are presented as a divisive element inside the European Union and are considered inadequate in dealing with the problem.
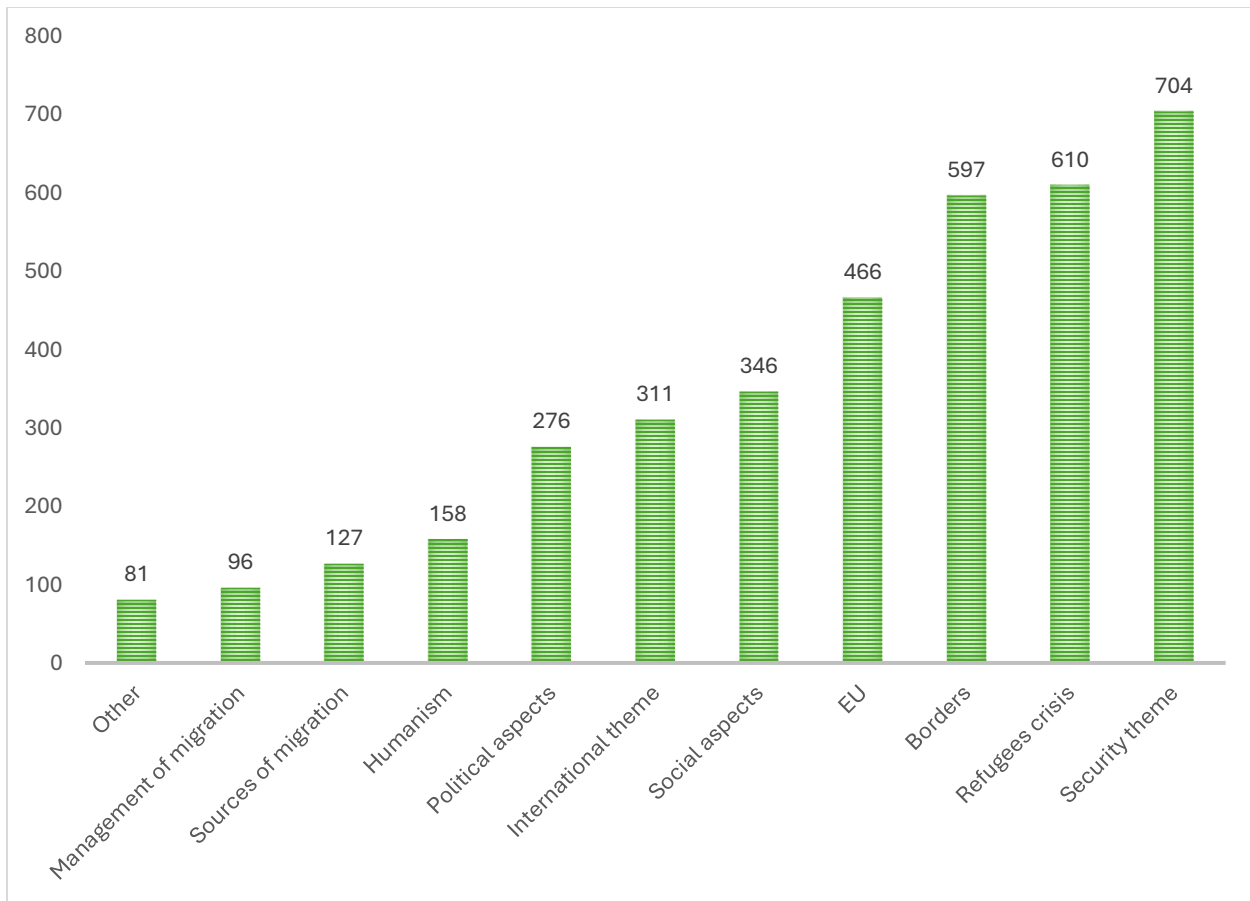
Figure 4 Themes identified in the Hungarian parliamentary discourse

In the case of Hungary (Figure 4), it is evident that the distribution of thematic groups is more balanced. However, there is still a noticeable focus on security (704 entries) as the main issue in the discussions of legislators and government representatives. The investigation revealed that the legislators and government representatives placed significant importance on the topics of the "refugee crisis" and borders. The main goal of the legislators and government representatives was to create a story about the issue being a matter of security, and to emphasize the separation between refugees and asylum seekers as a different social group. In the case of the cheque issue, legislators within the thematic category of "refugee crisis" highlighted the connection between foreign diseases and refugees to portray this social group in an unfavorable light.

The prevalence of themes centered around "borders" is not surprising, given that Hungary was a key player during the Schengen crisis. The government established "transit zones" as camps to accommodate incoming refugees and asylum seekers. Additionally, Hungary was one of the first countries to construct a sophisticated border fence in response to the surge in migration.

In the forthcoming chapters, a comprehensive examination will reveal that the main sub-codes comprising the theme "EU" revolve mostly around the topics of referendums and quotas. The discussion surrounding the quotas primarily revolved around their rejection and the government's justification for rejecting them. However, the referendum sub-code offers a unique viewpoint on how populism during the Schengen crisis resulted in a contrived referendum that aimed to validate the government's actions in the eyes of the general public. It is important to note that these two subjects were utilized as political instruments by the ruling authorities.

The analysts will address the specific sub-codes and subjects that are relevant to the scope of this chapter. However, due to the limitations of this chapter, I cannot provide further details on the distribution of the specific thematic categories. Nevertheless, it is crucial to emphasize that the particular themes consist of numerous subcodes that collaborate to create a unified category. The upcoming sections of the analysis will provide these subcodes. Nevertheless, this thesis is unable to provide a thorough and methodical examination of each code due to its restrictions. Therefore, the following research focusses solely on the most significant codes that communicate the fundamental aspects of meaning creation by political leaders concerning the refugee crisis, refugees, and other global entities such as the European Union, the United States of America, and third countries.

Finally, the subchapters concentrate on dissecting the particular codes that constitute the themes. Their objective is to uncover the dominant narratives in the parliaments of the nation's being examined and illustrate how legislators established the link between the specific category and the

refugee issue. Ultimately, these narratives will be assessed and contrasted in the final part or dedicated to the summary of the instances.

Not all 11 semantic fields identified through Qualitative Content Analysis were examined in the subsequent sections dedicated to the detailed Critical Discourse Analysis of selected extracts representing the overall narratives in the discourse of the three parliamentary cases. This was due to the limitations of the scope of this thesis. Tables 9-44 (Appendices 19-54) display a chosen excerpts together with the respective authors. These tables demonstrate the specific discursive elements employed by legislators to shape the identities of refugees/asylum seekers and rationalize the policy choices they enacted. In the following sections, I will only provide an analysis of the "Refugee crisis" theme although these findings are crucial for understanding the discourse in the three parliaments and will be discussed in the background as part of the thesis's discussion chapter.

5.3. Discursive analysis of transcripts in the Hungarian parliament

The analysis of the transcripts of the parliamentary debates in the Hungarian parliament that are coding by the theme "refugee crisis" (Figure 5) uncovered deep negative other representation of as Islam seekers labelled by parliamentarians as predominantly "illegal immigrants" (365 entries) a "economic immigrants" (190 entries). In contrast more neutral and humane referencing there was this group of people labelled as "asylum seekers" was only the third most predominant category (98 entries) and shows that even the code "diseases" that negatively represents this group of people was similar in terms of abundance among the identified codes (64 entries). In this respect the rest of the coding scheme and this thematic area contains the codes "invasion" (24 entries), "civilizational/European threat" (31 entries) and other marginal codes such as "children of immigrants", "invitation", and lastly the code designated as "predominantly men". Based solely on this preliminary analysis, we can conclude that the parliamentarians in the Hungarian parliament,

regardless of their affiliation with liberal and centrist parties, played a role in shaping the negative social identities of refugees. They excluded refugees as a group and contributed to the process of marginalising them in public discussions.
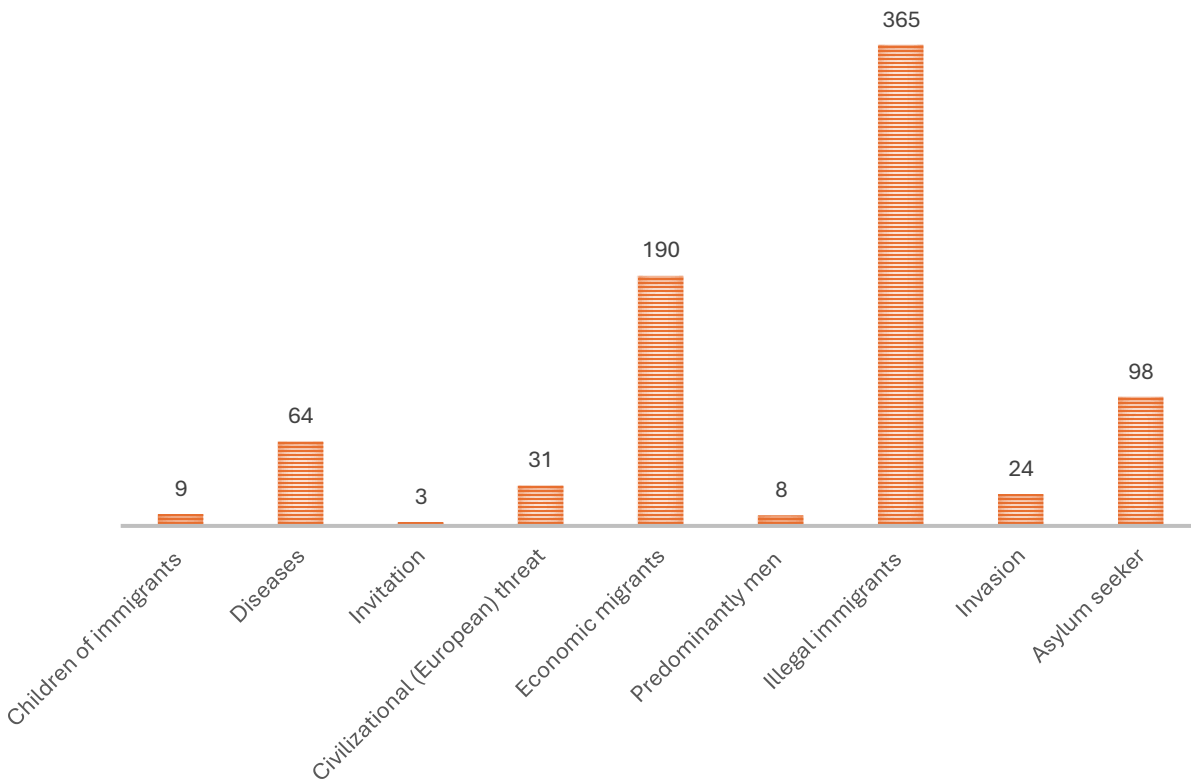
Figure 5 Codes representing the composition of the theme Refugee crisis (Hungary)

Through a thorough examination of qualitative content, I attempt to gain a greater understanding of how legislators framed the Schengen crisis as a social issue. Specifically, I examine how they focused on constructing the identity of asylum seekers and refugees. In summary, the analysis shows that the legislators primarily portrayed the identities of refugees and asylum seekers in a negative manner by assigning categories that emphasise negative qualities and behaviours.

Refugee crisis				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"A round-up of the scandalous cases involving illegal immigrants in the last two months. The riot of several hundred people on the Sámsoni road in Debrecen, the ongoing tension at the Middle Eastern railway station, the destruction and vandalism of the bus in Békéscsaba. And then I don't know if you saw the video of alfahir.hu, what they did yesterday at the Bicske railway station, the police brought them mineral water, various sandwiches, fruit, supplies for the children, and the adult men threw them away, deprived their own children of drinking water and took away their very precious food."	Apáti István	Jobbik	far-right	Negative other representation, Topos of disturbance, Topos of burden
"In any case, what has already been said many times here today is unfortunately the willingness of the masses of illegal immigrants not to, or not to, and not to plan to, comply with the minimum human duty of cooperation, In other words, they do not cooperate with the authorities in any way, as has been pointed out in several media reports, and there is very little willingness to cooperate among them, so it is much more difficult to screen these patients or these people, to talk to them and to treat them if necessary."	Lukács László Gyorgy	Jobbik	far-right	Generalisation, Topos of burden, Negative other representation
"Thank you very much for the floor. Mr President. Mr Secretary of State. Honourable Members of the European Parliament! In fact, what needs to be summarised in the context of this bill is, of course, the state's position and the position of the political parties on how to protect the Hungarian population from the epidemic situation caused by migrants, immigrants and illegal immigrants. First and foremost, and this is what Jobbik considers to be the most acceptable and the only acceptable position, is that such persons should not be allowed to enter our country, should not be allowed to pass through it, and should not be allowed to come into contact with our public spaces, either on the public transport mentioned by Lajos Rig or otherwise, and infect an otherwise healthy society."	Lukács László Gyorgy	Jobbik	far-right	Negative other representation, Topos of threat, Topos of risk, Topos of security
"What we have to see is that the fact that the security situation has deteriorated in recent days is very much based on the premise that the Hungarian government and the various Hungarian bodies, including the Hungarian State Railways, have not acted in a clear, unambiguous and consistent manner. It is also part of the breakdown in the security situation that people who are seeking asylum, who are entering Hungary illegally, have not been given clear and unambiguous information about what the order is, so to speak, very simply. It is not for them to be held to account, Minister. Why is it that it is civilian volunteers who are trying to give these people some very basic information in Farsi and Urdu about where to go and how many metres?"	Schiffer András	LMP	green-liberal	Topos of security, Topos of failure, Topos of responsibility
"Thank you, Mr President. Mr President. Honourable Parliament. Honourable Member of Parliament! The Government is firmly of the view that consistent and tough action against asylum abuses is justified. The problems of economic refugees must be addressed where they arise. In all cases, the police will take firm action against troublemakers and violators of the law."	Kontrát Károly	Government	right-wing populist ; national-conservative	Topos of law and order, Topos of responsibility, Topos of burden

Table 3 Example extracts for the identified theme Refugee crisis (Hungary)

Tables 3 and 4 (Extract 1) demonstrate how the legislators form the collective identity of refugees by emphasising their negative characteristics and providing a summary of many instances linked to what he refers to as "illegal immigrants". The narrative presented here emphasises the assumed undesirable behaviours and acts of migrants, while also portraying them as a unified group without making any effort to distinguish between individuals. The legislator in the above extract constructs his narrative by employing a semantic move, focussing on conflict and disruption. He

achieves this by making references to "well-documented" incidents of significant disturbances at train stations reported by the media. Additionally, he establishes a connection between refugees/asylum seekers and the act of causing damage to public property. The negative portrayal is further reinforced by the assumed refusal of aid by refugees, exemplified by their presumed rejection and squandering of goods meant for their children. This implies that refugees and asylum seekers in Hungary are not appreciative of the kindness and support provided by authorities or local communities. This notion of expressing worry for the welfare of refugee children and questioning the logic behind adult actions can be seen as an attempt to influence public opinion in Hungary regarding refugees/asylum seekers via highlighting negative incidents that may contribute to anti-immigrant sentiments and garner support for stricter immigration policies. It's worth to note, that these policies are primarily advocated by government officials and members of the far-right Jobbik party. In the scholarly literature (Delanty et al., 2011; Wodak & van Dijk, 2000) this argument is frequently employed by individuals who oppose admitting and assisting refugees relies on the rhetorical strategy of utilising the topos of disturbance connecting refugee as a group with chaos and disorder. Additionally, it employs the topos of burden, highlighting the negative consequences this group has on local resources, law enforcement, and social harmony.

The legislator's statement in Extract 2 highlights the idea that refugees are unwilling to engage with authorities, suggesting a fundamental lack of cooperation. From a discourse standpoint, this generalisation regarding refugee attitudes towards authorities once again supports the argument for stricter control measures proposed by authorities, as they are seen as required to maintain order and efficient administration. Again, we may observe that the argumentation relies on the topos of burden. Translating the migrants' attitudes towards cooperation with authorities as hindering their absorption into Hungarian society further suggests a need for endorsing stricter measures instead.

Additionally, as we can see via extract 3, among the legislators there was a propensity to negatively represent immigrants as a group reflecting on the perceived threat of contagious diseases and initiating narratives for a political position of protecting the Hungarian population from these concerns. This link with potential epidemiological concerns discursively produces a case for strong control measures to prevent the entry or transit of migrants. From this arises that this argument is founded on the topos of threat which helps to justify rigorous border controls matching with the broader narrative of needing more proper national protection.

Extract 10 also presents a comparable narrative, highlighting the legislative measures taken to address the health hazards. It emphasises the presumed lack of control and administration, which endangers public health in Hungary. Furthermore, the concept of cultural difference is being used as a rhetorical strategy to portray the arrival of immigrants as a potential threat. The underlying criticism of an "uncontrolled situation" implies a breakdown in the system, stressing the concept of accountability.

A strong position on immigration during the crisis was mirrored in the nominations for economic migrants, with a focus on rigorous measures against those who were thought to be abusing their claim to refuge (extract 5). Prominent lawmakers from the governing party were known to employ lexical choices such as "abuse of asylum rights," "economic refugees," and "troublemakers" to systematically classify migrants into legally and morally separate categories. This distinction therefore provides a rationale for implementing strict measures against those who do not meet the specific criteria for deserving asylum as defined by the law. Basing it on the concept of "economic refugees" and "troublemakers," they emphasise the importance of a state's ability to decide who can enter its territory and the adherence to laws as the main criteria for evaluating the validity of migration.

Refugee crisis				
Extract	Author	Party Affiliation	Party Ideology	Discursive Elements
"In my opinion, honourable Members, the proposed amendments, which we would expect the support of the opposition Member before me, are suitable for protecting our country and the European Union against illegal economic immigration and the criminals associated with it. In view of what has been said, on behalf of the Christian Democratic People's Party, I propose the adoption of the bill, I intend to support it and I will ask my fellow Member to support it in the future. Thank you for your kind attention."	Firtl Mátyás	KDNP	christian democratic	Topos of security, Topos of responsibility, Topos of law and order
"One is that, as far as I am aware, no one wants to open the gates, i.e. to let everyone indiscriminately into Hungary and settle here. The other is that the concept of economic immigrants as such does not exist. It is an artificial term created by Fidesz for the purpose of their inflammatory, inflammatory communication. It serves this purpose and nothing else, such a term does not exist. The third is that migration is a natural process in the world, a process that is taking place from the less fortunate countries of the world to the more advanced ones, and it is the latter, the latter countries, that have the task of keeping this process on a normal course."	Bárándy Gergely	MSZP	centre-left	Counterfactuals, Topos of manipulation, Topos of demography
"I would like to point out here that Hungary is a transit country, not a destination country. There are huge problems with the concepts, as we can see. Here, illegal migration is being confused with immigration, starting with economic migrants, but what is certain is that 42 thousand asylum seekers were registered last year, and 500 people were granted refugee status in total, so we are talking about hysteria in terms of the government's communication."	Demeter Márta	MSZP	centre-left	Topos of distinction, Topos of numbers, Topos of rationality, Topos of manipulation
"I think it is a very great danger that you are conflating livelihood migrants and refugees here. The fact that someone crosses the border illegally does not make them an immigrant for subsistence, and as has been said here before, they can still be one, and in the majority of cases they are most likely to be entitled to refugee status in Hungary under the Geneva Convention, as they do not have the appropriate documents or travel documents."	Szabó Tímea	Independent	green-liberal	Topos of distinction, Topos of legality, Topos of danger
"There are infectious diseases in the countries of origin of refugees crossing the borders of Hungary that we do not have, and it should be taken into account that the more than 100,000 migrants in our country come from different cultures and hygienic environments. The lack of control, the poorly managed situation, puts public health security at risk."	Rig Lajos	Jobbik	far-right	Topos of threat, Topos of public health, Topos of cultural difference, Topos of reesponsibility
"On this day, Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán managed to deliver his inflammatory speech against economic immigrants, to the deep shame of us all. He did so as the Prime Minister of a country from which nearly half a million of our fellow citizens fled unemployment, poverty and corruption under his government."	Harangozó Tamás	MSZP	centre-left	Irony, Negative other representation, Topos of failure

Table 4 Example extracts for the identified theme Refugee crisis (Hungary)

Among legislators who were against pro-immigration political viewpoints we often see a tendency to characterise refugees and asylum seekers also as "illegal economic immigrants" linking them to criminal behaviour. This framing, which relies on the concept of legality and security, is once again employed to rationalise the aforementioned strict control measures. In extract 6, the legislator utilised the platform of the parliament to seek bipartisan support, presenting it as a practical approach to enacting immigration legislation. This emphasises the belief in the necessity of unified positions

despite political differences. The analysis indicates that the opposition parties have largely failed to respond to this appeal, with the exception of the representatives from the extreme right party Jobbik.

In contrast to the government's narrative, opposition politicians questioned the government's stance on immigration, namely on the notion of economic immigrants and the assumed policy of unrestricted borders. In extract 7, the opposition politicians criticise the phrase "economic migrants" and argue that it is a political construct meant to provoke strong reactions and shift the focus of the debate from being a national security issue to a global one. Their notion, rooted in the concept of humanity, highlighted the inherent movement of people and proposed that policy should take into account the human dimension of migration. Apart from that the concept of responsibility was also mentioned, highlighting the need for global accountability in regulating migrant movements.

The criticism of the government's portrayal of the situation as a crisis, which suggests that the label is disproportionate to the actual circumstances, emphasises this even more. An excerpt from the legislation (number 8) draws attention to the ambiguity around terms related to migration and statistics on asylum seekers, advocating for a reasoned conversation that emphasises precise and understandable language. While this is not a positive other-representation of refugees/asylum seekers, it again shows that the legislators of the opposition parties took more moderate and neutral positions towards the crisis. Therefore, the critique in extract 8 is rooted in the topos of rationality, emphasizing the misuse of terms and the discrepancy between the number of asylum seekers and those granted refugee status.

Likewise, as excerpt 4 illustrates, the opposition legislator criticized the government's response while highlighting the absence of explicit and continuous attempts to manage security and reach out to asylum seekers since the crisis began. The argument, grounded on the concept of responsibility, emphasises the government's obligation to act decisively and furnish crucial information to asylum seekers. Additionally, the legislator emphasises the significance of civil society, namely citizen volunteers, in effectively handling situations where there is a lack of state intervention. This criticism

serves as a political strategy to attack the administration and distinguish itself from the prevailing language of the ruling party, even while it does not fully defend the rights of asylum seekers.

The opposition lawmakers' criticism of the prime minister's statements regarding refugees and asylum seekers who are classified as economic immigrants is shown in extract 11 again, where the lawmakers characterise the prime minister's statements as demeaning and inciting. This discourse employs a criticism that contrasts internal problems, like as unemployment and poverty, with the Prime Minister's statements, simultaneously proposing that the true issue lies in the immigration of Hungarian residents rather than incoming immigrants. The depiction of the Prime Minister as a source of national disgrace suggested a moral or ethical disapproval of his position. The logic here is based on the topoi of hypocrisy, failure, and humiliation, highlighting the government's incapacity to tackle internal matters and the moral and ethical expectations placed on politicians.

In conclusion, the analysis of the findings within the Critical Discourse Studies framework reveals that Jobbik's far-right representatives depict refugees as inherent threats and burdens. They employ emotionally charged language to justify exclusionary policies and reinforce social hierarchies. On the other hand, green-liberal and independent representatives critique government failures and promote lawful approaches to migration. Alongside green-liberal representatives and independents, the centre-left representatives dismantle official narratives, highlighting rationalism and condemning the manipulation of public sentiment. Ultimately, in line with the extreme right-wing perspectives, proponents of right-wing populism and national conservatism prioritise security and law enforcement, arguing for strict immigration regulations. The next section of the thesis is now moving towards the detailed analysis of the Hungarian Prime Minister's discourse about the crisis.

5.3.1. Viktor Orbán and the Other

Again, the primary objective of the Qualitative Content Analysis of Orbán's annual addresses was to systematically examine and document the process of objectification as perceived from the prime minister's standpoint. The analytical results offer a more accurate understanding of Orbán's methods of communication and, simultaneously, validate Campbell's pre-existing premise regarding the connection between threats and increased alienation of others.

Firstly, the investigation revealed significant evidence regarding the dynamics of the Self-Other dichotomy. Prior to the crisis in February 2015, the prime minister's main focus was on developing and maintaining the identity of the Self, which he calls the "Hungarian Model". However, in the subsequent two years, there has been a shift in this tendency. Table 1 illustrates the proportionate allocation of references between the two problematised identity conceptions that underwent transformation. Following the height of the refugee crisis, the focus of the 2016 and 2017 speeches gradually shifted towards the Other. These dynamics correspond to the anticipated consequences of a situation characterised by ontological insecurity, when the process of constructing one's identity turns towards the act of perceiving others as different or alien.

Furthermore, the references encompassed within the category "Other" are not uniform or homogeneous. Table 2 demonstrates that the temporal representations of the three investigated speeches underwent changes. Prior to the crisis, the subcategory [Opposition] held the highest frequency of references, followed by the subcategory [Liberals]. The remaining subcategories highlighted in the 2015 Address were either minimally represented or were not shown as objects of othering in subsequent addresses. Amidst the ongoing crisis and Orbán's increasing emphasis on the exclusion of others, attention shifted towards the specific group known as the European elites, who were considered the primary "Other". This category contains Orbán's portrayal of Europe as a

contrast to the Hungarian identity. The significance of this subcategory is further recognised by the fact that Orbán prioritised it over the subcategory of [Migrants], even after the crisis had completely unfolded. In 2017, a new subcategory of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) emerged. However, its significance was only important when considered in relation to the subcategories of European elites and liberals.
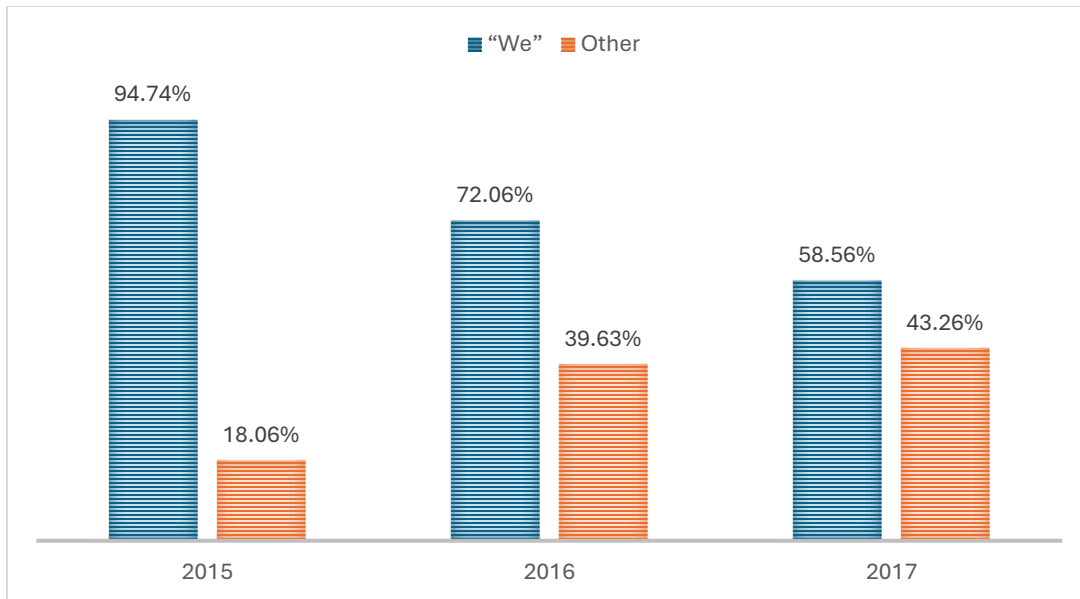
Figure 6 Representation of categories "We" and Other" in the three analysed speeches. Source: Author

Furthermore, the process of constructing the [European elites] as the contrasting Other was the main focus of discussion in the speeches delivered in 2016 and 2017. However, Orbán's comprehension of Europe is not concise either. The speaker's speech demonstrates a pessimistic attitude associated with the indicated subcategory and an optimistic one referred to as [Our Europe]. Figure 6 displays the progression of both identity formations. In 2015, Orbán considered the subcategory [Our Europe] to be more important. However, in the subsequent years, the negative subcategory became dominant. This phenomenon, in my perspective, reinforces the argument that the 2015 refugee crisis signifies a pivotal juncture in Orbán's process of marginalising others.
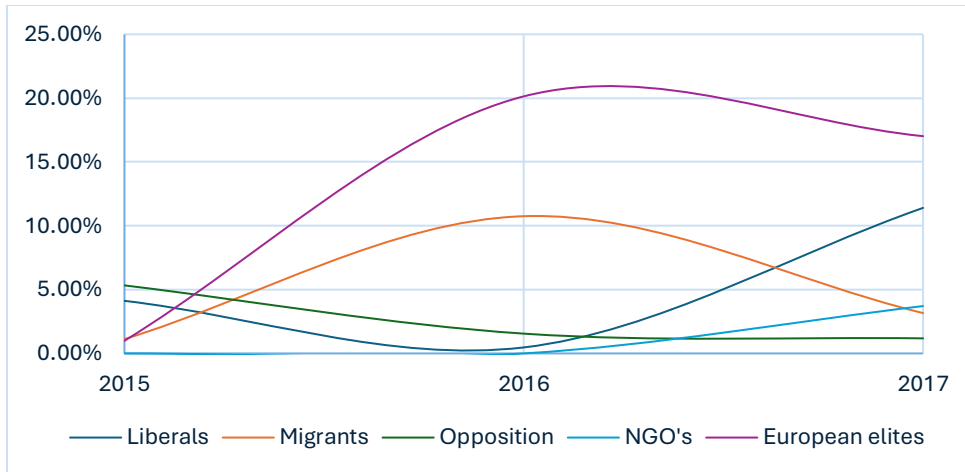
Figure 7 Changing representation of the Other(s) between 2015-2017. Source: Author
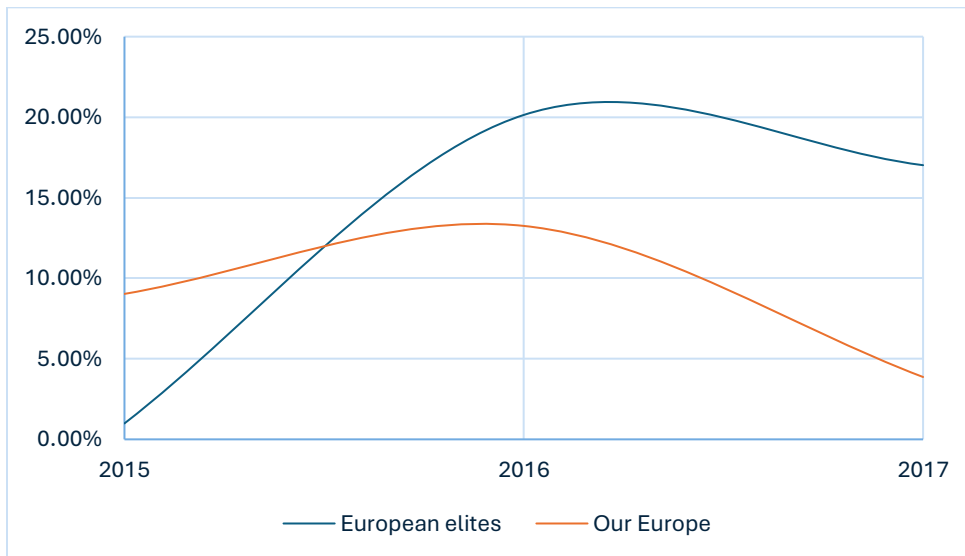
Figure 8 Changing representation of subcategories [Our Europe] and [European elites] between 2015-2017. Source: Author

Ultimately, the findings corroborate the original claim regarding the chronological correlation between the development of the expanding Self-Other dichotomy and the renewed backing for the FIDESZ-KDNP party coalition by the populace. Orbán aims to justify the Hungarian identity by explicitly stating the danger it faces from the Other. In general, the process of othering results in a stronger association of individuals with their national identity. Given the strong interdependence between the "Hungarian Model" and the present political administration, particularly the prime minister, the continued existence of the model is essential for Orbán's control over power. The public

opinion data corroborates the correlation between the electorate's endorsement of the ruling party coalition and the distinction between the Self and Others. The FIDESZ-KDNP alliance achieved a resounding win in April 2014, securing 44.54% of the votes (Deloy, 2014). After the corruption revelations, the support for the ruling party coalition significantly decreased to 21% in the June 2015 polls. Figure 35 presents the progression of party preferences one month following the 2014 elections. The temporal interval between the two red lines represents the length of time that the crisis lasted, starting with its onset in April 2015 and ending with the "Quota referendum." The results suggest a correlation between the crisis and the repeated increase in support for the governing coalition. The aforementioned factors serve to strengthen the assertion that the crisis had a role in Orbán's efforts to solidify his authority (Bíró-Nagy, 2021).

The subsequent sections elaborate on the aforementioned correlation between the prime minister's strategies of alienating others in his speech and the policies that ensured the reengagement of voters with the FIDESZ-KDNP coalition.

5.3.1.1.   The "Hungarian Model"

Orbán's discourse has been intensified by the refugee crisis, leading to a stronger emphasis on the processes of Othering. This tendency aligns with the anticipated influence of ontological insecurity, where imminent dangers like migrants function as a catalyst for the process of othering, which seeks to validate one's own identity. While the nature of the crisis suggests that refugees and migrants are seen as the significant Other and the target of social organisation, in this particular situation, this subgroup only plays a minor role in creating the division between the Self and the Other. Refugees and immigrants, as a whole, are subjected to securitisation and depicted as a menace in all of the examined speeches. The underlying narrative revolves around the topos of threat (Wodak, 2015), wherein these individuals are seen as posing a risk to the cultural and national characteristics of

Hungarian identity. The shared attribute encompasses terms such as "terrorists," "fundamentalists," "anti-Semite," "criminal," or even "homophobe." However, refugees are viewed solely as a means by powerful European elites to create a distinct Hungarian identity by positioning them as the major Other. The subsequent parts delve into the examination of Orbán's (re)construction of this dichotomy, which is derived directly from the meanings hidden in his discourse.

Orbán establishes his perceived Hungarian identity as the "Hungarian Model" which consists of five logically connected nodes, as seen in Figure 9. The "Hungarian Model" serves as a nodal point (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985b) around which the detected nodes are structured to form a coherent representation. Firstly, the term "Self" is used to describe the concept of the New World that is represented by the "Hungarian Model". According to Orbán, this approach gives priority to nationalist policies and a proactive foreign policy transforming Hungary into an anti-liberal state (Deák, 2013). It also adopted an anti-globalist stance, rejecting programs promoting multiculturalism.
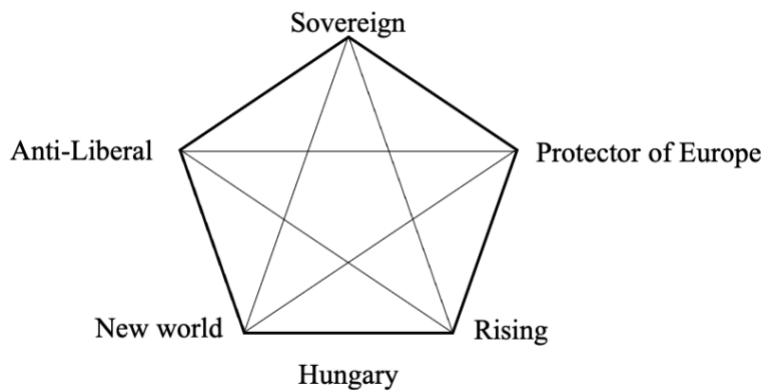
Figure 9 The positive construction of the Self based on the discursive analysis. Source: Author

The genesis of these identity constructions may be traced back to 2010, when Hungary underwent a significant political transformation following the triumph of Viktor Orbán's conservative

114

FIDESZ-KDNP alliance of parties (Sadecki, 2014). The significance of this triumph is prominently evident in the remarks that were delivered. The prime minister often emphasises that prior to 2010, Hungary was on the brink of financial disaster, and the new administration had to confront an unparalleled cynicism among voters against the ruling elites. According to this perspective, the year 2010 marked the beginning of a new period, symbolising the emergence of a fresh Hungarian identity that, as Orbán declared, is being constructed from the remnants of the previous, deteriorated state. Hence, the "Hungarian Model" serves as a deliberate emblem of opposition to the pre-Orbán era and as a justification for the presence of his administration. The concept of New World encompasses the idea of a prosperous change achieved under the existing government, serving as a catalyst for inspiring other states.

> *"Already since 2010, we have been living in the future which many Other countries are only just setting out towards or will attempt to reach sooner or later."* (Orbán, 2015b)

Orbán strengthens his case by using the topos of superiority, which links the perceived appeal of the "Hungarian Model" with the anticipation that other states in the Old World will imitate it. The prime minister's construction of the Self revolves around a second theme known as anti-liberalism. Orbán views liberal ideals as inadequate and insufficient in addressing the major challenges of the 21st century. Liberalism is often seen as a foe to nations, their cultural identity, and even Christian principles. The inadequacy of liberalism is rooted in the topos of burden (Boukala, 2016) and exemplified by a remark from his 2017 address. Orbán elucidates his understanding of liberalism by employing a parable involving a chicken and a group of foxes:

> *"…through dismantling the rules of economic self-defense, the foxes are let into the henhouse to engage in free competition. And, if the foxes keep winning, nobody can do anything about it. And if the poor, slowly-awakening citizens do after all dig in their heels, they'll be flooded with a few million migrants."* (Orbán, 2017b)

The weight of liberalism therefore provides justification for the development of the "Hungarian Model" as a system that opposes liberalism. Moreover, liberalism is inherently associated with ideas such as multiculturalism, open society, political correctness, and globalism when seen in a specific context. Orbán asserts that these principles are incompatible with the "Hungarian Model".

The third aspect of the "Hungarian Model" is recognised as sovereignty. In order to achieve its success and continued progress as a New World, the prime minister frequently emphasises the importance of maintaining sovereignty. The argument utilises the topos of history (Wodak, 2009, 2015), highlighting the significance of "*learning the lessons*" (Orbán, 2017c) from previous experiences. According to him, every time the Hungarian state has lost its sovereignty, it has been unable to achieve its full potential. Sovereignty has a crucial role in shaping the desired identity. Furthermore, the refugee crisis further reinforces this notion as the foundation for distinguishing oneself from the Other. Orbán incites action with rallying cries such as "...*how shall we stop Brussels?...*" or "...*we will teach Brussels...*" (Orbán, 2016b). According to his analysis, there is a continuous conflict between those who advocate for a Europe composed of independent nation-states and those who support the preservation of the existing unionist system.

Following the logic based on the topos of responsibility (Boukala, 2019), the Hungarian government is depicted as a guardian of Hungary and Europe. Hungary plays a significant role in safeguarding the so-called Balkan route by providing assistance to non-EU member states in terms of personnel and equipment to address the situation.

> "*We resisted; we drew a line, built a fence, recruited border hunters, and stopped them.*
> *We defended Hungary – and with it, incidentally, Europe.*" (Orbán, 2017b)

Hungary is actively upholding the traditional European way of life, which does not embrace multiculturalism and non-Christian principles. An instance of this conflict can be observed in the 2016 Hungarian referendum on migration (MacDowall, 2016), which symbolised the nation's assertion of

its own authority and opposition to the impact of external forces. Similarly, the opposition to quotas in the Council of the EU is portrayed as a defensive action that seeks to advocate for a Europe composed of individual nations. Conversely, the role of EU institutions is depicted in a contrasting manner. Orbán identifies the "*liberal European elites*" as the primary threat within the EU (Orbán, 2016b, 2017c).

5.3.1.2.   Fighting for Europe or against it?

Orbán's discursive construction of Europe as a social object assumes that there are two significant interpretations of Europe. Europe, when it is built with positive meanings, bears a resemblance to the creation of the "Hungarian Model". The concept represents a true Europe composed of nations that are defined by their Christian roots and governed by non-liberal politics based on traditional values. According to Orbán, the Europe of countries derives its identity from the collective historical inheritance of the past.

> *"We are the citizens of the same historical and spiritual Europe as Charlemagne,*
> *Leonardo, Beethoven, Saint Ladislaus, Imre Madách, or Béla Bartók. Our Europe is*
> *built on Christian foundations, and we are proud that it has accomplished fulfillment*
> *of human and spiritual freedom."* (Orbán, 2016c)

The discussion over the idealised portrayal of Europe revolves around the concept of locus amoenus (Wodak, 2009; Wodak & Meyer, 2009), which refers to the idyllic representation of pre-liberal age. The constructive construction of Europe serves as a guiding principle for the "Hungarian Model" and its future growth. The process of legitimising the Self is based on the inclusion of Europe inside the in-group category. Consequently, Hungary must implement policies that guarantee the preservation of this favourable establishment of Europe.

Furthermore, Orbán portrays Europe as a formidable adversary that poses a threat to the "Hungarian Model". In line with the concept of the Self, the important Other is formed based on five distinct themes (as shown in Figure 10) that contrast with the Self, resulting in a dichotomy. The term "Other" encompasses multiple characters, but it specifically refers to the current leadership in Brussels, which is commonly perceived as the European elites.

The primary theme that underlies the construction of this Other is the allusion to the old world. The current leadership in Brussels is seen as the ageing liberal establishment that is undergoing a decline. Orbán argues that in certain Western European countries, there exist "*parallel societies*" that are incapable of assimilating and present a danger to the future of European citizens (Orbán, 2016b). He asserts that radicals are actively recruiting terrorists across the continent and emphasises the rise of right-wing extremist parties. Additionally, he highlights the outdated nature of the concept of the Other. Ultimately, he depicts these cultures as deeply entrenched in a state of disorder and unpredictability:

> *"The people of the West feel that the history of their generation and future generations could indeed be at an end. And this is not an exaggeration or poetic license. Can they continue the way of life they inherited from their parents, or will something change forever without their consent – and indeed against their will? Will they have the right to their own culture?"* (Orbán, 2017b)

The prime minister's reasoning is based on the topos of uncertainty, which portrays the Other in a negative light. The perception of uncertainty reinforces the necessity to distinguish oneself from the Other, as embracing it would essentially result in the Hungarian Model following a similar trajectory.

Orbán attributes the collapse of once-thriving Europe to the failure of liberal politics. In his perspective, liberals undermined the democratic systems of these governments by advocating for multiculturalism, an open society, and globalism, while collaborating with non-governmental

organisations to restrict the desires of the nations. The prime minister expresses certainty over the lack of success of these liberal ideas and cites Brexit and Donald Trump's triumph in the 2016 presidential race as instances of rebellion (Orbán, 2017c). However, given the strong connection between the Other and these liberal norms and ideals, it is necessary to develop the "Hungarian Model" in opposition to them in order to avoid failure in Hungary.

Furthermore, the construction of the dangerous "Other" encompasses the concept of European elites endorsing the influx of migrants and extending invitations to refugees to enter Europe. There is a primary focus on the conflict between the ruling class and the general population, as the ruling class struggles to convince the populace to endorse their progressive programs.

"…Brussels has started to encourage those living in the poorer and less fortunate parts
of the world to come to Europe and to change their lives for something different."
(Orbán, 2016c)
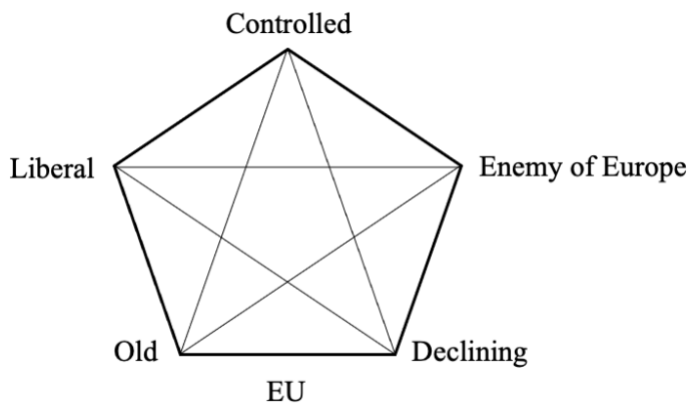
Figure 10 The negative construction of the significant Other based on the discursive analysis. Source: Author

The aforementioned association of Europe with efforts that seek to jeopardise the unity of European nations is epitomised in the topic "Enemy of Europe". The apparent risk lies in the collaboration of elites, smugglers, NGOs, and multinational companies, which is believed to be aimed at advancing a multicultural worldview and eradicating the old European way of life and cultural heritage. The EU, which is characterised by liberal policies, is not prioritising the interests of European

nations and instead serves the interests of foreign entities (Orbán, 2016b). Once again, the prime minister intends to isolate the elites and portray them as outsiders to Hungary and his vision of Europe. The Other is constructed as being controlled by adhering to foreign interests. This topic serves as a contrasting identity that poses a threat to the existence of the Self, while also creating conflict to repress the vision of Europe that the Self has. In all three talks, Orbán consistently places the responsibility for the mishandled issue on the Other.

