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**REFLECTIONS OF THE 2015 AND 2022 MIGRATION
CRISES ON THE DISCOURSES IN THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT**

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ABSTRACT

REFLECTIONS OF THE 2015 AND 2022 MIGRATION CRISES ON THE DISCOURSES IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Migration is not an unknown phenomenon for the EU, where 5.3 percent of the population consists of immigrants. However, in 2015 and 2022, migration turn into a pressing issue in both public and political discussions within the EU. Migration crises also occupied particular time in the European Union plenary debates. This thesis examines the reasons of similarities and differences in discursive frames in the European Parliament (EP) debates towards the 2015 and 2022 migration crises. To achieve this goal, first of all, content analysis was conducted on the discursive frames which MEPs spoke at migration-related plenary debates in 2015 and 2022 crises. After analyzing the discourse frames produced in crises, a comparison between the frames was made to reveal the discursive frames that continued or changed throughout the crises.

The study results indicate that the discursive frames referred by MEPs in the 2015 and 2022 migration crises were more similar than different. The reasons behind the similarities were the institutional function of the EP and political positions of the party groups in the parliament. Moreover, the reasons behind the differences are geographical differentiation towards migration flows and changes in the party groups. The results of study showed that the EP's discussions on migration crises are formed by MEPs' approach to migration, MEPs can participate in migration discussions and create a political solution for the migration crisis as much as political power that the EP has.

Keywords: migration, migration crisis, the European Parliament, parliamentary debates, discursive frames

ÖZ

2015 VE 2022 GÖÇ KRİZLERİNİN AVRUPA PARLAMENTOSUNDAKİ DİSKURLARA YANSIMALARI

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Nüfusunun yüzde 5,3'ünü göçmenlerden oluşan AB için göç yeni bir olgu değil. Ancak 2015 ve 2022'de, AB içindeki hem kamusal hem de siyasi tartışmalarında göç önemli bir gündem maddesi oldu ve Avrupa Parlamentosu (AP) genel kurul tartışmalarında da göç tartışıldı. Bu çalışma boyunca, 2015 ve 2022 göç krizleri sırasında Avrupa Parlamentosu'nun göç krizlerine yönelik genel kurul toplantılarında kullanılan söylem çerçevelerindeki benzerlik ve farklılıkların nedenlerini incelendi. Bu amaca ulaşmak için öncelikle 2015 ve 2022 göç krizlerinde Avrupa Parlamentosu milletvekillerinin göçle ilgili genel kurul toplantılarında konuştukları söylemsel çerçeveler içerik analizi metodu ile ortaya çıkartıldı. Daha sonra ortaya çıkan söylemsel çerçeveler arasında karşılaştırma yapılarak benzerlikler ve farklılıklar analiz edildi.

Tezin sonuçları, 2015 ve 2022 göç krizlerinde milletvekillerinin bahsettiği söylemsel çerçevelerin benzerliklerinin farklılıklarından fazla olduğunu gösterdi. Benzerliklerin sebepleri AP'nin kurumsal işlevi ve parlamentodaki parti gruplarının siyasi konumları olduğu görüldü. Farklılıkların arkasında yatan nedenler ise, coğrafi farklılaşma ve parti gruplarındaki değişikliklerdir. Sonuç olarak, AP'nin göç krizlerine ilişkin tartışmalarını milletvekillerinin göçe yaklaşımına bağlı olarak şekillendiğini, AP'nin sahip olduğu siyasi güç kadar milletvekillerinin göç tartışmalarına katılabildiğini ve göç krizine siyasi çözüm üretebildiğini gösterdi.

Anahtar Kelimeler: göç, göç krizi, Avrupa Parlamentosu, parlamento tartışmaları, söylemsel çerçeveler

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Zeynep Gunsal

İzmir, 2023

TEXT OF OATH

I declare and honestly confirm that my study, titled “REFLECTIONS OF THE 2015 AND 2022 MIGRATION CRISES ON THE DISCOURSES IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT” and presented as a Master’s Thesis, has been written without applying to any assistance inconsistent with scientific ethics and traditions. I declare, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that all content and ideas drawn directly or indirectly from external sources are indicated in the text and listed in the list of references.