Therefore, the examination of political communication conducted by Viktor Orbán demonstrates a profound correlation between the linguistic strategies used to shape identity and the policies he advocates as the leader of the Hungarian government. By prioritising the refugee crisis as a major political issue, I presented two reasons.

Initially, I contended that the refugee crisis served as a catalyst for ontological insecurity, hence amplifying the process of othering inside the prime minister's discourse. The findings of the Qualitative Content Analysis offer a compelling justification for this assertion. Moreover, the increase in the process of alienating others is happening at the same time as the resurgence of voter backing for Orbán's political party.

Furthermore, I argued that there is a correlation between the prime minister's construction of the Self-Other dichotomy and the policies implemented by the administration. Orbán's construction of a meaningful representation of the Hungarian identity allows him to justify his implementation of the aforementioned exclusionary measures. Figure11 illustrates the contrasting identity concepts that Orbán uses to express his perception, which are derived from the identified topics.

The research also confirms the idea that the Self's many manifestations of identity are influenced by the specific situation in which it interacts with its surroundings. The social identity of the "Hungarian Model" in-group is qualitatively distinct from the European Union as an out-group. By examining the distinction in how time is perceived, the split between the new world and old world

establishes a definitive demarcation between the two identities under investigation. Hungary, as a representative of the new world, rejects the antiquated European approach to politics and views it as an obsolete artefact. In order for the current process of self-liberation to be successful, there is no room for the presence of others. It is intricately linked to the recurring subject of growth and decline. If the Self were to acknowledge the Other as an integral component of its collective comprehension, it would undergo the identical observed deterioration. The two categories are intricately linked and serve as the fundamental driving forces behind the conflict.

Furthermore, positions are clearly demonstrated. Hungary takes on the role of Europe's defender by advocating for stronger anti-migration laws. It sees the European Union as a potential threat or adversary that goes against the inherent interests of European nations. Orbán envisions the future of Europe as one that emphasises nationalism and the collaboration of sovereign nations. Consequently, any suggestion of further supranationalism in the realms of refugee and migration policies is unequivocally dismissed. In contrast to other examined instances where the perilous location was confined to a single evident menace, Hungary faces several hazards. In addition to the EU, NGOs and civil societies are also encompassed by this classification. The interconnections between NGOs and the EU also indicate that the EU is being influenced, which demonstrates its opposition to the independent perspective of the Hungarian state.
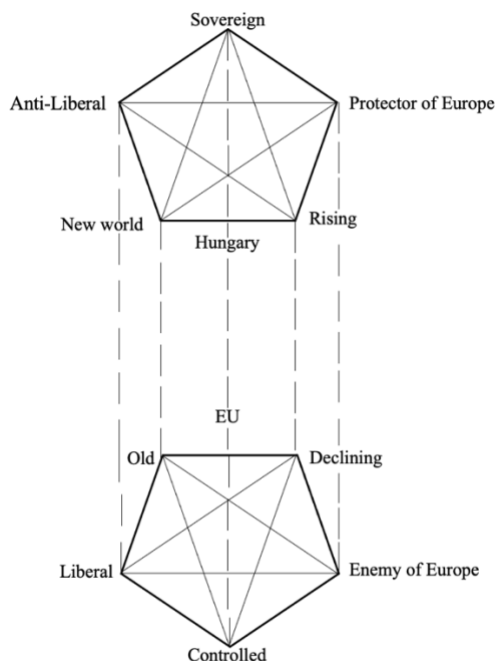
Figure 11 Self - Other dichotomy based on the discursive analysis of texts. Source: Author

Lastly, the work provides ample opportunity for additional research into various genres in the Hungarian discourse. In order to properly comprehend the intricacies of identity, it is necessary to include various forms of discussion, such as parliamentary discussions and debates in the media. Additionally, there is an opportunity to examine the "Hungarian Model".

5.4. Discursive analysis of transcripts in the Slovak parliament

The examination of the transcripts of the parliamentary discussions in the Slovak parliament, categorised under the topic "refugee crisis" (Figure 12), uncovered the subsequent main areas of focus: The code that appears most frequently is "Economic migrants" with 78 entries, which suggests a substantial focus on semantic framing of refugee/asylum seeker collective identities. Next on the list are "Illegal immigrants" with 57 entries, which brings attention to the significant issue of the legal status of refugees. The category with the third highest frequency is "Asylum seeker" (32 occurrences), indicating significant usage of this more impartial and compassionate term. Other significant

categories include "Invasion" with 10 entries and " Civilisational (European) threat " with 7 entries, suggesting concerns about the cultural or societal influence. Less commonly discussed are categories such as "Diseases" (8 entries), "Invitation" (4 occurrences), "Assistance to minors" (2 occurrences), "Migrants' qualifications" (5 occurrence), "Language barrier" (1 occurrence), and "Inexperience with..." (1 occurrence), indicating that these concerns receive very little attention.
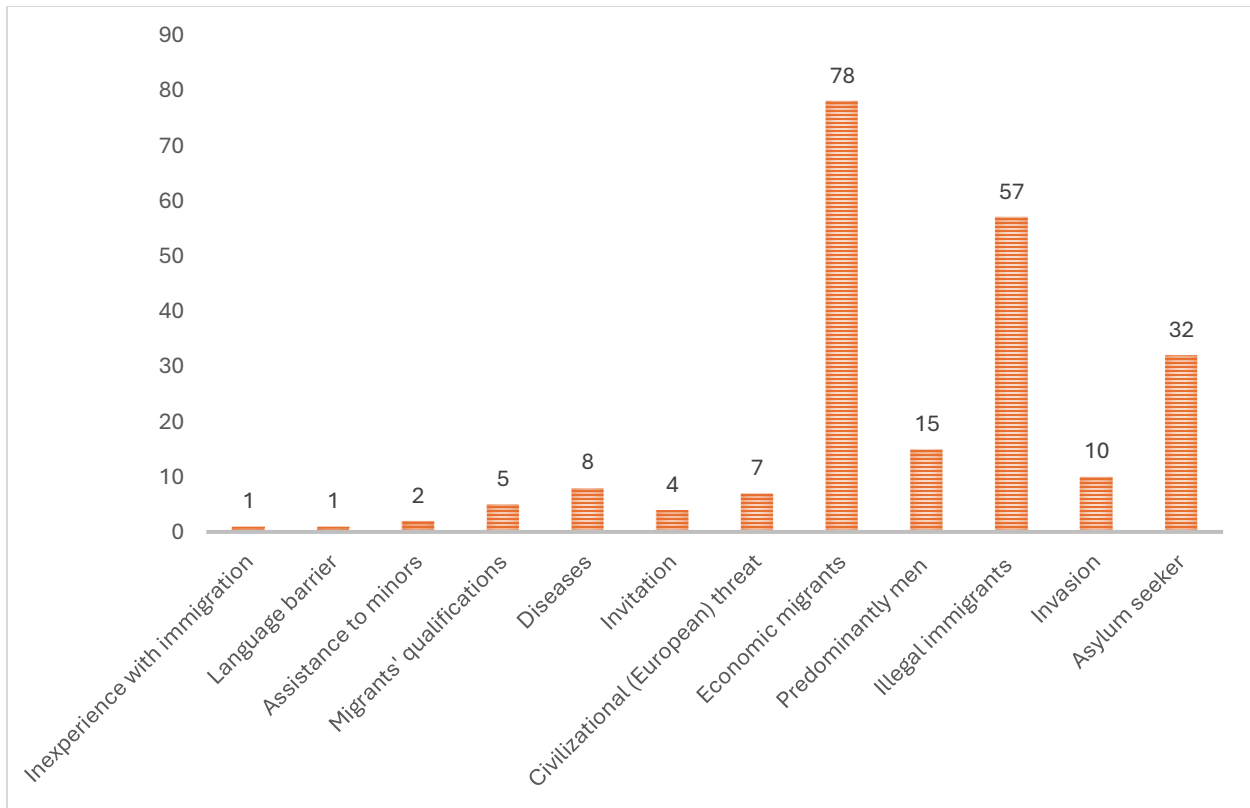
Figure 12 Codes representing the composition of the theme Refugee crisis (Slovakia)

In order to further explore the analysis of this thematic field, I put together a set of carefully chosen excerpts that accurately depict the overarching narratives found in the parliamentary discourse on this topic. It is important to highlight that within this topic, debates are complex and focus heavily on categorising refugees as either economic immigrants or illegal immigrants, which is a similar trend to the other cases that have been investigated. The critical aspect here is the distinction made by legislators between economic migrants and illegal migrants, as it plays a significant role in shaping the

collective identities of refugees and influencing the legislative and executive response to the European

Commission's redistribution mechanism.

Refugee crisis				
Extract	Author	Party Affiliation	Party Ideology	Discursive Elements
"Yes, people are afraid. And it is quite right that they are scared, because many of them have no information about what is happening, or they have the minimum of information, or they are already totally overwhelmed and manipulated by the propaganda of pro-Kremlin servers on social networks, whose obvious task is to destabilise and erode the European Union. And you, my dear colleagues, that is to say many of you, with great honour to the exceptions, instead of at least making an effort to reassure and explain the difference between refugees and economic migrants, you are scaring people. Just as you scared them with Hungarians five years ago, now you are scaring them with refugees, for the sole reason of proving your political existence, you are manufacturing a bogeyman that you then want to protect people from so that people can vote for you in the elections."	Juraj Miškov	SAS	centre-right liberal	Topos of fear, Topos of manipulation, Negative other representation, Topos of political gain, Topos of misinformation
"As far as economic immigrants are concerned, the solution is that we can stop the waves of economic immigrants by stopping the exploitation of people who live either in North African states or also in the Middle East. As for stopping the waves of refugees who are really fleeing in order to protect their lives from the terrorists of the Islamic State, there is again a clear solution, which lies in a concerted effort to stop the aggressor, to stop these terrorists, and here I really see a big deficit."	Helena Mezenská	OĽANO	conservative	Topos of economic burden, Topos of responsibility, Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of security
"But I'll say it again: War refugees need help, and under the Geneva Conventions, we must help. We can be unsociable and leave it to the Hungarians, the Greeks or the Italians, or we can be solidaristic and help them in the asylum procedure. Let us come to the economic immigrants. Ladies and gentlemen, nobody perhaps understands economic immigration better than Slovakia. For 150 years, the Slovaks have been economic immigrants. Did the tens of thousands of Slovaks living in England today go there as what? Do they happen to work there? Do they not work there, as my friends from eastern Slovakia say, because I can earn a thousand pounds here and at home I would be making ties in Michalovce for 400 euros? Are they not there for economic reasons? They work in those countries. So do not be surprised that economic migrants will always come from poorer countries to richer countries. The European Union is a richer country and Slovakia is a richer country than many of the countries from which these migrants come. So there will always be economic immigration."	Viliam Novotný	SDKÚ-DS	liberal-conservative	Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of solidarity, Topos of economic migration, Topos of historical analogy
"If, for example, to return again to the subject that has been discussed here, if we had long ago had the borders of the European Union, of the Schengen area, perfectly protected in all respects, if the asylum procedure had been taken seriously in all countries, and if it had not been an entirely formal gateway to an avalanche of economic immigrants, then the problem that we have to deal with today, as a much bigger, more pressing and more dangerous problem, would not even have arisen in the first place."	Ľudovít Kaník	SDKÚ-DS	liberal-conservative	Topos of security, Topos of responsibility, Topos of failure, Topos of burden
"It is only natural that most people who want to apply for asylum cross the border illegally."	Martin Poliačik	SAS	centre-right liberal	Topos of inevitability, Topos of legality, Topos of burden

Table 5 Example extracts for the identified theme Refugee crisis (Slovakia)

Furthermore, according to Tables 5 and 6, the discussion surrounding the semantic field of the "refugee crisis" is mostly shaped by opposition parties, particularly those with moderate views, rather than government representatives. Based on these tables, it can be inferred that the Slovak government justifies labelling refugees/asylum seekers as economic migrants to in accordance with their rejection of accepting refugees and their rejection of the European Commission's redistribution mechanism. Opposing to that narrative, the legislator in extract 1 asserts that this framing is utilised to influence public apprehensions and to denounce political adversaries who endorse policies regarding refugee admission. In addition, the adverse effects of misinformation and the burden of responsibility on public figures to provide accurate information have also been highlighted in this narrative. This demonstrates that the opposition party representatives, specifically SAS (a centre-right liberal party), were cognisant of the government's use of negative portrayals of refugees and asylum seekers for its own agenda. Additionally, the statement indicates that the legislature emphasises the decline of public confidence caused by pro-Kremlin propaganda, which, in other words, fosters fear and undermines the stability of the EU. Here, a legislator from the opposition party SaS refutes false information and alarmist tactics, asking for a rational and evidence-based approach to addressing the refugee issue and its administration. This approach of the government described by the opposition legislator in his words also makes comparisons with past tactics employed against Slovakia's Hungarian minority, suggesting a topos of manipulation in arguments.

Similarly, the opposition party legislator from the OĽANO party (conservative) expresses a comparable viewpoint, emphasising the importance of differentiating between economic migrants and refugees. This is important because numerous lawmakers and government officials employ the linguistic technique of generalisation to shape the perception of refugees as economic migrants or even unauthorised immigrants, in order to oppose any system of redistribution. The term "stop the exploitation" (extract 2) demonstrates an understanding of the importance of showing support for

refugees and also contributes to the conversations about recognising that individuals are escaping uncontrollable circumstances such as terrorism. The legislator's argument is in this case founded on the concept of humanitarianism, emphasising the significance of tackling the underlying factors of economic migration.

Refugee crisis				
Extract	Author	Party Affiliation	Party Ideology	Discursive Elements
"But much more important is the return of illegal migrants. Firstly, so that those potential other migrants realise that the same thing awaits them. Indeed, smuggling is an extremely lucrative billion-dollar business. If, for example, 700 000 refugees pay an average of USD 3 000, that is more than USD 2 billion for a couple of rubber boats, and the smugglers will gladly take those rubber boats. But also because, if the illegal immigrants are not turned back and are distributed all over Europe, it will only create the conditions and encouragement for more and more potential immigrants to try it too."	Ľubomír Galko	SAS	centre-right liberal	Topos of security, Topos of deterrence, Topos of economic burden, Topos of criminality
"During our Presidency, we expect the European Border Guard to become operational, which will improve the ability to manage external borders and carry out returns of illegal migrants. The Slovak Presidency will also focus on legal migration in order to make residence in the Union more attractive for highly skilled migrants, such as start-up founders and entrepreneurs."	Peter Pellegrini	SMER-SD	social democratic	Topos of security, Topos of responsibility, Topos of economic opportunity
"They are migrants who are here illegally. They have arrived without meeting the administrative conditions of our migration laws, whether in Hungary or in other countries. They are persons, and it has been said, with a security risk. We do not know who they are, we do not know whether there are also people hiding from prosecution in those home countries. We do not know which countries they are from. Today, it is 'in' to throw away your passport and everyone will say I am from Syria."	Róbert Madej	SMER-SD	social democratic	Generalization, Topos of security, Negative other representation, Topos of legality
"Today, only the blind can no longer see that the European Union is run by unelected bureaucrats who trample on the rights of Europeans and are doing everything they can to destroy Europe and the European peoples. And they are not doing this by accident. It all looks like organised crime to me. You are talking about illegal migrants. Well, illegal migrants. But what are you going to do, and what are we going to do, with the hundreds of thousands of migrants that Turkey is going to legalise for us? They will no longer be illegal migrants and different rules will apply to them. Do you think, and is there anyone else in their right mind who believes that anyone, that they will send us highly trained and qualified professionals from Asia and Africa?"	Natália Grausová	ĽSNS	far-right	Topos of conspiracy, Negative other representation, Topos of failure, Topos of security
"Believe me, just as we were told last year that we had to accept this migration wave because we are not able to stop it anyway, this is what we were told throughout Western Europe and here at home, then Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary, later supported by Austria, came to an agreement with one small country, Macedonia, which closed its border with Greece, and suddenly the Balkan route is no longer working. Why? Well, because those people who are also breaking the law in that sense, who want to come here illegally, they watch the television, they watch the media, and they see: is it going? It's not. They're not letting themselves in at the border anymore? We'll take a look. Did they break through in that Igumen, or whatever it was called, there on the Macedonian border? They didn't. All right, well, then we can't do that anymore."	Milan Krajniak	Sme Rodina	right-wing populist	Topos of security, Topos of cooperation, Topos of responsibility, Topos of deterrence

Table 6 Example extracts for the identified theme Refugee crisis (Slovakia)

The extract 3 from the legislator of the SDKÚ-DS party (liberal-conservative) demonstrates a humanitarian perspective. The legislator justifies support for refugees/asylum seekers by drawing a historical parallel with Slovak immigrants who left the country for economic reasons. The legislator also highlights the obligation outlined in the Geneva Convention to assist war refugees and emphasises the importance of solidarity rather than placing a burden on countries like Hungary, Greece, or Italy. It is evident that this extract is from a period when Hungary was greatly impacted by the Schengen crisis and required assistance from its allies. However, the situation changed as the number of incoming persons declined.

In reference to this, another lawmaker revisits the subject of European Union border security and asylum processes (extract 4), contending that efficient border management and stringent asylum protocols are indispensable for handling migration. This argument, utilising the concept of security, presents the absence of protection as a catalyst for economic migration. The legislator this way suggests that the European Union's inability to safeguard its borders weakens the entitlement of refugees to be accepted by Slovakia and the EU.

Further investigation reveals that some legislators express their sympathy for refugees and asylum seekers by recognising the dire conditions that force people to cross borders without the proper documentation. In contrast, extract 6 gives a contrasting perspective by highlighting the unlawful components of migration policies and human smuggling. The statement depicts refugees as being in the EU without legal authorisation, emphasising the consequences of utilising smugglers' assistance and suggesting that addressing illegal immigration may result in repeated efforts at illegal migration. This demonstrates that not all liberal opposition legislators maintained a positive stance towards refugees and asylum seekers. It also indicates that the party spectrum did not serve as the sole determinant between those who showed empathy towards migrants as a collective and those who opposed any form of assistance for them. In this regard, this position aligns more closely with the

viewpoint of the coalition representative and the Speaker of the House, Peter Pellegrini. They differentiate between illegal immigrants and "highly skilled" immigrants, suggesting that the favourable depiction of migrants is driven by their economic impact rather than a sense of solidarity. The speaker's stance is more realistic in terms of distinguishing between various groups of refugees. In addition, the speaker examines the duties of the EU presidency (held by Slovakia at that time), with a particular emphasis on the establishment of the European border guard agency (Frontex) and the management of the EU's external borders. This highlights that the governmental discourse places greater importance on security rather than humanitarian concerns.

A it was presented before; this research predominantly focusses on cases from discourse when legislators deliberately manipulate the portrayal of refugees and asylum seekers. As an illustration, the lawmaker affiliated with the dominant governmental party, SMER-SD, categorises refugees as unauthorised migrants, employing the notions of risk and threat to emphasise the assumed security difficulties brought about by immigration. This framing is predicated on the process of granting legal status to refugees, which is contingent upon actions like as relinquishing passports and making fraudulent assertions. Furthermore, this narrative becomes increasingly extreme with the far-right ĽSNS party. In extract 9, the politician expresses disapproval of the EU's leadership and raises concerns about its immigration policies, specifically questioning Turkey's involvement. The legislator employs a sceptical style of speech, making allegations against EU officials, claiming their intention is to "ruin Europe and its people", and making sweeping generalisations about immigrants, suggesting they lack skills or qualifications.

In the context of Critical Discourse Studies, the data in the tables exemplify language use that construct and reinforces ideological positions on the Schengen crisis. The divergence strategies employed by certain parties shed light on how their discourse influences public perception, policies, and attitudes towards refugees and asylum seekers. Populist and far-right discourses employ

emotionally charged language to strengthen social hierarchies and exclusion. Even seemingly neutral data-driven approaches by Social Democrats can contribute to a narrative of crisis, which can then be used to justify greater state intervention and control. Furthermore, it is evident that centre-right liberals and conservatives prioritise the ethical aspects of fear manipulation while advocating for a more equitable and compassionate approach. The next section bring this discussion further it shows how the Prime Minister shaped of the discourse about the Schengen crisis.

5.3.1. Robert Fico

Understanding the rationale for the Slovak government's resistance to the quota system put forth by the European Commission requires an analysis of the legitimisation techniques the prime minister used in his parliamentary speech, with particular attention to their pragmatic and semantic aspects. This discourse feature is unique and serves to promote a strategy of legitimacy. There are no exceptions here, and the analysis that follows provides support for five microlevel strategies: seeking approval based on norms, identifying refugees based on their specific semantic roles, presenting quotas along with positive self-representation and negative representation of others, and finally, influencing the Prime Minister's beliefs and assumptions by providing evidence in the form of epistemic positioning to establish shared knowledge.

5.4.1.1. Looking for consent

As I have previously proposed, the Prime Minister's legitimacy strategy depends on several microlevel measures that are essential in moulding the discourse. At first, in line with previous well-documented cases of discursive legitimacy (Hart, 2011a, 2011b; Rojo & van Dijk, 1997), the Prime Minister begins his statement by seeking consent from the members of the opposing political parties in parliament. During his address, he consistently focused on these legislators, encouraging them to support the government's position on the quotas. Typically, the employment of rhetorical techniques, such as

appealing to emotions with phrases like "*we are in the same boat*" or "*we can probably agree on this*" (Fico, 2015a), serves the purpose of demonstrating unity and solidarity against the group identified as "*them*" in this particular context, which encompasses both refugees and European institutions. The metaphorical representation of a boat traversing the centre of the ocean assumes that the sailors rely on one another. Therefore, analogies involving boats generally suggest the need for cooperation.

Furthermore, the deictic phrase "*we*" has two interpretations. Its primary target audience consists of all legislators. In this specific case, Fico is not swayed by political philosophy. Moreover, in a broader context, the term "*we*" also aims to include the entire population of Slovakia, as indicated by the statement "…*and every one of us will be at risk, whether we sit in the seat of a KDH or SMER, or whether we are people who live in eastern Slovakia, in the centre, or in the west*" (ibid.). Fico expresses appreciation to the Slovak opposition for their substantial support in order to obtain approval from the opposition parties (ibid.). Unlike past situations, the parliamentary opposition has not disputed this political issue. Therefore, the attempt to obtain normative consent is mostly symbolic and aimed at the general public. The objective is to cultivate a feeling of cohesion and preempt any possible undermining discussions from the media or non-governmental organisations.

5.4.1.2. Quotas

The Prime Minister's address principally centres on the rhetorical construction of the reddistribution mechanism suggested by the European Commission, which is was then pending ratification by the Council of the EU on 22 September. On a small scale, this technique relies on two considerations. Initially, quotas and their implementation are regarded as illogical; thus, the rationale for rejecting them is founded on what Van Leeuwen and Wodak term as "*rationalisation*" (Leeuwen Van & Wodak, 1999). In this context, rationalisation emphasises the legitimacy of such a course of action. Moreover, the

adoption of the quotas is expected to increase the existential uncertainty of the European Union. The following exctract gives both perspectives.

> *I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Slovak opposition for its broad*
> *support for the Government's rejection of the introduction of quotas as something which*
> *is irrational, which does not address the root of the problem, and which distracts*
> *attention from the mobilization of the European Union's forces to stem the flow of*
> *immigrants and to restore the European Union's ability to protect its external border*
> (Fico, 2015b).

In this section, Fico outlines three presuppositions that he presents as objective truths rather than personal viewpoints. Firstly, it is presumed that quotas are an illogical tool. Furthermore, quotas not only divert attention inside the European Union but also undermine the EU's ability to efficiently protect its borders in light of migration. In addition, the speech includes other sections that depict quotas as having adverse effects on both Slovakia and the EU. The quotas are characterised as a factor that endangers the global influence of the European Union and serves as a constant source of disputes inside the Union (ibid.). The speaker utilises the rhetorical strategy of a slippery slope by predicting that the implementation of quotas will ultimately result in the creation of "*refugee supermarkets*", where member states can selectively pick their refugees.

> *Yesterday, a newspaper commentator yesterday likened it to a marketplace, writing:*
> *Better not to even think about what would happen if the European Commission's plan*
> *of mandatory quotas came to pass. The consequence of this plan would be the*
> *establishment of a kind of refugee supermarket, where individual countries, sellers,*
> *would jostle for migrants, customers. It is obvious that there would be further chaos, new*
> *mutual recriminations, and further erosion of the rules of the European Union (ibid.).*

The primary objective of a newspaper comment is to pre-emptively counter criticism, thereby safeguarding the commentator against accusations of political incorrectness or dehumanisation by any

member of parliament or media representative as the Prime Minister simply replicates the discourse of another individual. The inclusion of terms like confusion, recrimination, and erosion further enhances the notion that quotas have negative repercussions. In addition, Fico links the quotas to both the EU and refugees, implying that they will act as a motivation for a growing influx of refugees into the EU. In essence, the act of categorising quotas as "*supermarkets*" aims to diminish their level of support. The deleterious effect of quotas on the European Union is clearly apparent in their influence on the domestic political landscapes of the member states. The subsequent extract showcases an illustration presented by the Prime Minister:

> *If you follow the Austrian political scene, you must confirm that the traditional political parties are taking a beating, so speak, even the bases of some of the traditional pro-European parties in Austria are beginning to be in the hands of parties that have nothing to do with the integration of Europe, with Europe as such (ibid.).*

In this instance, the argument is based on the expected consequences of quota implementation inside Austria's internal political environment. It is important to mention that Fico has made numerous remarks. He claims that the political situation in Austria is currently undergoing a significant change, with a shift away from established political parties that support European integration towards factions who are solely against European integration. Moreover, in his capacity as a spokesman of conventional political factions, he tacitly expresses his concern regarding this profound change. This worry is further validated when he publicly declares "*we believe in the integration of the European Union* " (ibid.). Both cases illustrate that the resistance to quotas is mostly linked to the effect on Slovakia as a member state of the European Union, rather than constituting a direct danger to Slovakia itself. Furthermore, as I previously indicated, these worries are in line with the beneficial aspect of rejection, as not doing so might lead to Slovakia experiencing similar negative consequences.

5.4.1.3. They are not true refugees

The reason for rejecting quotas is directly connected to the Prime Minister's depiction of refugees in his address. Like earlier examples of elite discourse (Bocskor, 2018; Brubaker, 2017; Kluknavska et al., 2021; Talay, 2020), Fico frames his argument by ascribing negative qualities to refugees through three narratives. Initially, he persists in his endeavour to evade the disapproval of external individuals, thus shaping the portrayal of refugees based on the prevailing depiction of economic migrants or "*bogus refugees*" (Neumayer, 2005), rather than resorting to overtly racist rhetoric. Fico argues that the majority of individuals who migrate to Europe should be classified as economic migrants rather than refugees or asylum seekers. According to Fico, around 90% of these individuals are seeking employment opportunities in Europe (Fico, 2015a). Fico relies on storytelling in the absence of empirical evidence to substantiate his assertion:

> *Well, if someone is in Serbia and flees from Serbia to Hungary, is there a war in Serbia? If someone is fleeing from war, they must be happy in Serbia. If they are not happy in Serbia, they should be happy in Hungary, if they are not happy in Hungary, they should be safe in Austria, but in Austria last weekend 14 thousand people arrived, only 700 applied for asylum, everything else fled to Germany. So let us tell the truth, at least here, if someone else does not want to say it, and let us say that this is primarily migration of an economic nature (ibid.).*

Due to the process of identity construction, those who cross the external borders of the EU are categorised as "*not true refugees*" (Wodak & van Dijk, 2000) and hence should not receive the same treatment as genuine refugees. He posits that these persons who migrate to the EU with the specific aim of finding job have a conscious desire to take advantage of the social safety systems of the EU member countries. Alternatively, they would choose to remain in Serbia, a country recognised for its safety, and would not attempt to escape to Germany. This concept is further strengthened by the

precise vocabulary choices of the words "*primarily*" and "*must*". Furthermore, it is important to highlight that the speaker tries to propagate his own opinions to the public as a universally recognised knowledge among the participants in the communication scenario by using the deictic phrase "*us*". In contrast, those who have a different opinion are shown as persons who are reluctant to articulate the truth.

The second element of his story centres on the intentional contrast between the local community and the refugees. Elite discourses often focus on depicting discrimination against ordinary residents rather than refugees, thereby casting the home population as victims. In this extract, Fico aims to communicate this idea by contrasting an unsupported narrative about migrants receiving monetary aid with the impoverished conditions experienced by Slovak elderly.

> *I was a little dismayed when I heard about the allowances that economic migrants are supposed to receive, for example, 650 euros a month of pocket money. How on earth are we supposed to explain this to our pensioners? After all, we have sacrificed whole generations of people in the name of reforms, and our people live on EUR 300 a month after working for 40 years, some of them for more than that* (Fico, 2015b).

The passage demonstrates that Fico does not provide any supporting proof for his claims and instead relies on a straightforward appeal to the emotions of the general audience. The narrative follows the victimisation method suggested by van Dijk (2011c). This method entails depicting refugees who receive allowances upon their arrival in the country, contrasted with persons who have made "sacrifices" but continue to live in poverty circumstances. This part not only exemplifies the topos of burden (Wodak & van Dijk, 2000), but also strengthens the previous notion of not true refugees. According to this account, refugees not only receive a greater sum of money than the general population by only announcing their refugee status, but they also receive it promptly, unlike regular pensioners who have laboured for 40 years or more.

In addition, although the message does not contain open anti-migratory and racist language, Fico directly links the refugee problem with a clichéd depiction of terrorism. He achieves this by employing a strategic semantic move of epistemic positioning or evidentiality, notably directing attention towards the Slovak Information Service and other European Secret Services as authoritative sources:

> *We cannot ignore our own intelligence and information from the media that refers to news sources. For example, that there are 11,500 Salafists in Germany who are trying to recruit new followers among young immigrants, or British reports that the Islamic State has sent 4000 of its agents into the refugee stream to set up new cells in the European Union. I add to these other reports that say that it is the Islamic State, in particular, that is organizing the smuggling of people and that is gaining huge resources from it. It is no secret that such a ticket, in quotation marks, can sometimes cost between 3000 and 5000 euros, or dollars, and this revenue can then be used by the Islamic State for its activities in Europe, which is extremely dangerous* (Fico, 2015b).

This extract illustrates various approaches employed by the Prime Minister to build a correlation between the topic of migration and terrorism. Firstly, it is apparent that he articulates his case in a manner that allows for minimal dissent. Right from the start of the first sentence ("*we cannot ignore*"), the listener(s) are compelled to acknowledge the veracity of his assertion. Subsequently, this concept is reinforced by the expression "*it is no secret*". Furthermore, Fico seeks to augment the importance of his assertion by integrating a more intricate level of detail in his depiction. Simultaneously, the Prime Minister employs a typical approach of seeking support from authorities, namely the secret services, who offer intelligence on terrorists in several European nations. The reason behind this method is based on his endeavour to establish the credibility of his assertions. Politicians' statements are typically not very reliable. However, when they present their allegations to authorised authorities, such as the state's secret service, their claims become more significant.

This extract also demonstrates the correlation between the epistemic positioning and the unfavourable portrayal of a specific actor (Germany). Fico defends his refusal of the quotas by indirectly implying that Germany is a nation infiltrated by the terrorist group Islamic State. Germany's credibility is compromised not only by its staunch endorsement of the relocation mechanism, but also by the potential for the acceptance of this mechanism to result in comparable circumstances in Slovakia as those encountered in Germany. It is expanded upon by referring to smugglers, who act as a conceptual connection between the phenomenon of migration and the presence and actions of terrorist organisations.

Furthermore, apart from the previously indicated implications, there are two other implicit connotations included in the excerpt. Fico suggests that by linking migration and terrorism, implementing the relocation process will lead to greater benefits for the Islamic state. Once again, this aids in the advancement of his policy. Moreover, similar to previous cases, there is an implied association between the Islamic faith and terrorism, given that the majority of the migrants were followers of Islam. This stereotype is frequently encountered in debates against migration (Krzyzanowski & Wodak, 2008; Wodak, 2015, 2017) and is employed to establish a perception of peril, described as 'very hazardous', which the leader must combat on behalf of the populace.

5.4.1.4. Actor description: positive vs. negative representation

CDA analysts have generally maintained that actor description inevitably requires depicting actors who, by virtue of their institutional nature, possess the ability to make decisions. This principle is relevant to both racist discourses and anti-migration discourses (van Dijk, 1993; Wodak & van Dijk, 2000). In this analysed situation, the two actors exerting this authoritative power are the European institutions, particularly the European Commission, and Slovakia, represented by the government led

by Robert Fico. Van Dijk and other academics (Burroughs, 2015; Hart, 2011a; van Dijk, 2011c) contend that in situations when institutions collide, the elite discourse tends to give precedence to presenting themselves in a positive light while depicting others in a negative manner. The concept of rationality serves as the primary value that differentiates and characterises the two factions in Fico's speech. In his speech, he consistently encourages MPs to participate in a logical and reasoned debate regarding the current problem (Fico, 2015a). He describes the conflict within the EU institutions, including the efforts to establish an automatic redistribution system, as illogical and "*non-pragmatic*" (ibid.). This reinforces the stance taken by the Slovak administration and underscores the imperative of refusing to comply with the implementation of quotas.

In addition to reason, which serves as a differentiating characteristic in the connection between oneself and others, Fico principally concentrates on the individual assessment of Slovakia, the European Union, and its member states. Regarding positive self-representation, he emphasised two crucial elements: guaranteeing the security of persons and maintaining established regulations and standards.

> *I want to assure you, ladies and gentlemen, that the government and all the security and state protection forces will do everything in their power and capabilities to minimize the security risks arising from the situation, and we are cooperating with all the forces from other European countries (ibid.).*

Fico utilises the deictic phrase "*I*" to express the speech act of assuring lawmakers that security is the primary focus of his government. This message seeks to affect public emotions by demonstrating a strong commitment "*do everything in their power*", regardless of the present communication circumstances. Fico's argument emphasises the significance of security and indirectly includes the concepts of threat and responsibility (Krzyzanowski and Wodak, 2008; Wodak, 2017, 2015a). First and foremost, he has an individual obligation, as well as his administration in a more extensive context, to guarantee the safety and protection of the populace. Furthermore, in the event that the government

fails to respond as specified, the repercussions of the crisis could potentially endanger the welfare of the entire population.

> *I would like to stress that we have respected European standards and rules and have built an impenetrable Schengen border, strictly applying international European asylum law and procedures. Those of you who have had the opportunity, especially perhaps the Members of the relevant committee, to see the border in Ukraine, that is, the strict protection of the Schengen border, that is how every single state should behave, including Greece, Italy, in particular, those countries whose Schengen borders are now being crossed by migrants flooding into Europe. And we will continue this policy consistently, because we respect the rules of the European Union that are in force (Fico, 2015b).*

The second section emphasises the need of following the "*European standards*" and hence forbids any kind of border crossing. The inclusion of the term "*impenetrable*" in this context corresponds to the "Fortress Europe" argument advocated by populist and nationalist right-wing politicians (Wodak, 2015, 2017). These leaders seek to limit the entry of individuals from developing nations to European borders. The address consistently highlights Fico's dependence on impersonal authority (Leeuwen Van, 2007), specifically in the shape of rules and norms. In addition, he describes the argument about penalties as a disagreement "*over the rules of the European Union*" (Fico, 2015a).

As previously suggested, Fico consistently highlights the superiority of Slovakia as a positive example compared to other European countries, emphasising the correctness of his government's decisions. According to this concept, it is evident that he specifically speaks to legislators, particularly the members of the relevant committee, in order to foster a sense of solidarity and portray Slovakia in a positive light as a model actor. The primary focus of the "*relevant committee*" in this situation is to protect his argument by utilising the knowledge and experience of these MPs. Furthermore, the comparison serves a more intricate purpose, specifically to shift the responsibility for the problem

onto other member states by enumerating their negative activities. Thus, the Slovak administration is equipped with a stronger and more persuasive stance to justify its judgements.

The metaphor "*flooding*" is employed rhetorically to depict the large number of refugees entering the EU's external borders. Metaphorically, the term "flood" is associated with disastrous occurrences that have the capacity to present substantial harm to ordinary humans. Just with natural disasters, the general population is also anticipated to be at risk in this scenario, requiring the government to take action and reduce the dangers.

Fico's main point on the representation of the EU and its institutions is around the notion of insecurity. It is evident that Slovakia and its administration prioritise the protection of their citizens, whereas the European Union is portrayed as being 'unsafe'. This is consistent with the earlier thesis that the EU is losing its worldwide influence because of the debate over quotas. Contrary to Slovakia's role as the enforcer of norms, adoption is seen as a process that undermines rules. Once again, the use of the term "erosion" obliquely alludes to natural calamities and symbolically suggests that the EU would face a similar fate unless the implementation of quotas is stopped.

5.5. Discursive analysis of transcripts in the Czech parliament

The Qualitative Content Analysis of the transcript in the Czech parliament revealed that the code "Illegal immigrants" was the most often identified code (93 entries) within the theme "Refugee crisis" (Figure 13). This indicates that the legislators placed significant attention on the legal aspects of the situation. Next is the section on "Diseases" which contains 62 entries. This section highlights concerns about public health hazards related to refugees. It is worth noting that this focus on public health risks is unique to the Czech situation and differs from the other two examples reviewed. In addition, when comparing the code "Illegal immigrants" to the category "Asylum seeker" (which has 32 entries), it becomes evident that legislators placed less significance on the latter. This indicates that the

acknowledgement of refugees in a more impartial or compassionate manner was not a prominent aspect of the prevailing narrative. Following that is the code " Economic migrants " (28 entries), which specifically focusses on the delegitimization of refugees/asylum seekers and their rights to apply for protection. The study has revealed that the code "Civilisational (European) threat" was also an important code, with 14 entries. This code indicates that Czech legislators viewed refugees and asylum seekers as a potential threat to European culture and society, contributing to their negative perception of them. The remaining codes were categorised as less significant, beginning with codes such as "Migrants' qualifications" (11 occurrences), "Assistance to minors" (5 occurrences), "Children of immigrants" (5 occurrences), and "Invasion" (5 occurrences). Next, we proceed to analyse the chosen excerpts that exemplify the general narrative in the parliamentary discourse.
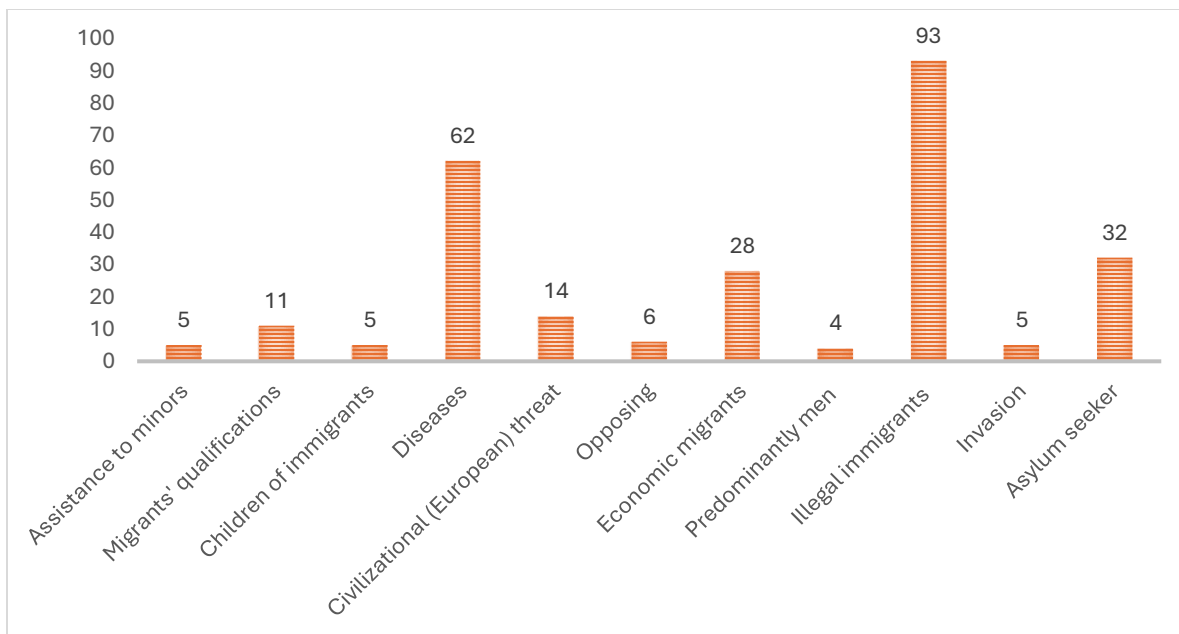
Figure 13 Codes representing the composition of the theme Refugee crisis (Czech Republic)

The analysis of the Qualitative Content Analysis of the Czech Republic reveals that one of the most dominant issues linked with the Schengen crisis is the code diseases, showing that healthcare issues around the most dominant concerns associated with refugees/asylum seekers in the Czech

parliamentary discourse. The portrayal of refugees as a health risk or sometimes a threat was interestingly not limited to far-right parties like Úsvit and was also present in the speeches from other political representatives including Social Democrats. Via Table 7, we can see a notable example of this through which the legislator of the far-right party use the strategy of securitization to portrait refugees as potential health threat to the Czech population (Extract 1). This strategy involved emphasizing different healthcare standards and vaccination statuses between the Czech Republic and the countries from which refugees originate, thus creating a polarization between "us" and "them".

Furthermore, the stigmatization is evident in arguments suggesting that refugees bring unknown diseases to European populations, employing the topoi of health, threat, and security. For instance, a legislator (Extract 2) argued against a redistribution mechanism for asylum seekers by citing not only security and economic concerns but also the threat of diseases. This argument also introduced a racial element by differentiating refugees based on their origin, specifically targeting people from sub-Saharan Africa and generalizing them into a collective threat. Similarly, another legislator, Martin Lank, linked Islamic communities to health threats, suggesting that refugees pose a risk of epidemic outbreaks and radicalization. This further reinforced the topos of threat in the discourse surrounding refugees. From the semantic and rhetorical perspective, the denomination of refugees/asylum seekers as a health threat is based on hand topos of health and topos of danger, but the tendency to make differences among people based on their country of origin shows the prevalence of the topos of difference traditionally used by far-right actors.

Refugee crisis				
Extract	Author	Party Affiliation	Party Ideology	Discursive Elements
"I am sure you will agree with me that refugees are leaving countries where health care is at a much lower level than in Europe and the Czech Republic. There is practically no vaccination there, there are diseases that our medical students learn about only from textbooks and that we have completely eradicated over time. So these very diseases, ladies and gentlemen, are common and fatal in their native countries."	Jana Hnyková	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of health, Topos of fear, Topos of difference, Topos of danger
"And not just security, but I think it's about the economy, I think it's about health, of course, because people who come from sub-Saharan Africa are not vaccinated, they have diseases that we're not prepared for."	Marek Černoch	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of health, Topos of fear, Topos of economic burden, Topos of preparedness
"There are many Islamic communities in Europe where it only takes a small impulse to radicalize. The health risk is also not negligible. No one can guarantee that dangerous diseases will not spread."	Martin Lank	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of radicalization, Topos of health, Topos of fear, Topos of security
"Statistics on detentions of irregular migrants in the European Union for the first half of 2015 show a significant increase. Compared to the same period last year, the number of migrants increased from 91 000 to 225 000, an increase of 143%. The most dynamic developments were on the Western Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean migration routes."	Bohuslav Sobotka	Government	social-democratic	Topos of numbers, Topos of crisis, Topos of urgency, Topos of security
"The most significant group of irregular migrants are Syrian citizens, of whom more than 45 000 were detected in the European Union in July this year. Almost 25 000 people came from Afghanistan, followed by Eritreans by a considerable margin with around 7 000."	Bohuslav Sobotka	Government	social-democratic	Topos of numbers, Topos of crisis, Topos of urgency, Topos of security

Table 7 Example extracts for the identified theme Refugee crisis (Czech Republic)

Except for the denomination of refugees/asylum seekers is a health threat, there's also an interesting aspect of the parliamentary discourse identified by the analysis which is in this case the differential determinacy used to refer to refugees/asylum seekers. Political elites and other actors used terms like economic migrants, illegal migrants, and asylum seekers, depending on the intended portrayal of refugees. Far-right representatives like ÚSVIT frequently used "illegal" or "economic migrants," while centrist and leftist parties preferred "asylum seekers" or "irregular migrants" indicating a more neutral political discourse overall in the Czech Republic.

Within the broader framework of analysis, the aforementioned parts demonstrate that Czech political leaders utilised language to shape and strengthen ideological stances pertaining to the Schengen crisis. Examining the situation through the lens of Critical Discourse analysis, we observe

contrasting approaches employed by right-wing populists and government officials in shaping and being influenced by public relations. These methods serve to maintain particular power structures and social hierarchies. Right-wing populists, such as the ÚSVIT party, frequently use rhetoric that focusses on fear, health hazards, economic burdens, and security concerns. Jana Hnyková and Marek Černoch utilise the topos of health and topos of fear to portray refugees as bearers of diseases that have been eliminated in Europe, presenting them as significant health risks. This discourse corresponds to the topos of difference and topos of danger, which emphasise the contrast between "us" (Czech citizens) and "them" (refugees), thereby strengthening a narrative of exclusion and threat. Martin Lank's construction of the topos of radicalisation advances this objective by depicting refugees as potential origins of radical Islamic movements and security risks. Moreover, the rhetorical construction employed by right-wing populists seeks to elicit intense emotional responses and portray refugees as perilous 'outsiders.' This narrative is consistent with their ideological position, which places emphasis on national security and the safeguarding of native citizens rather than humanitarian considerations. Next, right-wing populists employ health hazards, economic costs, and security threats as justifications for implementing restrictive immigration laws, thereby strengthening power structures that marginalise refugees/asylum seekers.

On the other hand, government officials, especially those affiliated with the social-democratic faction such as Bohuslav Sobotka, tend to employ a more evidence-based and seemingly impartial strategy. Sobotka's use of the topos of numbers and topos of urgency establishes a factual foundation for the pressing nature of the refugee situation. This technique aims to justify policy responses by using scientific facts, emphasising the urgency and need of timely and coordinated action. Although this approach may seem more logical and less influenced by emotions, it creates a narrative of crisis and urgency that can support strict measures and government control. At the same time, it does not

actively challenge the narratives of the far right, indicating that the Prime Minister and other representatives have allowed these narratives to shape the overall discourse.

In addition to what is evident, it is also noteworthy that far-right, right-wing populists often portray refugees and asylum seekers as a zero-sum game, wherein the presence of migrants inevitably jeopardises the welfare of the native population. On the other hand, the government's focus on statistical facts and urgency creates a conversation that highlights the widespread extent of the crisis. This portrays the state as a logical entity that must handle a challenging circumstance.

5.5.1. Bohuslav Sobotka

The next section of this chapter will focus on the Critical Discourse Analysis of the individual addresses made by Czech Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka. Just like the last example from Slovakia, the speeches of the Czech Prime Minister were examined by searching for the linguistic categories outlined in the methodology portion of this thesis. We are analysing the macrostructures of the Prime Minister's utterances, and I have selected eight crucial subjects for the inquiry.

The prime minister's discourse primarily focuses on elucidating migration patterns and providing comprehensive statistics on the influx of individuals crossing the boundaries of the European Union and approaching its member nations. He consistently highlights the fluidity of migration routes, namely those that traverse Western Balkan states and finally reach the Mediterranean borders of the European Union. Moreover, the Prime Minister intentionally exaggerates the issue by highlighting the escalated figures since 2014 and emphasising the deterioration of the crisis, particularly at the Hungarian borders.

Furthermore, the prime minister dedicates a substantial section of his speeches to assessing the European Union's response, both from the perspective of the European Union as a whole and from the perspective of individual member states. The Prime Minister's speech prominently discusses

the European Commission's proposal to address migration by implementing relocation programs and redistribution procedures. Regarding securitisation, he also discusses the necessary national security measures that the Czech Republic must and will need to adopt in order to address the issue. There is a significant focus on regional collaboration, namely among the Visegrad countries, Slovakia and Hungary, as well as with neighbouring Austria.

Furthermore, the Prime Minister dedicates a substantial portion of his time deliberating on asylum policies and the integration of refugees into Czech society. Bohuslav Sobotka, unlike the prime ministers of Slovakia and Hungary, does not evade the issue of potential refugee acceptance through the European Commission's redistribution process. Furthermore, he discusses the matter of Social Security benefits for asylum seekers, making a clear distinction between those who are legally entitled to be welcomed and those who are there unlawfully. Last but not least, there are apparent traces of consideration in his speeches regarding employment opportunities and language instruction for asylum seekers who are received by the Czech Republic.

Furthermore, with regards to assessing cross-European measures aimed at resolving the crisis, the Prime Minister highlights two conflicting viewpoints. Primarily, he unequivocally opposes the European Commission's suggested mandatory redistribution mechanism introduced in the summer of 2015, while arguing for a commitment to a collective European resolution while explicitly advocating for a comprehensive approach that tackles both the crisis and the repercussions of its beginning.

Additionally, the Prime Minister underscores the significance of differentiating between lawful refugees and unauthorised or economic migrants when evaluating the efficacy of the European Commission's past suggestions, including the quota-based redistribution system. It is noteworthy that, as will be exemplified in the subsequent examination of specific excerpts from the prime minister's

speeches, he often labels asylum seekers as illegal or economic migrants who aim to exploit the social security systems of European Union member states, specifically the Czech social system.

Finally, he acknowledges the wider global circumstances, specifically mentioning the ongoing civil war in Syria, the involvement of the Islamic state in exacerbating the crisis, and the imperative of backing international initiatives to avert further deterioration of the situation. Ultimately, the Prime Minister acknowledges that the Czech Republic is unable to handle the Schengen crisis on its own. Instead, he recognises the necessity of a united European stance.

5.5.1.1. Consent Seeking and Unity Building

In relation to the quest for approval, the Prime Minister's speech on September 15th made only two attempts to include the audience and cultivate a sense of solidarity. The main focus of the Prime Minister's address is to analyse the issue and explain the specific measures being implemented by the Czech government, rather than aiming to create agreement among the audience. Furthermore, the Prime Minister utilises an instructive linguistic style, effectively conveying factual information to the audience. The only reference to an effort to convince the other members of the parliament may be found in the following excerpt.

> *Thank you. Dear Mr. President of the Chamber of Deputies, honorable deputies, I am very glad that the Chamber of Deputies has included this item on its agenda and that it allows me to speak on the floor of the Chamber of Deputies and inform about the government's current policy on this matter. I think that I do not need to emphasize on the floor of this Chamber of Deputies that the migration situation in Europe is extremely serious.*

This extract utilises formal designations and organised phrases to communicate the importance and solemnity of the parliamentary setting. In order to increase the effectiveness of his communication with both legislators in the parliament and the general population, the Prime Minister

carefully use the phrase "migration situation" as a neutral and formal way of discussing the issue, thus avoiding the use of language that evokes strong emotions. Moreover, he is actively seeking support for his ideas by interacting with a wide variety of stakeholders, directly communicating with them and seeking their endorsement. This is mainly demonstrated by the phrase "...we will need the support of churches, municipalities, cities, employers..."

5.5.1.2.   Crisis Interpretation and Government Actions:

With regards to the interpretation of the crisis, the prime minister utilises evidentiality by presenting statistical data many times in his address to support his claims. The discourse thoroughly highlights the precise portrayal of the government's protocols, the operations of European organisations, and offers a detailed report on the border situation, including the tally of individuals who have passed Europe's external borders. As mentioned in the thorough examination of the Czech Prime Minister's speeches, a crucial element of his strategy to strengthen his claims entails using statistical information and presenting an overview of the current crisis scenario. In this sense, the prime minister aims to utilise accurate quantitative data to assess the scale of the refugee problem, therefore portraying it as a tangible and significant challenge backed by empirical evidence. The references of the 143% increase is to underscore the magnitude of the crisis's impact on the whole European Union while the utilisation of evidentiality in this particular context assists to underscore the present state of affairs of the European Union and its constituent nations. Describing the context of the crisis, the Prime Minister pinpoints two primary origins of the crisis: the Western Balkans and the migrant routes in the eastern Mediterranean. Once again, pinpointing specific regions aids in directing the audience's attention towards the problematic entrance points and establishes a basis for critiquing the member states of the European Union that are situated along these routes. Furthermore, the Prime Minister's

understanding of the problem is based on similarities, particularly in assessing the different influxes of refugees heading towards the European Union:

> *Compared to the same period last year, the number of these increased from 91,000 to 225,000, an increase of 143%. The most dynamic development was on the Western Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean migration route. In recent weeks, the crisis has escalated particularly in Hungary. The route via the central Mediterranean, i.e. from Libya, now shows relatively stable numbers. The Western Balkan route has seen an increase in the number of external border crossings from 6 000 in the first half of last year to more than 67 000 this year. The most significant group of irregular migrants are Syrian citizens, of whom more than 45 000 were detected in the European Union in July this year. Almost 25 000 people came from Afghanistan, followed by Eritreans by a considerable margin with around 7 000. The development of the number of applications for international protection in the European Union has been very dynamic recently. In 2014, the number of applications increased by 43%. Last year, there were 660 000 applications for international protection in the European Union, and in the first six months of 2015, we have already recorded 450 000 applications for international protection. In June this year alone, almost 100 000 people applied for international protection in the European Union. The most important groups among the applicants are citizens of Syria and Afghanistan, but also of Kosovo, Albania and Eritrea.*

Additionally, the Prime Minister concurs that Syria is the primary origin of the surge of migrants. Nevertheless, he effectively highlights the varied backgrounds of the refugees who are coming to Europe, thereby laying the foundation for his arguments concerning both undocumented and economic migrants. In this respect, he asserts that refugees from Syria and Afghanistan, nations impacted by both internal and external problems, possess valid reasons to request asylum within the European Union. Nevertheless, individuals originating from Albania, Kosovo, and Eritrea are not included in this categorisation and may consequently be designated as "illegal" or "economic" migrants.

5.5.1.3. Distinction of Migrant Categories

As previously mentioned, the Prime Minister distinguishes between two groups of people who arrive in Europe: unauthorised "illegal migrants" or "economic migrants", and legitimate asylum seekers. This distinction is important in shaping the identity of refugees and is evidently founded on the argumentative strategy of the topos of differentiation. The following excerpts illustrate how this dictation is conveyed in the speech.

> *The most significant group of illegal migrants are Syrian citizens, of whom more than 45 000 were detected in the European Union in July this year. Almost 25 000 people came from Afghanistan, followed by Eritreans by a considerable margin with around 7 000. (15.9, Pos. 1)*

The Prime Minister's statement espouses an ideological perspective that categorizes migrants based on their nationality and legal standing, thereby endorsing the belief that legal status and border control should be given priority in discussions on immigration. While the Prime Minister does not use the word "*they*" to refer to a specific group, the categorization of refugees as an out-group is based on distinguishing them as individuals associated with specific national factions. This aligns with the discourse in the parliament that if the Czech Republic were to accept a specific number of refugees, it should be contingent upon a conditionality rule. This stance opposes the proposed quota system, which prohibits the use of selective international protection based on the preferences of individual member states. The reference to "*July this year*" establishes a specific timeframe for the Prime Minister to address the refugee crisis in parliament. Moreover, labelling refugees as "*illegal*" implies a negative other-representation that conveys a moral judgement and reflects negative attitudes towards this

particular group. The Prime Minister intends to simplify the discussion by presenting precise numerical data, thereby establishing an objective foundation for the discourse.

> *Statistics on detentions of irregular migrants in the European Union for the first half of 2015 show a significant increase.*

Moving forwards, the Prime Minister employs evidentiality once more to emphasise his portrayal of the out-group's identity, by providing statistical evidence regarding the state of affairs in the European Union starting from 2015. The Prime Minister utilises a rhetorical approach in the given statement, employing the topos of numbers to emphasise the worsening condition in Europe. This specific rhetorical device enhances the objectivity and authenticity of his speech, resembling a point of reference after a pause. Furthermore, it is clear from the previous passage that the Prime Minister employs a rhetorical strategy focused on the topos of danger. This is seen in the categorisation of immigrants as "illegal", which can be perceived as a possible threat to the European Union, as the concept of unlawfulness and the breach of regulations have negative consequences for the overall stability of the system. The Prime Minister unequivocally expresses his disapproval of persons who do not fulfil the legal prerequisites by affirming, "*We need the return of economic migrants* ", in accordance with the discussion on the legality of accepting potential asylum seekers.

The Prime Minister's efforts to undermine the legitimacy of admitting migrants amid the crisis are not only predicated on the unlawful character of immigration. Additional allusions to the topos of threat indicate that the Prime Minister's viewpoint on refugees is commonly associated with references of terrorism.

> *The first risk is the return of Islamic State fighters to Europe. Many of these fighters are returning, returning to Germany, returning to Austria, returning perhaps to Serbia, and to other European countries. These people obviously pose a potential risk, and we are cooperating in this matter with the security services of other European countries, and*

this cooperation is very intense. The second potential risk that exists and is pointed out by some foreign media is the possibility that within this significant wave of migration, some people may deliberately come to the territories of the European Union in order to support some terrorist activities. That is why we are monitoring very closely what is happening in connection with migration on the territory of the Czech Republic.

Within its discourse structure, the Prime Minister's extract serves as a classic example of a slippery slope argument. The comment implies that there is a potential for Islamic State combatants to come to Europe together with other refugees, leading to an increased security threat. The association between the involvement of individuals with military experience and refugees in potential acts of terrorism leads to a narrative where security concerns become more important, often overshadowing other factors like human rights. Furthermore, the passage illustrates a clear ideology of differentiation between "us" and "them". This division strengthens a sense of favouritism towards the in-group, while perceiving the out-group as a cohesive and menacing entity.

5.5.1.4. Quotas

The Czech Prime Minister's position on the European Commission's proposed quota system is characterized by a firm rejection of any compulsory redistribution system, aligning with the discourse in parliament. However, it is argued that the Czech Republic would be willing to adopt such legislation if it were based on a voluntary basis. In this sense the Prime Minister strongly emphasizes his position by firmly rejecting the use of quotas as a solution to the migration problem, stating "*I hope we can agree here that quotas are not the solution to the problem of migration...*":

That means we are saying: we don't want a permanent redistribution mechanism, but let's build the aid on the basis of voluntary contributions from individual countries.

The Prime Minister's inclination towards voluntary contributions, rather than a permanent mechanism, underscores the significance of individual countries' sovereignty and their capacity to exercise autonomous decision-making. From a Critical Discourse Studies perspective, this decision is based in the argumentative techniques of the topos of autonomy and topos of national sovereignty. Furthermore, with the use of the deictic phrase "we," the Prime Minister creates a narrative that emphasises unity with other European Union countries who prioritise individual national liberty and authority over collective, mandated solutions. Subsequently, the Prime Minister further justifies the rejection of the quota system suggested by the European Commission by highlighting its potential future impact on the European Union.

> *The redistribution of legitimate refugees can only make sense if the system I spoke about is functioning. The biggest problem Europe could face would be the approval of quotas in a situation where the protection of the external border and regulation of migration is not ensured. This would only serve as an invitation for further economic migration, as we have seen in the past weeks. Simply in such a situation, it is not possible for the Czech government to allow the approval of a system of mandatory reallocation and mandatory quotas. (Bohuslav Sobotka, Pos. 12)*

In this statement, the Prime Minister restates the slippery slope argument, suggesting that the lack of border protection and migration regulation, along with the acceptance of quotas, necessarily leads to an increase in economic migration. Furthermore, the Prime Minister formulates his argument by employing rhetorical devices, including the topos of responsibility and the topos of consequences. He highlights the potential adverse consequences, particularly the rise in economic migration, that may arise from the implementation of quotas without adequate border security and migration regulation. By this he asserts that the authorities should prioritise robust border protection and migration management before contemplating any quota system.

5.5.1.5. Self-Representation of the Czech Republic

The technique of actor's description emphasises the Czech Republic's proactive and involved portrayal of itself, which is in line with the discussions in the parliament. The Czech Republic is depicted as a proactive contributor to border security, actively engaged in conversation with neighbouring states, and providing viable solutions for the entire European Union. This is further exemplified by the forceful declaration *"Our stance remains unwavering and I am firmly convinced of its consistency."*

Regarding the European Union's actual description, the Prime Minister attempts to act as an understanding actor while using neutral language and avoiding direct blame for the crisis on the European Union and its institutions. This includes the European Commission and the European Council. One way to describe the speech would be that it seeks to defuse the situation while remaining diplomatic. The absence of metaphors, irony, or euphemisms emphasizes this point even more. Furthermore, there isn't a clear attempt to polarize the discourse. With this statement, the prime minister makes the most forceful criticism of the European Union and its institutions. Rather than portraying the Czech Republic as an outsider to the EU and its institutions, the prime minister affirms the government's efforts to find a middle ground:

> *We are interested in a common European solution to the problem. National measures that are not coordinated will only lead to the disintegration of the common migration policy, limitation of the free movement of persons and Schengen cooperation, and ultimately, perhaps even to the collapse of the entire Schengen system. It must be admitted that the current system of migration policies of the European Union is not working. It is particularly not working under such strong pressure, to a significant extent brought about by the largely ignored four-year civil war in Syria. After four years of this war,*

such a strong migration pressure has been created, which essentially leads to the collapse

of the existing functioning of the Schengen system.

In this statements, the prime minister unequivocally endorses a collective European approach to address the refugee crisis, thereby underscoring the significance of the European Union's stance. He argues against additional fragmentation resulting from the policies proposed by European institutions, such as the quota system. Instead, he emphasizes the necessity of European cooperation, highlighting the importance of collaboration. In addition, the utilization of the deictic phrase "we" indicates a collective perspective.

5.5.1.6. V4 Countries Cooperation

The second participant in the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic's debate, widely discussed and significantly influenced by this process, is the regional cooperation of the V4 countries. Unlike the neutral stances of the Prime Ministers on the European Union and its institutions as the main actors in the crisis, the Prime Minister actively fosters the shared identity of the V4 cooperation and presents the Czech Republic as a constructive member of this group. The below-presented extracts illustrate that the group and its members are portrayed as being actively participated in regular talks and negotiations during the Schengen crisis. Their objective was to present themselves as active contributors inside the European Union, even while they unilaterally opposed the redistribution mechanism. Throughout the designated period, the Prime Minister consistently provided the legislators in the Czech parliament with updates on the activities and political stance of the group:

When I return to the conclusions of the V4 summit, we clearly placed emphasis on

maintaining the voluntary nature of the European Union's solidarity measures. This

way, each member state can build on its own experience, proven procedures, and

available resources.

As we can see in the above-presented extract, the Prime Minister's use of the deictic expression "we" signifies a collective position of the V4 countries. Moreover, it is evident from this statement that the Prime Minister consistently articulates the group's dissent towards the policies of the European Union, both in this excerpt and through their actions within the European Union. However, the V4 group, as members of the European Union, has made it a trademark to prioritize flexibility and respect the autonomy of individual member states when it comes to solidarity measures during the crisis. This narrative on self-determination further emphasizes the concept of national sovereignty, which leads to acknowledging the diverse experiences and resources of member States. It implies an understanding that a uniform approach may not be effective in all cases. The essence of collaborative cooperation within the V4 group can also be observed via the Prime Minister's statement "…*from the beginning, we have held the view…*".

> *This meeting of the V4 heads of government had two goals. Firstly, to declare that the V4 countries want to continue to be active in the EU solutions to the migration problem and that they are ready to offer and implement the necessary supportive and solidarity measures, either at a bilateral level or at the level of the European Union, in all areas where it makes sense. It is not true that we are not showing solidarity. On the contrary, the second goal of the summit was to present a comprehensive set of common priorities of the V4 countries as a contribution to the debate on migration and refugee policy that is taking place across the European Union. With colleagues from Slovakia, Poland, and Hungary, we agreed on common priorities. These priorities are contained in a joint statement, which represents the main conclusion of the V4 summit that took place in Prague. The starting point of the common position of the V4 countries is especially that the migration situation cannot be solved by one partial measure, but a comprehensive approach is needed, it is necessary not to focus only on solving the consequences of migration but to focus primarily on the causes. The European Union must fully utilize all its policies and resources.*

Finally, in this extended excerpt, The Prime Minister confirms the V4 group's active involvement in the EU's efforts to address the refugee crisis. In addition, from a semantic standpoint, the statement by the Prime Minister also highlights the V4 group's willingness to provide and execute essential assistance and solidarity measures, both on a bilateral basis and within the European Union. This demonstrates the Prime Minister's intention to present the group in a favourable light as an active participant. Additionally, the Czech Republic and the group emphasise a positive self-representation, highlighting a comprehensive approach that advocates for addressing both the consequences and root causes of the refugee crisis in a holistic manner. In addition to promoting a positive self-image, the Prime Minister also challenges the notion that the V4 countries lack solidarity with the EU. Instead, he advocates for the unity of the V4 in presenting a cohesive set of priorities in the EU's migration debate, while still acknowledging and respecting the individual positions and policies of each member state. The group's approach can be described as a delicate balance between prompt reactions and enduring resolutions. Moreover, the statement strengthens the process of constructing a shared identity and the cohesion of the V4 group by demonstrating their capacity to collectively tackle European challenges.

6.   Discussion and conclusion

Through three carefully chosen case studies—the parliaments of Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Hungary—I aimed to investigate the complex and fascinating phenomena of refugee identity construction and the Schengen crisis as a social phenomenon at the macro and micro level of parliamentary discourses. Specifically, I sought to understand how these identity constructions can reveal the rationale behind national governments' decisions regarding the admission of asylum seekers and negotiations over the European Commission's proposed redistribution mechanism, also known as the quota system. To that end, the main objective of this research was to create a framework that would enable the examination of these discourses at the level of individual speeches made by lawmakers, government officials, and other representatives in national parliaments. The goal was to develop an explanatory model that would demonstrate the process of identity construction from the micro to the macro level, demonstrating a bottom-up approach.

In order to achieve this, the research framework in this thesis employs a holistic constructivist approach to examine how political elite narratives and perceptions shape and produce social identities of refugees as a social group through discourse. As a result, the theoretical foundation for this study draws from a wide range of constructivist works, from Alexander Wendt's framework of the self-other national identity (Wendt, 1987) construction to a more complex and micro level approach that draws from post-structuralism and symbolic interactionism. The chapter on this topic provides a theoretical framework for understanding and interpreting the production of this course within the national parliaments of the chosen nations. It suggests interpreting this phenomenon through the post-structuralist dialectics of self-other differentiation, which leads to specific policy actions—in this case, Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic's rejection of the proposed redistribution mechanism and their admission of asylum seekers.

From a methodological perspective, the thesis makes use of a multi-method approach that combines Critical Discourse Analysis and Qualitative Content Analysis as two sequential techniques for revealing the identity constructions that are explicitly present in political elite discourse. Gathering the data that was publicly available on the websites of the relevant parliaments was the first step in the analytical process. Next came the first stage of data reduction using the qualitative software MAXQDA (De Lerma & de las Mercedes Botija Yagüe, 2022; Gizzi & Rädiker, 2021). With the use of a dictionary search to find text passages that were relevant to the study's problem I aimed towards the downsizing of the data. Following the accurate identification of these segments, the next step involved coding each text segment that was relevant to the problem under study. At the conclusion of the analysis, it was possible to ascertain which politician had spoken the most about the Schengen crisis, as each code represented a single politician. In addition, this phase supplied information about the distribution of speeches made by the various politicians, allowing me to present the individuals who made the highest and least amount of contributions to the discourse production on this subject. Next, the data was arranged in accordance with the specific politicians. Finding the themes that form the framework within which the various political elites constructed their perceptions about the Schengen crisis and the identity construction of refugees and asylum seekers was the main goal of this stage of the analysis. As previously mentioned, the results of this analysis revealed 11 thematic fields.

The empirical analysis that followed the Qualitative Content Analysis phase concentrated on interpreting certain segments that best reflected the political elites' discourse. This was accomplished by first going over the entire data set multiple times, after which a small number of speech extracts were selected, and these were analysed employing Critical Discourse Analysis. This stage of the analysis uses the study of specific discourse properties, such as positive and negative other-representation, metaphors, irony, slippery slope arguments, and topoi, to uncover how and what strategies political elites employed to construct the identities of refugees within the individual thematic fields.

The thesis concludes with a discussion section that compares the cases under study and interprets the empirical findings. It's important to note that the final interpretation of the findings does not assert a causal relationship between the foreign policy decisions made by the governments of the participating countries during the Schengen crisis and the identity constructions that were identified within the studied discourse. Conversely, the explanation offers an interpretation of the relationship between these foreign policy decisions and identity constructions through macro level discourses, but it does not rule out the possibility that other pertinent factors could also influence the political elites' decision-making in the chosen nations. It is outside the purview of this thesis to concentrate on additional aspects of the crisis in order to provide a more thorough analysis.

Now in a more detailed manner I aim to address and discuss the findings of the first stage of the analysis namely the Qualitative Content Analysis. The first and most important step for our analysts was to pinpoint, examine, and comprehend the thematic context in which the discourse reproduction of identity constructions occurred. This allowed us to address the question, "What thematic categories do political elites assign to the political crisis?" and gain an understanding of how political elites and party representatives constructed the collective identity of refugees during the Schengen crisis. As previously detailed, the Qualitative Content Analysis conducted in the first phase of the analyst's work revealed 11 thematic categories that can be interpreted as the thematic context or environment that the legislators had to navigate with. Figure 31 illustrates that security was the most prevalent theme across all cases examined. This fact implies that the main thematic context in which the identity construction discussed above occurred was focused on how national security concerns were connected to the Schengen crisis, the increasing number of people entering Europe as refugees and asylum seekers, and particularly to the cases under study.

Next, one of the most intriguing inferences made from the Critical Discourse Analysis aided by the results of the Qualitative Content Analysis was that that sovereignty was a key concern of the

political discourse in all three case studies confirming the findings of scholars who previously studied the Schengen crisis (Fabbrini & Zgaga, 2024; Stepper, 2016; Wiczanowska, 2017). The focus was on protecting sovereignty from any threats, particularly economic and illegal immigrants, and in the case of Hungary and its prime minister, there was also a specific emphasis on the European Union and its institutions, such as the European Commission. Using MAXQDA, I generated a code relationship map that illustrates the connection between the code sovereignty and the most often associated codes. Specifically, these codes are the ones that appeared in the top 10% of the frequency. This way I have established six codes: terrorism, Schengen, illegal immigrants, border/fence, security, and quotas. Figure 14 displays the frequency ratio. The graphs indicate that the following important issues were prominent in the discussions surrounding sovereignty during the 2015 Schengen crisis in Slovakia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. From a broader perspective, this connection between codes effectively reinforces the earlier discoveries in this thesis, which demonstrate the importance of maintaining national authority over immigration policies, ensuring security (Štefančík et al., 2021), and addressing the actual and sometimes assumed legal and logistical obstacles presented by the arrival of refugees and asylum seekers.
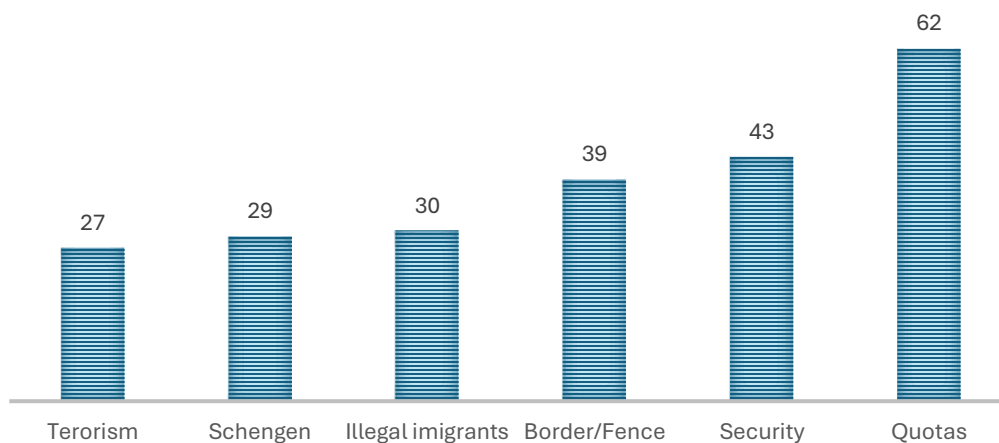
Figure 14 Most frequently co-occurring codes with the code security. Source: Author

Next, we can move towards Figure 15, which presents a code map that was constructed using MAXQDA. This map demonstrates the convergence of different codes inside the same portion of the studied text. This graph illustrates the cumulative codes assigned to each of the three case studies, illustrating the degree of overlap during the whole period of the three parliamentary sessions. Sovereignty is depicted as a peripheral yet essential concept in all three countries (Figure 15). It permeates discussions on various subjects without being strongly linked to any specific subject. Therefore, sovereignty had a crucial role in shaping governmental decisions and public debates. Furthermore, the conspicuous positioning of the term "quotas" in the graph signifies that EU refugee quotas were a significant point of contention, underscoring a shared concern among the three nations regarding the impact of externally imposed refugee redistribution mandates on their national sovereignty. The significant correlation between "security" and "illegal immigrants" underscores the previously addressed concerns regarding the apparent increase in illegal immigration, which legislators and government officials directly link to national security in all three countries. Moreover, while "terrorism" is a significant concern, its comparatively lower prominence in relation to "Security" and "Illegal Immigrants" indicates that it was a part of the broader security discourse but not as central. This suggests that while terrorism was a notable issue, the primary focus was on the broader security implications of the refugee situation. The strong closeness between the terms "border/fence" and "Schengen" highlights a conflicting relationship between the need to uphold the principles of the Schengen Agreement (which Slovakia and Hungary have invoked to oppose quotas) and the practical necessity of implementing border control.
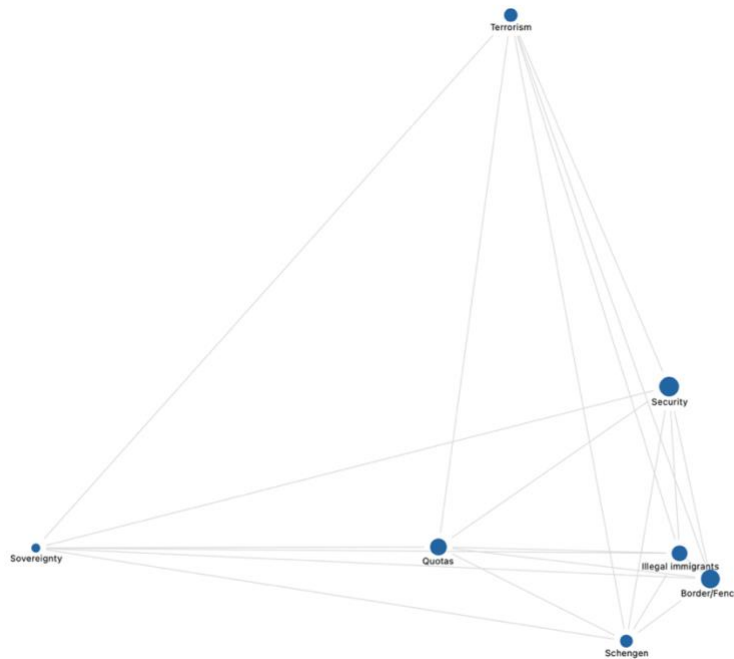
Figure 15 Intersection of codes in segments (all studies cases). Source: Author

When examining the level of studied cases, it becomes evident that there are both similarities and distinctions among them. Let us begin by examining the situation in Hungary, as depicted in Figure 16. Upon examining the code quotas, it becomes evident that it is situated in the central position of the network and is strongly linked to matters such as unlawful migrants, border/fence, and Schengen. This highlights that the EU quotas in Hungary were a significant point of connection, similar to the other three cases. It is perceived in the political discourse as a direct challenge to Hungary's sovereign authority to regulate its own immigration policies. Despite being somewhat distant, security is intricately linked to quotas, illegal immigrants, and border fences, suggesting the significance and interconnectedness of these topics in the conversation. The noteworthy aspect here is the close proximity and clustering of the terms "illegal immigrants" and "border/fence" in the code, indicating a strong emphasis on the legislators' perception of the crucial role of illegal immigration and the necessity of physical border controls in ensuring national security and sovereignty. Moreover, the pairing signifies a somewhat strong connection where the need for strong border controls to manage

illegal migration was recognised. This need was then demonstrated by Hungary through the construction of a fence on its border with neighbouring southern countries (Glied & Pap, 2019; Rheindorf & Wodak, 2018) . The government and state representatives of Hungary communicated this action as a display of Hungary's sovereignty. In general, sovereignty is a dominant theme that influences discussions on numerous subjects. It is not directly linked to any specific issue, but it strongly influences the debates in parliament, along with six other codes. Moreover, although terrorism is a matter of worry and was often used by lawmakers and government officials as a reason to oppose the admission of refugees and asylum seekers, its placement in the graph suggests that it was considered within the context of a larger security narrative rather than being treated as a separate and independent issue.
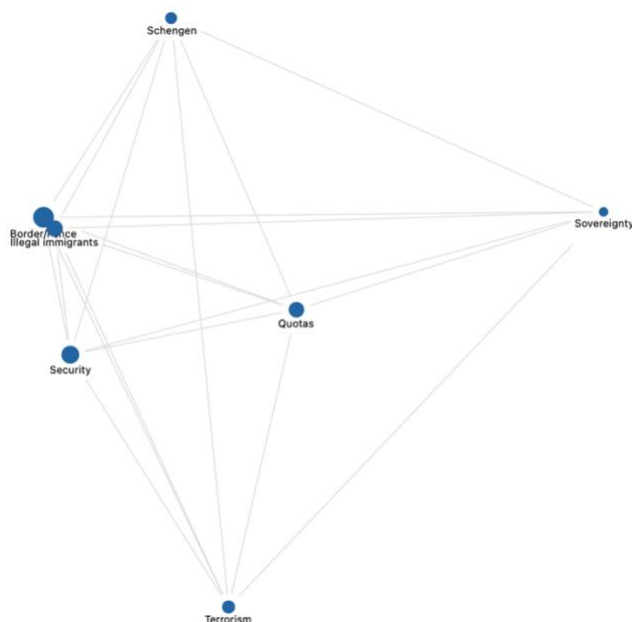
Figure 16 Intersection of codes in segments (Hungary). Source: Author

In the Czech case (Figure 17), we can observe that quotas play a prominent role once again. In addition to that, we can observe distinct disparities in the Hungarian speech. There is no correlation (clustering) between any pair of codes indicating that the codes "illegal immigrants," "border/fence,"

"Schengen," and "security" are equally significant in constructing the narrative about the quotas. What is noteworthy is that the code Schengen and the code border/fence are relatively distant from the code quotas. This suggests that in the Czech Republic, which is not a transit state and has a low influx of refugees/asylum seekers, the protection of the external borders of the European Union or the borders of the Czech Republic was not the main focus of political discussion.
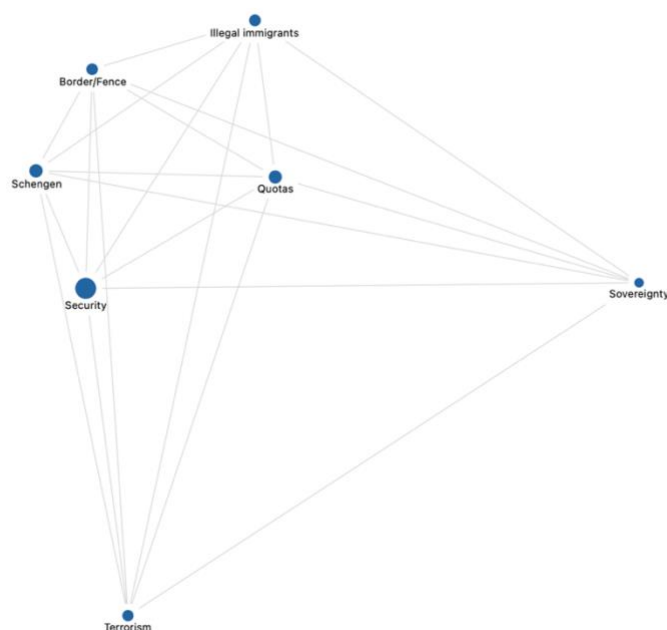
Figure 17 Intersection of codes in segments (Czech Republic). Source: Author

Upon detailed examination of the Slovak instance (Figure 18), significant disparities can be observed in comparison to the preceding two cases. Quotas do not hold a central position in the political discussions of the Slovak parliament. Essentially, the discourse lacks a core code, and sovereignty is far more distant from the other codes than to the prior two situations, where quotas were somewhat closer to this code. Moreover, it is noteworthy that quotas are closely associated with the term "illegal immigrants" in a cluster. This indicates that, in contrast to the Hungarian example, the discussion surrounding quotas was predominantly connected to the concept of illegal immigration rather than the concept of border/fence. This is logical considering Slovakia's geographical position, as it is a country that was not immediately affected by the crisis and instead operated as an bystander

state. It is noteworthy that the term "Schengen" is more closely associated with this group than the term "border/fence," indicating that the issue of the European Union's external boundaries was more prominent in the discussions of the Slovak parliament compared to the topic of safeguarding national borders.
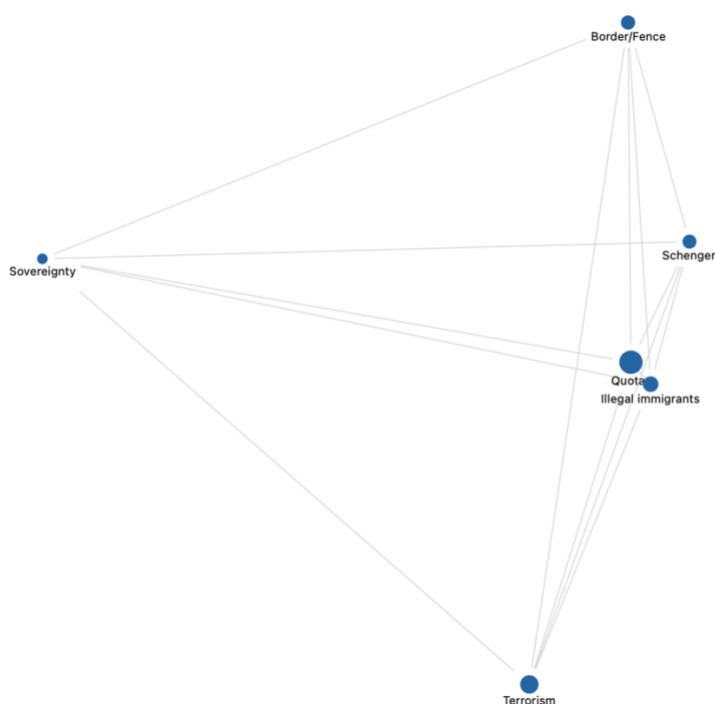
Figure 18 Intersection of codes in segments (Slovakia). Source: Author

The next objective of this thesis was to comprehend how political elites create the identities of refugees/asylum seekers, building on the thematic environment analysis. In order to achieve this, the discussion section will list and compare the ways in which the prime ministers of the countries under study shaped the identities of refugees through their speeches both inside and outside of parliament. First, it is important to recognise that all three of the cases under study have both similarities and differences. From the standpoint of a comparative analysis, it is safe to say that, while the prime ministers of Slovakia and the Czech Republic base their identity constructions on the myth that asylum seekers are illegitimate, the prime minister of Hungary places refugees as a secondary

concern in his annual addresses, focusing more on the juxtaposition of Hungary's national identity with the collective identity of the European Union.

The primary narrative that supports the identity formation resulting from the previously mentioned delegitimization of asylum seekers as lawful refugees pertains to Robert Fico's tenure as Slovakia's prime minister. Throughout the analysis, I was able to pinpoint multiple occasions in which the Prime Minister called certain refugees "not true refugees" and questioned the reasons behind their arrival in Europe. The Prime Minister's construction of his narrative regarding asylum seekers and refugees can be attributed to his attempts to legitimise Slovakia's government's stance on refugees, particularly with regard to the redistribution mechanism proposed by the EU. He does this by asserting that Slovakia is a law-abiding nation and that individuals who cross EU borders in search of asylum have reasons other than those specified by EU asylum laws. As a result, it is impossible to accept them as legitimate refugees, and the government's decision to deny them entry is valid.

Secondly, Fico's argumentation strategy is based on the idea that the majority of incoming refugees come from countries where the majority is Muslim, and Slovakia's majority population is Christian creating a presupposed cultural divide. Fico highlights in his assertions that these cultural, and particularly religious, divides are at odds with Slovakia's favoured policies. This is evident from the fact that, in contrast to the other two governments, the Slovak government granted 200 Syrian asylum seekers entry on the grounds of their religious beliefs (Christianity).

Third, the idea that refugees are only crossing borders in order to benefit economically also served as the foundation for the Slovak Prime Minister's identity construction of refugees. The Prime Minister backs up this claim by declaring that one of the reasons the refugees came to the European Union in the first place was so they could get pocket money.

The last and most obvious tactic was to link the collective identities of refugees with the category of terrorism in order to undermine the legitimacy of asylum seekers as lawful migrants in

need of protection from the European Union and its member states. The prime minister's assertions that Salafists are enlisting new immigrants in member states to fight for extremist Islamic groups like the Islamic state make this clear. As a result, the admittance of refugees could also present an internal threat to EU member states.

From the Czech Prime Minister's point of view we can also observe a strategy to undermine the legitimacy of their status as refugees although more moderate than his Hungarian and even the Slovak colleagues. The claims that many of the incoming refugees are from nations where there is no ongoing military conflict make this first evident, and as a result, their requests for asylum do not satisfy the requirements for acceptance.

Furthermore, just like the prime minister of Slovakia, the prime minister of the Czech Republic regularly calls the incoming refugees "illegal" and "irregular," and these claims serve to justify the government's stance that it is in accordance with this claim lawful to deny them entry because they are breaking the law. Once more, there is a clear intention in the case of the Czech prime minister to associate refugees with terrorism, sometimes overtly and sometimes implicitly. Using the "slippery slope argument," which suggests that some of the new immigrants may be members of terrorist groups who plan to carry out terrorist attacks in the European Union or who may enlist the help of other refugees to do so, the prime minister achieves this goal.

Moreover, the study reveals that the Hungarian Prime Minister's speech primarily attempted to establish a distinct Otherness against the European Union, symbolised by "Brussels" and "European elites". In this case, the Hungarian Prime Minister deviates from the two other prime ministers by placing emphasis on creating a threat not from refugee/asylum seekers, but from the European Union itself. The refugees/asylum seekers are merely used to construct this significant Other. What is particularly noticeable in comparison to the other two situations is that the Hungarian Prime Minister has made a substantial shift in his focus in this discourse. Prior to the crisis, the process

of othering relied on criticising the Hungarian opposition parties. However, following the onset of the crisis, the focus swiftly shifted towards scrutinising the European Union and its methods of resolving the problem.