Zeynep Günsal

04.12.2023



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ABBREVIATIONS

ALDE Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe

ECR European Conservatives and Reformists Group

EFDD Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy Group

ENF Europe of Nations and Freedom Group

EP the European Parliament

EPP Group of the European People's Party

EU the European Union

EASO the European Asylum Support Office

Europol the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation

Frontex the European Border and Coast Guard Agency

Greens/EFA Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance

GUE/NGL Confederal Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left

ICRC the International Committee of the Red Cross

ID Identity and Democracy

Renew Renew Europe Group

S&D Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament

UNHCR the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

WFP the World Food Program

1. CHAPTER: INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Motivation and Objectives of the Research Project

Migration is defined as an umbrella term, as the temporary or permanent displacement of people within a country or across an international border for various reasons (IOM, n.d.). According to the 2023 World Development Report, about 184 million people—corresponding roughly to 2.3 percent of the World’s population- live in countries outside of their own country of origin (World Bank, 2023). Migration can occur on a voluntary basis motivated by reasons such as education, career opportunities and travel. Yet, it can also take the form of forced migration which includes people leaving their homes to save their lives by fleeing conflict, war or extreme weather conditions. The Europe Union (EU) has been exposed to significant migratory arrivals from other continents for centuries because of different reasons and currently, Eurostat dataset published on 1 January 2021, there were 23.7 million non-EU citizens living in one of Member States, representing 5.3% of the EU population (Eurostat, n.d.)

Migration was not an unprecedented phenomenon for the EU, but between 2015 and 2022, migration turned into a particularly pressing issue in both public and political discussions within the EU. As the migrant arrival rates to the EU in 2015 and in 2022 were significantly high, they triggered difficulties in managing these largescale groups, which arrived unexpectedly within a very short time span, turning migration into a crisis (IOM, n.d.). The purpose of defining the challenge as a migration crisis is, firstly, that migration is a term that covers different types and whole processes. In other words, migration covers several types of processes that people leave the country to lives in for whatever forced reason (e.g. war, civil war, conflict, natural disaster) and arrive in another country, they apply for asylum and is in the waiting process, and they receive refugee or temporary protection status. In addition, the migration crisis was preferred because it includes different forced migrants.

The second reason why the term migration crisis was selected is that the cause of the

crisis was not individuals. Referring to the events of 2015 and 2022 as migrant or refugee crisis may imply that the cause of the crises was migrant individuals, but the causes of the migration crises depended on the management of migration, not individuals. According to the data of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), there were 1.8 million illegal border crossings in 2015, and this is an indication that EU Member States could not properly manage migration flows at the EU borders (2016). According to the IOM's report, total number of arrivals to the EU was roughly 1,005,504 in 2015. The total is the highest migration flow since World War II (IOM, 2015). In Eurostat data set, asylum applications in 2015 almost tripled the previous year and reached 1,282,690 (Eurostat, n.d.). 75% of those who reached EU borders in 2015 had fled conflict and persecution in Syria, Afghanistan or Iraq (UNHCR, 2015).

This intensity of migration flows and the failure of Member States to manage migration flows have turned migration into a crisis. While the EU is still feeling the impact of the 2015 migration crisis, it faced a new wave of migration in 2022. Ukrainians fleeing the war with Russia and Ukraine have arrived at the EU borders. On the one hand, asylum applications rose again to a total of 965,665 people (Eurostat, n.d.). The EU activated the temporary protection mechanism for 4 million Ukrainians fleeing the war (European Commission, n.d.). In 2022, the number of illegal crossings across borders was limited to only 331,400 people (Frontex, n.d.). The large differences in the number of immigrants, asylum seekers and illegal border crossings between 2015 and 2022 show that in addition to the intensity and unexpectedness of migration flows, different factors may also be effective in the management of the migration crises. The discussions carried out by the European Parliament, an important the EU institution, during the migration crises can help show the factors affecting the management of the migration crisis. Moreover, identifying the similarities and differences of the discursive frames used during the 2015 and 2022 migration crisis discussions will also show how migration crises are approached and what other factors may be involved in turning these challenges into crises.

Migration flows in 2015 and 2022 reaching the EU borders were unexpected because the number of arrivals was several times higher than in previous years, the EU and Member States were unprepared for the migration crisis. For this reason, there were

public and political debates about migration crises and migration went higher in the EU political agenda where different EU institutions, Member States, the press and the EU public all paid increased attention to migration. The EU institutions discussed or developed solutions within their own authority. The European Parliament (EP) is one of the institutions where discussion about the migration crises occupied significant space in the parliamentary debates. Before co-decision authority on migration policies was given to the EP, it had only advisory position and could participate in migration governance within the framework allowed by the EU treaties, however, after the parliament gained the equal authority with the European Council in migration management, which members of European Parliament (MEPs) had directly participated in the legislative process, the EP gained importance during the migration crises (Ripoll Servent 2018; Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2018; Givens & Luedtke 2004; Acosta 2009).