Also, when examining the Hungarian Prime Minister, we can also observe a greater prevalence of discourse rooted in ideology backed by nationalism a nativism. In contrast to his Slovak and Czech counterparts, the Hungarian Prime Minister develops an ideological framework that he labels the "Hungarian model"(Földes, 2022). This framework is designed to generate a national identity that is presented to the public. Subsequently, the Prime Minister asserts that his backing contributes to the preservation of the "Hungarian model," which stands in opposition to the values represented by the European Union. Due to the limitations of the thesis, I am unable to thoroughly investigate the topic of the "Hungarian model." However, there is a substantial gap in comprehending this process of identity formation, which presents an opportunity for future research.

Additionally, when we look at the three cases as a whole, the overall narrative revolves around the threat posed by refugees fleeing to Europe, and this is evident in the national parliaments' debates among lawmakers. The three terms "economic migrants," "illegal migrants," and "terrorism" are most frequently associated with immigration in the context of the Hungarian parliament. The three most prevalent categories related to migration in the context of the national parliament of the Czech Republic were determined to be "terrorism," "illegal immigrants," and "diseases." The categories of "terrorism," "economic immigrants," and "illegal immigrants" dominated the discourse in the Slovak national parliament; however, in this instance, the category of "solidarity," which was primarily associated with the discourse of the opposition party members, was also of equal importance.

From these narratives, it is clear that the legislators' main goal in all three of the selected cases — along with the political spectrum as a whole — was to take part in the process of othering and, in this case, creating an out-group from refugees/asylum seekers. This can also be seen in the difference

between how their home countries are positively portrayed, which is frequently achieved through narratives that show how much they have already contributed and how they present the public and nation states in a positive light, while drawing attention to the negative aspects of the outgroup. Moreover, as was evident in the prime ministers' speeches, the focus was put on the intricately woven stories concerning refugees/asylum seekers, which emphasise danger, downplay legitimacy, and marginalise and exclude refugees as an outside group. The parliamentary discourse's recurrent use of these categories not only reflects but also strengthens the power dynamics that shape public opinion and policy in ways that uphold the status quo.

Regarding language's properties, we can undoubtedly pinpoint a number of different strategies, such as the use of metaphors, hyperbolas, irony, and the previously mentioned "slippery slope arguments," which sought to denigrate the outgroup and create narratives that would incite fear in the general public, thereby justifying their policies. These strategies, which involve creating stories of public fear and then pleading with the public to support actions purportedly intended to allay those fears, are common tactics in racist and far-right discourses.

Furthermore, the discourse in all three cases reflects the widely accepted narrative about the "Fortress Europe" (Glied & Pap, 2019; Lamour, 2021) argument (predominantly seen in the Hungarian case), which aims to create the impression that by solely fortifying the borders and rejecting the income of any asylum seeker into these countries, would bring security to them. This is because the discourse frequently emphasises the theme of borders and border protection, whether it be the external borders of the European Union and the national borders of the nation states. The Czech Republic provided a prime example of this, as discussions about the technical aspects of border protection there often mentioned the use of drones and other cutting-edge technologies as means of achieving security objectives. The Hungarian emphasis on the border fence and its emphasised importance only serve to reinforce this argument, much like in the cheque case.

"How do the identity constructs of refugees legitimise the denial of asylum applications and the European Union's policies to redistribute asylum seekers among European countries?" is the second research question, and the analysis's findings and responses to the first research question offer a strong foundation for addressing it. If the governments of the countries view refugees and asylum seekers as threats (terrorism, diseases), then it makes sense for them to regard the decision to deny them entry as a lawful policy choice, as per their constitutional obligations. In conclusion, the analyst offers responses to the final research question: "how have the national identities of Slovakia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic shaped their responses to the EU's refugee relocation and resettlement plans during the 2015 crisis?"

As previously stated, the governments and parliamentary elites of Slovakia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic have deliberately crafted and expressed a national identity that prioritises cultural uniformity, sovereignty, and security. These components of identity construction have been framed in political discourse as being threatened by outside forces, in this case, immigration. As a result, this discourse frame suggests that national identity preservation efforts depend on managing borders and limiting who is permitted to enter and dwell in these states. In the cases of Slovakia and Hungary, it is also evident that the prime ministers and legislators frequently constructed a significant "other" from the European Union, portraying it as an entity that infringes on national sovereignty. By calling for the implementation of the redistribution mechanism, they are directly attempting to alter the national identities that these political elites have created. This is also evident in a somewhat more subdued way in the speech of the prime minister of the Czech Republic, who raises concerns about the mechanism of redistribution and asserts that, as a sovereign nation, the Czech Republic cannot participate in any mechanism that relies on an automatic process without the ongoing approval of the national government of the Czech Republic. It is also important to highlight that, in contrast to Slovakia and

Hungary, which show a blatant opposition to any form of redistribution, the Czech Republic showed openness to the idea of a possible system as long as it was voluntary.

Now, in order to understand the importance of discussing and defining the outcomes of the empirical study, we need to connect these findings to the existing academic research and perhaps contribute new material to address the gaps in the current literature that have not been covered. When we assess the results of both analyses, the findings confirm previous research on the discursive shift in European countries during the crisis, showing a significant shift from humanitarian tolerance to a more securitized discourse where refugees are seen more as a threat or at least a risk rather than victims (Kluknavská et al., 2019). Furthermore, the emphasis on sovereignty as a key narrative during the crisis, paired with securitization, indicates that concerns about national identity were a crucial part of the discussions about the European Union, its identity as perceived by the nation states, and European integration (Coman & Leconte, 2019; Tabosa, 2020).

This contestation of European values was most apparent in the case of the Hungarian Prime Minister, who openly exchanged liberal values and ideas of multicultural societies for a more traditional value-based liberal ideology of the state (Coman & Leconte, 2019). Additionally, the analysis shows that across the three cases and the political spectrum, representatives framed the refugees as a threat or at least a risk, regardless of their political party affiliation. This meant that even moderate and liberal parties mimicked the narratives of anti-immigrant parties (Kluknavská et al., 2019; Zvada, 2018), with little opposition, except from some representatives in Slovakia.

The differences between the three cases, with Hungary using securitization of refugees/asylum seekers as the primary narrative to oppose the European redistribution mechanism and the more pragmatic Czech and Slovak approaches, show similarities with the discourse in other countries, such as Bulgaria. In Bulgaria, the government used dual narratives, with the Prime Minister's statements to

the foreign press reflecting the general EU sentiment, while statements to the Bulgarian media focused more on security concerns (Rizova, 2019).

Furthermore, the results of the Qualitative Content Analysis in the Hungarian case, especially the clustering of borders with illegal immigration, highlight the narrative about the so-called "Christian fortress of Hungary" (Glied & Pap, 2019). In contrast, the emphasis on a more rational debate in Slovakia, primarily promoted by Prime Minister Robert Fico, shows that the Slovak political representation leaned more towards what Triandafyllidou (2018) calls the "rationalisation frame," which unfolded in the overall European discourse only later after the crisis ended. On the other hand, Viktor Orbán utilized an opposing narrative of the "threat frame" to stay in power. The analysis shows no serious overlaps of the three cases with the so-called "moralisation frame" and thus a more humanitarian discourse, proving the argument of previous studies (Bedea & Osei Kwadwo, 2021; Kazharski, 2018b) that argued for a shift from cosmopolitan to a nationalistic solidarity attitude.

From the perspective of ideological positions within the discourse of the parliamentary debates, the results show that the construction of refugee identities as a threat to the security of the nation and the sovereignty of the state, coupled with labeling refugees/asylum seekers as economic immigrants or illegal immigrants, manifested attributes of nationalism (Hobsbawm, 2012) and nativism (Anbinder, 2007; Quint & Higham, 1956; Riedel, 2020; Zolberg, 2006).

Additionally, the centrality of "quotas" in the MAXQDA network graph in the two studied cases (Czech Republic and Hungary) shows that there were tensions between national autonomy and supranational obligations in these states, a common theme in nationalist rhetoric. Interestingly, nativism and nationalism were not only present as guiding principles in the narratives of far-right parties in these three cases or populist parties such as Viktor Orbán's Fidesz, but also in the Social Democratic Party of SMER-SD, represented by Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico. This demonstrates divisions between V4 countries and Western European states, where social democratic

politicians usually utilize more humanitarian and cosmopolitan discourse, defending refugees and asylum seekers rather than constructing them as a threat.

In the case of Hungary, the government and its Prime Minister utilized common narratives used by far-right actors (Krzyzanowski & Wodak, 2008; Rheindorf & Wodak, 2018; Rydgren, 2008; Wodak, 2015, 2017), including narratives about George Soros and frequently referring to the Schengen crisis as a struggle between the old and new Europe, represented by his "traditional values" on one side and the "liberal elites of Europe" on the other side. Similarly, in the Czech Republic, there was an emphasis on conservatism as an ideology guiding the policies of the government during the crisis.

The strong association between the codes "security" and "illegal immigrants" not only supports the securitization thesis but also aligns with nationalist and far-right ideologies that emphasize national security and view immigrants as potential threats to cultural and social stability (Zúquete, 2018). Interestingly, this conservatism comes from a government whose Prime Minister was affiliated with the Social Democratic Party (Bohuslav Sobotka). Conservative rhetoric, often including arguments about the economic impact of immigration and the need for law and order (Scruton, 2018), is reflected in the way economic concerns and legal frameworks are discussed in relation to the Schengen crisis.

Now moving to the theoretical level, it is clear that the employed approach differs from the current IR theoretical approaches when we consider the gap that this thesis seeks to close in the larger IR academic debate. However, the findings of this thesis's analysis are consistent with the expectations of constructivist and post-functionalist perspectives. Firstly, from the standpoint of mainstream theories of European integration, specifically neo functionalism (C. Jensen, 2000, 2019; M. A. Jensen et al., 2020), which would anticipate that the rejection of the redistribution mechanism would stem from a backlash against supranational authority. In this case, the findings of this thesis offer a thorough examination of how the political elites' emphasis on national sovereignty shapes their national

preferences, which in turn offers a convincing justification for the case studies under study. The resistance of lawmakers to any possible fusion of the national culture with other non-European cultures and the general consensus among political elites regarding the necessity of maintaining cultural homogeneity only serve to reinforce this case. In this sense, the two major narratives that are prevalent in the discourse of national governments and parliamentary elites are the origins of the spill-back effect. Second, the second theory—liberal intergovernmentalism (Andersson, 2016; Kleine & Pollack, 2018; Moravcsik, 1997; Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig, 2018; Schimmelfennig, 2015) — would anticipate that societal attitudes towards refugees and asylum seekers would serve as the source of national preferences expressed by political elites, primarily governmental representatives. However, in this regard, the general attitudes of the people in all three nations were regarded as neutral, and the subject of migration was not central to the macro discourses in any of these states. Indeed, the political elites were the ones who shaped public perceptions (Daniel, 2020; Simonovits, n.d.; Vestergaard, 2020) and opinions about refugees by crafting narratives about them. We may include the Hungarian "quota referendum," for instance.

Third, this thesis can contribute significant scholarly understanding to the theoretical underpinnings of this method from the standpoint of post-functionalism (M. Braun, 2019; Hooghe & Marks, 2009; Leuffen et al., 2022; Schimmelfennig, 2014). According to post-functionalism, identity is vital to the political elites' decision-making process and the formation of national preferences. It is possible to interpret the political elites' emphasis on the cultural distinctions, economic ties, and security risks related to refugees and asylum seekers as a manifestation of the nation's identity, one that demands defence against outside influences. The findings also unequivocally demonstrate that the political elites' construction of the national identity is predicated on narratives that characterise refugees and asylum seekers as threats to national security, economic burdens, and illegitimacy. This reinforces the national identity as a means of resistance (Lamour, 2021) against these external pressures

and aims to fend off a perceived erosion of sovereignty and cultural homogeneity as a result of the European Commission's proposed redistribution mechanism.

Furthermore, it is possible to interpret the opposition to the EU's relocation mechanism as an example of the politicisation of European integration (Bélanger & Schimmelfennig, 2021; Börzel & Risse, 2018b; Gattinara & Morales, 2017; Koß & Séville, 2020; Kovář, n.d.; Krzyżanowska & Krzyżanowski, 2018; Krzyżanowski et al., 2018; Schimmelfennig, 2020; Schimmelfennig et al., 2015), which aims to further the arbitrary interests of the political elites. According to opinion polls, the governments of Slovakia and Hungary have gained more support from the populace by promoting anti-immigration policies and narratives. In Slovakia's case, in particular, the topic of the refugee crisis has contributed to the Fico government's four-year term extension. Furthermore, post-functionalism anticipates the rise of populism as a factor influencing European integration in this regard. In this case, the thesis adds significant knowledge to the discourse on refugees and asylum seekers, portraying them as a danger to national security and identity through populist tactics meant to take advantage of division and societal fears for political ends.

Lastly, because the thesis already goes beyond the typical dissertation thesis scope, the empirical analysis offers an enormous amount of potential for additional analysis and interpretation of the micro-level discourse productions that were not possible to accomplish. In light of the Schengen crisis and the policies of the governments of the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia, my goal is to keep up with the data interpretation, finding synthesis, and knowledge generation.

7. References

Adam, I., & Hepburn, E. (2019). Intergovernmental relations on immigrant integration in multi-level states. A comparative assessment. *Regional and Federal Studies*, *29*(5). https://doi.org/10.1080/13597566.2018.1524376

Adamczyk, A. (2017). Państwa Grupy Wyszehradzkiej wobec kryzysu imigracyjnego w Unii Europejskiej. *Przegląd Europejski*, *1–2017*. https://doi.org/10.31338/1641-2478pe.1.17.1

Adamczyk, M. (2017). The importance of cultural differences in international business. *Central European Review of Economics and Management*, *1*(2), 151–170. https://doi.org/10.29015/cerem.336

Adler-Nisse, R. (2016). The Social Self in International Relations: Identity, power and the symbolic interactionist roots of constructivism. In *European Review of International Studies* (Vol. 3, Issue 3). https://doi.org/10.3224/eris.v3i3.27340

Adler-Nissen, R. (2016). Towards a Practice Turn in EU Studies: The Everyday of European Integration. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *54*(1), 87–103. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12329

Albert, M., Kessler, O., & Stetter, S. (2008). On order and conflict: International Relations and the 'communicative turn.' *Review of International Studies*, *34*(S1). https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210508007791

Anbinder, T. (2007). Nativism and Prejudice Against Immigrants. In *A Companion to American Immigration*. https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470997116.ch9

Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso.

Andersson, H. E. (2016). Liberal Intergovernmentalism, spillover and supranational immigration policy. *Cooperation and Conflict*, *51*(1). https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836715597945

Androvičová, J. (2013). Immigration in current political discourse - The case of Slovakia within the European Union. *Annual of Language and Politics and Politics of Identity*, *7*(1).

Androvičová, J. (2017). The Migration and Refugee Crisis in Political Discourse in Slovakia: Institutionalized Securitization and Moral Panic. *AUC STUDIA TERRITORIALIA*, *16*(2), 39–64. https://doi.org/10.14712/23363231.2017.11

Appiah, K. A. (2007). *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*. W. W. Norton & Company.

Asseburg, M. (2013). The Arab Spring and the European Response. *International Spectator*, *48*(2), 47–62. https://doi.org/10.1080/03932729.2013.787824

Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do Things with Words,* (J. O. Urmson & M. Sbisá, Eds.; 2ND ed.). How to do Things with Words,.

Bajomi-Lázár, P. (2019). An anti-migration campaign and its impact on public opinion: The Hungarian case. *European Journal of Communication*, *34*(6), 619–628. https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323119886152

Bąk-Pitucha, A. (2023). The Role of the Visegrad Group in the European Security System. *Przeglad Strategiczny*, *16*, 195–206. https://doi.org/10.14746/ps.2023.1.14

Bartoszewicz, M. G., & Eibl, O. (2022). A rather wild imagination: who is and who is not a migrant in the Czech media and society? *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, *9*(1). https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-022-01240-2

Bedea, C. M., & Osei Kwadwo, V. (2021). Opportunistic sub-regionalism: the dialectics of EU-Central-Eastern European relations. *Journal of European Integration*, *43*(4), 385–402. https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2020.1776271

Bélanger, M. E., & Schimmelfennig, F. (2021). Politicization and rebordering in EU enlargement: membership discourses in European parliaments. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *28*(3). https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2021.1881584

Belkina, P. Y. (2019). Antimigrant Policy of Visegrad Group Countries. *History: The Journal of the Historical Association*.

Benedikter, R., & Karolewski, I. P. (2016). "We Can Handle This"—How the Refugee and Migration Crisis is Changing the German Political Landscape. *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs*, *10*(3), 423–435. https://doi.org/10.1080/23739770.2016.1260250

Benhabib, S. (2004). The rights of others: Aliens, residents, and citizens. In *The Rights of Others: Aliens, Residents, and Citizens*. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511790799

Berejikian, J. (1992). Revolutionary Collective Action and the Agent-Structure Problem. *American Political Science Review*, *86*(3). https://doi.org/10.2307/1964128

Betz, H. G. (1993). The Two Faces of Radical Right-Wing Populism in Western Europe. *The Review of Politics*, *55*(4). https://doi.org/10.1017/S0034670500018040

Bhaskar Roy, Margaret Archer, Collier, A., Lawson, T., & Norrie, A. (1998a). *CRITICAL REALISM: Essential Readings*. Routledge.

Bhaskar Roy, Margaret Archer, Collier, A., Lawson, T., & Norrie, A. (1998b). *CRITICAL REALISM: Essential Readings*. Routledge.

Bickerton, C. J., Hodson, D., & Puetter, U. (2015). The New Intergovernmentalism: European Integration in the Post-Maastricht Era. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *53*(4). https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12212

Birner, B. J. (2013). Introducing to Pragmatics. In *UK*.

Bíró-Nagy, A. (2021). Orbán's political jackpot: migration and the Hungarian electorate. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *0*(0), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2020.1853905

Blumer, H. (1969). The Methodological Position of Symbolic Interactionism. In *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*. Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Bocskor, Á. (2018). Anti-Immigration Discourses in Hungary during the 'Crisis' Year: The Orbán Government's 'National Consultation' Campaign of 2015. *Sociology*, *52*(3), 551–568. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038518762081

Bojar, A. (2016, October 4). *Orbanism at its limits? Hungary's referendum has exposed the first cracks in Viktor Orban's rule.* https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2016/10/04/hungary-refugee-referendum-orban/

Bolecekova, M. (2021). Reflections of EU Migration and Refugee Crisis in Slovak Foreign and Security Policy. *Security Dimensions*, *39*(39). https://doi.org/10.5604/01.3001.0015.6530

Borjas, G. J. (2016). *We Wanted Workers: Unraveling the Immigration Narrative.* W. W. Norton & Company.

Börzel, T. A., & Risse, T. (2005a). When Europe Hits Home: Europeanization and Domestic Change. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, *4*(15), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.302768

Börzel, T. A., & Risse, T. (2005b). When Europe Hits Home: Europeanization and Domestic Change. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, *4*(15), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.302768

Börzel, T. A., & Risse, T. (2012). From Europeanisation to Diffusion: Introduction. *West European Politics*, *35*(1), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2012.631310

Börzel, T. A., & Risse, T. (2018a). From the euro to the Schengen crises: European integration theories, politicization, and identity politics. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *25*(1), 83–108. https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2017.1310281

Börzel, T. A., & Risse, T. (2018b). From the euro to the Schengen crises: European integration theories, politicization, and identity politics. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *25*(1), 83–108. https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2017.1310281

Boukala, S. (2016). Rethinking topos in the discourse historical approach: Endoxon seeking and argumentation in Greek media discourses on 'Islamist terrorism".' *Discourse Studies*, *18*(3), 249–268. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445616634550

Boukala, S. (2019). *European Identity and the Representation of Islam in the Mainstream Press.* Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-93314-6

Boukala, S., & Dimitrakopoulou, D. (2017). The politics of fear vs. the politics of hope: analysing the 2015 Greek election and referendum campaigns. *Critical Discourse Studies*, *14*(1), 39–55. https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2016.1182933

Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming Qualitative Information Thematic Analysis and Code Development*. SAGE Publications, Inc.

Braun, B., Schindler, S., & Wille, T. (2019). Rethinking agency in International Relations: performativity, performances and actor-networks. In *Journal of International Relations and Development* (Vol. 22, Issue 4). https://doi.org/10.1057/s41268-018-0147-z

Braun, M. (2019). Postfunctionalism, Identity and the Visegrad Group. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *58*(4), 925–940. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12994

Brljavac, B. (2017). Refugee crisis in Europe: the case studies of Sweden and Slovakia. *Journal of Liberty and International Affairs*, 91–107.

Brubaker, R. (2017). Between nationalism and civilizationism: the European populist moment in comparative perspective. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *40*(8), 1191–1226. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1294700

Burroughs, E. (2015). The Discourse of Controlling "Illegal Immigration" in Irish Parliamentary Texts. *Journal of Language and Politics*, *14*(4), 479–500. https://doi.org/10.1075/jlp.14.4.01bur

Bustikova, L., & Guasti, P. (2017). The illiberal turn or swerve in central Europe? *Politics and Governance*, *5*(4PopulismandtheRemakingof(Il)LiberalDemocracyinEurope), 166–176. https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v5i4.1156

Butler, J. (2004). Precarious life: the powers of mourning and violence. In *New York*.

Butler, J. (2009). Performativity, precarity and sexual politics. *AIBR Revista de Antropologia Iberoamericana*, *4*(3). https://doi.org/10.11156/aibr.040303e

Butler, J. (2010). Performative agency. *Journal of Cultural Economy*, *3*(2). https://doi.org/10.1080/17530350.2010.494117

Butler, J. (2011). Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity. In *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203824979

Buzan, B., Waever, O., & de Wilde, J. (1998). Security: A New Framework for Analysis. In *International Journal*. Lynne rienner Publishers, Inc. https://doi.org/10.2307/40203739

Campbell, D. (1998a). *National Deconstruction Violence, Identity, and Justice in Bosnia* (Vol. 4, Issue 1). University of Minnesota Press.

Campbell, D. (1998b). *Writing Security United : United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity Revised Edition David* (Revised ed). University of Minnesota Press.

Carens, J. (2013). *The Ethics of Immigration*. Oxford University Press.

Carstensen, M. B., & Schmidt, V. A. (2016). Power through, over and in ideas: conceptualizing ideational power in discursive institutionalism. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *23*(3), 318–337. https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2015.1115534

Ceccorulli, M. (2019). Back to Schengen: the collective securitisation of the EU free-border area. *West European Politics*, *42*(2). https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2018.1510196

Cederman, L.-E. (2001). *CONSTRUCTING EUROPE'S IDENTITY: THE EXTERNAL DIMENSION*. Lynne rienner Publishers, Inc.

Černý, P. (2020). Asylum Proceedings in the Czech Republic During the Migration Crisis. *Journal of Legal Studies*, *25*(39). https://doi.org/10.2478/jles-2020-0003

Charteris-Black, J. (2016). Politicians and rhetoric: The persuasive power of metaphor. In *Politicians and Rhetoric: The Persuasive Power of Metaphor*. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230501706

Checkel, J. T. (2003). "Going native" in Europe? Theorizing social interaction in European Institutions. *Comparative Political Studies*, *36*(1–2), 209–231. https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414002239377

Checkel, J. T., & Katzenstein, P. J. (2009). *European Identity*. Cambridge University Press.

Chomsky, N. (2013). Profit over people. In *The Applied Theatre Reader*. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203891315-39

Chouliaraki, L., & Fairclough, N. (1999). Critical Discourse Analysis: A framework. In *Rethinking Critical Discourse Analysis*.

Christiansen, T., Jørgensen, K. E., & Wiener, A. (1999a). The social construction of Europe. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *6*(4), 528–544. https://doi.org/10.1080/135017699343450

Christiansen, T., Jørgensen, K. E., & Wiener, A. (1999b). The social construction of Europe. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *6*(4), 528–544. https://doi.org/10.1080/135017699343450

Cichocki, P., & Jabkowski, P. (2019). Immigration attitudes in the wake of the 2015 migration crisis in the visegrád group countries: Comparative insights of ESS7 and ESS8. *Intersections East European Journal of Society and Politics*, *5*(1), 27–47. https://doi.org/10.17356/ieejsp.v5i1.480

Citrin, J., & Sides, J. (2004). More than Nationals: How Identity Choice Matters in the New Europe. In *Transnational Identities. Becoming European in the EU* (pp. 161–185). Rowman and Littlefield.

Coman, R., & Leconte, C. (2019). Contesting EU authority in the name of European identity: the new clothes of the sovereignty discourse in Central Europe. *Journal of European Integration*, *41*(7), 855–870. https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2019.1665660

Conolly, W. E. (1991). *Identity/Difference Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox*. University of Minnesota Press.

Cooley, C. H. (1902). Human Nature and Social Order. In *Human Nature and Social Order*.

Council of the EU. (2015a). *Council establishes EU naval operation to disrupt human smugglers in the Mediterranean.* https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/05/18/council-establishes-naval-operations-disrupt-human-smugglers-mediterannean/

Council of the EU. (2015b). *Foreign Affairs Council, 16-17 November 2015.* https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/fac/2015/11/16-17/

Council of the EU. (2015c). *Justice and Home Affairs Council, 8-9 October 2015.* https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/jha/2015/10/08/

Council of the EU. (2015d). *Meeting of heads of state or government with Turkey - EU-Turkey statement, 29/11/2015.* https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/11/29/eu-turkey-meeting-statement/

Council of the EU. (2015e). *OUTCOME OF THE COUNCIL MEETING 3396th Council meeting - Justice and Home Affairs.* https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/23281/outcome-of-the-council-meeting_en.pdf

Council of the EU. (2015f). *Relocation of 40 000 refugees from Greece and Italy agreed by Council.* https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/09/14/jha-relocation-refugees/

Cozzolino, A. (2020). The Discursive Construction of Europe in Italy in the Age of Permanent Austerity. *Journal of Common Market Studies, 58*(3), 580–598. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12921

Czina, V. (2021). Hungary as a Norm Entrepreneur in Migration Policy. *Intersections East European Journal of Society and Politics, 7*(1), 22–39. https://doi.org/10.17356/ieejsp.v7i1.666

Czirfusz, M. (2021). The concept of solidarity in cohesion policies of the European Union and Hungary. *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space, 39*(5). https://doi.org/10.1177/2399654420971636

Czyż, A. (2017). Państwa Grupy Wyszehradzkiej wobec kryzysu migracyjnego Visegrad countries towards migration crisis. *Studia Politicae Universitatis Silesiensis*, *18*, 143–161. http://www.visegradgroup.eu/calendar/2016/joint

Daniel, O. (2020). "Not Racists but Careful." Czech Perceptions of Visegrad Collaboration during the Crisis of European Migration Policies. In *The Visegrad Four and the Western Balkans*. https://doi.org/10.5771/9783748901136-107

De Lerma, G. M. C. L., & de las Mercedes Botija Yagüe, M. (2022). MAXQDA and its application to Social Sciences: a comparative case study on urban vulnerability. *Alternativas*, *29*(1). https://doi.org/10.14198/ALTERN.19435

de Wilde, P. (2019). Media logic and grand theories of European integration. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *26*(8), 1193–1212. https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2019.1622590

Deák, A. (2013). Hungarian Dances – The Origins and the Future of Viktor Orbán's Revolution. *Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review*, *11*(1), 145–168. https://doi.org/10.2478/v10243-012-0026-z

Delanty, G., Wodak, R., & Jones, P. (2011). Identity, belonging and migration. In *Identity, Belonging and Migration*. https://doi.org/10.5949/UPO9781846314537

Deloy, C. (2014). *Unsurprisingly outgoing Prime Minister Viktor Orban wins the general election in Hungary*. https://www.robert-schuman.eu/en/doc/oee/oee-1493-en.pdf

Dessewffy, T., & Nagy, Z. (2021). Dreaming homogenous–power switches of history in public discourse in Hungary. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *47*(18), 4189–4208. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2020.1812277

Diez, T. (1999a). Speaking "Europe": The politics of integration discourse. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *6*(4), 598–613. https://doi.org/10.1080/135017699343496

Diez, T. (1999b). Speaking "Europe": The politics of integration discourse. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *6*(4), 598–613. https://doi.org/10.1080/135017699343496

Dominguez, V. R. (1995). Mapping the Language of Racism: Discourse and the Legitimation of Exploitation. MARGARET WETHERELL and JONATHAN POTTER. In *American Ethnologist* (Vol. 22, Issue 1, pp. 201–202). https://doi.org/10.1525/ae.1995.22.1.02a00210

Dovidio, F. J., & Antweiler, C. (2019). Collective identity. *The Bonn Handbook of Globality*, *1*, 353–361. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-90377-4_29

Drisko, J. W., & Maschi, T. (2016). *Content Analysis: Pocket Guides to Social Work Research Methods*. Oxford University Press.

Duszczyk, M., Podgórska, K., & Pszczółkowska, D. (2020). From mandatory to voluntary. Impact of V4 on the EU relocation scheme. *European Politics and Society*, *21*(4), 470–487. https://doi.org/10.1080/23745118.2019.1672367

Eatwell, R., & Goodwin, M. (2018). *National Populism: The Revolt Against Liberal Democracy*. Penguin UK.

Eder, K., & Glensen, B. (2001). *European Citizenship: National Legacies and Transnational Projects*. OUP Oxford.

Egres, D. (2018). Symbolic and realistic threats – frame analysis of political and media discourses about refugees and migrants. In *Society and Economy* (Vol. 40, Issue 3, pp. 463–477). Akademiai Kiado Rt. https://doi.org/10.1556/204.2018.40.3.11

Ejobowah, J. B., & Kymlicka, W. (1997). Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights. *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne Des Études Africaines*, *31*(1). https://doi.org/10.2307/485334

Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. (2015). *Emergency Trust Fund for Africa - factsheet* (pp. 1–3). https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/21933/euagendafor-migration_trustfund-v10.pdf

European Commission. (2015a). *Communication from the Commission to the European parliament, the Council, the European economic and social committee and the Committee of the regions - a European agenda on migration.*

European Commission. (2015b). *European Commission first package of proposals.* https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_15_5039

European Council. (2015a). *COUNCIL DECISION establishing provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of Italy and Greece.* https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-12098-2015-INIT/en/pdf

European Council. (2015b). *Special meeting of the European Council, 23 April 2015.* https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/european-council/2015/04/23/

Eurostat. (2015). *Asylum in the EU in the first quarter 2015 185 000 first time asylum seekers in the EU in the first quarter of 2015 Half are Kosovars, Syrians or Afghans.* https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/6887997/3-18062015-CP-EN.pdf/4457b050-26f9-4cf1-bf27-9ffb73ff8c7b

Fabbrini, S., & Zgaga, T. (2024). Right-Wing Sovereignism in the European Union: Definition, Features and Implications. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *62*(2), 341–359. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.13497

Fairclough, N. (n.d.). *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language.*

Fassin, D. (2011). Humanitarian Reason: A Moral History of the Present. In *Humanitarian Reason: A Moral History of the Present.* https://doi.org/10.1080/13507486.2012.702063

Ferrara, F. M., & Kriesi, H. (2022). Crisis pressures and European integration. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *29*(9). https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2021.1966079

Fico, R. (2015a). *Parlamentný prejav.* https://www.nrsr.sk/dl/Browser/Document?documentId=254481

Fico, R. (2015b). *Parlamentný prejav.*

Foldes, K. (2020). *Data set - The Self and the Other – Hungarian Identity and the Refugee Crisis.* http://dx.doi.org/10.17632/f3kgkmmgck.1%0A%0A

Földes, K. (2022). The "Hungarian Model"–the dialectical relationship of the Self and the Other on the background of the 2015 refugee crisis. *Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe*, *00*(00), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/25739638.2022.2136845

Fraser, N. (2020). *Fortunes of Feminism: From State-Managed Capitalism to Neoliberal Crisis*. Verso.

Frontex. (2015). *Annual Risk Analysis 2015*.

Frost, M. (2021). Constitutive Theory in International Relations. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.588

Gallagher, A. (2016). Conceptualizing humanity in the English School. In *International Theory* (Vol. 8, Issue 2). https://doi.org/10.1017/S1752971916000038

Gattinara, P. C., & Morales, L. (2017). The politicization and securitization of migration in Western Europe: public opinion, political parties and the immigration issue. In *Handbook on migration and security*.

Gee, P. J. (2005). *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis Theory and method* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Genschel, P., & Jachtenfuchs, M. (2018). From Market Integration to Core State Powers: The Eurozone Crisis, the Refugee Crisis and Integration Theory. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *56*(1). https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12654

Gessler, T. (2017). The 2016 referendum in Hungary. *East European Quarterly*, *45*(1–2), 85–97. https://politicalscience.ceu.edu/sites/politicalscience.ceu.hu/files/attachment/basicpage/1096/theresagessler_0.pdf

Gessler, T., Tóth, G., & Wachs, J. (2022). No Country for Asylum Seekers? How Short-Term Exposure to Refugees Influences Attitudes and Voting Behavior in Hungary. *Political Behavior*, *44*(4), 1813–1841. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-021-09682-1

Giuli, M., & Oberthür, S. (2023). Third time lucky? Reconciling EU climate and external energy policy during energy security crises. *Journal of European Integration*, *45*(3), 395–412. https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2023.2190588

Gizzi, M. C., & Rädiker, S. (2021). The Practice of Qualitative Data Analysis Research Examples Using MAXQDA. *Maxqda Press, March.*

Glied, V., & Pap, N. (2019). *The 'Christian Fortress of Hungary' – The Anatomy of the Migration Crisis in Hungary.*

Glied, V., & Zamęcki, Ł. (2010). Together, but Still Separated? Migration Policy in the V4 countries. *Politics in Central Europe.*

Gourevitch, P. (1978). The second image reversed: The international sources of domestic politics. *International Organization*, *32*(4), 881–912. https://doi.org/10.1017/S002081830003201X

Grech, P. (2017). Undesired properties of the European Commission's refugee distribution key. *European Union Politics*, *18*(2), 212–238. https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116516649244

Grillo, R. (2008). Multiculturalism: A civic idea. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *34*(5).

Haas, E. B. (1958). *The uniting of Europe : political, social, and economic forces, 1950-1957*. University of Notre Dame Press.

Haas, E. B. (2004). The Uniting of Europe: Political, Social, and Economic Forces, 1950-1957. In *International Journal*. University of Notre Dame Press.

Hage, G. (2012). White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society. In *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society*. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203819470

Halmai, G. (2016). From a Pariah to a Model? Hungary's Rise As an Illiberal Member State of the EU. *European Yearbook on Human Rights 2017.*

Hansen, L. (2006a). *Security as Practice : Discourse analysis and the Bosnian war* (U. Barry Buzan, London School of Economics and Richard Little, Ed.). Routledge.

Hansen, L. (2006b). *Security as Practice : Discourse analysis and the Bosnian war* (L. S. of E. Barry Buzan & U. Richard Little, Eds.). Routledge.

Hansen, L., & Waever, O. (2002). *European Integration and National Identity, The Challenge of the Nordic States by Lene Hansen | 9780415220934 | Booktopia.* https://www.booktopia.com.au/european-integration-and-national-identity-lene-hansen/book/9780415220934.html

Hansen, L., & Wæver, O. (2003). European Integration and National Identity. In *European Integration and National Identity*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203402207

Hart, C. (2011a). *Critical Discourse Studies in Context and Cognition*. John Benjamins Publishing Company. https://benjamins.com/catalog/dapsac.43

Hart, C. (2011b). Legitimizing assertions and the logico-rhetorical module: Evidence and epistemic vigilance in media discourse on immigration. *Discourse Studies*, *13*(6), 751–769. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445611421360

Harvey, D. (2020). A Brief History of Neoliberalism. In *The Anti-Capitalist Chronicles*. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv17ppcd0.8

Held, D. (2010). *Cosmopolitanism: Ideals and Realities*. Polity.

Hewitt, J. P. (2003). *Self and Society: A Symbolic Interactionist Social Psychology* (9th ed.). Pearson.

Hobsbawm, E. J. (2012). Nations and nationalism since 1780: Programme, myth, reality, second edition. In *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality, Second Edition*. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107295582

Holmes, S. M., & Castañeda, H. (2016). Representing the "European refugee crisis" in Germany and beyond: Deservingness and difference, life and death. *American Ethnologist*, *43*(1). https://doi.org/10.1111/amet.12259

Hooghe, L., & Marks, G. (2009). A postfunctionalist theory of European integration: From permissive consensus to constraining dissensus. *British Journal of Political Science*, *39*(1), 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123408000409

Hooghe, L., & Marks, G. (2018). Re-Engaging Grand Theory: European Integration in the 21st Century. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3293827

Hooghe, L., & Marks, G. (2019). Grand theories of European integration in the twenty-first century. In *Journal of European Public Policy* (Vol. 26, Issue 8). https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2019.1569711

Hooghe, L., & Marks, G. (2020). Is liberal intergovernmentalism regressive? A comment on Moravcsik (2018). *Journal of European Public Policy*, *27*(4). https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2019.1582684

Hooghe, L., & Marks, G. (2022). Differentiation in the European Union and beyond. *European Union Politics*, *24*(1), 225–235.

Huntington, S. P. (2005). *Who Are We?: The Challenges to America's National Identity*. Simon & Schuster.

Ivanova, D. (2017). Hungarian Security Policy and the Migrant Crisis (2015–2017). *International Conference KNOWLEDGE-BASED ORGANIZATION*, *23*(1), 166–171. https://doi.org/10.1515/kbo-2017-0026

Jachtenfuchs, M., Diez, T., & Jung, S. (1998). Which Europe?: Conflicting Models of a Legitimate European Political Order. *European Journal of International Relations*, *4*(4), 409–445.

Jackson, P. T. (2011). *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Jackson, R., & Sørensen, G. (2015). Introduction to International Relations. In *Introduction to International Relations*. https://doi.org/10.1093/hepl/9780198707554.001.0001

Jacobi, D., & Freyberg-Inan, A. (2012). The forum: Human being(s) in international relations. In *International Studies Review* (Vol. 14, Issue 4). https://doi.org/10.1111/misr.12012

Jelínková, M. (2019). A Refugee Crisis Without Refugees: Policy and media discourse on refugees in the Czech Republic and its implications. *Central European Journal of Public Policy*, *13*(1), 33–45. https://doi.org/10.2478/cejpp-2019-0003

Jensen, C. (2000). *Neofunctionalist Theories and the Development of European Social and LabourMarket Policy*.

Jensen, C. (2019). 4. Neo-functionalism. *European Union Politics*.

Jensen, M. A., Atwell Seate, A., & James, P. A. (2020). Radicalization to Violence: A Pathway Approach to Studying Extremism. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *32*(5). https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2018.1442330

Kapelner, Z. (2020). Rainer Bauböck: Democratic Inclusion: Rainer Bauböck in Dialogue. *Res Publica*, *26*(1). https://doi.org/10.1007/s11158-019-09429-0

Kaufmann, E. P. (2019). Whiteshift: Populism, Immigration, and the Future of White Majorities: EBSCOhost. In *New York : Abrams Press*.

Kazharski, A. (2018a). The End of 'Central Europe'? The Rise of the Radical Right and the Contestation of Identities in Slovakia and the Visegrad Four. *Geopolitics*, *23*(4), 754–780. https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2017.1389720

Kazharski, A. (2018b). The End of 'Central Europe'? The Rise of the Radical Right and the Contestation of Identities in Slovakia and the Visegrad Four. *Geopolitics*.

KhosraviNik, M. (2006). The representation of refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants in British newspapers: A critical discourse analysis. *Journal of Language and Politics*, *9*(2010).

KhosraviNik, M. (2010). Actor descriptions, action attributions, and argumentation: towards a systematization of CDA analytical categories in the representation of social groups 1. *Critical Discourse Studies*, *7*(1), 55–72. https://doi.org/10.1080/17405900903453948

Kissová, L. (2018). The production of (Un)deserving and (un)acceptable: Shifting representations of migrants within political discourse in Slovakia. *East European Politics and Societies*, *32*(4), 743–766. https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325417745127

Kleine, M., & Pollack, M. (2018). Liberal Intergovernmentalism and Its Critics. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *56*(7), 1493–1509. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12803

Kluknavská, A., Bernhard, J., & Boomgaarden, H. G. (2019). *Claiming the Crisis: Mediated Public Debates about the Refugee Crisis in Austria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia*. https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fez022/5476100

Kluknavska, A., Bernhard, J., & Boomgaarden, H. G. (2021). Claiming the Crisis: Mediated Public Debates about the Refugee Crisis in Austria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *34*(1), 241–263. https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fez022

Koß, M., & Séville, A. (2020). Politicized transnationalism: The Visegrád countries in the refugee crisis. *Politics and Governance*, *8*(1), 95–106. https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v8i1.2419

Kovář, J. (n.d.). *Politicisation of Immigration in Central and Eastern Europe: Evidence from Plenary Debates in Two Countries*.

Kovář, J. (2023). *Debating Immigrants and Refugees in Central Europe.Politicising and Framing Newcomers in the Media and Political Arenas* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Krikorian, M. (2008). *The New Case Against Immigration: Both Legal and Illegal*. Sentinel HC.

Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology*. SAGE Publications, Inc.

Krzyżanowska, N., & Krzyżanowski, M. (2018). 'Crisis' and Migration in Poland: Discursive Shifts, Anti-Pluralism and the Politicisation of Exclusion. In *Sociology* (Vol. 52, Issue 3). https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038518757952

Krzyżanowski, M. (2018). Discursive Shifts in Ethno-Nationalist Politics: On Politicization and Mediatization of the "Refugee Crisis" in Poland. *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies*, *16*(1–2), 76–96. https://doi.org/10.1080/15562948.2017.1317897

Krzyżanowski, M., Triandafyllidou, A., & Wodak, R. (2018). The Mediatization and the Politicization of the "Refugee Crisis" in Europe. In *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies* (Vol. 16, Issues 1–2, pp. 1–14). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.1080/15562948.2017.1353189

Krzyzanowski, M., & Wodak, R. (2008). Multiple Identities, Migration and Belonging: "Voices of Migrants." In R. C. Caldas-Coulthard & R. Iedema (Eds.), *Identity Trouble Critical Discourse and Contested Identities* (1st ed., pp. 95–119). PALGRAVE MACMILLAN.

Krzyzanowski, M., & Wodak, R. (2016). Multiple identities, migration and belonging: "Voices of migrants." In *Identity Trouble: Critical Discourse and Contested Identities*. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230593329

Kuckartz, U., & Rädiker, S. (2023). *Qualitative Content Analysis*. SAGE.

Kurpebayeva, G. (2020). Political and socio-economic roots of uprisings in the Arab world. *Space and Culture, India*, *8*(1). https://doi.org/10.20896/saci.v8i1.786

Kymlicka, W. (1996). *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* . Oxford University Press.

Laclau, E., & Mouffe, C. (1985a). *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy - Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (Second Edi). Verso.

Laclau, E., & Mouffe, C. (1985b). *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy - Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (Second Edi). Verso.

Laffan, B. (1998). The European union: A distinctive model of internationalization. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *5*(2). https://doi.org/10.1080/135017698343965

Laffan, B. (2004). The European Union and Its Institutions as 'Identity Builders. In R. Herrmann, T. Risse, & M. Brewer (Eds.), *Transnational Identities: Becoming European in the EU* (pp. 75–96). Rowman & Littlefield.

Laffan, B. (2016). Europe's union in crisis: tested and contested. *West European Politics*, *39*(5). https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2016.1186387

Lamour, C. (2021). Orbán Urbi et Orbi: Christianity as a Nodal Point of Radical-right Populism. *Politics and Religion*, 1–27. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755048321000134

Larsen, H. (1999). British and Danish European Policies in the 1990s:: A Discourse Approach. *European Journal of International Relations*, *5*(4), 451–483. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066199005004003

Lavenex, S. (2018). 'Failing Forward" Towards Which Europe? Organized Hypocrisy in the Common European Asylum System.' *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, *56*(5), 1195–1212. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12739

Lawson, C., Latsis, J. S., & Martins, N. (2007). *Contributions to Social Ontology: Routledge Studies in Critical Realism.* Routledge.