Against this background, the reasons for the similarities and differences of discursive frames in the European Parliament debates towards forcibly displaced persons during the 2015 and 2022 migration crises will be investigated in this thesis. One of the reasons parliamentary debates were chosen for analysis is that MEPs are elected by the EU citizens, and they are meant to represent these citizens, which gives the EP legitimacy. Moreover, it is a direct expression of political power since the EP debates are conducted by parliamentarians in a political context (Fairclough, 2003; Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012). They allow speakers to control the agenda, topics, and other important aspects of corporate speech and set a remarkable precedent for legitimizing discourse (Giordano and Piga, 2020, 132). In addition, parliamentary debates are often well-crafted, well-thought-out, persuasive texts designed to be effective and agenda setting. These debates are also detailed, closely watched by relevant stakeholders such as the European Commission, the European Council, the EU citizens, and certainly need to be recorded (Giordano and Piga, 2020, 132).

As a result, during the 2015 and 2022 migration crises, the EP held general assembly meetings on managing the challenge, and MEPs made speeches to solve the crisis. When the EU's migration agenda has been heated by crises twice in the last decade, the EP got involved in the political debates in the agenda with its plenaries to manage the challenge. Since the EP gained its co-decision authority, it has equal authority and

responsibility in migration policies with the Council (European Union, 2023). Therefore, power of MEPs' votes and speeches also has increased with the authorities and responsibilities, and the repeated discursive frames that emerge in these speeches and plenaries will affect the perspective toward the migration crisis, its management and policies. Eventually their discourse can create an agenda, be effective in migration crises and legitimize the decisions taken during crises (Giordano and Piga, 2020; Krotký, 2022).

In this case, the EP debates had an impact on migration agenda, policies and governance during the crisis periods. Understanding similar and different discursive frames adopted by MEPs and comparing the reasons it will show the reflection of migration crisis, and it is hoped that by analyzing parliamentary debates this thesis will contribute to the EU and migration literature. Although the migration crisis literature is very extensive, in the next section "1.2 Literature Review", studies on how the European Parliament's attitude towards immigration and the immigration debates in the general assembly shape will be denoted. The EU and migration literature covers the EP's positions in the EU migration system, and how the position of the EP affects migration policies. Based on relevant studies in the literature analyzing the debates on migration in the EP plenaries and MEPs' speeches and votes toward migration policies will be presented. How this research contributes to the literature will be underlined in the next part.

1.2. Literature Review

Abolition of internal borders under the Schengen Regulations affected the transformation of legislative power in migration policies from Member States to the EU level (Givens & Luedtke 2004; Geddes 2001; Genschel & Jachtefuchs 2018; Huysmans 2000). The main reason for this was the free movement of goods, services, capital and people within the European Economic Community (EEC). With no internal border controls in the Schengen zone, any third-country nations admitted to any Member State can freely travel to others, therefore, the free movement of people has caused the EU's external borders to gain importance (Givens & Luedtke 2004; Geddes 2001). The European Parliament (EP) increased its power in migration and asylum policies when the 1999 Amsterdam Treaty enabled the ordinary legislative procedure

(European Parliament, n.d.).

In the relevant literature, it is emphasized that the EU's Common European Asylum System (CEAS) had major problems about taking responsibility of Member States or implementation of the CEAS and sharing the financial burden of migration management (Kauffman, 2021; Ripoll Servent, 2019; Zaun, 2017). Studies (Kauffman, 2021; Ripoll Servent, 2019; Zaun, 2017) generally had assumptions that the EP positively contribute the CEAS which had gaps (e.g. relocations among Member States is not obligated) with the co-decision procedure. However, the CEAS reforms voted for and approved by the EP were also insufficient in improving migration policies in terms of sharing the cost of migration management and relocation mechanism. In this case, the EP seems to be inadequate in solving problems related to migration management after gaining joint decision-making authority. Therefore, in this thesis how the EP debates contribute migration and asylum policies, what solutions they found, and the discursive frames repeated by MEPs will be analyzed by focusing on the plenaries that took place throughout the migration crises. Investigating the different ideas put forward by the EP about common migration and asylum policies and why these ideas are discussed will contribute to the relevant literature.