Lees, R. B., & Chomsky, N. (1957). Syntactic Structures. *Language*, *33*(3). https://doi.org/10.2307/411160

Leeuwen Van, T. (2007). Legitimation in discourse and communication. *Discourse & Communication*, *1*(1), 91–112. https://doi.org/10.1177/1750481307071986

Leeuwen Van, T., & Wodak, R. (1999). Legitimizing immigration control: A discourse-historical analysis. *Discourse Studies*, *1*(1), 83–118. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445699001001005

Leuffen, D., Rittberger, B., & Schimmelfennig, F. (2022). Postfunctionalism. In *Integration and Differentiation in the European Union*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-76677-1_6

Lincényi, M. (2017). Entrepreneurship ecosystem facets: The european migrant crisis and public opinion in Slovakia. *Entrepreneurship and Sustainability Issues*, *5*(2). https://doi.org/10.9770/jesi.2017.5.2(14)

Lindberg, N. L. (1963). *Political Dynamics of European Economic Integration*. Stanford University Press.

Lirola, M. M. (2014). Legitimating the return of immigrants in Spanish media discourse. *Brno Studies in English*, *40*(1), 129–147. https://doi.org/10.5817/BSE2014-1-7

Loar, B., & Searle, J. R. (1982). Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts. *The Philosophical Review*, *91*(3). https://doi.org/10.2307/2184707

Lovett, F. (2006). Rational choice theory and explanation. *Rationality and Society*, *18*(2). https://doi.org/10.1177/1043463106060155

Lundborg, T., & Vaughan-Williams, N. (2015). New Materialisms, discourse analysis, and International Relations: A radical intertextual approach. In *Review of International Studies* (Vol. 41, Issue 1). https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210514000163

MacDowall, A. (2016). Voters back Viktor Orbán's rejection of EU migrant quotas. In *Politico*. https://www.politico.eu/article/hungary-referendum-eu-migration-viktor-orban/

Maher, R. (2021). International Relations Theory and the Future of European Integration. *International Studies Review*, *23*(1). https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viaa010

Malakhov, V. S., & Kascian, K. (2020). The Eu's Migration Dilemma: Legal and Political Dimensions. *Polis. Political Studies*, *4*, 139–151. https://doi.org/10.17976/jpps/2020.04.10

Manners, I., & Whitman, R. (2016). Another Theory is Possible: Dissident Voices in Theorising Europe. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *54*(1), 3–18. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12332

Marcussen, M. (1999). The dynamics of EMU ideas. *Cooperation and Conflict*, *34*(4), 383–411. https://doi.org/10.1177/00108369921961942

Marcussen, M. (2000). *Ideas and Elites: Danish Macro-Economic Policy-Discours in the EMU-Process.*

Martin-Mazé, M. (2015). Unpacking Interests in Normative Power Europe. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *53*(6), 1285–1300. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12257

Marttila, T. (2016). The Order of Discourse. In *Post-Foundational Discourse Analysis*. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137538406_3

Mayring, P. (2022). *Qualitative Content Analysis: A Step-by-Step Guide* (1st ed.). SAGE Publications Ltd.

Mead, G. H. (1934). *Mind, Self, and Society from the standpoint of a social behaviorist* (C. W. Morris, Ed.). The University of Chicago Press. https://doi.org/10.7208/9780226112879.001.0001

Menshawy, M. (2020). The legitimating power of discourse constructing the 1973 war under mubarak. *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication*, *13*(3), 256–275. https://doi.org/10.1163/18739865-20202000

Mitrany, D. (1994). A Working Peace System. In *The European Union* (pp. 77–97). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-23984-9_12

Modood, T. (2013). *Multiculturalism: Second Edition: A Civic Idea*. Polity.

Moravcsik, A. (1997). Taking preferences seriously: A liberal theory of international politics. In *International Organization* (pp. 513–553). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1162/002081897550447

Moravcsik, A. (1999). The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht. In *The American Historical Review*. Routledge.

Moravcsik, A., & Schimmelfennig, F. (2018). 4. Liberal Intergovernmentalism. In *European Integration Theory*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/hepl/9780198737315.003.0004

Mudde, C. (2019). *The Far Right Today*. Polity.

Nader Nourbakhsh, S., Abbas Ahmadi, S., Yazdanpanah Dero, Q., Faraji Rad, A., & Yazdanpanah, Q. (2020). History and Political Geography of Central Europe: Explaining the Rise of

Euroscepticism and Nativism in Visegrád 4 Countries. *Journal of World Sociopolitical Studies|*, *4*(4), 773–808. https://doi.org/10.22059/wsps.2021.322264.1209

Nagy, B. (2016). Hungarian Asylum Law and Policy in 2015–2016: Securitization Instead of Loyal Cooperation. *German Law Journal.* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iyuyI51AvOI&feature=youtu.be

Národná rada SR. (2016). *Schôdze NR SR.* https://tv.nrsr.sk/archiv/schodza/6

Národná rada SR. (2020). *Schôdze NR SR.*

Naurin, D. (2018). Liberal Intergovernmentalism in the Councils of the EU: A Baseline Theory? *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *56*(7). https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12786

Navrátil, J., & Kluknavská, A. (2023). A tale of two campaigns: understanding the role of short-term political context in Czech and Slovak counter/mobilizing on migration. *Social Movement Studies*, *22*(2), 250–268. https://doi.org/10.1080/14742837.2022.2031958

Neumann, I. B. (2014). International Relations as a Social Science1. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, *43*(1). https://doi.org/10.1177/0305829814539860

Neumayer, E. (2005). Bogus refugees? The determinants of asylum migration to Western Europe. *International Studies Quarterly*, *49*(3), 389–410. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2478.2005.00370.x

Ngo, B., & Hansen, S. (2013). Constructing Identities in UN Refugee Camps: The Politics of Language, Culture and Humanitarian Assistance. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, *10*(2). https://doi.org/10.1080/15427587.2013.753843

Niemann, A. (1998). The phare programme and the concept of spillover: Neofunctionalism in the making. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *5*(3), 428–446. https://doi.org/10.1080/135017698343901

Niemann, A. (2006). Explaining decisions in the European union. In *Explaining Decisions in the European Union* (Issue January 2006). https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511492044

Niemann, A., & Gutenberg, J. (2016). Theorising Internal Security Cooperation in the European Union: A Neofunctionalist Perspective. In *Theorising Internal Security Cooperation in the European Union*.

Niemann, A., & Speyer, J. (2017). *A Neofunctionalist Perspective on the "European Refugee Crisis": The Case of the European Border and Coast Guard**. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12653

Niemann, A., & Zaun, N. (2017). *EU Refugee Policies and Politics in Times of Crisis: Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives*. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12650

Nyzio, A. (2015). The second revival? The Visegrád group and the European migrant crisis in 2015-2017. *GLOBAL AND REGIONAL SECURITY CHALLENGES*, *50*(5), 47–98. https://doi.org/10.2307/26564285

Oprisko, R., & Kaliher, K. (2014). The State as a Person?: Anthropomorphic Personification vs. Concrete Durational Being. *Journal of International and Global Studies*, *6*(1). https://doi.org/10.62608/2158-0669.1212

Orbán, V. (2015a). *Orbán Viktor teljes beszéde*. https://magyarnemzet.hu/archivum/belfold-archivum/orban-viktor-teljes-beszede-3996863/

Orbán, V. (2015b). *The next years will be about hardworking people*.

Orbán, V. (2016a). *Orbán Viktor évértékelő beszéde*. http://www.miniszterelnok.hu/orban-viktor-evertekelo-beszede/

Orbán, V. (2016b). *Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's State of the Nation Address*. https://miniszterelnok.hu/prime-minister-viktor-orbans-state-of-the-nation-address/

Orbán, V. (2016c). *Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's State of the Nation Address*. https://miniszterelnok.hu/prime-minister-viktor-orbans-state-of-the-nation-address/

Orbán, V. (2017a). *Orbán Viktor 19. évértékelő beszéde*. http://www.miniszterelnok.hu/orban-viktor-19-evertekelo-beszede/

Orbán, V. (2017b). *Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's State of the Nation Address*. https://miniszterelnok.hu/prime-minister-viktor-orbans-state-of-the-nation-address-2/

Orbán, V. (2017c). *Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's State of the Nation Address*. https://miniszterelnok.hu/prime-minister-viktor-orbans-state-of-the-nation-address-2/

Parlament. (2018). *Országgyűlési napló ciklusonkénti adatai - Felszólalások*. https://www.parlament.hu/web/guest/orszaggyulesi-naplo-elozo-ciklusbeli-adatai?p_p_id=hu_parlament_cms_pair_portlet_PairProxy_INSTANCE_9xd2Wc9jP4z8&p_p _lifecycle=1&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&_hu_parlament_cms_pair_portlet_PairPr oxy_INSTANCE_9xd2Wc9jP4

Pécoud, A., & de Guchteneire, P. (2007). *Migration without borders: Essays on the Free Movement of People*. Berghahn Books.

Polo, M. R. (2018). An unexpected impact of the debate about refugees in Slovak republic. *PROGNOSTICKÉ PRÁCE - PP (FORESIGHT ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS - FAR)*, *10*(1–2). https://doi.org/10.31577/ppfar.2018.10.002

Postelnicescu, C. (n.d.). Europe's New Identity: The Refugee Crisis and the Rise of Nationalism. *Europe's Journal of Psychology*.

Průchová Hrůzová, A. (2021). What is the image of refugees in Central European media? *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, *24*(1), 240–258. https://doi.org/10.1177/1367549420951576

Quint, H. H., & Higham, J. (1956). Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925. *The Journal of Southern History*, *22*(1). https://doi.org/10.2307/2955278

Rathbun, B. C. (2009). It takes all types: Social psychology, trust, and the international relations paradigm in our minds. *International Theory*, *1*(3). https://doi.org/10.1017/S1752971909990121

Reyes, A. (2011). Strategies of legitimization in political discourse: From words to actions. *Discourse and Society*, *22*(6), 781–807. https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926511419927

Rheindorf, M., & Wodak, R. (2018). Borders, Fences, and Limits—Protecting Austria From Refugees: Metadiscursive Negotiation of Meaning in the Current Refugee Crisis. *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies*, *16*(1–2), 15–38. https://doi.org/10.1080/15562948.2017.1302032

Riasati, M. J., Rahimi, F., & Branch, S. (n.d.). *Critical Discourse Analysis: Scrutinizing Ideologically-Driven Discour ses.*

Ridder, H. G., Miles, M. B., Michael Huberman, A., & Saldaña, J. (2014). Qualitative data analysis. A methods sourcebook. *Zeitschrift Fur Personalforschung*, *28*(4).

Riddervold, M., Trondal, J., & Newsome, A. (2021). *The Palgrave Handbook of EU Crises*. Palgrave Macmillan. http://www.palgrave.com/gp/series/14629

Riedel, R. (2020). Nativism versus nationalism and populism - bridging the gap. *Central European Papers*, *6*(2). https://doi.org/10.25142/cep.2018.011

Risse, T. (2009a). 8. Social Constructivism and European Integration. In *European Integration Theory* (pp. 159–176). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/hepl/9780199226092.003.0008

Risse, T. (2009b). 8. Social Constructivism and European Integration. In *European Integration Theory* (pp. 159–176). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/hepl/9780199226092.003.0008

Risse, T. (2010). *A COMMUNITY OF EUROPEANS? Transnational Identities and Public Spheres*. Cornell University Press.

Risse, T. (2018). 7. Social Constructivism and European Integration. In *European Integration Theory*. https://doi.org/10.1093/hepl/9780198737315.003.0007

Ritsert, J. (1972). Inhaltsanalyse und Ideologiekritik. Ein Versuch über kritische Sozialforschung. In *Sozialwissenschaften*.

Rizova, T. P. (2019). The Securitization of the European Migrant Crisis - Evidence From Bulgaria and Hungary (2015-2017). *Review of European Studies*, *11*(4), 78. https://doi.org/10.5539/res.v11n4p78

Rocabert, J., Schimmelfennig, F., Crasnic, L., & Winzen, T. (2019). The rise of international parliamentary institutions: Purpose and legitimation. *Review of International Organizations*, *14*(4). https://doi.org/10.1007/s11558-018-9326-3

Rojo, M. L., & van Dijk, T. A. (1997). "There was a Problem, and it was Solved!": Legitimating the Expulsion of `Illegal' Migrants in Spanish Parliamentary Discourse. *Disocurse & Society*, *8*(4), 523–566.

Rosamond, B. (1999a). Discourses of globalization and the social construction of European identities. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *6*(4), 652–668. https://doi.org/10.1080/135017699343522

Rosamond, B. (1999b). Discourses of globalization and the social construction of European identities. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *6*(4), 652–668. https://doi.org/10.1080/135017699343522

Rosati, J. A. (2000). The power of human cognition in the study of world politics. *International Studies Review*, *2*(3). https://doi.org/10.1111/1521-9488.00215

Rupnik, J. (2018). Explaining Eastern Europe: The Crisis of Liberalism. *Journal of Democracy*, *29*(3), 24–38. https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2018.0042

Ruszkowski, J. (2019). The Constructivist Approach to Europeanisation ad personam: Towards Social Functionalism. *Polskie Studia Politologiczne*. https://doi.org/10.15804/athena.2019.64.07

Rydgren, J. (2008). Immigration sceptics, xenophobes or racists? Radical right-wing voting in six West European countries. *European Journal of Political Research*, *47*(6). https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2008.00784.x

Šabić, S. Š. (2017). *The Relocation of Refugees in the European Union Implementation of Solidarity and Fear*. https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/kroatien/13787.pdf

Sadecki, A. (2014). In a state of necessity. How has Orban changed Hungary. In *OSW Point of View* (Issue 41). Ośrodek studiów Wschodnich. http://search.ebscohost.com.recursos.uloyola.es/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsupe&AN=edsupe.57986&lang=es&site=eds-live&scope=site

Sandelowski, M. (2000). Whatever happened to qualitative description? *Research in Nursing & Health*, *23*(4). https://doi.org/10.1002/1098-240x(200008)23:4<334::aid-nur9>3.0.co;2-g

Sassen, S. (1999). *Globalization and Its Discontents Essays on the New Mobility of People and Money*. New Press.

Saurugger, S. (2016). Sociological Approaches to the European Union in Times of Turmoil. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *54*(1), 70–86. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12330

Sayer, A. (2010). Method in Social Science. In *Method in Social Science*. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203850374

Schimmelfennig, F. (2005). The community trap: Liberal norms, rhetorical action and the eastern enlargement of the European Union. *The Politics of European Union Enlargement: Theoretical Approaches*, *55*(1), 142–171. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203008720

Schimmelfennig, F. (2014). European Integration in the Euro Crisis: The Limits of Postfunctionalism. *Journal of European Integration*, *36*(3). https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2014.886399

Schimmelfennig, F. (2015). Liberal intergovernmentalism and the euro area crisis. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *22*(2). https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2014.994020

Schimmelfennig, F. (2018a). European integration (theory) in times of crisis. A comparison of the euro and Schengen crises. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *25*(7). https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2017.1421252

Schimmelfennig, F. (2018b). Liberal Intergovernmentalism and the Crises of the European Union. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *56*(7). https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12789

Schimmelfennig, F. (2020). Politicisation management in the European Union. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *27*(3). https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2020.1712458

Schimmelfennig, F., Leuffen, D., & Rittberger, B. (2015). The European Union as a system of differentiated integration: interdependence, politicization and differentiation. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *22*(6). https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2015.1020835

Schmitter, P. C. (1970). A Revised Theory of Regional Integration. *International Organization*, *24*(4), 836–868. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300017549

Schreier, M. (2012). Qualitative Content Analysis in Practice. In *Qualitative Content Analysis in Practice.*

Scott, J. W. (2020). Hungarian Border Politics as an Anti-Politics of the European Union. *Geopolitics*, *25*(3), 658–677. https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2018.1548438

Scruton, R. (2018). *Conservatism: An Invitation to the Great Tradition*. All Points Books.

Sedláková, R. (2017). Moral panic over migration in the broadcasting of the Czech Radio. *Lodz Papers in Pragmatics*, *13*(2). https://doi.org/10.1515/lpp-2017-0012

Simonovits, B. (2020a). The Public Perception of the Migration Crisis from the Hungarian Point of View: Evidence from the Field. In *Geographies of Asylum in Europe and the Role of European Localities* (pp. 155–176). Springer Science and Business Media B.V. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-25666-1_8

Simonovits, B. (2020b). The Public Perception of the Migration Crisis from the Hungarian Point of View: Evidence from the Field. In *IMISCOE Research Series.*

Skjærseth, J. B. (2023). The War in Ukraine and EU Climate Leadership. *Czech Journal of International Relations.* https://doi.org/10.32422/cjir.783

Smeets, S., & Beach, D. (2020). Intergovernmentalism and its implications–new institutional leadership in major EU reforms. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *27*(8). https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2019.1699940

Smith, S. (1999). Social constructivisms and European studies: A reflectivist critique. In *Journal of European Public Policy* (Vol. 6, Issue 4, pp. 682–691). https://doi.org/10.1080/135017699343540

Sněmovna, P. (2017). *Parlament České republiky Poslanecká sněmovna, 2013 - 2017*.

Soysal, Y. N. (1994). *Limits of Citizenship Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe*.

Štefančík, R., & Kiner, A. (2021a). 'Sorry, i don't want them here.' Migration in Slovak Political Discour se. *Professional Discourse & Communication*.

Štefančík, R., & Kiner, A. (2021b). 'Sorry, i don't want them here.' Migration in Slovak Political Discourse. *Professional Discourse & Communication*.

Štefančík, R., Némethová, I., & Seresová, T. (2021). Securitisation of Migration in the Language of Slovak Far-Right Populism. *Migration Letters*, *18*(6), 731–744. https://doi.org/10.33182/ml.v18i6.1387

Stepper, P. (2016). The Visegrad Group and the EU agenda on migration: A coalition of the unwilling? In *Corvinus Journal of International Affairs* (Vol. 1, Issue 1). https://journals.lib.uni-corvinus.hu/index.php/cojourn/article/view/27

Stojarová, V. (2018). Populist, Radical and Extremist Political Parties in Visegrad countries vis à vis the migration crisis. In the name of the people and the nation in Central Europe. *Open Political Science*, *1*(1), 32–45. https://doi.org/10.1515/openps-2018-0001

Strapáčová, M., & Hloušek, V. (2018). Anti-Islamism without MOSLEMs: Cognitive frames of Czech antimigrant politics. In *Journal of Nationalism Memory and Language Politics* (Vol. 12, Issue 1). https://doi.org/10.2478/jnmlp-2018-0001

Stryker, S. (1968). Identity Salience and Role Performance: The Relevance of Symbolic Interaction Theory for Family Research. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *30*(4), 558–564. https://doi.org/10.2307/349494

Sweet, A. S., & Sandholtz, W. (1997). European integration and supranational governance. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *4*(3), 297–317. https://doi.org/10.1080/13501769780000011

Tabosa, C. (2020). Constructing Foreign Policy vis-à-vis the Migration Crisis: The Czech and Slovak Cases. *Czech Journal of International Relations*, *55*(2), 5–23. https://doi.org/10.32422/mv.1687

Tajfel, H. (1974). Social identity and intergroup behaviour. *Social Science Information*, *13*(2), 65–93. https://doi.org/10.1177/053901847401300204

Talay, L. (2020). The language of exclusion: A critical comparison of new-right arguments against Islam. *Journal of Language and Politics*, *3*(November 2020), 430–450. https://www.jbe-platform.com/content/journals/10.1075/jlp.19071.tal

Ticktin, M. I. (2011). Casualties of care: Immigration and the politics of humanitarianism in France. In *Casualties of Care: Immigration and the Politics of Humanitarianism in France*. https://doi.org/10.1525/california/9780520269040.001.0001

Todorov, T. (1999). *The Conquest of America*. OUP.

Tóth, J. (2021). Negative and Engaged: Sentiments towards the 2016 Migrant Quota Referendum in Hungarian Online Media. *East European Politics and Societies*, *35*(2), 493–518. https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325420915954

Trauner, F. (2016). Asylum policy: the EU's "crises" and the looming policy regime failure. *Journal of EuropEan IntEgratIon*, *38*(3), 311–325. https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2016.1140756

Triandafyllidou, A. (2018). A "Refugee Crisis" Unfolding: "Real" Events and Their Interpretation in Media and Political Debates. *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies*, *16*(1–2), 198–216. https://doi.org/10.1080/15562948.2017.1309089

Urbániková, M., & Tkaczyk, M. (2020). Strangers ante portas: The framing of refugees and migrants in the Czech quality press. *European Journal of Communication*, *35*(6). https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323120928224

Vaara, E., & Tienari, J. (2002). Justification, legitimization and naturalization of mergers and acquisitions: A critical discourse analysis of media texts. *Organization*, *9*(2), 275–304. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508402009002912

Valletta Summit on migration. (2015a). *VALLETTA SUMMIT, 11-12 November 2015 Action plan*. https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/21839/action_plan_en.pdf

Valletta Summit on migration. (2015b). *VALLETTA SUMMIT, 11-12 November 2015 Political Declaration*. https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/21841/political_decl_en.pdf

Vallo, Z., Jaworek, R., & Matlach, V. (2020). Islamophobic Discourse of Czech Politicians and Political Parties on Twitter during the 2015 Migration Crisis. *Journal of Nationalism Memory and Language Politics* , *14*(2), 152–176. https://doi.org/10.2478/jnmlp-2020-0009

van Dijk, T. (1993). *Elite Discourse and Racism* (T. A. van Dijk, Ed.; Vol. 1999, Issue December). SAGE Publications, Inc.

van Dijk, T. (1997). *Discourse as Social Interaction* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.

van Dijk, T. (2006). Discourse and manipulation. *Discourse and Society*, *17*(3). https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926506060250

van Dijk, T. (2008). Discourse and context: A sociocognitive approach. In *Discourse and Context: A Sociocognitive Approach*. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511481499

van Dijk, T. (2011a). Discourse studies: A multidisciplinary introduction. In *Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446289068

van Dijk, T. (2011b). Ideology and discourse. A Multidisciplinary Introduction. In *Pompeu Fobra University, Barcelona*.

van Dijk, T. (2011c). Ideology and discourse. A Multidisciplinary Introduction. In *Pompeu Fobra University, Barcelona*.

van Dijk, T. (2019). Ideologies, Racism, Discourse: Debates on Immigration and Ethnic Issues. In *Comparative Perspectives on Racism*. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315196374-5

Van Dijk, T. A. (1997). *Discourse as Social Interaction* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.

van Ostaijen, M. M. A. C. (2020). Legitimating intra-European movement discourses: understanding mobility and migration. *Comparative European Politics*, *18*(1), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41295-019-00152-x

Veebel, V. (2020). Is the European Migration Crisis Caused by Russian Hybrid Warfare? *Journal of Politics and Law*, *13*(2). https://doi.org/10.5539/jpl.v13n2p44

Verhoeff, E. C., & Niemann, A. (2011). National preferences and the European Union Presidency: The case of German energy policy towards Russia. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *49*(6), 1271–1293. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5965.2011.02198.x

Vestergaard, K. T. (2020). The battle for the public perception: how increases in asylum seekers and media framing affected the perception of the refugee crisis and support for additional measures across the left-right spectrum. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, *28*(4), 411–433. https://doi.org/10.1080/14782804.2020.1773775

Vetrovcova, M. (2021). The Visegrad Countries in the European Union: Understanding the Identi. *Heidelberg University Library*. https://doi.org/10.11588/HEIDOK.00030395

Visegrad Group. (2015). *Joint Statement of the Heads of Government of the Visegrad Group Countries*. https://www.visegradgroup.eu/calendar/2015/joint-statement-of-the-150904

Votoupalová, M. (2019). Construction of Solidarity: Czech and Polish Approach to Refugees in the EU Context. *Studia Europejskie-Studies in European Affairs*, *23*(1). https://doi.org/10.33067/se.1.2019.03

Waever, O. (2005). European Integration and Security: Analysing French and German Discourses on State, Nation, and Europe. *Discourse Theory in European Politics*, 33–67. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230523364_2

Wæver, O. (2018). A post-western europe: Strange identities in a less liberal world order. *Ethics and International Affairs*, *32*(1), 75–88. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0892679418000114

Wallace, R. A., & Alexander, J. C. (1999). Neofunctionalism and After. *Contemporary Sociology*, *28*(1). https://doi.org/10.2307/2653918

Wallerstein, I. (2004). World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction / Edition 1. *Barnes & Noble.*

Waltz, K. N. (1986). Reflections on "Theory of International Politics": a response to my critics. In *Neorealism and its critics.*

Walzer, M. (1984). *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality.* Basic Books.

Weber, R. P. (1990). *Basic Content Analysis.* SAGE.

Weissenrieder, M., & Fairclough, N. (n.d.). Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language. *The Modern Language Journal*, *81*(3), 428. https://doi.org/10.2307/329335

Wendt, A. (1987). The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory. *International Organization*, *41*(3), 335–370. https://www.jstor.org/stable/2706749?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents

Wendt, A. (1999). Social Theory of International Politics. In *Social Theory of International Politics.* Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511612183

Wendt, A. (2004). The state as person in international theory. In *Review of International Studies* (Vol. 30, Issue 2). https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210504006084

Wiczanowska, H. (2017). The Relocation of the Iron Curtain to the Middle East: the Polish and Slovak Position Towards the EU Migration and Asylum Policy. *Polish Political Science Yearbook*, *1*(46), 63–73. https://doi.org/10.15804/ppsy2017104

Wight, C. (2003). The Agent-Structure Problem and Institutional Racism. *Political Studies*, *51*(4). https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0032-3217.2003.00454.x

Wodak, R. (2009). The discourse of politics in action: Politics as usual. In *The Discourse of Politics in Action: Politics as Usual.* https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230316539

Wodak, R. (2015). *The Politics of Fear - What Right-Wing Populist Discourses Mean.* SAGE Publications Ltd. https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446270073

Wodak, R. (2017). "Strangers in Europe": A discourse-historical approach to the legitimation of immigration control 2015/16. In *Advancing Multimodal and Critical Discourse Studies: Interdisciplinary Research Inspired by Theo Van Leeuwen's Social Semiotics* (pp. 31–49). https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315521015

Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (2002). *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis* (R. Wodak & M. Meyer, Eds.; 2nd ed., Vol. 7, Issue 1). SAGE Publications Ltd.

Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (2009). *Methods for Critical Discourse Analysis* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications Ltd.

Wodak, R., & van Dijk, T. A. (2000). *Racism at the top. Parliamentary Discourses on Ethnic Issues in Six European States.* Klagenfurt: Drava Verlag.

Wondreys, J. (2021). The "refugee crisis" and the transformation of the far right and the political mainstream: the extreme case of the Czech Republic. *East European Politics*, *37*(4), 722–746. https://doi.org/10.1080/21599165.2020.1856088

Zehfuss, M. (2001). Constructivism and identity: A dangerous liaison. *European Journal of International Relations*, *7*(3). https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066101007003002

Zey, M. A. (2015). Rational Choice and Organization Theory. In *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences: Second Edition.* https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.73109-6

Zhang, Y., & Wildemuth, B. M. (2009). Qualitative Analysis of Content. *Applications of Social Research Methods to Questions in Information and Library Science.* https://doi.org/10.1002/hbm.20661

Zizek, S. (2017). *Against the Double Blackmail: Refugees, Terror and Other Troubles with the Neighbours*. Penguin Press.

Zolberg, A. R. (2006). *A Nation by Design: Immigration Policy in the Fashioning of America*. Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvk12qvs

Zúquete, J. P. (2018). *The Movement against Globalism and Islam in Europe*. University of Notre Dame Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvpj775n

Zvada, Ľ. (2018). Securitization of the migration crisis and islamophobic rhetoric: The 2016 Slovak parliamentary elections as a case study. *Journal of Nationalism Memory and Language Politics* , *12*(2), 216–235. https://doi.org/10.2478/jnmlp-2018-0010

8. Appendices

8.1. Appendix 1
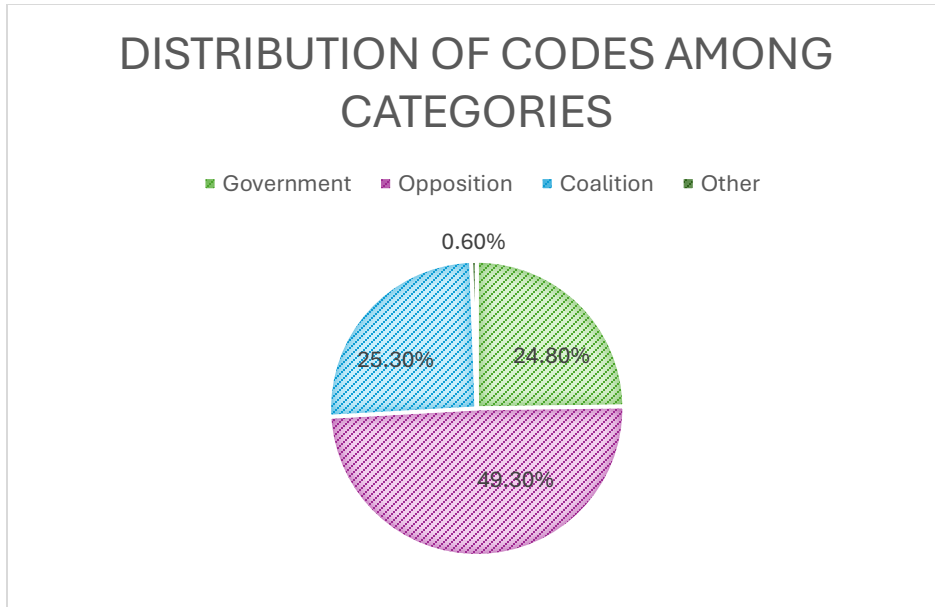
Figure 19 Distribution of coded segments among the government, coalition and opposition parties in Hungary (overall)

8.2. Appendix 2
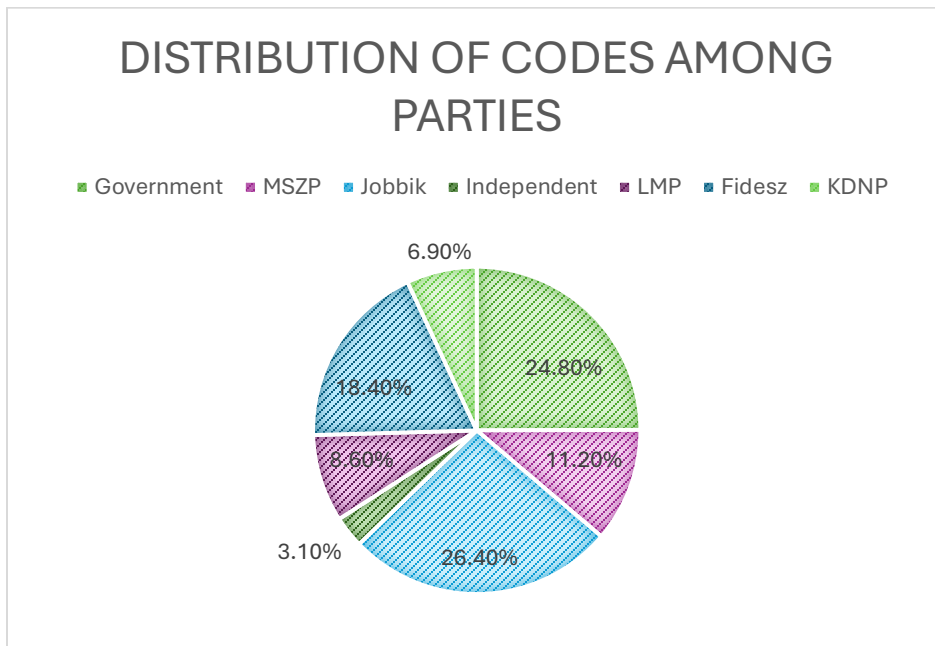
Figure 20 Distribution of coded segments among the government, coalition and opposition parties in Hungary

8.3.   Appendix 3

DISTRIBUTION OF CODES
AMONG CATEGORIES

■ Coalition parties   ■ Opposition parties   ■ Government   ■ Other

0.20%

18.30%   14.70%

66.80%
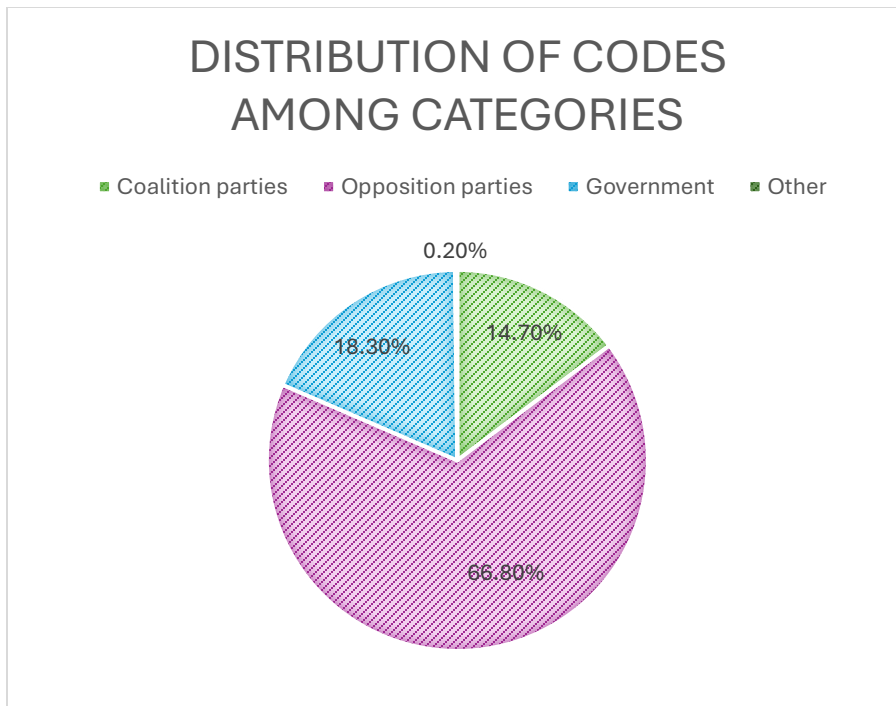
Figure 21 Distribution of coded segments among the government, coalition and opposition parties in Slovakia (overall)

8.4.   Appendix 4

DISTRIBUTION OF CODES
AMONG PARTIES

■ SMER-SD   ■ KDH   ■ SAS   ■ SDKÚ-DS   ■ OĽANO   ■ Most-Híd   ■ Government

18.30%   14.70%

7.60%   19.10%

23.00%

10.40%

6.70%
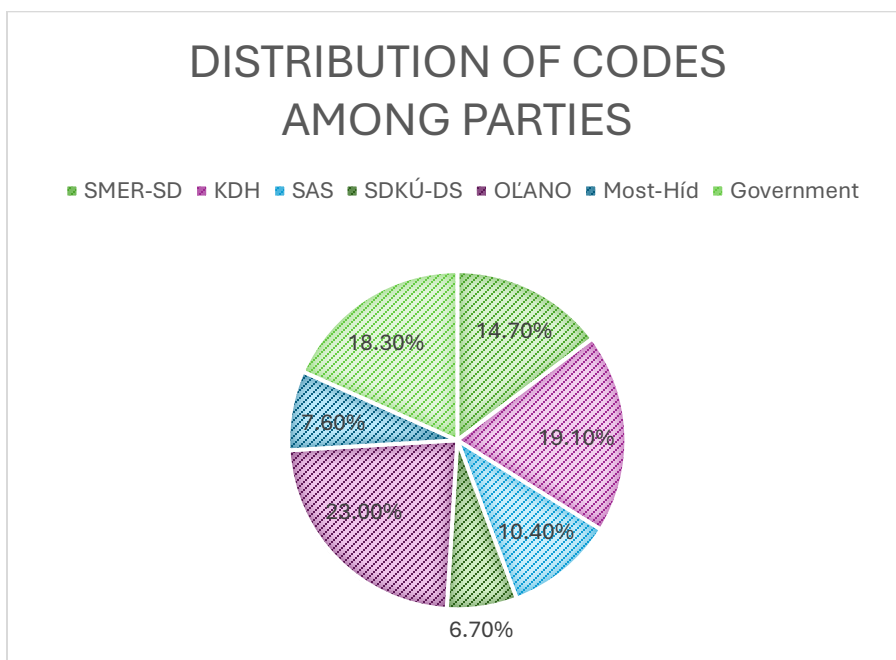
Figure 22 Distribution of coded segments among the government, coalition and opposition parties in Slovakia

8.5.   Appendix 5

DISTRIBUTION OF CODES AMONG CATEGORIES

■ Opposition parties   ■ Coalition parties   ■ Government   ■ Other

0.70%
32.30%
57.60%
9.40%
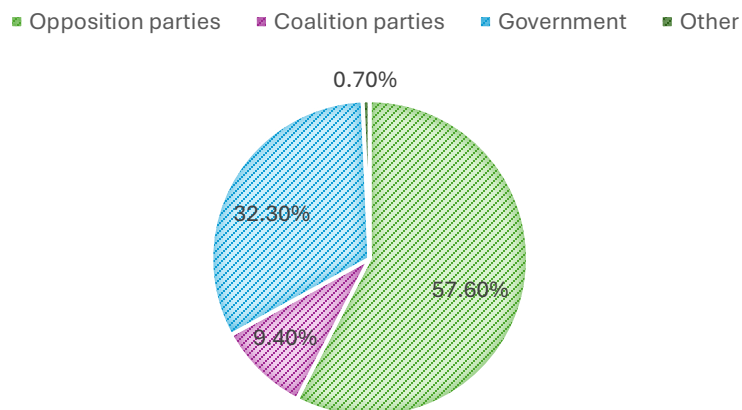
Figure 23 Distribution of coded segments among the government, coalition and opposition parties in the Czech Republic (overall)

8.6.   Appendix 6

DISTRIBUTION OF CODES AMONG PARTIES

■ KSČM   ■ ÚSVIT   ■ ODS   ■ TOP09   ■ ČSSD   ■ ANO   ■ KDÚ-ČSL

3.30%
4.00%
2.10%
7.00%
7.00%
15.40%
28.20%
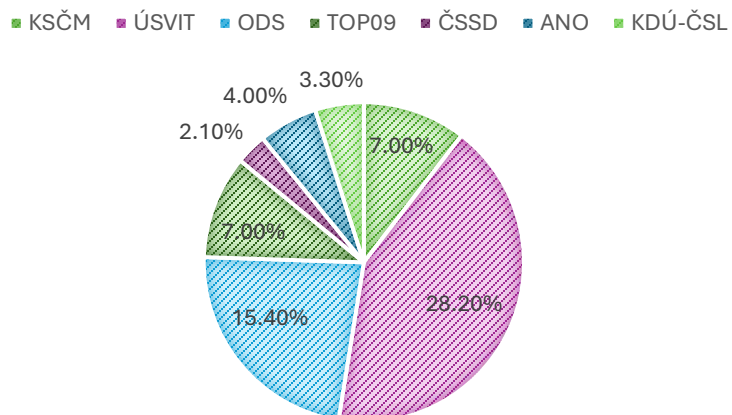
Figure 24 Distribution of coded segments among the government, coalition and opposition parties in the Czech republic

DISTRIBUTION OF CODED SEGMENTS BY PARTIES (EACH SESSION)
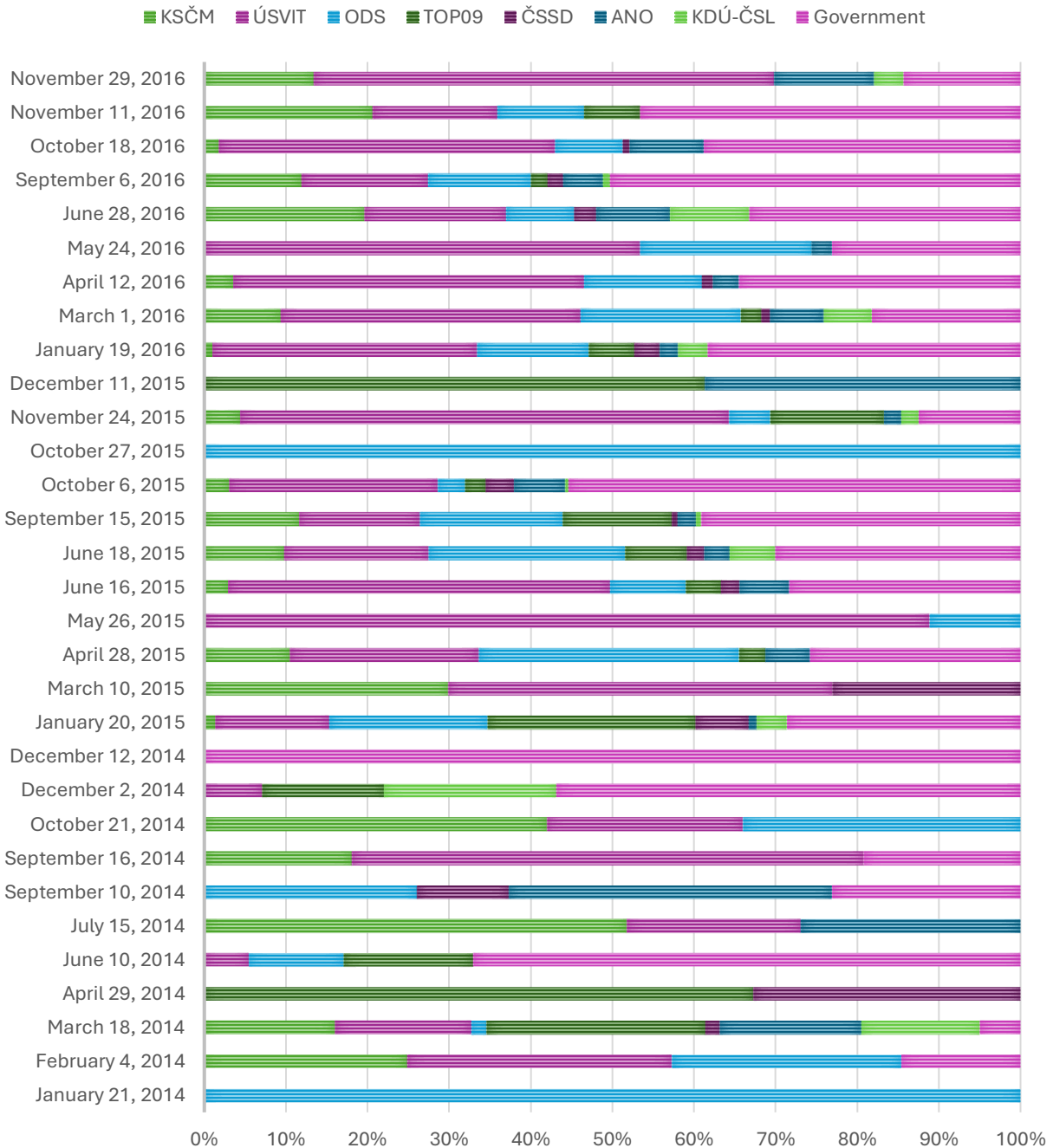
Figure 25 Distribution of coded segments among the government, coalition and opposition parties in the Czech republic throughout the studied period

8.8. Appendix 8
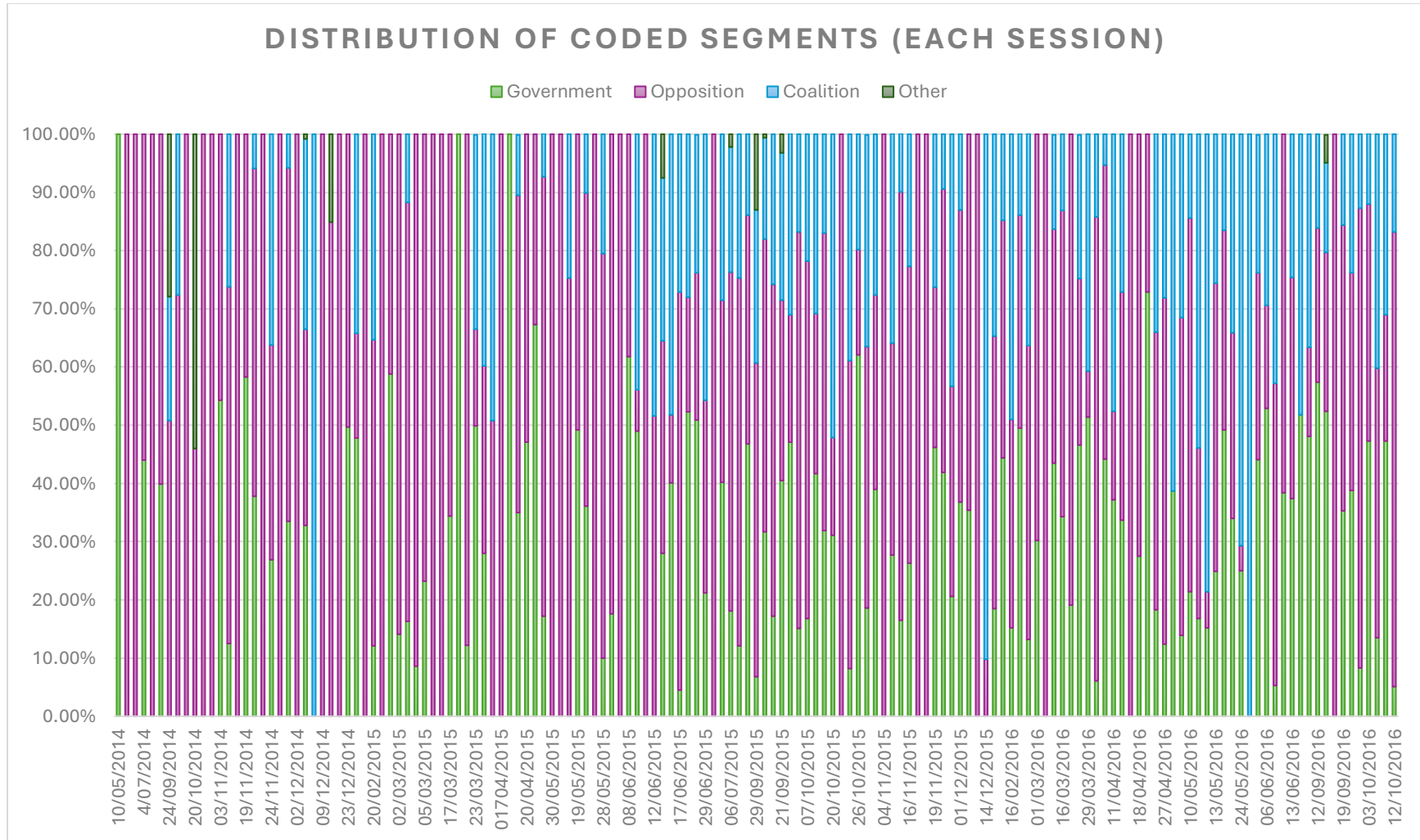
Figure 26 Distribution of coded segments among the government, coalition and opposition parties in Hungary throughout the studied period (overall)

8.9. Appendix 9
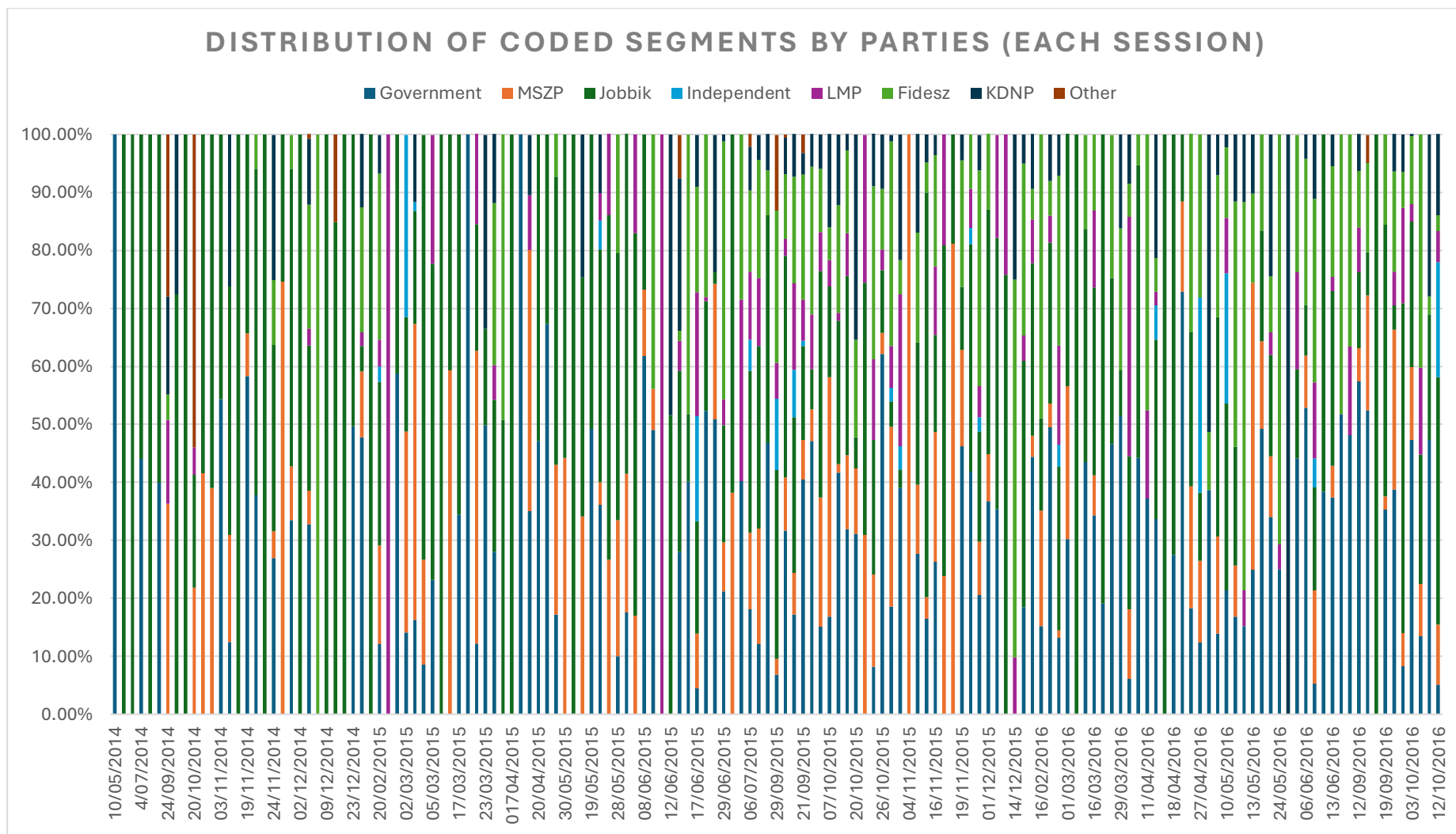
Figure 27 Distribution of coded segments among the government, coalition and opposition parties in Hungary throughout the studied period

8.10. Appendix 10
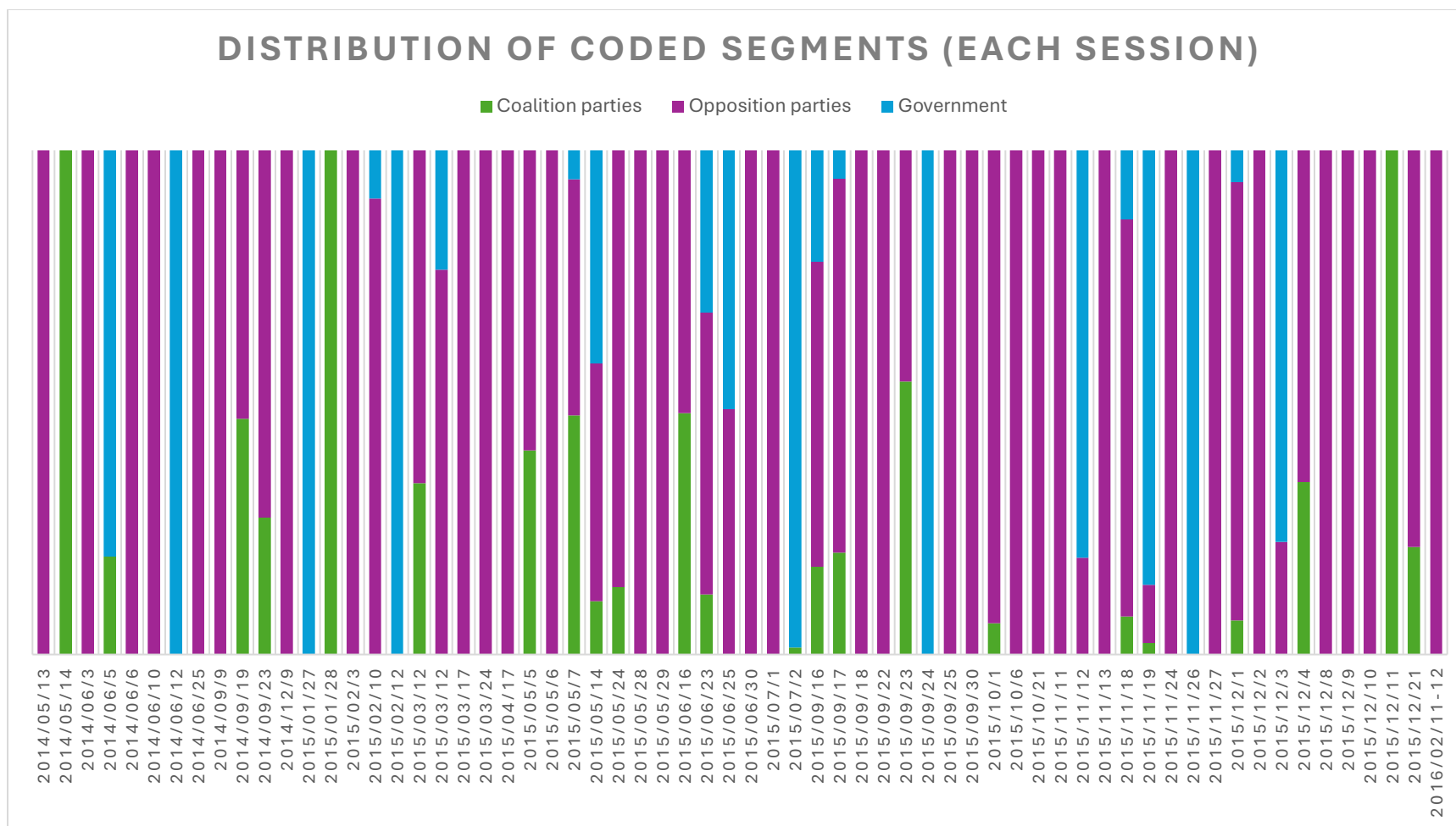
Figure 28 Distribution of coded segments among the government, coalition and opposition parties in Slovakia throughout the studied period (overall)

DISTRIBUTION OF CODED SEGMENTS BY PARTIES (EACH SESSION)
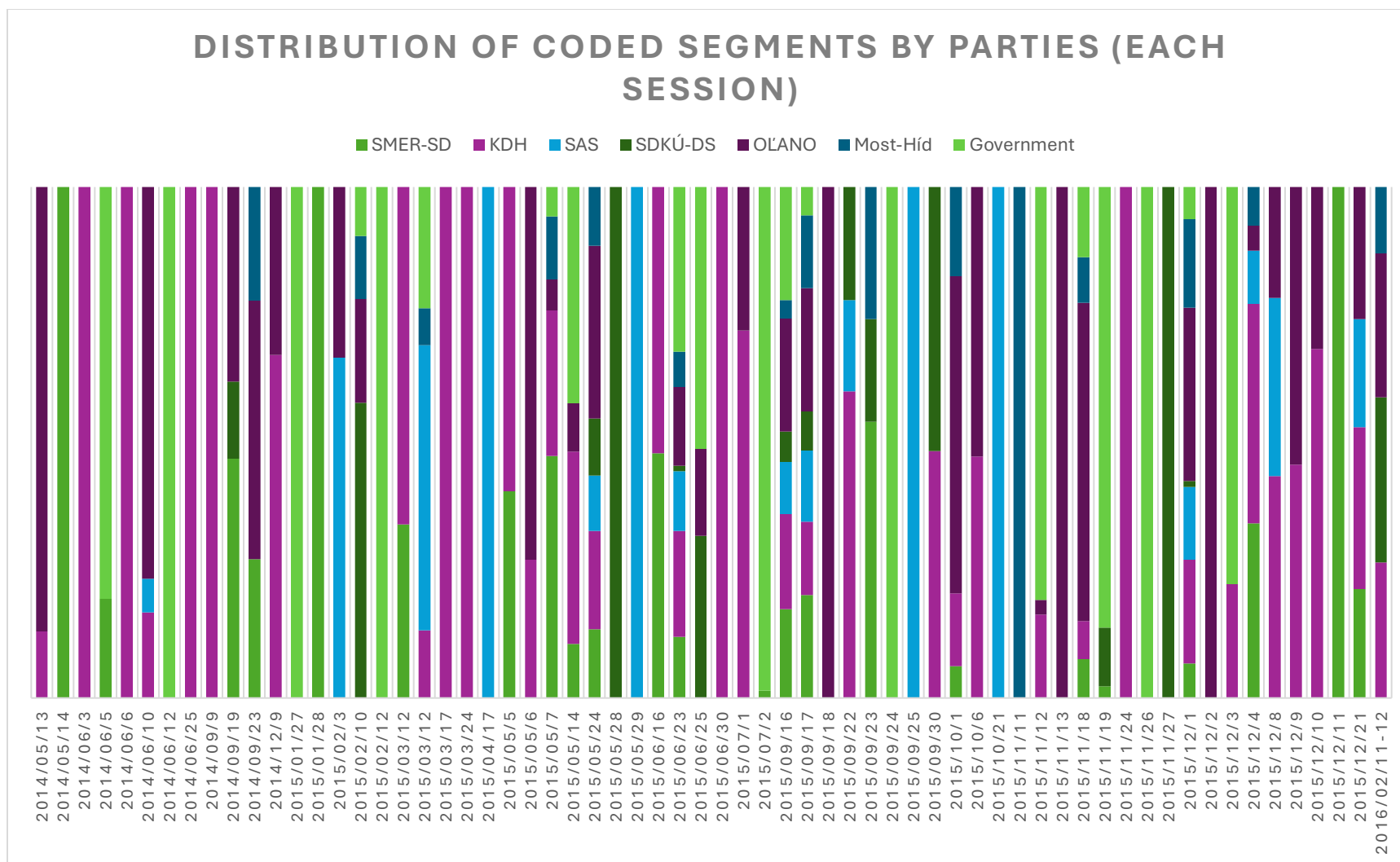
Figure 29 Distribution of coded segments among the government, coalition and opposition parties in Slovakia throughout the studied period

8.12. Appendix 12
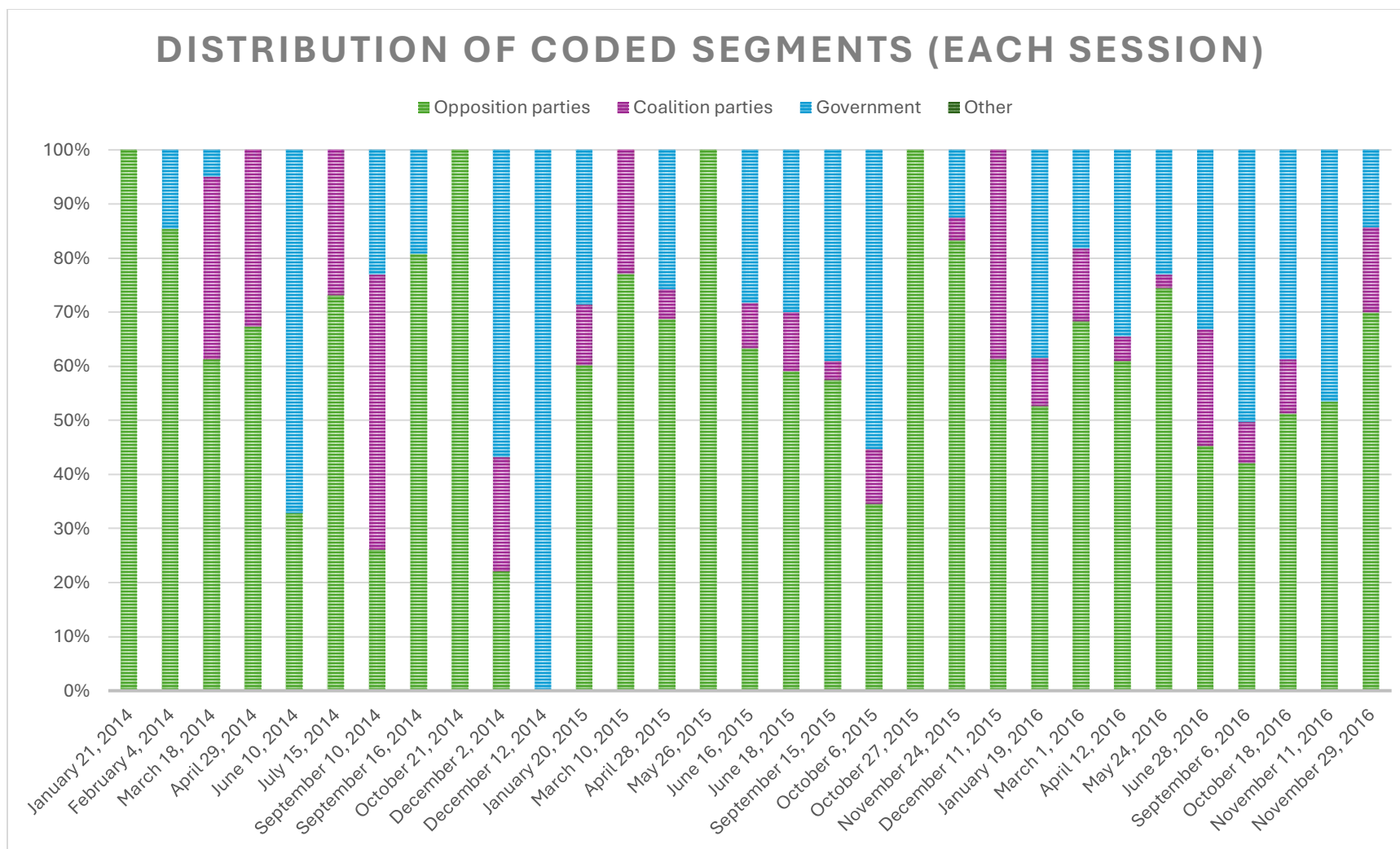
Figure 30 Distribution of coded segments among the government, coalition and opposition parties in the Czech republic throughout the studied period (overall)

8.13. Appendix 13
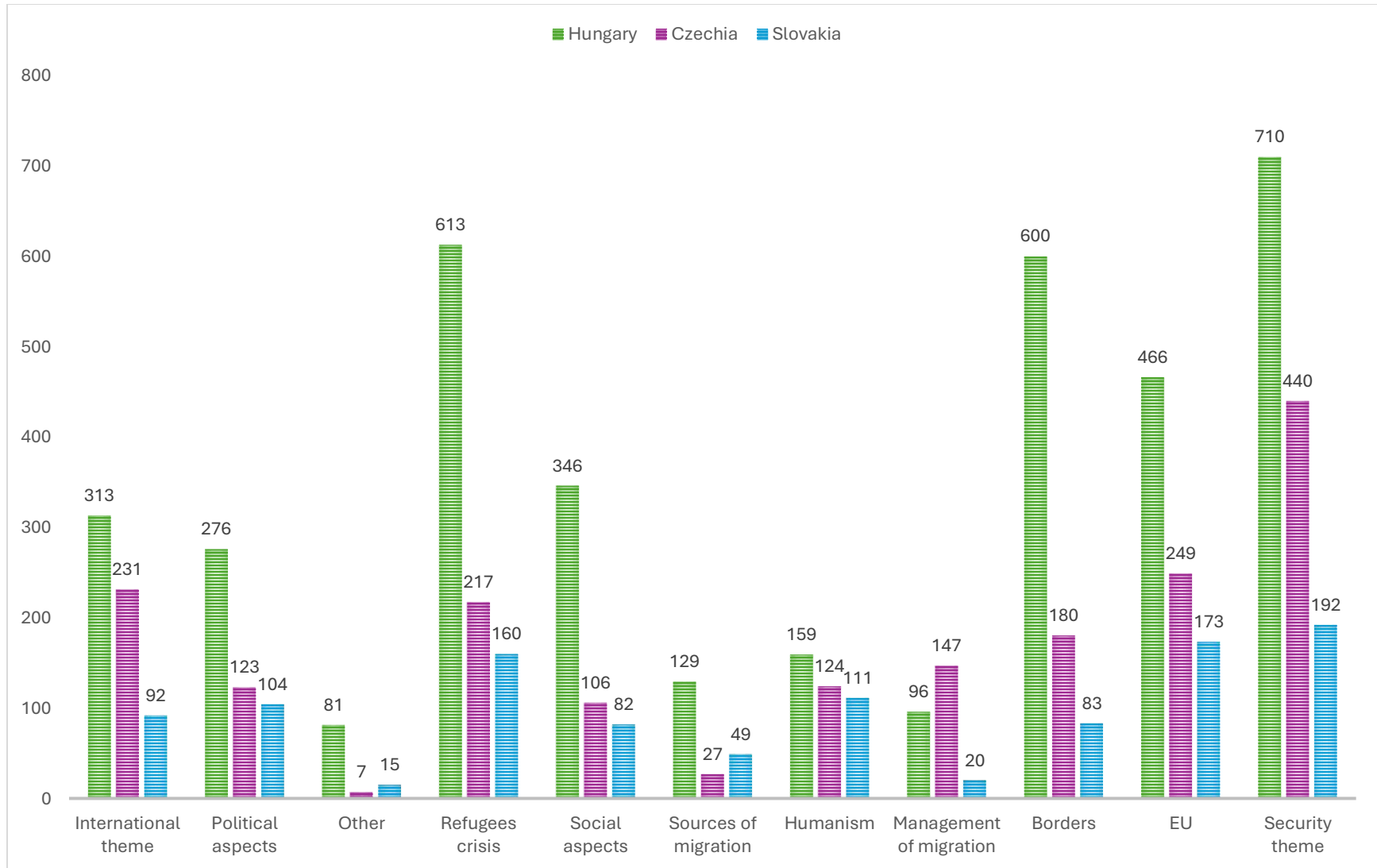
Figure 31 Distribution of themes as result of the Qualitative Content Analysis

8.14. Appendix 14
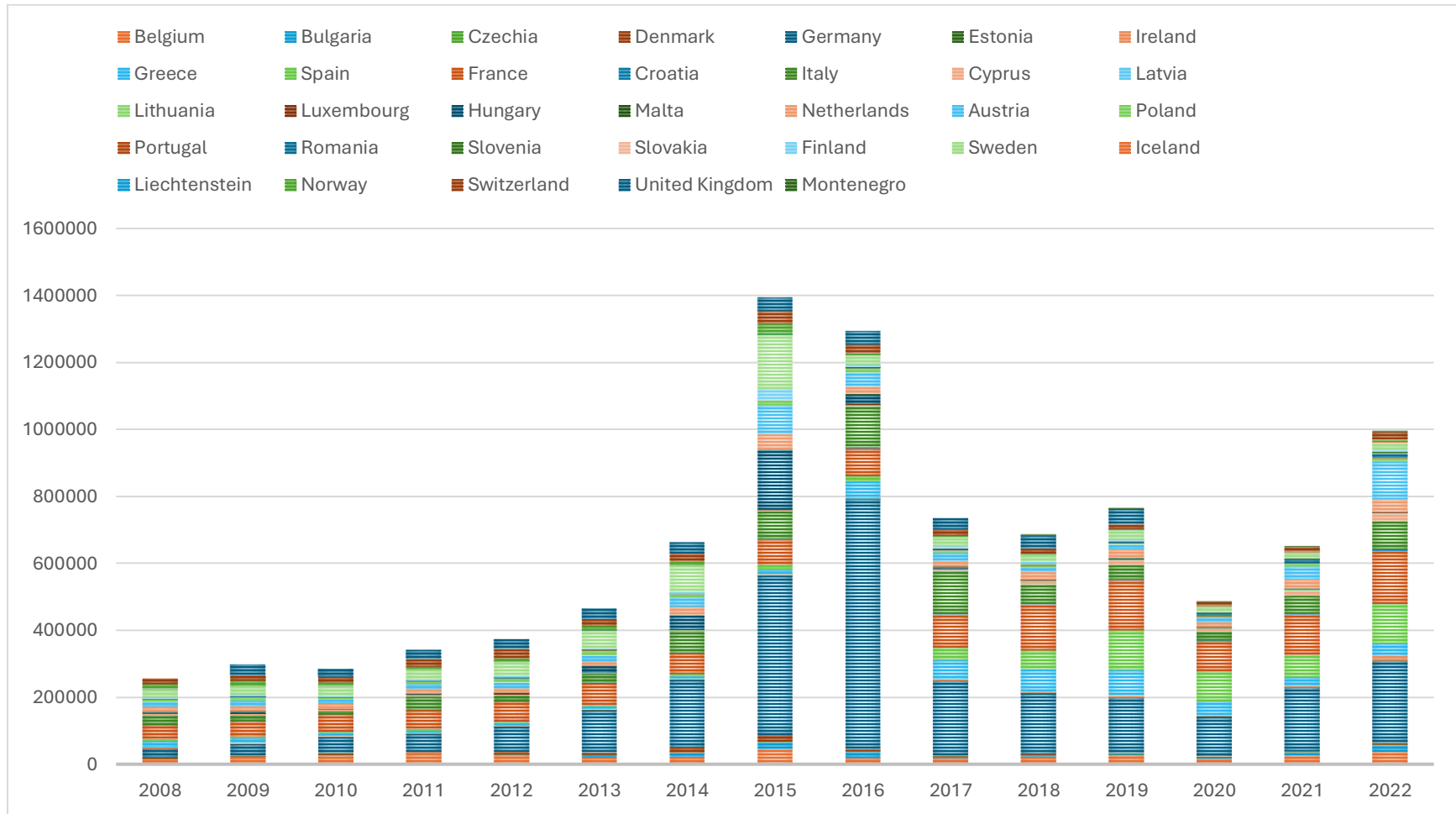
Figure 32 Yearly distribution of asylum seekers among EU member states

8.15. Appendix 15
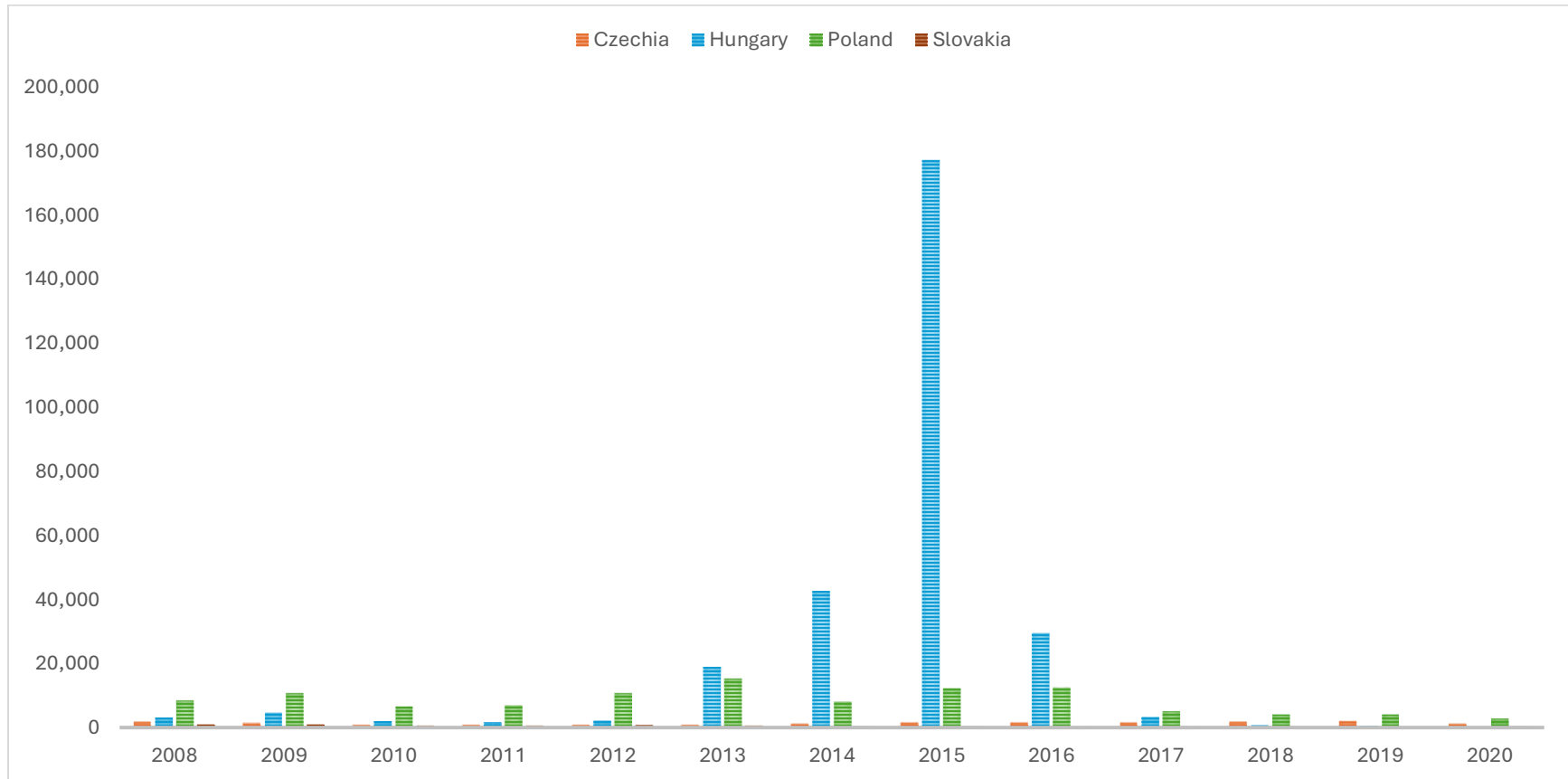
Figure 33 Yearly distribution of asylum seekers among the V4 countries

8.16. Appendix 16

Czech (CZ)	Hungarian (HU)	Slovak (SK)
Azylanty, Azylantů, Azylanti, Azylant, Azyl, Azylem, Azylový, Azylová, Azylové, Azyloví	Külföldiek, Külföldi, Külföldieknek	Migrant, Migranti, Migranty, Migranta, Migrantoch, Migrantom, Migrantov, Migrantská, Migrantské, Migrantskej, Migrantskú, Migrantských, Migrantami
Uprchlíků, Uprchlíci, Uprchlícky, Uprchlík	Menedékjog, Menedékjogi, Menedékjogok, Menedékjoggal, Menedék, Menedéket	Migračný, Migračná, Migrační, Migračné, Migračného, Migračnej, Migračnou, Migračnú, Migračných, Migračným, Migračnými
Běženci, Běženců	Migráns, Migránsok, Migránsokat, Migránsoknak, Migráció, Migrációt, Migránsokért, Migránsoknak	Cudzinec, Cudzinci, Cudzinecký, Cudzinecká, Cudzinca, Cudzincami
Immmigrant, Imigrantů	Menekültek, Menekülteknek, Menekült, Menekülés, Menekül, Menekülő	Presídlený, Presídlení, Presídlené, Presídliť, Presídleniam, Presídlenia, Presídlenie, Presídlime, Presídleného, Presídlenom, Presídlenú
Relokace, Relokační	Bevándorló, Bevándorlók, Bevándorlóknak, Bevándorlókat, Bevándorlás, Bevándorol	Azyl, Azylu, Azyle, Azylových, Azylovom, Azylového, Azylovú, Azyly, Azylantom, Azylanta, Azylantov, Azylantovi, Azylantoch, Azylantské, Azylom, Azylov, Azylovou, Azylovým, Azylový, Azylová, Azylové, Azyloví, Azylovej, Azylových, Azylovom, Azylového, Azylovú, Azyly, Azylantom, Azylanta, Azylantov, Azylantovi, Azylantoch, Azylantské, Azylom, Azylov, Azylovou, Azylovým
Přisťahovalec, Přisťahovalci, Přisťahovalectvo	Kitelepített, Kitelepítettek, Kitelepítetteknek, Kitelepítés	Kvóty, Kvóta, Kvótne, Kvótach, Kvótam, Kvótami, Kvóte, Kvótou, Kvótový, Kvótovou, Kvótu, Kvótových, Kvótovým, Kvótovej
Cizinec, Cizinecký, Cizinecká	Kvóta, Kvóták, Kvótákat, Kvótáknak, Kvótán, Kvótára, Kvótából, Kvótát, Kvótával, Kvótában, Kvótához, Kvótája, Kvóták	Prisťahovalec, Prisťahovalci, Prisťahovalecký, Prisťahovalectvo, Prisťahovalecké, Prisťahovalectvom, Prisťahovalecká, Prisťahovalcov, Prisťahovalectvu, Prisťahovalectva, Prisťahovalcami
		Relokovaní, Relokácia, Relokačné, Relokačný, Relokačného, Relokačnom, Relokácie, Relokáciou, Utečenecká, Utečenecké, Utečeneckej, Utečeneckou, Utečeneckú, Utečenecký, Utečeneckých, Utečeneckými, Utečenectva, Utečenectvami, Utečenci, Utečencoch, Utečencom, Utečencov, Utečenec, Utečenectvom

Table 8 Keywords for initial delimitation of data

8.17. Appendix 17
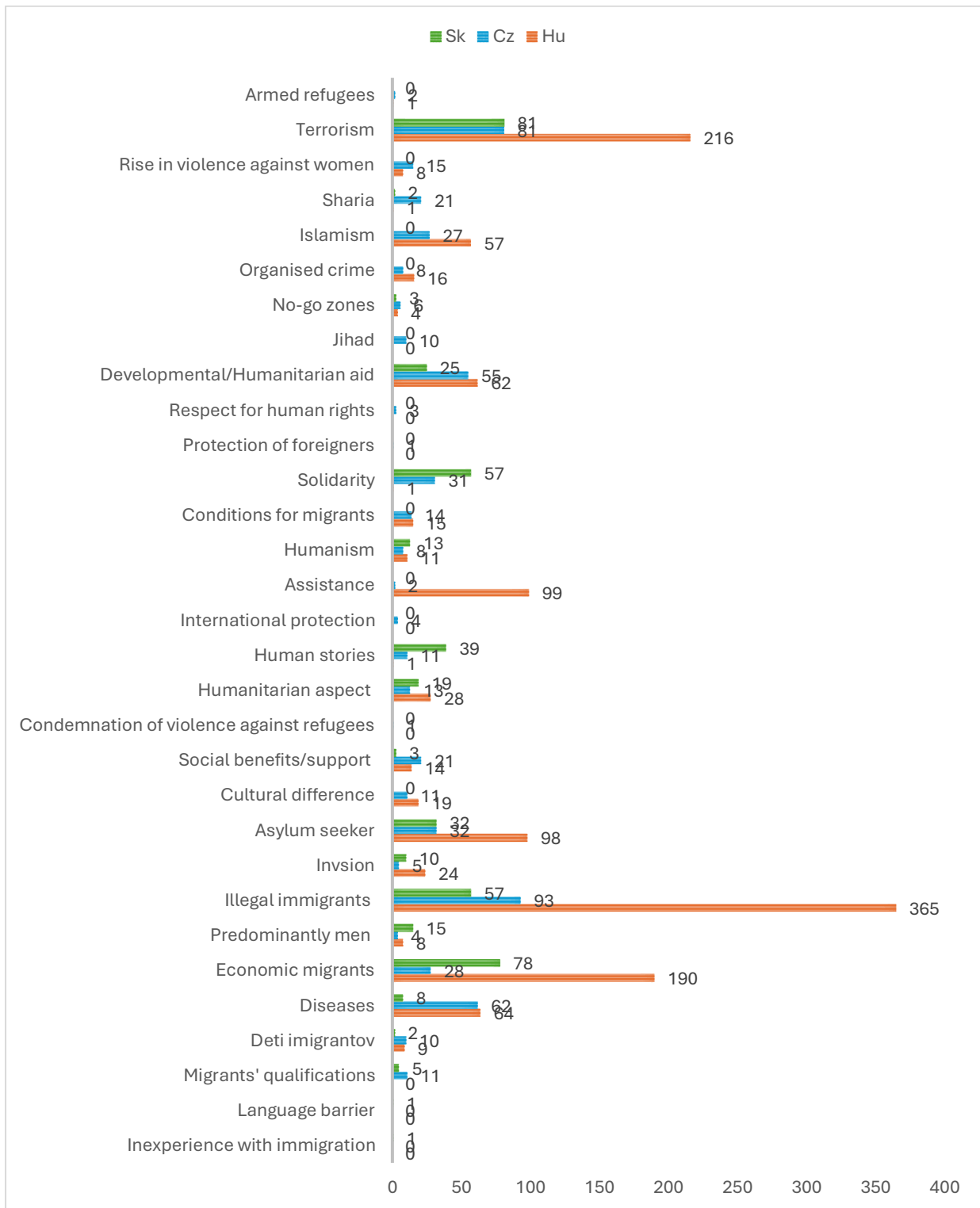
Figure 34 Distribution of codes related to the social category of refugees/asylum seekers

8.18. Appendix 18
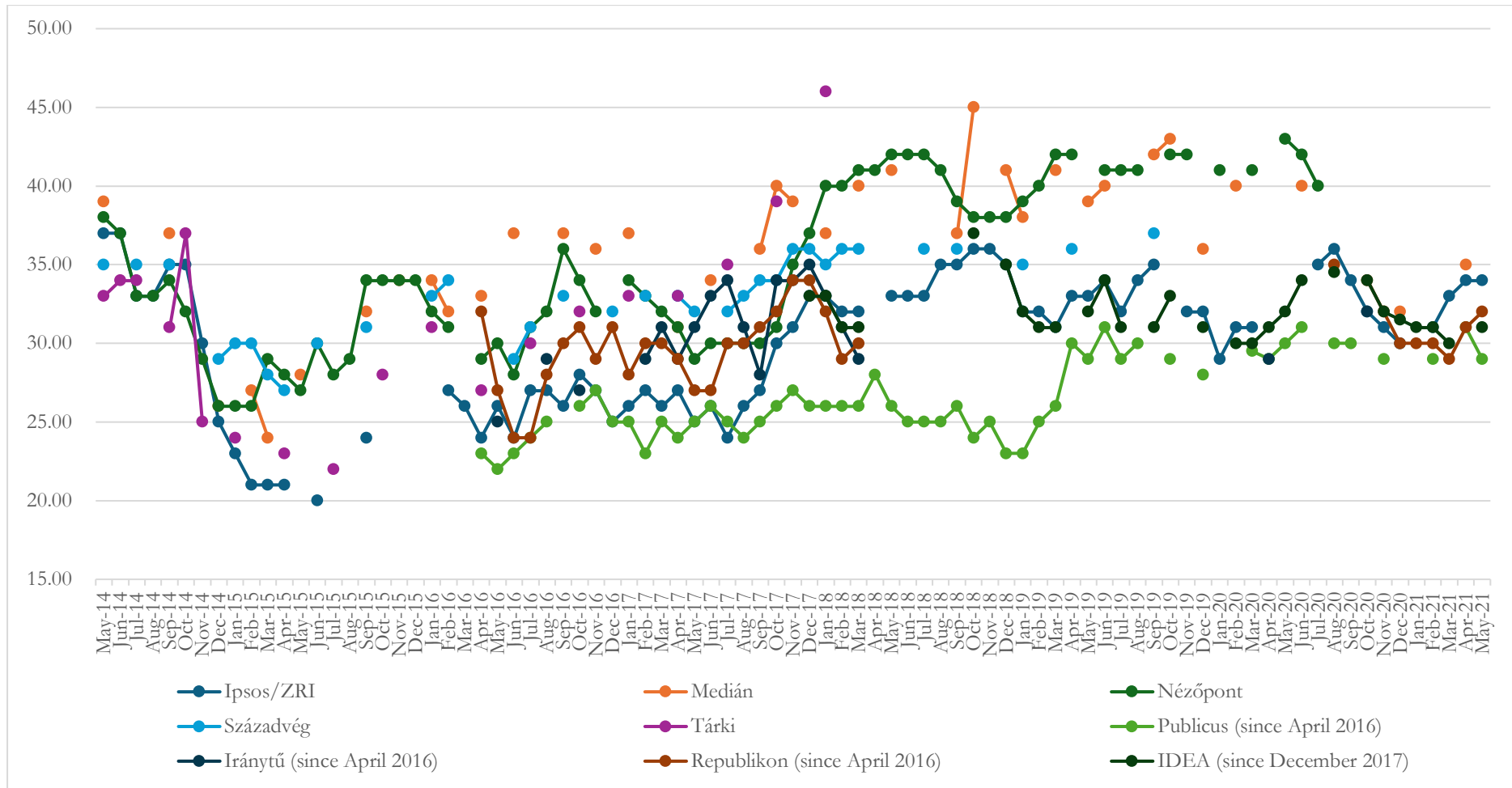
Figure 35 The table displays party preference for the FIDESZ-KDNP party among those entitled to vote. The table is based on data from Közvéleménykutatók.hu. Source: (Közvéleménykutatók.hu, n.d.).