Moreover, studies in the literature (Ripoll Servent 2018; Genschel and Jachtefuchs 2018; Givens and Luedtke 2004; Acosta 2009) showed no meeting the expectation that migration management would turn into a more supra-state politics with the EP becoming a co-decision body. Research also emphasizes that the EP is insufficient to transform the intergovernmental structure in migration management into a supranational structure (Ripoll Servent, 2018). Member States have preserved the national power and intergovernmental structure in the procedures related to border security and irregular immigration, such as Schengen regulations and visa regulations (Genschel and Jachtefuchs 2018; Givens and Luedtke 2004; Acosta 2009). For example, The Fund for Asylum, Migration and Integration (AMIF) established for increasing national capacities of Member States and developing migration procedures, only provided €2.4 billion over six years (2014-20) to help Member States manage migration flows, but only Germany spent €20 billion on refugees in 2016 (Genschel & Jachtefuchs 2018). This indication showed that Member States still spend more on migration, but the EU remains weaker than them in migration management.

Additionally, the EP accepted the Council's arguments that limitation on Frontex's autonomy and increasing the control of Member States' officers in Frontex, and the discussions during the enactment of the Returns Directive the EP accepted the articles prepared by the Council directly, without requesting any amendment, only regulating the unaccompanied children article (Acosta 2009). In this case, the Parliament was less involved in migration policies than the Council and strengthened the position of the Member States (Ripoll Servent 2018; Genschel and Jachtefuchs 2018 2018; Givens and Luedtke 2004; Acosta 2009). In the light of studies in the literature, although the EP gained legislative authority, they did not exercise balancing power on the Council in legislative processes on migration and asylum issues and, moreover, the institution remained in a situation that preserved the power of the Member States and the Council. Therefore, analyzing the EP plenary debates about migration issues could open a new venue in terms of understanding whether the EP preserves the Council's position, or balances the power of the Council in plenaries during the selected migration crises. One of the contributions of this research to the literature will be to show whether MEPs have discursive frameworks that will balance or support them in their discourse towards the Council and Member States during crisis periods.

In addition, migration and refugee policies were not the only issues discussed among EU institutions. The perspective towards immigrants is also turning into a political issue discussed by the EU institutions (e.g. the Commission, the Council, the EP), Member States, the EU media and the EU citizens. Importance of the EU's external borders and migration policies became a pressing issue firstly over labor migration in the 1970s and to expanded because of entering the EU borders irregularly in the 2000s (Geddes 2000, Buzan and Wæver 2009, Baker-Beall 2009). Relevant literature explains that the EU sees immigration as an economic, domestic security and cultural threat and it has adopted a restrictive approach towards immigration (Huysmans, 2000; Baker-Beall, 2009; Bigo, 2000). According to Huysmans, factors such as workers working cheaper than native workers and not being organized made them more preferred in the workforce, and for this reason they were seen as an economic threat to EU citizens (2000, p.767-770). This situation began to rise on the EU political agenda as a result of labor migrations that started in the 1970s. Later on, the increase in terrorist attacks (e.g. 2004 Brussels, 2004 Madrid, 2005 London) led the EU public to

assume that immigrants, especially those coming from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, were more prone to crime, and the idea that they were a threat to the domestic security of the EU was spread (Huysmans, 2000; Baker-Beall, 2009; Bigo, 2000). Lastly migrants are considered a cultural threat to the EU social harmony, which is identified with the European civilization built on Christianity, science and enlightenment (Delanty, 1997; Huysmans, 2000).

In addition to the fact that immigrants were considered a threat for economic, internal security and social reasons, there were also pro-migration ideas in the EU public opinion. Studies in the literature indicate that the rights of immigrants based on the Geneva Convention (e.g. access to humanitarian aid, lifesaving and emergency first aid, the principle of non-refoulement) should be ensured and the rights of refugees should be improved in the long term (Cuttitta, 2018; Perkowski, 2016). In addition, there is an acceptance that immigrants are an important factor for the growth and development of economies and that immigrants are capital in terms of education and workforce in the EU (Vogler & Rotte, 2000; De Haas, 2010). Considering the changes in the EU's ideas and approaches towards migration and immigrants over the years, this thesis will build upon the existing research in the relevant literature and will test whether any of the pro- and/or anti-immigrant views underlined in the literature were actually voiced out by MEPs during the 2015 and 2022 migration crises. At the same time, the changes in these discursive frames between crises and their reasons will be analyzed.