8.19. Appendix 19

Social aspects				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"The events and riots around the refugee camp in Debrecen last Monday have already been discussed in many places, but I would like to add some new information to this topic. When these events broke out, it was reported in the media that a religious conflict between two camp residents turned into a minor scuffle, which turned into a major brawl and riot. According to our information, this does not cover the reality. Inside the camp, the campers have been behaving in a way that is, how shall we say, not really appropriate in cultural circles. Some kind of mind-altering drugs may have been used, and an unfortunate animal, a sheep, may have been mistreated, which would amount to criminal cruelty to animals. There have been several video and news reports of the events, with images of these criminals, who claim to be refugees, rampaging through the streets."	Kulcsár Gergely	Jobbik	far-right	Negative other representation, Topos of disturbance, Topos of criminality
"Jobbik has stressed many times that those who come to Hungary fleeing real persecution, those who are genuinely persecuted, whether for religious or political reasons, must be given a helping hand. However, the astounding generalisation that all asylum seekers are genuine refugees from persecution is quite astounding."	Z. Kárpát Dániel	Jobbik	far-right	Generalisation, Topos of distinction, Topos of humanity
"It is here that, according to several news portals, the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration has asked the churches there to remove from the churches and church buildings they receive, not only paintings of crosses and Jesus Christ, but also any religious symbols that might offend the sensibilities of the so-called migrants, because of the religious beliefs of the migrants."	Z. Kárpát Dániel	Jobbik	far-right	Topos of cultural difference, Topos of religious sensitivity, Negative other representation
"The vast majority of refugees are not fleeing a real problem, there is no war in their country, they are not persecuted or persecuting their family, their lives are not in danger because of their nationality, religion or political beliefs; they come from a safe country, they are fleeing their country of origin for economic reasons."	Kontrát Károly	Government	right-wing populist ; national-conservative	Generalisation, Topos of economic burden, Topos of illegitimacy
"The right to asylum makes a clear distinction between refugees, protected persons and asylum seekers. A refugee is someone who suffers persecution in his or her country of origin on racial or religious grounds or because of his or her political beliefs, and therefore applies for refugee status."	Schiffer András	LMP	green-liberal	Topos of legality, Topos of distinction, Topos of definition
"But the problem is that there are 20 million Arabs of Islamic faith living in European countries, many of whom were born here. Groups that use Islamic slogans and sometimes carry out radical acts of terrorism can have an influence on them, and the conflicts that have broken out in their countries of origin also have an impact on the community in Europe, potentially leading to the possibility of cooperation with Islamic extremists. A visible example of this was France. Host countries need to be particularly sensitive in dealing with second and third generation 'refugees' who are already citizens of their own religion, as they are the most impressionable. Indeed, they are trained in the ranks of the Islamic State and have been or are involved in the murder and persecution of Christians in the Middle East."	Firtl Mátyás	KDNP	christian democratic	Topos of security, Topos of threat, Negative other representation, Topos of radicalisation
"This is why all the criticisms and criticisms of Jobbik's representatives, who have repeatedly expressed a sympathetic and permissive stance towards Islam in recent years, are justified. Of course, there is no need to demonise Islam. So make no mistake, we are talking here about radical religious fundamentalism, a political variety of it, which is the most serious challenge today, not only for the country, but also for the world, for the whole of the European Union."	Fodor Gábor	Independent	liberal	Topos of radicalisation, Topos of security, Topos of global threat

Table 9 Example extracts for the identified theme Social aspects (Hungary)

8.20. Appendix 20

Sources of migration				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"We have also proposed that the Criminal Code should make the offence of smuggling of human beings more punishable."	Bárándy Gergely	MSZP	centre-left	Topos of law and order, Topos of criminality, Topos of responsibility
"However, it should also be said that the vast majority of illegal immigrants do not fall into this category, as their lives are not in immediate danger; they are on the move for a better, perhaps easier life, often risking the lives of their families and supporting criminal groups involved in people smuggling. For them, the mandatory quota that the Commission proposal is about is a strong call, another invitation from Europe."	Hollik István	KDNP	christian democratic	Generalisation, Topos of economic burden, Topos of criminality, Topos of responsibility
"The second task is to prepare countries outside the EU, such as Serbia, to be able to take in refugees and provide them with decent protection, to fight people smugglers, and of course the European Union must take in many more refugees than it has done so far, because there are many more refugees in the world."	Szelényi Zsuzsanna	Independent	social-liberal	Topos of responsibility, Topos of humanity, Topos of international cooperation
"Tell me, honourable Members of Parliament: how much could a Kosovar refugee who has just been disconnected from a train legally buy Hungarian citizenship from your offshore havers? How much is the Hungarian piece of the pie to you? And how much better are you than the people smugglers who smuggle these unfortunates into the EU for 700/800 euros with the promise of a Western standard of living?! Have you ever asked yourself that question?"	Harangozó Gábor István	MSZP	centre-left	Rhetorical questions, Topos of corruption, Topos of criminality, Topos of responsibility

Table 10 Example extracts for the identified theme Sources of migration (Hungary)

8.21. Appendix 21

<table>
<tr><th colspan="5">Humanism</th></tr>
<tr><th>Extract</th><th>Author</th><th>Party Affiliation</th><th>Party Ideology</th><th>Discursive Elements</th></tr>
<tr>
<td>"Obviously, from a humanitarian point of view, this is what is required, and the real refugees, who make up perhaps 1,020 per cent of the arrivals, deserve to receive this form of assistance and support."</td>
<td>Kontrát Károly</td>
<td>Governnment</td>
<td>right-wing populist ; national-conservative</td>
<td>Topos of humanity, Evidentiality, Topos of distinction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>"Jobbik's position regarding military action against the Islamic State has been known since the beginning. We condemn the aggression against Christians and peaceful Muslims, but until we see the background of ISIS and the role and responsibility of the West in the creation of the Islamic State, we cannot support any kind of military action. We can only support humanitarian aid in this matter."</td>
<td>Gyongyosi Márton</td>
<td>Jobbik</td>
<td>far-right</td>
<td>Topos of threat, Topos of humanity, Topos of responsibility, Topos of international cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>"We think it is very important to emphasise that the European Union should try to deal with the issue effectively outside its borders, to provide assistance, financial assistance to Turkey, which is already facing enormous problems in dealing with migration; the European Union should help Turkey to deal with this issue. Thank you very much."</td>
<td>Gyongyosi Márton</td>
<td>Jobbik</td>
<td>far-right</td>
<td>Topos of international cooperation, Topos of responsibility, Topos of burden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>"It is utterly hypocritical that Fidesz is trying to make political capital from stirring up xenophobia, while selling the right of residency for money. They claim to be nationalists, while they are fiddling with Hungarian citizenship. For those who can pay, it does not matter whether they are Christian or not, and the fear of cultural differences is overpowered by the smell of money. It is the height of unscrupulousness that they are able to insert rules to boost their resettlement business in the same law in which they deny assistance to recognised, genuinely protected people fleeing war. Is that Christian compassion, my fellow Christian Democrats? Those who can lend the Hungarian state millions for a few years will be taken in, and those who are fleeing persecution or poverty will be deprived of all aid?"</td>
<td>Harangozó Tamás</td>
<td>MSZP</td>
<td>centre-left</td>
<td>Irony, Topos of hypocrisy, Negative other representation, Topos of distinction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>"Do not try to distort the fundamentally humane approach that the MSZP represents, do not try to transform it into pro-immigration! We are saying that the European Union is certainly wrong about many things, but we cannot be wrong about the fact that those who are genuinely refugees, those who are genuinely trying to save their lives with their small children, must also be treated humanely by Hungary. Unfortunately, we have seen few examples of this, and in fact the opposite is true: when civil organisations try to help, they are actually faced with the fact that the government's attitude, and I am thinking of the events of last summer, has not been matched by this humanitarian aid."</td>
<td>Józsa István</td>
<td>MSZP</td>
<td>centre-left</td>
<td>Topos of humanity, Topos of hypocrisy, Negative other representation, Topos of responsibility</td>
</tr>
</table>

Table 11 Example extracts for the identified theme Humanism (Hungary)

8.22. Appendix 22

Management of migration				
Extract	Author	Party Affiliation	Party Ideology	Discursive Elements
"The majority of those applying for asylum in transit zones are immigrants who come from a safe country, so they are economic immigrants."	Firtl Mátyás	KDNP	christian democratic	Generalisation, Topos of economic burden, Topos of distinction
"The question is whether the state is capable of providing a heated and sanitary transit zone, if not, then help should be requested from the EU member states, financial, in-kind and professional help."	Ikotity István	LMP	green-liberal	Topos of responsibility, Topos of international cooperation, Topos of burden
"As is known and has already been mentioned, these were typically carried out at the southern border crossings, in the transit zones, in Röszke and Tompa, where, on the one hand, infectious patients were screened and health complaints complained of or claimed by illegal immigrants were examined."	Lukács László Gyorgy	Jobbik	far-right	Evidentiality, Topos of public health, Topos of security
"But what is important, and perhaps the question that arises, is that if we were to get an answer from the Minister or from someone else, if a situation were to arise, for example, at a transit zone, as has now happened in Roszke, where people go wild, act aggressively and try to break out, how and what action the military would take."	Mirkóczki Ádám	Jobbik	far-right	Rhetorical questions, Topos of security, Topos of threat
"While you are talking about where to create transit zones, in reality the whole of Hungary has become one big transit zone with the Röszke-Budapest-Vienna axis."	Hegedus Lorántné	Jobbik	far-right	Metaphor, Topos of burden, Topos of failure

Table 12 Example extracts for the identified theme Management of migration (Hungary)

Borders				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"Dear Colleagues! The Government of Hungary and the FideszKDNP, true to European traditions and the principle of democracy, have asked the Hungarian people about the recent migration of people and the dangers of the migrant flood. They said that the country's borders, culture and way of life must be protected. The government, empowered by the people, has defended the borders and done exactly what it was obliged to do by common EU rules. However, the decision-makers in Brussels were unable to accept that the Hungarian government was standing firmly up for its national interests."	Hollik István	KDNP	christian democratic	Positive self-representation, Topos of sovereignty, Topos of security, Topos of culture, Topos of responsibility, Negative other-representation
"In relation to immigration, the tightening of domestic legislation has now also been put on the agenda through the debate day. On behalf of the Christian Democratic People's Party, I can state that we are supporters of stricter regulations. States have the right to regulate the level of migration and protect their own borders."	Firtl Mátyás	KDNP	christian democratic	Topos of law and order, Topos of sovereignty, Topos of responsibility
"I think that it can hardly be disputed that the global crisis that has reached Hungary's borders exceeds or will exceed Hungary's security and load-bearing capacity beyond a certain point. There is no dispute between us that if the situation continues to escalate at the Hungarian borders, Hungary may reach a point where it will not be able to handle and resolve this situation on its own. And perhaps we also agree that the roots of this crisis are global, we can agree that a global crisis has reached Hungary, which partly goes back decades, namely global imbalances, the exploitation of different nations and countries, the consequences of climate change already decades ago, it was predicted that Europe would be hit by a large-scale wave of immigration."	Schiffer András	LMP	green-liberal	Topos of threat, Topos of burden, Topos of responsibility, Topos of global crisis, Evidentiality
"However, we do not want to pretend that the tens of thousands of asylum seekers appearing at our borders do not represent a serious policing, border policing and asylum problem. However, at the National Defense and Law Enforcement Committee meeting a month ago, the relevant bodies indicated exactly what to prepare for. I am asking what you have done since then to deal with the situation."	Harangozó Tamás	MSZP	centre-left	Topos of security, Topos of responsibility, Rhetorical questions
"And now, when there is responsibility for why the threat of terrorism has increased, they don't mention the fact that you took Hungarian soldiers to fight in places where they have nothing to earn, because America and the CIA throw their own little parties, and then you command the Hungarian soldiers, who would have a place and task on the Hungarian borders or for the protection of Hungarian internal security, because this should also be discussed when the representative Mátyás Firtl talks about the increase in the threat of terrorism."	Sallai R. Benedek	LMP	green-liberal	Topos of threat, Topos of responsibility, Negative other representation, Topos of conflict
"I would like to remind you that your Western European and American liberal friends caused this emergency: the United States, referred to as the cradle of human rights, erected a 310-kilometer wire fence on the US-Mexico border, with orders to shoot, and they are even worse than you, because they do not use rubber bullets, but live bullets, they shoot the Mexicans with live ammunition."	Apáti István	Jobbik	far-right	Topos of hypocrisy, Topos of security, Negative other representation, Irony
"Hungary's borders are open, and when we participate in these types of roles, the threat of terrorism in Hungary does indeed arise in connection with immigration. I hope that the Prime Minister will take responsibility if something happens to any Hungarian citizen in our country."	Gyongyosi Márton	Jobbik	far-right	Topos of threat, Topos of security, Topos of responsibility, Topos of terrorism

Table 13 Example extracts for the identified theme Borders (Hungary)

8.24. Appendix 24

EU				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"Because of all this, the government will use all means to oppose such quotas, resettlement quotas, and will listen to all proposals that serve this purpose. By the way, this is also what the referendum about it serves. A successful anti-quota referendum would be a clear message, the essence of which is the following: the European Union cannot go beyond, cannot exceed the basic principles on the basis of which it was created. Thank you for your attention."	Domotor Csaba	Government	right-wing populist ; national-conservative	Topos of sovereignty, Topos of responsibility, Topos of legitimacy, Topos of action
"We have seen over the past few months that although it often seemed that quota proposals had been thrown out the window, they always kept climbing back out the window. That is why it is still a priority for the Hungarian people to reject the resettlement quota in the referendum. This is more important than ever."	Domotor Csaba	Government	right-wing populist ; national-conservative	Topos of responsibility, Topos of action, Metaphor, Topos of persistence
"Jobbik was the first to propose the construction of the fence, the referendum rejecting the quota, and as the only opposition party secured the two-thirds majority so that the national defense can be deployed at our borders."	Farkas Gergely	Jobbik	far-right	Positive self-representation, Topos of security, Topos of action, Topos of responsibility
"We bourgeois, right-wing Christian Democrats do not believe in this kind of Europe, which is why we consider it important that the Hungarian people make it clear to Brussels in the referendum: we Hungarians want to decide for ourselves who we want to live with and who we don't."	Hollik István	KDNP	christian democratic	Topos of sovereignty, Topos of self-determination, Negative other representation, Topos of responsibility
"Everyone knows that neither the Hungarian referendum, which you have acknowledged, nor the separate path policy will solve the refugee crisis. The Socialist Party is a supporter of joint solutions. He believes in joint border protection and joint asylum procedures, where the aspects of control, legality and humanity must prevail at the same time. Dear fellow representatives! Fidesz spends more than ten billion forints on a false referendum campaign, which is why we reject this, the incitement of hatred and fear."	Tóth Bertalan	MSZP	centre-left	Topos of hypocrisy, Topos of joint responsibility, Topos of legality, Topos of humanity
"At the initiative of your own government, you forced a referendum on Hungary, which ultimately failed. In contrast to the nice-sounding lying words, it was a purely political decision to incite the country with hate-inducing propaganda from state public funds in connection with a real problem, but at the same time non-existent provisions. It was a political decision, the purpose of which was to stop the loss of popularity of Fidesz, and at the same time to create an anti-EU atmosphere."	Kész Zoltán	Independent	center-right	Topos of failure, Topos of manipulation, Negative other representation, Topos of conflict

Table 14 Example extracts for the identified theme EU (Hungary)

8.25. Appendix 25

EU				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"According to our point of view, every European state should play a role in supporting those fleeing war, but at the same time, in the case of economic immigrants, each nation-state must or has the right to decide within its own jurisdiction who it wants to accept. We see that the Hungarian government primarily uses this topic for political gain; if it had the chance, the referendum campaign would last forever, the false and fear-mongering posters should never leave the streets, and public television could still show photos of chaotic refugee camps years from now. You are misleading people. While the posters shout about settling a small town's worth of refugees with a foreign culture, settlement bonds were sold for good money to three small towns' worth of people with a foreign culture, reportedly without any special security checks."	Schmuck Erzsébet	LMP	green-liberal	Topos of hypocrisy, Negative other representation, Topos of economic burden, Topos of sovereignty, Topos of manipulation
"One more thought in my remaining minute, and this is related to the quota system to be introduced. We are also interested in the government's position here. In Jobbik's opinion, this should be rejected, because this quota system can open a door that smaller states like Hungary can drink from, because these quotas can be changed in the future, they can be drastically increased, and the flood of refugees can fall on the Hungarian people, on our country. rather than nowadays."	Kulcsár Gergely	Jobbik	far-right	Topos of threat, Topos of burden, Topos of responsibility, Metaphor
"It is not acceptable to introduce a quota system where Hungary is forced to accept an indeterminate, indeterminate, but large number of migrants."	Bárándy Gergely	MSZP	centre-left	Topos of sovereignty, Topos of burden, Topos of responsibility
"It is true that a quota as such is not a solution in itself, but I want you to know that neither is a fence. Actually, in the last months of the crisis, the Hungarian government could show nothing but a fence, and then another fence. This is obviously an absurd situation. Just think, if everyone in Europe copied the solution of the Hungarian government, what the European Community would look like. There would be fences between us, across borders, but the problem would remain the same. Substitute measures will therefore not work, but if we want to talk about solutions and we are certainly partners in this, three fundamentals must be clarified. One is that there will be no European solution if the member states say no to everything. Cooperation is necessary, as the minister said, but it is not enough to say, it is also necessary to do. The second principle is what the LMP expects from the European Union, including the Hungarian government, since you are also at the negotiating table, to provide real solutions that are developed, well-founded and sensitive to the different load-bearing capacities of the countries. It is also a fact that no such thing has been born so far."	Szél Bernadett	LMP	green-liberal	Topos of failure, Metaphor, Topos of cooperation, Topos of responsibility, Topos of rationality, Negative other representation

Table 15 Example extracts for the identified theme EU (Hungary)

8.26. Appendix 26

Security theme				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"But if I'm talking about Syria, if the ground fight against the Islamic State is successful, then the current terrorists will be the refugees. This is worth thinking about, my fellow representatives. The government also uses EU funds to ensure that those seeking protection are identified as soon as possible by the asylum authority, and that their applications are assessed in a fast and efficient procedure and granted the necessary protection."	Kontrát Károly	Government	right-wing populist ; national-conservative	Topos of threat, Topos of security, Topos of responsibility, Negative other representation
"So it is definitely important that we can protect the entire Hungarian border, it is the government's expressed intention that we will achieve this. We provide the necessary tools for this, the necessary technical, legal and manpower conditions were provided by the government with the law adopted on September 4, and will be provided on the source side by amending the budget law, and we will do everything to ensure that the acting bodies, the Immigration and the Citizenship Office, the police, the Anti-Terrorism Center and the services, as a result of the cooperation, no terrorist can enter Hungary, and if such a person enters Hungary, the competent authorities can take action against him."	Kontrát Károly	Government	right-wing populist ; national-conservative	Topos of security, Topos of responsibility, Topos of law and order
"We live in a world where we also have to deal with terrorism and migration. So the concept of defense in asymmetric warfare is not just a matter of capabilities. I would like to draw your attention to this. It is no longer just about what capabilities we have, what types of weapons we have, and what combat experience our soldiers have. In today's world, this has been reevaluated."	Gyongyosi Márton	Jobbik	far-right	Topos of security, Topos of threat, Topos of modern warfare
"At the moment, the migration crisis perfectly pointed out how complex and how complex the issue of national security and the protection of a country is. We have to face terrorism as a consequence of the migration crisis, we have to face social, demographic and ethnic tensions, we have to face the virus threat, all of these threaten the security of our country, and today, due to the current circumstances and the nature of the current war conflicts, the enemy and those against whom we are fighting are no longer in different parts of the world, waiting for us to confront them there with conventional means, but are here in Europe."	Gyongyosi Márton	Jobbik	far-right	Topos of security, Topos of threat, Topos of complexity, Topos of modern warfare
"Károly Kontrát said that the Hungarian people are rightly concerned about this issue. But Mr. Secretary of State, the Hungarian people are not concerned with this issue! This question is generated by you precisely because even you cannot decide whether it is a refugee issue or an immigration issue, and confuse it with terrorism."	Szabó Tímea	Independent	green-liberal	Topos of confusion, Topos of manipulation, Negative other representation
"Dear fellow representatives, if I have to choose between how the representatives of the government deal with this problem, as a serious political matter or as a communication and vote-getting maneuver due to their skyrocketing popularity, I will vote for the latter. If only because it was surprisingly easy to get from the danger of terrorism to refugees after the bloody story in Paris. So nothing else happened, my fellow representatives, than they found an enemy again."	Tukacs István	MSZP	centre-left	Topos of manipulation, Negative other representation, Topos of political gain, Topos of scapegoating
"After all, the most important thing is to clearly see what belongs to terrorism and what belongs to migration. These are constantly discussed in the committees, as well as the fact that in some waves of refugees, 40 percent of the people affected are children and their parents, and terrorism has nothing to do with the fact that people have no drinking water, no food, are in danger at home and therefore they have to leave their residence. The form of terrorism as such has changed in the 21st century, some of it is organized online. I think that it is very irresponsible to create the kind of mood that is about seeing migrants as terrorists."	Szél Bernadett	LMP	green-liberal	Topos of distinction, Topos of humanity, Topos of responsibility, Negative other representation, Topos of modern terrorism

Table 16 Example extracts for the identified theme Security (Hungary)

8.27. Appendix 27

International theme				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"About half an hour ago, a delegation of the National Council of the Slovak Republic returned from Prague to attend a meeting of the committees of the national parliaments of the V4 countries, where the current problems in communication between the European Commission and the national parliaments and states were discussed. And within that, I would say, the positions were united and the positions of the V4 countries were confirmed that we will not support the redistribution mechanisms as proposed by the European Commission and that we will do everything to stop these redistribution mechanisms, to abolish them, and that refugee policy should be dealt with, I would say, very, very rationally, pragmatically, without any serious consequences for the nation states."	Jaroslav Paška	SNS	ultranationalist	Topos of solidarity, Topos of sovereignty, Topos of rationality, Topos of resistance
"To date, no one has been able to give us and other partners from the Visegrad Four, Romania or the Baltics a satisfactory answer to our questions. Instead of listening and trying to understand our arguments, we have either been ignored or pushed and persuaded."	Miroslav Lajčák	Government	social democratic	Topos of neglect, Topos of resistance, Negative other representation
"In this respect it is important that the V4 sticks together, because it is a force of 60 million people, but in this respect the V4 should also stick together in other cases, and it is a force that the European Union cannot completely ignore."	Jozef Mikloško	KDH	christian-democratic	Topos of solidarity, Topos of power, Topos of unity
"There is no shortage of dialogue on this particular migration crisis, as I said, we have them at our fingertips, particularly in the form of the V4 grouping. And our partners in this grouping are pursuing a very similar foreign policy on the refugee crisis."	Edita Pfundtner	Most-Híd	inter-ethnic ; liberal-conservative	Topos of solidarity, Topos of cooperation, Topos of unity
"And I think that since this game is not really about us as a priority and some of the countries that are predominantly the destination of this migrant crisis or humanitarian crisis caused by migration want to make some kind of a notch on the arm, I don't know if it's good to evaluate it from the position that they want to beat somebody. And I have the feeling that the whole European Union and the whole postponement of the adoption of the final solution seems to be preparing the ground for the fact that, in the end, those who strictly refuse, in this case the V4 plus other allies, are going to have enormous problems with the application or implementation of the directive that they are forcibly pushing through."	Jozef Viskupič	OĽANO	conservative	Topos of resistance, Topos of manipulation, Topos of conflict
"I do not mean now only the iron or iron curtain that is being raised on the border between Hungary and Serbia, but I believe that the iron curtain is also being raised between the new member states, to put it more narrowly, the V4 countries and the rest of the European world. The absurdity of this, in my opinion, lies in the fact that the second crisis, which has the word "solidarity" in its title, is dividing the member states of the European Union, and instead of trying to come up with some reasonable solution, we are getting into the absurd situation of weakening the European project."	Jozef Viskupič	OĽANO	conservative	Topos of division, Metaphor, Topos of hypocrisy, Topos of conflict
"But my question is, in order to improve your negotiating position both as Slovakia and as the V4, what did you put on the table? Because when you talk about the fact that we reject quotas, I agree there, because the consequence of quotas can be what my colleague Mr. Blaha spoke about before me, that extremism is increasing in some countries and may also be in Slovakia."	Martin Poliačik	SAS	centre-right liberal	Topos of negotiation, Rhetorical questions, Topos of threat, Topos of extremism

Table 17 Example extracts for the identified International theme (Slovakia)

8.28. Appendix 28

Political aspects				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"We are left with one task, and it is not just a task for the Foreign Office and the Government, but also for all the NGOs and all the dedicated people who are working, whether in Sudan or in Moldova or wherever else their aid is needed: we need to promote them more, and we need to insist that there is a public debate about development aid."	Magdaléna Vášáryová	SDKÚ-DS	liberal-conservative	Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of responsibility, Topos of international cooperation
"Last week, on the occasion of World Refugee Day, a group of 30 NGOs and personalities signed an appeal entitled 'The Mediterranean is our sea'. At least twice in the debate this call has been mentioned, but only in passing, and given that these are 30, I think, prominent, reputable, and meritorious NGOs, we can argue about some of them, not everybody will have the same opinion on this, but there are a number of them that are really unquestionable and whose long-standing relevance we could probably agree on here across the political and ideological spectrum. So that is one reason why I think we should look at this challenge in more detail. And the other is, of course, that it brings a lot of stimulating opinions and also some suggestions for solutions."	Mikuláš Huba	OĽANO	conservative	Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of legitimacy, Topos of responsibility, Topos of international cooperation
"We welcome all steps taken by states, NGOs, the civil sector, religious communities to sincerely assist those who are persecuted and are concerned about their bare existence or their basic livelihood. We perceive that the issue of refugees is becoming a space of populism, xenophobia and extremism, not only in Europe, but also in Slovakia, and we therefore strongly condemn all the manifestations of violence and hatred that we saw during Saturday's protest in the capital, Bratislava."	Ján Fígeľ	KDH	christian-democratic	Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of solidarity, Topos of condemnation, Negative other representation
"Society is very polarised on this topic, there have been negative opinions from the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Interior on quotas rather than on this topic in general, and I have before me now a very nice, nice initiative from about a hundred NGOs, the Mediterranean Sea is our sea too, an initiative for World Refugee Day."	Jozef Mikloško	KDH	christian-democratic	Topos of polarisation, Topos of solidarity, Topos of responsibility

Table 18 Example extracts for the identified theme Political aspects (Slovakia)

8.29. Appendix 29

Political aspects				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"But this is a good example of the fact that in this case, too, it was lobbying and, in my opinion, very false lobbying, even propaganda, because it is quite clear today that most of what the NGOs, funded by the way from abroad, were saying was that these were political refugees. According to all the statistics today, we know that they were economic migrants, that they were not refugees. According to last year's statistics, we know that even a quarter of those migrants who came to the countries of the European Union were even directly from Europe, and certainly not from some war zones."	Milan Krajniak	Sme Rodina	right-wing populist	Topos of hypocrisy, Topos of manipulation, Negative other representation, Topos of economic burden
"I have to thank the speaker, Rášťo, who has summed up fantastically, really well, the malignant and repulsive activities of non-governmental organisations in Slovakia and throughout Europe. He summed up the danger of foreign-paid agents operating in Slovakia. How they are corrupting society, promoting perverted values, promoting perverts, various sexual deviants and trying to destroy everything that our forefathers fought for. I am going to touch a little more deeply on some of the themes and some of the activities that these NGOs also carry out in Slovakia, and I am going to analyse them a little better. For example, the aid to refugees, so-called refugees, because we all know that the vast majority of them are young, brave and fighting-strength guys. So these NGOs funded by George Soros all over Europe, but also in Slovakia, are funding and helping Islamic radicals to get into Europe. They help them to get citizenship, to get asylum and to infiltrate European soil and then to carry out their terrorist attacks here, to murder people, to ambush people, to rape women and to kill children. Yes, this is also one of the activities of NGOs, and I think that there is nothing wrong with the citizens of Slovakia also knowing that these people who are promoting these perversions, who are murdering Europe as such, who are hating the white European peoples, are being paid by someone from abroad, that they are not our own people, but that they are agents paid by foreign countries."	Milan Mazurek	ĽSNS	far-right	Topos of danger, Topos of threat, Negative other representation, Topos of conspiracy, Topos of corruption
"Furthermore, these are those who enable the functioning of the so-called third sector, a Trojan horse of foreign governments serving to harm Slovakia and the Slovaks. They are those who defend the influx of migrants into our homeland. It is those who systematically falsify our history and systematically work to de-nationalise the Slovaks."	Natália Grausová	ĽSNS	far-right	Topos of conspiracy, Topos of threat, Negative other representation, Topos of nationalism
"In integrating citizens of the Roma community, in stretching with our southern neighbour how to ensure the rights of citizens belonging to national minorities. I feel internally that the concept of individual rights could also be a very solid starting point when drawing up our immigration policy so that we can manage this problem."	Mikuláš Dzurinda	SDKÚ-DS	liberal-conservative	Topos of integration, Topos of rights, Topos of responsibility
"With the existence of the Islamic State, the growing religious intolerance as personified by Islamic radicals, refugees from Africa and Asia pose a certain security risk to our citizens. This is a fact that may run counter to our human solidarity and compassion, but it is virtually impossible to check the number of people who have entered the European Union illegally, without papers. Moreover, let us face it: Slovakia has not been able to integrate even the Roma who live here in the long term, and it is simply not able to integrate thousands or tens of thousands of people with a completely different culture and different living habits."	Ľubomír Galko	SAS	centre-right liberal	Topos of security, Topos of integration, Topos of threat, Negative other representation

Table 19 Example extracts for the identified theme Political aspects (Slovakia)

8.30. Appendix 30

Political aspects				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"So we need to look at the reason for immigration. Solidarity is also really needed. You mentioned the local Christians with those of, say, Iraq or Syria. And also integration. But here I want to say that, lest we forget, we do, unfortunately, also have a problem with the integration of the local Roma minority here, we are looking for different ways and we are not managing it."	Richard Vašečka	OĽANO	conservative	Topos of integration, Topos of responsibility, Topos of solidarity
"So, Mr Baránik, you were asking about how does Christian love of neighbour fit in with our attitudes and our criticism of NGOs? Well, if you meant that these NGOs are helping gypsy extremists, that they are helping immigrants, because in fact they are helping these groups in particular, then I must teach you a little lesson. So I do not know what faith you are, I do not want to make a judgement, but if you were a Christian, you should know that Christian love for our neighbour does not mean that we are somehow suicidal, because a Christian is not suicidal."	Rastislav Schlosár	ĽSNS	far-right	Topos of hypocrisy, Negative other representation, Topos of distinction
"We cannot handle the situation with gypsy extremism, I assure you that the Muslim one is a completely different level."	Stanislav Mizík	ĽSNS	far-right	Topos of threat, Negative other representation, Topos of distinction

Table 20 Example extracts for the identified theme Political aspects (Slovakia)

8.31. Appendix 31

Social aspects				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"In the medium term, we need to resolve the issue of refugees who are fleeing their countries from war, who are political refugees and who have no interest in staying here, but only need temporary asylum to wait in this country until the war conflict is over in their country. This group is one that we want to help, or should help, from a moral point of view. I, as a Christian, feel that we should clearly help them. On the other hand, they will go home after the war conflict is over."	Jozef Lukáč	OĽANO	conservative	Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of temporary protection, Topos of moral obligation, Topos of return
"Of course, quotas are not appropriate, they are not good, but, of course, our republic cannot completely close off asylum policy, because we have, for example, Christians who are persecuted, and they are also close to our culture, and they are certainly, or somebody's life is really at stake, that they want to execute them just for expressing their opinion, and such people have the right to asylum in terms of all democratic principles. But to absolutely refuse in that way, to just sink the ship slowly and turn it back, again, is not quite right."	Anton Martvoň	SMER-SD	social democratic	Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of cultural closeness, Topos of responsibility, Topos of asylum rights
"Today, 6% of Muslims live in the European Union. By the wildest estimates, which assume that the Muslim population will now reproduce far more than the, shall I call it, Christian or humanist, simply European, indigenous population, by 2050, if I remember the statistics correctly, there should be 9% or 10% of Muslims. That is the number of fellow Hungarians in Slovakia, by the way. And I do not feel that there is any danger of Hungarianisation here. So, again, let us not be hysterical, let us not exaggerate and let us try to see this problem as not a centre of cultures and religions, let us not spread religious hatred, xenophobic sentiments, as some Nazi creatures are trying to do in the streets. That is really a road that leads nowhere."	Ľuboš Blaha	SMER-SD	social democratic	Topos of rationality, Topos of demographic threat, Topos of solidarity, Topos of anti-xenophobia
"On the other hand, we certainly cannot completely slam the door in the face of real refugees saving their lives. We are facing unprecedented persecution of Christians in the Middle East. If we are to take in some refugees, why not join them? Surely they are closer to our cultural civilisational values than Muslims from somewhere in central Africa."	Martin Fedor	SDKÚ-DS	liberal-conservative	Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of cultural closeness, Topos of responsibility, Topos of persecution
"Often those fleeing and those fleeing are in the same danger of their lives, either because a Christian is fleeing from a Muslim who misinterprets Islam, or a Muslim is fleeing from a Muslim who interprets Islam differently."	Martin Poliačik	SAS	centre-right liberal	Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of common plight, Topos of religious persecution

Table 21 Example extracts for the identified theme Social aspects (Slovakia)

8.32. Appendix 32

Social aspects				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"And, ladies and gentlemen, even if we reject quotas today, I want to say very simply that the essence of European civilisation, the humanity of Christian values, is always to help people in need. These people need our help, they need it because they want to work here, they come here because they have no home, because they are afraid for their lives. And then we have the group of economic immigrants or economic migrants who come for a better life, who come to work in Western Europe, but also now in other European countries."	Viliam Novotný	SDKÚ-DS	liberal-conservative	Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of Christian values, Topos of economic migration, Topos of responsibility
"And this is how, one by one, these NGOs and these foreign agents promoting the subversion of traditional values, the subversion of Europe, the subversion of Christianity, of our faith, of everything that our ancestors have fought for for millennia, and hundreds of thousands and millions have fallen at the gates of Europe to the invasions of African and Asian immigrants, so that is exactly what they are pushing here today and the least we can do is to point out to the citizens of the Slovak Republic, to the Slovaks, who these people are, who they are and, as you said, whose bread they eat, whose song they sing. Thank you."	Milan Mazurek	ĽSNS	far-right	Topos of conspiracy, Topos of threat, Negative other representation, Topos of nationalism
"Please, if anyone feels the need to take in an economic migrant, let them. Indeed. If someone feels they need, demographically they are in bad shape, they are lacking in production, let them like, let them take in as many economic migrants as they need. If we want to define in Slovakia that we need economic migrants, let's talk about it. I would be very careful there that we do not need them."	Alojz Hlina	KDH	christian-democratic	Topos of economic burden, Topos of demographic challenge, Topos of responsibility
"You rightly asked how this government thinks about retirees 30-40 years from now. I have asked that too, but no one has yet given me or you an answer from this government. Neither the Minister has said it yet, nor has Fico said it yet, how he envisages the sustainability of the pension system with the current, already known demographics. Are we going to invite migrants to come here to sort out the situation and will they have jobs, will they pay their contributions? Well, it is difficult to say in this situation."	Igor Hraško	OĽANO	conservative	Topos of demographic challenge, Topos of economic burden, Rhetorical questions, Topos of responsibility
"I cannot help but mention and touch on, and I think some people mentioned this very briefly yesterday, and I will also mention it very briefly, but the unfavourable demographic development, not only in our country, but in the whole of the European Union. And this is what we are going to have to face, that this demographic development is really going to have to be addressed by immigration, whether we want to admit it or not. Or are we going to change our policy and simply be more open to accepting children and to accepting life."	Štefan Kuffa	OĽANO	conservative	Topos of demographic challenge, Topos of necessity, Topos of responsibility
"I think that Slovakia will also need legal migration at some point, but countries that cannot help everyone should also prioritise education and the areas from which they want to receive legal migration, because the demography in Slovakia is not good and it should be areas or countries that are close to us in terms of civilisation and culture. I think that that country has the right to say that."	Daniel Lipšic	KDH	christian-democratic	Topos of demographic challenge, Topos of legal migration, Topos of cultural closeness, Topos of responsibility

Table 22 Example extracts for the identified theme Social aspects (Slovakia)

8.33. Appendix 33

<table>
<tr><td colspan="5" align="center">Sources of migration</td></tr>
<tr><td align="center">Extract</td><td align="center">Author</td><td align="center">Party Affiliation</td><td align="center">Party Ideology</td><td align="center">Discursive Elements</td></tr>
<tr><td>"When you say, and quite rightly so, the West has largely, to a large extent, made Africa the way it is today. To a large extent, the West is responsible. Only then you added, yes, we are also responsible. You know, at the moment, of course, how can we talk about Slovakia being somehow part of the West by being part of the European Union. But to say that we bear responsibility for how Africa has been hurt for centuries, that is simply not true. Take 1914, there is a beautiful map, it is all over the Internet, showing how Africa was divided when there were colonies, when Western imperialism was at its very best. So there you have it, those little squiggles, France, Britain, Holland, Italy, Belgium. Not Slovakia. That is, Africa was durch all divided between the Western powers. This is what we mean when we talk about the West in this sense being responsible for Africa's suffering."</td><td>Ľuboš Blaha</td><td>SMER-SD</td><td>social democratic</td><td>Topos of responsibility, Topos of historical context, Negative other representation, Topos of denial</td></tr>
<tr><td>"Africa's main problem is Africa itself and the dictators who are impoverishing the continent. Certainly not the colonisers, the colonists of the middle of the last century who have mostly left. And that is a bit sad really, when you see Africa's problem as the fact that some British, French and the like brought culture, brought education, brought the judicial system and so on."</td><td>Juraj Droba</td><td>SAS</td><td>centre-right liberal</td><td>Topos of responsibility, Negative other representation, Topos of colonialism, Topos of blame</td></tr>
<tr><td>"This is what people smugglers rely on, either to get their cargo to the shores of a Member State or to be caught somewhere at sea and also to become the responsibility of the patrolling state. That needs to change."</td><td>Martin Fedor</td><td>SDKÚ-DS</td><td>liberal-conservative</td><td>Topos of criminality, Topos of security, Topos of responsibility</td></tr>
<tr><td>"These people have made a commodity out of the hapless refugees. On the other hand, they can help smuggle people across the Schengen borders who can potentially become a security risk for countries. This dirty business is only possible thanks to a vast organised smuggling network that has made a business out of people's misfortune."</td><td>Martin Fedor</td><td>SDKÚ-DS</td><td>liberal-conservative</td><td>Topos of criminality, Topos of security, Negative other representation, Topos of economic burden</td></tr>
<tr><td>"To illustrate, a warming of the atmosphere by one degree Celsius corresponds to a rise of half a metre in the level of the world's oceans, thus flooding large parts of the continental landmass and islands, not to mention an increase in the number of natural disasters, the depletion of water resources and others, which will in all likelihood cause a migratory wave of perhaps much greater proportions than we are facing here today."</td><td>Katarína Cséfalvayová</td><td>SIEŤ</td><td>centre-right</td><td>Topos of climate change, Topos of threat, Topos of inevitability, Topos of burden</td></tr>
<tr><td>"I also think that climate change, which is very much intertwined with these conflicts, whether it is the emergence of conflicts or then population movements, will also create pressure for migration to increase in the future. Therefore, we must prepare for this now with reason and rationality, but prepare in a way that is manageable. And that cannot be managed without regulated and controlled migration."</td><td>Ľudovít Kaník</td><td>SDKÚ-DS</td><td>liberal-conservative</td><td>Topos of climate change, Topos of rationality, Topos of responsibility, Topos of regulation</td></tr>
<tr><td>"Social impacts, speaking of the global situation, the creation of droughts and the impacts of droughts cause population migration. The impact of what we are experiencing today is not just economic migration, but it is also climate migration, people who are concerned about their living conditions and the impact of drought."</td><td>Anna Zemanová</td><td>SAS</td><td>centre-right liberal</td><td>Topos of climate change, Topos of migration, Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of responsibility</td></tr>
</table>

Table 23 Example extracts for the identified theme Sources of migration (Slovakia)

Humanism				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"The Minister for the Interior has not told us how we will strengthen border surveillance, whether it be at sea, right there in the creation of those safe zones. We have been told this should happen, but we have not been told, and I think this is a bit populist, what it will cost Slovakia. Because it will cost something. We have to express our solidarity, both with the refugees and with the other countries of the European Union, and we have to pay for it in some way; it will cost something. That is what I would like to hear from the Prime Minister and from the Minister for the Interior of this country. This is a crisis that affects the whole of Schengen, and we should therefore help the asylum processes of the countries that are not coping with it."	Martin Poliačik	SAS	centre-right liberal	Topos of responsibility, Topos of security, Topos of solidarity, Rhetorical questions
"We have not even begun to enjoy the fact that we are members of a great family of countries built on the principles of mutual support, assistance and solidarity, and already we - our government and the country as a whole - are being labelled as a country that violates the principles of solidarity and humanism. There is a lot of talk about humanity. Yes. We are all human, we all have that humanity in us, and the Slovaks are a hospitable people from memory. Who is more human? The decision of Prime Minister Robert Fico and the many politicians here in this Chamber who have rejected quotas, who are responsible to both migrants and refugees and responsible to our citizens, or are they the human ones who have given such a great invitation to all those refugees and migrants to the European community?"	Renáta Zmajkovičová	SMER-SD	social democratic	Topos of solidarity, Topos of responsibility, Topos of humanity, Topos of nationalism
"Solidarity yes. Everyone as best they can. Slovakia can help financially, materially, personnel-wise. We do not have the history and culture to take in some huge numbers of migrants now. No. But we want to help."	Ľuboš Blaha	SMER-SD	social democratic	Topos of solidarity, Topos of responsibility, Topos of cultural closeness
"And, you know, I'm asking: The selective justice and selective solidarity that the European Union is offering today. You know, on the one hand, let us help the Syrians, of course. But when children are dying in the Donbas in winter, nobody is talking about solidarity there. Have you ever heard anyone talk about solidarity with the Donbass people, with the Russians? The Russians can suffer. These are the Russians. When you talk about Congo, where Western corporations, thanks to the militias, Western corporations are killing millions of people, and they are really millions of people, no Western politician will say there: Jesus, let's help the Congolese. Let's move them to Europe. No, the Congolese can, because Western corporations are doing it. Here is the pseudo-humanism, here is the hypocrisy! Let's help Syria, but let's not be hypocritical like politicians in the West!"	Ľuboš Blaha	SMER-SD	social democratic	Topos of hypocrisy, Topos of selective solidarity, Topos of responsibility, Negative other representation
"Well, okay, so that's not the way to treat us, we don't want that, but then let's say that we find in ourselves anything like basic human solidarity and compassion for those who need help at all? Or do we only find it whenever it costs nothing to send a text message to an account when there is an earthquake in Nepal? This is very cheap and very easy."	František Šebej	Most-Híd	inter-ethnic; liberal-conservative	Topos of solidarity, Topos of compassion, Topos of responsibility, Rhetorical questions

Table 24 Example extracts for the identified theme Humanism (Slovakia)

8.35. Appendix 35

Management of migration				
Extract	Author	Party Affiliation	Party Ideology	Discursive Elements
"We have to help, but, of course, we have to look for the right form of help. And I am very, very much in favour of the idea of setting up safe zones in countries where it is possible, to take care of those people there, to teach them how to set up that democracy as well, and that is also important. I was listening on television today: the Slovak Republic has achieved, in terms of democracy in Slovakia, some American company, we are seventh, it is amazing. So we have some ideas about that democracy and we should teach them to others. Because as it says in the Bible, not fish to give, but teach to catch. And this is our duty to all those others because we can't help all the people by resettling them here. We take them again into an unnatural environment."	Renáta Zmajkovičová	SMER-SD	social democratic	Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of democracy, Topos of responsibility, Topos of self-reliance
"Otherwise it is true that the Netherlands where you have 1 000 euros as a basic social benefit for everybody, so as long as they have enough money to solve the problems of Africa as a whole, let them have a billion Africans move in, I am not going to contradict them in any way now. I just think that they should not impose this kind of discourse on Slovakia, where we all know realistically, and now really all of us, and I particularly belong to what is politically called the progressive left, I feel very sorry for those people, we are all in solidarity with those people, but for God's sake, you cannot solve Africa's problem by moving it over here! How about investing that money in Africa and finally helping Africa, finally addressing the causes and not just the consequences? That is what some colleagues in the West are forgetting."	Ľuboš Blaha	SMER-SD	social democratic	Topos of economic burden, Topos of responsibility, Topos of root causes, Negative other representation

Table 25 Management of migration

8.36. Appendix 36

Borders				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"The ambition of the Slovak Presidency and the third key theme will be to steer the Union towards a sustainable migration and asylum policy based on a comprehensive approach based on the protection of external borders, the re-establishment of Schengen and cooperation with third countries. During our Presidency, we expect the European Border Guard to become operational, which will improve the capacity to manage external borders and carry out returns of irregular migrants."	Peter Pellegrini	SMER-SD	social democratic	Topos of responsibility, Topos of security, Topos of cooperation, Topos of sustainability
"Oh, and a small comment on the fact that we are lucky to have only a 100-kilometre Schengen border. You know, I think that those rules, if they are given that that Schengen border has to be protected somehow, then it has to be protected everywhere. Or are we then pretending that it is only supposed to be better protected here and less protected there. Although I take the specifics into account, for example, that it may be more complicated at the coast, but that is Schengen anyway."	Juraj Blanár	SMER-SD	social democratic	Topos of security, Topos of equality, Topos of responsibility
"Because, and this is key, today Europe needs practical solutions to deal with the refugee crisis. This is what the Minister said very precisely, and what the Home Secretary says very often, that we must protect our borders. That is the key, that is the alpha and the omega, protecting our borders. Until there is real protection of our borders, you will never be able to convince the European public that we should welcome millions of refugees here. Because, for one thing, they do not know who is coming here and they are afraid that it might be terrorists. And secondly, there is a very real threat that without border protection, this flow of migration is not sustainable and manageable. That is to say, unless we can protect our borders, the European borders, the Schengen borders, there is no point at all in opening up any idea of quotas and any other social engineering on the part of the European Commission."	Ľuboš Blaha	SMER-SD	social democratic	Topos of security, Topos of fear, Topos of sustainability, Topos of public opinion
"We must consistently insist and consistently demand that all the countries of the European Union that have an external border and secure the external border of the European Union secure that border at least as much as we are securing it on the Ukrainian side. Yes, our border is short. Some of these borders are very long. But there is no other way. At the same time, and this is my conviction, such a huge wave of migration is beyond the power of those individual border states. I have said this many times. I said it back in May, when it first started to be perceived as a problem, and I have been saying it ever since, there must be a Europe-wide solution, there must be an accumulation of resources, of capacities, of energy to help these states. If we persist again in just saying that Greece is not fulfilling its role as the country that is supposed to be securing the Schengen border, and if we just stick to appeals and possibly send some money there, it will probably not solve the problem."	Ľudovít Kaník	SDKÚ-DS	liberal-conservative	Topos of responsibility, Topos of cooperation, Topos of burden, Topos of solidarity
"But many, many years ago, when the European Commission proposed redistributing migrants through mandatory quotas, the problem was that Greece did not protect its, and I stress, its land border with Turkey, which is about twice as long as our border with Ukraine. Thus, Greece has simply not fulfilled its long-term obligations, not only in the euro area, economic obligations, but also in protecting its external border."	Daniel Lipšic	KDH	christian-democratic	Topos of responsibility, Topos of blame, Topos of security, Topos of failure

Table 26 Example extracts for the identified theme Borders (Slovakia)

8.37. Appendix 37

EU				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"This is indeed an old truth. And the Deputy Prime Minister also said that the refugee crisis needs a comprehensive and sustainable solution. Are quotas the solution to this? Are the people who are coming just numbers and quotas? This is a very simplistic solution. Behind each person, there is a human story. Some of these people need help, but some are indeed speculators. By using numbers and these quotas, we are just supporting the traffickers of human misery."	Renáta Zmajkovičová	SMER-SD	social democratic	Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of complexity, Topos of responsibility, Negative other representation
"The foundation of everything, however, is that the Slovak Republic is prepared to help, but we reject quotas. It should be based on the question of voluntariness. The fact that we reject quotas does not mean that the government has a negative attitude towards refugees."	Ľuboš Martinák	SMER-SD	social democratic	Topos of responsibility, Topos of voluntariness, Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of rejection
"But we were right, from the beginning we said that as long as there is no border protection, as long as we do not protect the Schengen border, as long as we do not address the causes, then no quotas will help. And it turned out to be true. Not only because everyone is saying it today. But also because the quotas do not work."	Ľuboš Blaha	SMER-SD	social democratic	Topos of security, Topos of failure, Topos of responsibility, Topos of legitimacy
"But, for heaven's sake, no one can force us to accept people who simply do not want to come here. Such solutions only really help extremists and populists. And solutions that create winners and losers, losers in Europe, are solutions that ultimately benefit no one. Because if Central Europe loses the battle over quotas and other partial fights that are being fought today under the name of fragmentation in the European Union, then it will be very difficult for us to defend the idea of the European Union."	Ľuboš Blaha	SMER-SD	social democratic	Topos of sovereignty, Topos of failure, Topos of responsibility, Topos of unity
"Yes, we want to help Africa, I agree with that, but certainly not in such a way that Western powers impose quotas on us, thereby solving a problem they themselves have caused. And there lies the crux of the matter."	Ľuboš Blaha	SMER-SD	social democratic	Topos of responsibility, Topos of blame, Topos of sovereignty, Topos of rejection
"Mandatory quotas must be rejected also because it is exclusively within the jurisdiction of the sovereign Slovak Republic to independently decide who can and cannot enter it. The citizens of Slovakia reject mandatory quotas, the overwhelming majority. We don't need any referendums for this."	Ľubomír Galko	SAS	centre-right liberal	Topos of sovereignty, Topos of rejection, Topos of responsibility, Topos of democracy

Table 27 Example extracts for the identified theme EU (Slovakia)

8.38. Appendix 38

<table>
<tr><th colspan="5">Security Theme</th></tr>
<tr><th>Extract</th><th>Author</th><th>Party Affiliation</th><th></th><th>Discursive Elements</th></tr>
<tr>
<td>"As for stopping the waves of refugees who are fleeing really to protect their lives from the Islamic State terrorists, again, there is a clear solution that is offered in a concerted effort to stop the aggressor, to stop these terrorists, and that is where I really see a big deficit."</td>
<td>Helena Mezenská</td>
<td>OĽANO</td>
<td>conservative</td>
<td>Topos of security, Topos of threat, Topos of responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>"Paris, militant Islamists, terrorism. What is happening in the Middle East, but especially what has happened recently in Paris, has shaken the whole world. In addition to the many tragic consequences, terrorism is leading to increased emigration, that much is clear. People are fleeing to safer countries from regions, regions where blood is flowing. It is only a matter of time before Slovakia, too, faces this phenomenon, increased immigration."</td>
<td>Mikuláš Dzurinda</td>
<td>SDKÚ-DS</td>
<td>liberal-conservative</td>
<td>Topos of security, Topos of threat, Topos of inevitability, Topos of humanitarianism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>"The image of Slovakia abroad, especially in the Union, is, I feel, becoming a bit crooked. The European Union itself needs important changes and major reforms, but we cannot, however, tell our people that terrorists are refugees and that they are a threat and that we will protect them from them in the Union."</td>
<td>Erika Jurinová</td>
<td>OĽANO</td>
<td>conservative</td>
<td>Topos of image, Topos of reform, Topos of distinction, Topos of responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>"Oh, and you mentioned that something fell out of the sky or something like that to the government here. But I want to ask you, did our government invite migrants here who were brought in by terrorists? Did our government invite them here? As far as I know, those terrorists, many of them have come here before. And who invited them to Europe? It was the German and French Governments that have the biggest problems with them now."</td>
<td>Anton Martvoň</td>
<td>SMER-SD</td>
<td>social democratic</td>
<td>Topos of blame, Topos of responsibility, Rhetorical questions, Negative other representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>"Mr Prime Minister, the events in Paris have shown that security and caution are never enough, especially when terrorists are crossing borders unchecked among the swarms of migrants into Europe."</td>
<td>Milan Géci</td>
<td>SMER-SD</td>
<td>social democratic</td>
<td>Topos of security, Topos of threat, Topos of responsibility, Negative other representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>"The intention is to resolve the issue of systematic control at the Community's external borders, which is an important agenda in the fight against terrorism in Europe."</td>
<td>Peter Pellegrini</td>
<td>SMER-SD</td>
<td>social democratic</td>
<td>Topos of security, Topos of control, Topos of responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>"So these NGOs funded by George Soros are funding and helping Islamic radicals to get into Europe all over Europe, but also in Slovakia. They help them to get citizenship, to get asylum and to penetrate European soil and then to carry out their terrorist attacks here, to murder people, to ambush people, to rape women and to kill children."</td>
<td>Milan Mazurek</td>
<td>ĽSNS</td>
<td>far-right</td>
<td>Topos of conspiracy, Topos of threat, Negative other representation, Topos of security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>"We are being haunted by fictitious or hypothetical terrorists, and yet we saw real and actual terrorists, if not terrorists, then at least rapists of a coarse grain, last Saturday. They did not speak Arabic, but Slovak, albeit not very written, but still."</td>
<td>Mikuláš Huba</td>
<td>OĽANO</td>
<td>conservative</td>
<td>Topos of threat, Negative other representation, Topos of fear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>"And, Mr Brocka, yes, I think that SMER has been fear-mongering, enemy-building and campaigning since the beginning of the migration wave and now after these terrorist attacks. And I consider that to be detrimental to Slovakia."</td>
<td>Lucia Žitňanská</td>
<td>SDKÚ-DS</td>
<td>liberal-conservative</td>
<td>Topos of fear, Topos of manipulation, Negative other representation, Topos of conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>"I am in favour of a political competition, but let it be a competition of proposals and solutions on how to improve the lives of the people in Slovakia, let it not be a race to see who can scare people more with invasion, Islam or terrorists. Yes, people are scared. And it is quite right that they are scared, because many of them have no information about what is going on, or they have a minimum of information, or they are already totally overwhelmed and manipulated by the propaganda of pro-Kremlin servers on social networks, whose obvious task is to destabilise and erode the European Union."</td>
<td>Juraj Miškov</td>
<td>SAS</td>
<td>centre-right liberal</td>
<td>Topos of fear, Topos of manipulation, Topos of responsibility, Topos of political competition</td>
</tr>
</table>

Table 28 Example extracts for the identified theme Security (Slovakia)

8.39. Appendix 39

International Theme				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"We also agree within the V4 that it is out of the question for Europe to raise the issue of quotas for the compulsory redistribution of refugees, and that we do not agree that national competences in the area of migration policy should be transferred to the central European level. Here, I think that there is a consensus in these areas at least."	Bohuslav Sobotka	Government	social-democratic	Topos of sovereignty, Topos of rejection, Topos of responsibility, Topos of consensus
"So I think that the analysis of our government at the moment we came in and when we started to deal with the impact of the migration crisis was very accurate, and I even note that it is more the governments in Western Europe that initially criticised the V4 that are now adopting many of our positions and our positions that we in the V4 have held on this migration crisis from the very beginning."	Bohuslav Sobotka	Government	social-democratic	Topos of legitimacy, Topos of responsibility, Topos of vindication, Topos of leadership
"In spring 2015, a number of European officials and representatives of the European Commission were still pretending that there were no external borders. At that time, the V4 came up with the idea that the external borders needed to be protected and that everything should be done to ensure that the rules were respected at the external borders. At the time, they looked at us strangely and said: What is the V4 proposing? Nowadays, everyone agrees in principle."	Bohuslav Sobotka	Government	social-democratic	Topos of security, Topos of vindication, Topos of responsibility, Topos of leadership
"I am glad that the V4 countries, through sustained pressure, have also managed to get Europe to pay attention to the situation in countries such as Macedonia and Bulgaria, as well as in those Balkan states that are not yet part of the European Union."	Bohuslav Sobotka	Government	social-democratic	Topos of solidarity, Topos of responsibility, Topos of influence, Topos of success
"Brexit, Minister Zaorálek, was no accident. It is a consequence of the disconnection of European politicians and elites from their own citizens. It is the result of them ceasing to listen and to hear their own citizens. It's in a kind of 'say what you want and we'll do it anyway' mode."	Marek Černoch	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of disconnection, Topos of responsibility, Topos of accountability, Negative other representation
"The policies and military actions of France, the UK and, above all, the US have created chaos and set millions of people in motion."	Tomio Okamura	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of responsibility, Topos of blame, Topos of cause and effect, Negative other representation

Table 29 Example extracts for the identified International theme (Czech Republic)

8.40. Appendix 40

International Theme				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"Of course, it is true that a key source of the terrorist threat is the unresolved and ongoing conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa region. It is therefore essential that the Czech Republic and the international organisations of which we are a member, first and foremost the European Union, increase their commitment and efforts to resolve the conflicts in Syria and Iraq in particular, but also in Libya, Yemen, Somalia, Nigeria, Afghanistan and Pakistan."	Bohuslav Sobotka	Government	social-democratic	Topos of security, Topos of responsibility, Topos of international cooperation, Topos of conflict resolution
"We need a huge diplomatic offensive by the European Union towards countries where we have been giving European money for years and wanting almost nothing from them. So now, at the very least, we must want to sign readmission agreements or stop the financial flows. We need an agreement with Turkey, we need an agreement in Libya, we need Libya to find a political consensus. Libya is a window to Europe."	Milan Chovanec	Government	social-democratic	Topos of responsibility, Topos of international cooperation, Topos of negotiation, Topos of influence
"Second. The Czech Republic has a network of diplomatic offices in rich Gulf countries and can put diplomatic pressure on oil states to take a greater share of responsibility for accepting refugees from war zones, to accept co-responsibility."	Ivan Gabal	KDÚ-ČSL	christian-democratic	Topos of responsibility, Topos of international cooperation, Topos of influence, Topos of burden sharing

Table 30 Example extracts for the identified International theme (Czech Republic)

8.41. Appendix 41

Political Aspects				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"The responsibility for this situation lies with the policy of the European Union, but also with our government. Its multicultural plans and its plans to integrate millions of Muslims in Europe. That is why today, as Members of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, we must act. If we do not do so, then we can choose whether the next bomb will explode at Můstek or at the Museum."	Jaroslav Holík	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of blame, Topos of threat, Topos of urgency, Topos of responsibility
"The situation in Europe will get worse thanks to the policies of multicultural madmen. Our country will face an unprecedented existential challenge."	Radim Fiala	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of blame, Topos of threat, Topos of existential danger, Negative other representation
"This House today has its ears plugged and its eyes covered. You approve of regulation and nonsense only because we have allowed the loss of the sovereignty of our law and have resigned ourselves to our national interests and state interests. Instead, we have bought into building a perfectly regulated multicultural superstate. Ladies and gentlemen, this was one big mistake. Today, we are not dealing with the crash of building the EU. Terrorist attacks, the immigration wave, Islamisation, the debt crisis, these are not failures. They are the legitimate consequence of the European Union operating in close collaboration with the bankers', arms dealers' and big business lobbyists from both the United States and Europe."	Tomio Okamura	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of blame, Topos of sovereignty, Topos of conspiracy, Topos of responsibility, Negative other representation
"Creating a multicultural Europe through an influx of Islamic immigrants is a plan that will end in the blood of European nations."	Tomio Okamura	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of threat, Topos of blame, Topos of existential danger, Negative other representation
"I also mentioned the offer made by the Confederation of Industry and Transport, which was last repeated, as far as I know, officially at this week's congress of the Confederation on Monday, when representatives of industrial enterprises said that they would be able to employ at least 5 000 migrants immediately, depending, of course, on their qualifications, given that at the moment they are already short of more than 100 000 employees and cannot get people with the appropriate qualifications. I said in this context that, of course, if such a thing were feasible, then there is the potential, if we include family members, to take in somewhere between 7 and 15 000 migrants."	Jiří Dienstbier	Government	social-democratic	Topos of economic opportunity, Topos of practicality, Topos of responsibility
"How many of these migrants, who are arriving in huge waves, have qualifications and whether Europe still has enough unemployed."	Marek Černoch	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of economic burden, Topos of practicality, Topos of skepticism

Table 31 Example extracts for the identified theme Political aspects (Czech Republic)

8.42. Appendix 42

Political Aspects				
Extract	Author	Party Affiliation	Party Ideology	Discursive Elements
"Last week, the EU started a completely new policy and a new stage of the dictatorship of destructive policy. It decided that in the attacks on the sovereignties of the individual member countries, it will end the policy of crumbs, but will violently tear away a huge piece of our sovereignty."	Marek Černoch	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of sovereignty, Topos of threat, Negative other representation, Topos of responsibility
"Part of our sovereignty is our right to decide who we invite into our country and who we do not. It should not even be up to parliamentarians or governments to decide whether a country should accept more immigrants, but to the citizens themselves in a referendum, because the consequences of such decisions will ultimately be borne by all of them."	Tomio Okamura	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of sovereignty, Topos of democracy, Topos of responsibility, Topos of public opinion
"We deeply believe that a majority override on the issue of admitting foreign nationals into our territory, an issue that is fundamentally about security, that is fundamentally about the sovereignty of our country, is a risky precedent."	Petr Fiala	ODS	centre-right	Topos of sovereignty, Topos of security, Topos of responsibility, Topos of risk
"We agree that hate does not belong in Czech society, but on the other hand, your government supports organizations that aim to defame anyone who disagrees with government policy and who disagrees with the very dangerous acceptance of illegal immigrants."	Marek Černoch	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of hypocrisy, Negative other representation, Topos of responsibility, Topos of dissent
"And then I'll follow up on the non-profit organizations you mentioned. This is also a real mystery to me, because yesterday I listened to the end of the 7 o'clock interview on CT1, where there was a representative of perhaps Amnesty International who said that in Germany they had commissioned a study which clearly proves that immigrants are economically advantageous. And I said why don't they take them all to Germany."	Pavel Plzák	ANO 2011	populist; conservative	Topos of skepticism, Topos of economic burden, Topos of responsibility, Topos of blame

Table 32 Example extracts for the identified theme Political aspects (Czech Republic)Example extracts for the identified theme Political aspects (Czech Republic)

8.43. **Appendix 43**

Social Aspects				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"And finally, seventhly, we have 1 million fewer children in the Czech Republic over the last 20 years. The rest of Europe is in a similar situation, the Germans even worse. This leads some politicians to think that migration could replace or solve this demographic deficit. On the contrary, I think we can fill up with selected people for the professions we want, and people who want to be here and either want to come back or want to assimilate, we can of course welcome them here. Foreigners already have a huge presence in the Czech Republic, but we don't see them that way because they are Slovaks, they are people who are culturally close to us, they are other nations. We hardly even think of the Vietnamese as foreigners anymore."	Pavel Bělobrádek	Government	christian-democratic	Topos of demographic challenge, Topos of selective migration, Topos of cultural closeness, Topos of assimilation
"The solution to the demographic deficit is not migration, but support for the proper upbringing of children in Czech families. It is clear that those who do not think of others have no heart. Those who do not think of themselves have no sense. So let us solve the problem of migration with our heads and our hearts. It is very important that solidarity is one thing, aid is another, but suicide is another. We are obliged, in my opinion, to help others, even Christians are obliged to turn the other cheek, but they are not obliged and, on the contrary, they must not turn the other cheek, we must not turn the cheek of our children, we must not destroy the future of this country."	Pavel Bělobrádek	Government	christian-democratic	Topos of demographic challenge, Topos of self-reliance, Topos of responsibility, Topos of cultural preservation
"Even if someone is granted asylum, that does not mean they have to stay in Europe forever. This is where, in my opinion, the principle of the Geneva Conventions has begun to be very wrongly explained. That, too, needs to be discussed. It does not mean that there can be a permanent migration of peoples here, and some will think that this is all right, or even some will think that this will solve our own demographic crisis or labour market shortcomings. We cannot solve these by migration. And unmanaged migration and asylum procedures. That is not the way to go."	Helena Langšádlová	TOP09	liberal-conservative	Topos of responsibility, Topos of temporary protection, Topos of misinterpretation, Topos of demographic challenge
"This government has long tolerated crimes on Czech territory. These people should be returned immediately and should not even be tolerated here, let alone have their stays legalised. Again, the second wave under the Family Reunification Act means that if we accept even one illegal immigrant and you legalise his stay, which again I say you have decided to do and are doing, he will invite his family members and others here, and then it grows exponentially. They of course, if you look at the statistics even in Western Europe, the demographic curve, their average birth rate, these people who are followers of Islam, is many times higher than ours."	Tomio Okamura	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of security, Topos of crime, Topos of demographic challenge, Topos of fear

Table 33 Example extracts for the identified theme Social aspects (Czech Republic)

8.44. Appendix 44

Social Aspects				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"What is important to distinguish, and it has not always been distinguished in the discussions of the last few weeks, is that the asylum seeker is coming, and if he is coming, we simply do not choose, we cannot choose. We have to start the asylum procedure. If protection is granted, then yes, our state will take care of it. But there is often talk of large welfare payments. It is good to know that, in the Czech Republic, the benefits for asylum seekers, after they have been provided with accommodation and food, amount to about CZK 15 per day, if there is a long discussion here about how much this puts a strain on our social system. On the other hand, however, we need to talk very consistently, including with our European partners, about a consistent return policy, because those who come here on the basis of an asylum application that is not granted must return to the countries from which they came."	Helena Langšádlová	TOP09	liberal-conservative	Topos of responsibility, Topos of economic burden, Topos of return, Topos of cooperation
"Groups whose eligibility is more than questionable should now also be eligible for state social assistance benefits. Foreigners from third countries, i.e. those Vietnamese, Ukrainians and others with long-term residence who have been employed for at least six months and are now on the register of job seekers, can be cited. In other words, these are people who can only stay here for a temporary period and are unemployed in the Czech Republic. It is understandable that foreigners are coming to the Czech Republic to work in positions that cannot be filled by Czech employees, but if these foreigners lose their jobs and have no other, it is no longer desirable for them to remain in the Czech Republic and receive state social support benefits. Nor can it be accepted that family members of foreigners who have long-term residence but whose only reason for receiving social benefits is that one of their family members is working in the Czech Republic should receive them. They themselves have never had to work here, and yet they may be entitled to benefits under this law. In spite of all the accusations of xenophobia here, I must appeal to you, my fellow Members, for your common sense."	Tomio Okamura	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of economic burden, Topos of practicality, Topos of responsibility, Topos of skepticism
"We say clearly, money to our people, not to migrants."	Tomio Okamura	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of economic burden, Topos of nationalism, Topos of responsibility

Table 34 Example extracts for the identified theme Social aspects (Czech Republic)

8.45. Appendix 45

Sources of Migration				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"I would be glad if, for example, Interior Minister Chovanec, who is present here, would answer what the police are doing against smuggling gangs, how many they have uncovered, and how successful or unsuccessful the fight against them has been. I assume that we can all agree here on the importance of prevention in this migration crisis. So why do these Syrians, these Afghans and others keep pouring into Europe, even though almost all countries, with the unfortunate exception of the Czech Republic, have closed their borders in some way?"	Martin Lank	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of security, Topos of prevention, Topos of responsibility, Topos of failure, Rhetorical questions
"We have a legitimate opportunity to ask Turkey and Greece to improve their cooperation in terms of regulating migration. We can demand, on the basis of the agreement concluded with Turkey, that Turkey intervenes against human smugglers, that it restricts the possibility of boats leaving the Turkish coast, that it restricts the possibility of distributing those boats there, of selling them, including life jackets, that Turkey strengthens security measures on its western coast and returns refugees to its coast, if it intercepts them, in its coastal waters."	Bohuslav Sobotka	Government	social-democratic	Topos of cooperation, Topos of responsibility, Topos of security, Topos of regulation

Table 35 Example extracts for the identified theme Sources of migration (Czech Republic)

8.46. Appendix 46

Humanism				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"Millions of people are on the run, surviving in the squalid conditions of refugee camps. Our republic participates in humanitarian aid. I think they give a hundred million to aid on the ground, and the government decided in January to accept fifteen seriously injured children, who, according to the Ministry of the Interior's staff, would sooner or later die without professional medical help, and their families in our territory."	František Laudát	TOP09	liberal-conservative	Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of responsibility, Topos of aid, Topos of health
"Is it humane that we let those people come from African countries and now we are going to send them back? They often sold the last property. And we have to do it. No, it wasn't a humanitarian gesture. Europe is watching the genocide of Christians and Yazidis. And does it help him? It doesn't help. No, those last steps really weren't gestures of humanity, they were gestures of irresponsibility. And anyone who cares about Europe must criticize it."	Helena Langšádlová	TOP09	liberal-conservative	Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of responsibility, Topos of criticism, Topos of moral obligation
"Or rather, we will invest in those camps which, if it succeeds, that is the optimal option, will be established in the countries of origin of those migrants, and we will try to keep them there with the level of humanitarian aid that we agree on, and it will be us cost something, or they will come to our territory and the costs will be increased by the fact that our society will also be gradually destroyed, because the influx of refugees, which is currently estimated at only one thousand, the quotas talk about the distribution of 40 thousand in these two years , but waiting on the shores of Africa, according to the estimate of the commissioner in charge of protecting the external borders of the Schengen area, it is a broad estimate, but he is talking about half a million to a million refugees. It is certainly not desirable for these masses to get moving, and I would see it as a big risk not only for the Czech Republic."	Miroslava Němcová	ODS	centre-right	Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of responsibility, Topos of security, Topos of economic burden
"On the other hand, while defending these values, we must not at the same time deny them ourselves, and for me, this is also the case if we cry out against accepting, for example, injured Syrian children. Because if some people still refer to our civilizational values, solidarity undoubtedly belongs to them. I would like to support František Laudát's proposal and I would like to ask our government to consider whether we can accept more injured and sick children, because it was said here that there are millions of people living in refugee camps, children whose lives are at risk."	Helena Langšádlová	TOP09	liberal-conservative	Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of solidarity, Topos of responsibility, Topos of values
"Solidarity is just one of the Christian, or if you want, European values. And it's hard to share values with someone who has completely different values and doesn't want to respect our values too much. On the other hand, we have to ask ourselves how much we really profess the values that we are often so loudly ready to defend, how much we are still a Christian civilization and how much a cosmopolitan civilization that is cutting itself off from its own roots. Have aggressive secularism, caring paternalism and selfish individualism replaced the old Christian values of justice, solidarity and freedom? Is it not the case that we ourselves have created a spiritual vacuum in Europe? A vacuum that Islam feels well and is about to fill?"	Ondřej Benešík	KDÚ-ČSL	christian-democratic	Topos of values, Topos of responsibility, Topos of cultural identity, Topos of threat
"And where necessary, when people are fleeing from war or they are women and children, the Czech Republic of course helps them, helped them. And I think that the Czech Republic as a state of solidarity is one of the best in the world. In case of any disasters, any natural disasters, it is the Czechs who are the first to send money, who are the first to send rescue teams. But we will definitely, definitely not accept, we will not grant asylum, we will not expose ourselves to the risk, we will not expose the citizens of the Czech Republic to the risk that huge groups of people who do not even want to integrate will simply come here."	Marek Černoch	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of humanitarianism, Topos of solidarity, Topos of risk, Topos of responsibility

Table 36 Example extracts for the identified theme Humanism (Czech Republic)

8.47. Appendix 47

Management of Migration				
Extract	Author	Party Affiliation	Party Ideology	Discursive Elements
"I believe that we do not yet have an adequate legal framework in place to allow for the admission of immigrants in large numbers, and we do not have a legal framework in place for these immigrants to be truly integrated into society. We do not have a defined framework for where we are going to get the resources to integrate them, where the accommodation will be defined, where these immigrants will go for retraining, where their children will go to school, for example, who will guarantee them jobs, where they will be educated, so that they do not succumb to a feeling of inferiority, as is the case in France, for example."	Milan Šarapatka	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of responsibility, Topos of preparation, Topos of integration, Topos of failure
"These people are simply not interested in integration. France has its own experience with this. Germany has had its own experience of this. As has been said here, it is no longer the only way. There are more than one way. So, those people will be recruited, ghettos will emerge, communities will emerge in which people who are directly linked to terrorist organisations can then hide much more easily, they can then really be sleeping cells."	Marek Černoch	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of failure, Topos of security, Topos of fear, Topos of ghettos, Negative other representation
"First, we must take proper care of our own citizens who helped build our republic with their taxes. If this government does not prevent the influx of immigrants into the Czech Republic, as there is no indication that it will, and indeed the actions of this government are exactly the opposite, then I insist that the government should not, under any circumstances, allow the admission of Muslims, as they have no potential to integrate with our culture and with us. It is the biggest lie that a Muslim will assimilate. Nowhere, in any western developed country, in any western democracy, has there been an acceptable integration of Muslims. Whenever and wherever they have allowed larger numbers of Muslims to settle, almost immediately they have begun to challenge local laws and force the state administration to start giving them advantages against the locals."	Tomio Okamura	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of responsibility, Topos of cultural preservation, Topos of failure, Topos of fear, Negative other representation
"That is to say, we are heading towards extreme action here, and that is why I am talking about this, that basically the government's actions, not only at the moment, where it is basically acting in an extreme way from my point of view, because it is acting against the will of the majority of the population, but basically there are irreversible steps that will lead to further extremist tendencies and to great social tensions in society, because simply the culture of this Islam, as we know, is not compatible with democracy and with freedom. There are major problems with this everywhere and there is not, and I would also like to ask, for example, a single advanced Western democracy where there has been an acceptable integration of followers of Islam into mainstream society. There is not a single such example in Western Europe in the developed countries."	Tomio Okamura	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of extremism, Topos of cultural incompatibility, Topos of failure, Topos of fear, Negative other representation

Table 37 Example extracts for the identified theme Management of migration (Czech Republic)

8.48. Appendix 48

Management of Migration				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"When we talk about migration, we really cannot close our eyes to what is happening, especially in Western Europe. It has deep roots going back many decades, hundreds of years. It is true that these two problems have now collided, and just as we have failed to manage many things, we have failed to manage, for example, the integration of our Roma, so we need to be open about the fact that many of those who have come to Western Europe have not embraced European values, and many European countries have failed to integrate. This, too, concerns us, and I believe that this, too, will be the focus of attention in the negotiations at European level, because the consequences will also affect us."	Helena Langšádlová	TOP09	liberal-conservative	Topos of failure, Topos of responsibility, Topos of historical context, Topos of integration
"That is why it is extremely important that there are hotspots so that a distinction is made at the border, or as far as possible, between those who actually need international protection and those who are economic migrants, because if there were a consistent return policy, I am convinced that organised crime would also be greatly reduced."	Helena Langšádlová	TOP09	liberal-conservative	Topos of security, Topos of distinction, Topos of responsibility, Topos of return
"If we fortify Greece, if we say Greece is not in the Schengen area, we have another border, then we have to ask ourselves what will happen to these people, especially in a situation where the hotspots are not working. For all the incantations about how many hotspots there will be, how we are putting money into it, how there will be three or five or however many hotspots in Greece, the practice is completely different."	Petr Fiala	ODS	centre-right	Topos of security, Topos of failure, Topos of responsibility, Topos of practicality

Table 38 Example extracts for the identified theme Management of migration (Czech Republic)

8.49. Appendix 49

Borders				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"We would like the Government of the Czech Republic to submit a proposal for measures, including budgetary measures, to ensure the long-term protection of national borders against illegal immigrants."	Marek Černoch	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of security, Topos of responsibility, Topos of protection, Topos of budget
"So I want to stress that no European border solution works. All border protection measures have been taken at the level of nation states, whether it is Hungary, Macedonia or Slovenia. We must take the same approach to border protection, because no one else will take care of us."	David Kádner	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of failure, Topos of security, Topos of self-reliance, Topos of responsibility
"I would like to be home already too, but simply protecting the national border is important to me. This week, the State Security Council was held, and Minister Chovanec, who was present, presented an analysis of the security situation on the border with Austria. This analysis showed that most of the property at the border crossings has been sold or rented. Yes, we have casinos or similar businesses there, as is the case, for example, in Harrachov. Today, what is actually being mapped is the remnants of what the state still owns. It is primarily land that should be used as checkpoints. This decision cannot be described as anything other than short-sighted. The state has basically completely resigned itself to the fact that it will be policing the borders at some point in the future."	Jana Hnyková	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of security, Topos of failure, Topos of responsibility, Topos of preparation
"I would ask for a specific statement of what the Government is prepared to do, what concrete steps it is planning. How will we proceed if the situation on our borders becomes untenable or the situation on the borders of the external Schengen area?"	Karel Fiedler	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of responsibility, Topos of security, Topos of preparation, Topos of urgency
"I am saying that as we go around the debates and meet a lot of people, those people are interested in protecting the border, they are interested in joining the ranks of the police. I am convinced that if there is something good about migration, it is the awareness that is coming among our citizens. These people are becoming more and more aware of the need to protect the Czech Republic and the need to get involved in protecting the Czech Republic."	Marek Černoch	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of awareness, Topos of responsibility, Topos of security, Topos of civic engagement
"Since the European Union has proven that it is unable to protect the external borders of the Schengen area, each state must take care of its own border protection. Other states do so, and the Czech Republic needs to do so as well. The allocated funds are to be used to purchase technologies such as fibre-optic cables, cameras, drones, technical centres, etc., which will protect the southern border of the Czech Republic. This is not about building fences, as is the case in Hungary. The border is to be protected in a similar way to the Slovak-Ukrainian border."	Marek Černoch	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of security, Topos of technology, Topos of responsibility, Topos of practicality
"The European Union is not able to protect the external borders of the European Union, even though everyone calls it to do so, even though it is still being negotiated. They simply cannot protect the borders. It's been a year since thousands of immigrants poured into Europe and no real solution has been adopted. The only step the European Union took was immigration quotas. This is the only thing the Union has done for our safety. All threatened states understood that no one would take care of them, they all had to take care of themselves. That's why we have a fence in Hungary, that's why Austria is also building a fence now."	Olga Havlová	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of failure, Topos of responsibility, Topos of security, Negative other representation

Table 39 Example extracts for the identified theme Borders (Czech Republic)

8.50. Appendix 50

EU				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"That is why it is extremely important that we prepare for the reception, but we can prepare, and I believe we can do it. On the other hand, in terms of long-term settlement, long-term residence, we have the right to say that we want to settle here in the long term those who come from similar religious and cultural backgrounds and who are the most persecuted and the most vulnerable. I am convinced that we have to talk about the fact that, as Europe, we have to help children, the elderly, families at risk, in particular. This is part of our solidarity and we must never forget it. Yes, we are rich and we must help, and we can take in even more people than the quotas tell us to take in, but we must never forget to ensure the safety of our citizens, because one of the fundamental roles of the state is to ensure safety. We must not forget that either."	Helena Langšádlová	TOP09	liberal-conservative	Topos of solidarity, Topos of cultural closeness, Topos of responsibility, Topos of security
"We will oppose the introduction of permanent mechanisms for the relocation of refugees to and within the European Union on the basis of a compulsory redistribution key, the so-called quota. We want to express our support for such an approach by the Government of the Czech Republic and, in general, for solutions that will lead to a reduction in the overall migratory pressure on the European Union, will lead to the preservation of cooperation within the so-called Schengen area and to the preservation of the free movement of persons within it."	Jitka Chalánková	TOP09	liberal-conservative	Topos of opposition, Topos of responsibility, Topos of cooperation, Topos of migration pressure
"When we asked at the beginning of this meeting some 20 days ago for the inclusion of the Prime Minister's information on the immigrant crisis, it was brushed off by the governing coalition on the grounds that illegal immigration is not a problem in this country and that the Government rejects mandatory quotas. Unfortunately, it was a bit of a sham, and not just from the Prime Minister, but from the whole coalition, coalition MPs. During the extraordinary sitting of the House of Commons on the issue of the reception of refugees, the Social Democrats assured us that we were breaking open the door unnecessarily, because the entire Visegrad Group had clearly declared that it would reject mandatory quotas and so, in effect, fulfil our demand. None of the government officials had the courage to say openly that the government had already decided to accept illegal immigrants and to submit to the dictates of Brussels."	Marek Černoch	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of responsibility, Topos of transparency, Topos of blame, Topos of opposition
"Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for the floor. I would like to thank all the citizens who have signed the Bloc Against Islam's petition against immigration quotas."	Marek Černoch	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of opposition, Topos of public support, Topos of gratitude
"If we look at this in terms of actions, not rhetoric, we can see that on a factual level the Government, through its passivity and its approach, is de facto defending meaningless quotas, quotas that will most likely be here permanently, that will bring an unknown number of people to our territory and that will not work in terms of solving the migration crisis within the European Union anyway."	Petr Fiala	ODS	centre-right	Topos of failure, Topos of responsibility, Topos of opposition, Topos of ineffectiveness

Table 40 Example extracts for the identified theme EU (Czech Republic)

8.51. Appendix 51

EU				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"Today's considerations and instructions from Brussels and Berlin to simply redistribute hundreds of thousands of refugees from Iraq, Syria, Kosovo, Libya and Afghanistan through quotas are a misunderstanding of the seriousness of the situation and a manifestation of incompetence. Without naming and eliminating the causes of refugees, and today, above all, without changing the style of the aggressive and economically reckless policies of the great powers of the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Union, there can be no way out of the vicious circle of wars, extortion and the robbing of the weak and the ensuing social disasters."	Miroslav Grebeníček	KSČM	far-left	Topos of blame, Topos of incompetence, Topos of responsibility, Topos of opposition
"Today, this de facto collaboration with Brussels and damage to Czech national interests is being repeated. The Czech Republic has neither rejected the quotas nor is it contesting them. It has steadfastly refused to call a referendum to block them. Another threat is visa-free travel with Turkey, which is fast approaching, and Turkey is trying to speed it up by blackmail, which cannot be called anything else. We have already said several times here that visa-free travel with Turkey is tantamount to visa-free travel with terrorists from the Islamic State and that it represents a huge security risk, which, moreover, has not even been properly assessed by the Czech security services."	Martin Lank	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of opposition, Topos of blame, Topos of security, Topos of threat
"I think that Europe should deal strategically with Turkey. Europe, in short, in this situation - yes, there was an argument: we cannot deal with Libya when the main stream went through Italy. But we can negotiate with Turkey as a partner state of the Alliance. And we are supposed to invest in making sure that the migratory wave is eased, that those people there live in decent conditions, because one of the causes of the eastern wave here is that many people in those refugee camps - and it has been said how many millions of people there are - feel simply hopeless, hopeless, in a desperate situation."	Helena Langšádlová	TOP09	liberal-conservative	Topos of strategy, Topos of cooperation, Topos of investment, Topos of responsibility
"In particular, Turkey must work with us to address this migration crisis. We need to support the countries that today are caring for hundreds of thousands and millions of refugees. We need to support these countries because they are looking after them at the borders of the European Union."	Bohuslav Sobotka	Government	social-democratic	Topos of cooperation, Topos of responsibility, Topos of support, Topos of crisis management
"So I would like to know from the Minister of Culture, who has joined this discussion, what the Czech Government's real position is on Turkey's demands. What is the Czech Government's position on visa policy? What is the Czech Government's position on Turkey's accession to the European Union? Are we all aware that in ten or fifteen years' time Turkey will have a population of one hundred million? That, if it becomes a member of the European Union, it will be the most populous country, with an influence that we cannot even imagine or contemplate today? I would be interested to know. After all, that is what is being discussed now. The plot has shifted a little bit."	Miroslava Němcová	ODS	centre-right	Topos of inquiry, Topos of responsibility, Topos of future impact, Topos of demographic change

Table 41 Example extracts for the identified theme EU (Czech Republic)

8.52. Appendix 52

EU				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"I am convinced that the agreement with Turkey is not on solid ground. After all, my opinion should probably not matter so much, but the leading representatives of Austria are expressing similar views - Mr Mihola, the chairman of the KDU-ČSL parliamentary club, has spoken about this, the Austrian President has spoken about it, the Austrian Interior Minister has spoken about it, that this agreement with Turkey will not solve the problem."	Miroslava Němcová	ODS	centre-right	Topos of opposition, Topos of skepticism, Topos of solidarity, Topos of ineffectiveness
"My colleagues from the parliamentary club here have explained at length why the agreement with Turkey is a total failure for Prime Minister Sobotka and an unprecedented threat to our security. I would like to reflect on what we have received for this huge price. We have been given an agreement where we will always be pulling the short end of the rope and will always be very easy to blackmail. Rest assured that President Erdogan will make his superiority felt. From day one, the deal has not worked as agreed."	David Kádner	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of failure, Topos of threat, Topos of security, Topos of opposition
"Is it really so difficult to notice that, as the President aptly put it, Brussels is copying the decadent phase of the demise of the Roman Empire, when it would rather give in to Turkey's blackmail and give billions in ransom, just as the Roman Empire bought barbarians?"	Marek Černoch	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of blame, Topos of opposition, Topos of historical comparison, Topos of security

Table 42 Example extracts for the identified theme EU (Czech Republic)

8.53. Appendix 53

EU				
Extract	**Author**	**Party Affiliation**	**Party Ideology**	**Discursive Elements**
"While I am at the microphone, I would like to say why we would not support the proposal to call a referendum on leaving the European Union. We are known for our Euro-realist approach, for the fact that we very often rightly criticise the Government for not doing enough to defend the Czech Republic's national interests in Brussels. On the other hand, we say quite clearly - and I know that sometimes our political opponents use this and want to confuse our voters in particular - that we think that the European Union should work, but in a different way to today, and we offer active participation in the creation of Czech national interests, so that our ministers do not just come from Brussels and we do not hear here a hundred times at every meeting: we have to, because Brussels wants to and Brussels threatens us. We are also the European Union. So, I would like the Czech voice to be heard in the European Union too, not just for ministers and the Prime Minister to always come back with a list of tasks to be done at home in the Czech Republic."	Zbyněk Stanjura	ODS	centre-right	Topos of opposition, Topos of responsibility, Topos of reform, Topos of participation
"I would like to remind you here that it was the government of Bohuslav Sobotka that first responded to quotas with its resolution. This was at a time when quotas were being discussed in the backrooms in Brussels, and they were being discussed very cautiously. I mentioned at the time that a referendum was an option for introducing quotas in the Czech Republic."	Milan Chovanec	Government	social-democratic	Topos of opposition, Topos of responsibility, Topos of reform, Topos of transparency
"We want to hold a referendum, following the example of Hungary. This would give any Czech government an irreversible order to reject the quotas and take the country to the European Court of Justice. We know very well that this is precisely the mandate that Sobotka's government does not want from the citizens, because it would not allow it to continue to collaborate with Brussels. This makes it all the more important to hold this referendum, because it is the only chance to protect Czech citizens from Brussels quotas. Thank you for your attention."	Jana Hnyková	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of opposition, Topos of responsibility, Topos of democracy, Topos of protection
"We have put this referendum on the table and Prime Minister Sobotka desperately needs a reason how and why to bring it down."	Marek Černoch	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of opposition, Topos of blame, Topos of responsibility, Topos of strategy
"Calling a referendum is a question of courage, a referendum on leaving the European Union is a question of courage. It is about the courage of the leaders of the nation not to be dictated to, not to be pushed into a corner. And now we are already fighting a battle over whether we will be a sovereign state or a mere vassal of Brussels' instructions."	Marek Černoch	ÚSVIT	right-wing populist	Topos of opposition, Topos of sovereignty, Topos of courage, Topos of democracy

Table 43 Example extracts for the identified theme EU (Czech Republic)

8.54. Appendix 54

<table>
<tr><td colspan="5" align="center">Security Theme</td></tr>
<tr><td align="center">Extract</td><td align="center">Author</td><td align="center">Party Affiliation</td><td></td><td align="center">Discursive Elements</td></tr>
<tr>
<td>"Mr Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister has already officially admitted that migration is a problem. Foreign security authorities, such as German counterintelligence, have already officially stated that this is a controlled action and that there are thousands of dangerous terrorists and radical Islamist fighters among the migrants. I ask you, as a man who for years has stubbornly ignored and actively denied any danger from migrants, and as a man who has even lured them here by claiming that there is no problem in taking care of migrants, I ask you: has the time not come to admit that you have failed disgracefully, that you have lied to your fellow citizens, that you have endangered them by your actions, and that you have also endangered the security of our country? Prime Minister, do you admit that you have failed disgracefully? It is clear to me that you will not admit your failure. Unfortunately, all the facts convict you of lying, and the only thing a man who has betrayed his citizens and his country should do is resign and walk away in disgrace."</td>
<td>Tomio Okamura</td>
<td>ÚSVIT</td>
<td>right-wing populist</td>
<td>Topos of blame, Topos of security, Topos of responsibility, Topos of failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>"Unfortunately, the actions of most European politicians are leading to an increase in the risk of further terrorist attacks and Islam rather than a reduction in this risk. We say Europe is facing an attempted occupation by radical Islam. The responsibility for this situation lies with the policies of the European Union, but also with our government. Its multicultural plans and its plans to integrate the millions of Muslims in Europe."</td>
<td>Jaroslav Holík</td>
<td>ÚSVIT</td>
<td>right-wing populist</td>
<td>Topos of blame, Topos of security, Topos of threat, Topos of opposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>"So there will be more of these people, there will be ghettos, there will be communities that will be created, where it will be much easier for people who are directly connected to terrorist organizations to hide, they can really be sleeper cells. According to information which, of course, has not been verified, there are now around six thousand people at least who have some connection with terrorist organisations in Europe. These people will become one huge problem."</td>
<td>Marek Černoch</td>
<td>ÚSVIT</td>
<td>right-wing populist</td>
<td>Topos of security, Topos of threat, Topos of opposition, Topos of failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>"Let us use this moment to send a clear signal to our partners in these countries as one of the outcomes of our debate. A signal that will make it clear that we can and will distinguish between Islam and terrorism, between religion and fundamentalism, and between reality and prejudice, and that much will depend on the Muslims themselves, how their perception of these connections develops, how they themselves consistently distinguish the spiritual essence of Islam from violence and actively fight against its abuse."</td>
<td>Jan Mládek</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>social-democratic</td>
<td>Topos of distinction, Topos of cooperation, Topos of responsibility, Topos of communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>"If the forces of the other armed forces are not sufficient, the government is prepared to authorise the deployment of the army, with members of the army exercising the powers of police officers in checking our borders."</td>
<td>Bohuslav Sobotka</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>social-democratic</td>
<td>Topos of security, Topos of responsibility, Topos of preparedness, Topos of authority</td>
</tr>
</table>

Table 44 Example extracts for the identified theme Security (Czech Republic)