Kaunert and Léonard (2012, p. 1406) emphasize that the European Union institutions, especially the EP, support human rights and liberal migration policies and MEPs are in general refugee friendly. However, according to studies in the literature, the EP's immigrant-friendly and pro-immigration attitudes were present in the time when it has only consultative status in legislative procedure (Trauner 2016; Acosta 2009; Hix and Noury 2007; Servent 2014; Lopatin 2013). After becoming a joint legislature, the parliament abandoned its pro-refugee stance and support for liberal migration policies (Trauner 2016; Acosta 2009; Hix & Noury 2007; Servent 2014; Lopatin 2013). The EP tends to support relatively liberal migration policies while having only consultative status but when its political responsibilities come into play as co-decision body in the migration and asylum policies, the EP tends to support relatively restricted migration

policies (Lopatin, 2013, p. 740).

Ripoll Servent (2010, 2014) and Lopatin (2013) were of the opinion that in 2005, the EP shifted from its pro-migration position to relatively anti-migration position. The reason why the EP shifted to supporting more restrictive policies instead of pro-migration and liberal policies was actually the voting behavior of the two main parties that caused the EP to support restrictive migration policies (Servet 2008, Lopatin 2013). First, the socialists, namely the PES (S&D), supported liberal migration policies and had intra-party cohesion, but after 2005 they lost cohesion for the party and almost half of MEP changed their stance on migration (Lopatin, 2013: 751). Secondly, ALDE members, who were the biggest supporters of liberal migration policies before 2005, turned in the opposite direction and voted very conservatively on both asylum and irregular migration issues (Lopatin, 2013: 751). While Liberal groups tried to reach the mainstream in order to maintain their power in the parliament, Left political groups preferred to remain silent in the face of securitization of migration and pro-council attitudes (Servent, 2014: 203). Based on changes in approach of the political party groups in the EP over the years, this thesis will build upon the existing research in the relevant literature and analyze whether the discursive frames used in the EP change during the migration crises. Analyzing whether the discursive frameworks that MEPs use in addition to their voting behavior are connected to their party groups will fill the gap in the literature.

In the literature, party ideologies, distribution and potential of party groups were shown as the reasons for the change in the EP's attitude towards migration (Servent 2014; Lopatin 2013, Hix and Noury 2007). The European People's Party (EPP) has a more anti-migration stance, and The Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D) is divided among themselves and advocated different ideas (Frid-Nielsen 2018). Examining their rhetoric in the EP plenary debates during the 2015 migration crisis, it was revealed that Greens, Alternative and Liberals were more pro-migration, while Conservatist, Nationalist and Eurosceptics were more anti-migrant rhetoric (Krotký & Kaniok, 2020, p. 186-188). It is aimed to test and evaluate in this thesis whether the views stated in the literature also emerged in the discursive frameworks formed in the 2015 and 2022 migration crises. To sum up, there is extensive literature on the EP and migration. There are many studies showings the position of the

European Parliament during legislative process about migration policies Moreover, MEP's discourses and voting behaviors against migration, refugee and asylum were studied. Ideologies, political groups, membership periods, MEP's ages and sex have been the determining factors. However, there is no study that includes a comparison between different time periods. This research aims to address this gap by analyzing and comparing the speeches of MEPs during the 2015 and 2022 migration crises. It is hoped that the new information that will emerge as a result of this research will contribute to future studies.

1.3. Definition of Key Terms

This section consists of the definitions of the most common, popular and widely used key words throughout the thesis and an explanation of the meanings of these words. Migration is generally used as umbrella term referring people leaving their place of residence, either across an international border or within a State. Migration includes displacement for 'forced' or 'voluntary' reasons (e.g. education, work, travel) (UNHCR, 2023, para.239). Even though the person who migrated is also considered a **migrant**, there is no definition of migrant accepted by international law. However, in the international arena, migrant is used to characterize people who relocate within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, for compulsory or voluntary reasons (IOM, 2023, para.39). In this research, migrants and migration were accepted with the inclusive approach adopted by IOM. In other words, migration is used to include all forms of movement and migrants includes people who perform all forms of movement (IOM, 2023, para.39).

Country of origin is where people are citizens or residents before migration (IOM, 2023, para. 13), while **country of destination** is where they arrive at the end of migration (IOM, 2023, para. 12). The countries where immigrants pass or reside during the migration process are considered as **country of transit** (IOM, 2023, para.14). While a country is a destination for a migrant, it may be a transit or origin point for a different migrant. For this reason, the definition of countries as origin, transit or destination and the types of migration are unique for each migration. For example, From the perspective of destination country, **immigration** is the act of moving from country of nationality and the destination becomes the new country of his/her actual

residence (IOM, 2023, para. 26). From the perspective of origin country, **emigration** is the act of moving from the country and the destination becomes the new country of his/her actual residence (IOM, 2023, para. 16). Additionally, the number of migrants arriving or leaving the country during a certain period of time is described as **an international migration flow** (IOM, 2023, para. 40), and **migration management** covers all public plans, laws, regulations and decisions regarding migration legislated and implemented by States (IOM, 2023, para. 49).

Within the scope of this thesis, the type of migration in the 2015 and 2022 migration crises analyzed is displacement. **Forced migration or displacement** is when people are forced to leave their place of residence or flee as a result of armed conflicts, general situations of violence, human rights violations, natural or man-made disasters (UNHCR, 2023, para. 133). Regardless of the reason for migration, its definitions vary depending on how migration occurs. **Regular migration** is defined as that which occurs in accordance with the laws of the country of origin, transit and destination (IOM, 2023, p.56), and migration that occurs in violation of the laws, regulations and international law of the country of origin, transit and destination is defined as **irregular migration** (IOM, 2023, para. 36). Since irregular migration does not have a definition accepted by international law, this does not eliminate the legal responsibilities of States because, according to IOM, refugees, victims of human trafficking or unaccompanied migrant children can also be migrants who may remain in an irregular situation (IOM, 2023, para. 36). UNCHR underlines that the word of irregular, undocumented or illegal should be used to describe situations and should not characterize people in a stigmatizing and blaming manner (e.g. irregular migrant, undocumented migrant or illegal migrant) (UNHCR, 2023, para. 237).

Migration and migrant have a more inclusive meaning and there are also specific processes and definitions based on international law, binding and accepted by the signatory states as the same. **Refugee** (1951 Convention) is an international law term used for people who fear that they will be persecuted in the country where they reside or are citizens because of their religion, race, nationality, social group or political opinion (IOM, 2023, para.59). At the same time, those are people who do not want to benefit from the protection of that country due to the fear that they will be persecuted, cannot return there, or do not want to return there due to fear (IOM, 2023, para.59).

These people may be outside the country where they previously resided as a result of events that will cause persecution or they may not have a nationality (IOM, 2023, para.59). Moreover, **asylum** is the situation where people escape from serious harm and persecution, and they are outside the states of which they are citizens or residents, or flee from these states, and seek international protection. Asylum includes the right to protection against refoulement, permission to stay, standards of humanitarian treatment, and access to a durable solution (UNHCR, 2023, para.21). **Asylum Seeker** is a person who seeks international protection. It covers the situation of people after they request asylum and before the host countries make a final decision about asylum application. While it is not clear whether every asylum seeker will have refugee status, everyone became an asylum seeker before gaining refugee status (IOM, 2023, para.3).

1.4. Theoretical Framework

This research will analyze the European Parliament debates on the migration crises of 2015 and 2022 by framework of discursive institutionalism. In the last three decades, new institutionalism has become one of the most important theoretical approaches in the field of political science and international relations. Discursive institutionalism was one of the newest institutionalist frameworks, a debate where actors engage in the process of generating, reflecting and/or legitimizing ideas for political action in an institutional context, according to the logic of communication (Schmidt 2002, 2008,2010, 2011; Campbell & Pederson 2001). The term discursive institutionalism were used as an umbrella term for the scientific studies that take account of not only ideas and but also the interactive processes of discourse that generate those ideas and how institutions and agents communicate them to the public (Schmidt 2002, 2008, 2010, 2011; Schmidt 2004). Since the focus is on European Parliament debates and MEPs' speeches, discursive institutionalism (DI) provides the suitable theoretical framework for adequately and effectively making sense of the relevant data.

The first reason for the compatibility between the research and the theoretical framework is that the EP is an institution and the plenary debates of this institution consist of the speeches of MEPs. Another reason for choosing discursive institutionalism is that the discursive frames in the EP debates will be examined and then these frames referred to the 2015 and 2022 migration crises will be compared. DI

explains the institutions as the context of which agents think and speak, and the results of agents' thoughts, words (Schmidt 2008, 2011). DI attributes the actions of institutions to the background ideational abilities and foreground discursive abilities of agents (Schmidt 2008, 2011). Background ideational abilities covers the agents' ability to make sense of context, understand and define it. But institutional action can also be grounded foreground discursive abilities of agents representing the logic of communication which enables agents to think, speak, and act (Schmidt 2011, p. 314). On the one hand, agents have ideas about how institutions are established and maintained in a certain context due to their background intellectual abilities, and on the other hand, they can change or maintain institutions thanks to their discursive abilities (Schmidt 2008, 2011). In this case, institutions are structures that both limit the actors and also, they can be changed and transformed by actors. This two-way interaction between institutions and agents will be necessary to show the connection between them in the analysis of EP debates and MEP speeches during the migration crisis.

In addition, discursive institutionalism's perspective on political discourse coincides with the importance of MEPs' speeches in the migration crisis process. Moreover, discourses are also evaluated in terms of the rules that frame ideas and discourse in different political-institutional environments (Schmidt, 2011). There are studies showing that changes in ideas in discursive institutionalism may be due to paradigm shifts (Kjaer & Pedersen, 2001) and that ideas change gradually even in times of stability (Carstensen, 2011). This approach of discursive institutionalism will be useful in showing the similarities and differences between the discursive frames and ideas that emerged in the 2015 and 2022 migration crises. It will be shown how changes in MEPs' ideas affect the discourse and the reasons behind the changes.

Moreover, according to the DI, discourses do not simply mean voicing ideas but are seen as interactive processes through which these ideas are conveyed. In other words, discourses are an interactive process that involve not only expressing ideas but also discussing, bringing to the agenda, and legitimizing ideas in a certain political context in communication with other political actors, society or the public (Schmidt, 2002; 2008; 2011). Discursive institutionalists argue that actors communicate in two ways, which include communicative discourse and coordinative discourse (Schmidt, 2002).

While communicative discourses are used directly in communication with society and the public, coordinative discourses are preferred in communication processes with other political actors (Schmidt, 2002). In single-actor political systems, such as absolute kingdoms and empires, the political actor mostly includes communicative discourses because decision-making processes depend on a single actor and the responsibility is towards the people, whereas in multi-actor political systems, such as the EU, coordinative discourses are frequently used because more than one person is involved in decision-making processes since the agents have to reach to an agreement among themselves (Schmidt, 2002). The coordinative discourse definition of discursive institutionalism will contribute to the analysis of MEPs' discourses throughout the migrant crises. This theoretical approach of DI will be used to explain whether MEPs used these two types of discourses, or how they were used in their discursive frameworks during the 2015 and 2022 migration crises, and the reasons behind the discourses.

In this case, actors connected to institutions use discourses to generate ideas, negotiate and legitimize political actions within a specific context, but they are also constrained by institutions (Schmidt, 2008; 2011). Within the scope of this research, during the 2015 and 2022 crises, MEPs can generate ideas about the migration crisis through the discursive frames in their speeches, discuss and legitimize them, and only continue this within the borders of the EP. DI will be used throughout this research since it provides the relevant theoretical tools with its process-based perspective on discourse, and the way it treats institutions as dynamic rather than fixed structures to analyze and understand the interconnectedness between institutions and actors.

1.5. Hypothesis

In the light of the theoretical framework of discursive institutionalism, it is expected that the discursive frameworks that will emerge in the 2015 and 2022 migration crises will be similar in the debates covering legislative process or policies related the institutional structure of the EP but will differ in the debates regarding the migration flows. It is expected that the EP debates will continue regarding the relevant EU Stakeholders (e.g. Member States, the Council, the Commission, the EU Agencies) throughout the two crises, since there is no change in the institutional structure in an

area related to migration. Additionally, the speeches of MEPs will comprise coordinative discourse in both migration crises.

Based on the studies in the relevant literature (Kaunert & Léonard, 2012; Servent 2014; Lopatin 2013 Krotký & Kaniok, 2020), it is expected that the discursive frames in the speeches of MEPs will tend to support pro-migration and liberal immigration policies in 2015. In addition, although MEPs show similar trends throughout the 2022 migration crisis, since migration crises are independent events, changes in their approaches to the migration crisis will also be reflected in their discourse. The first reason behind the changes in the discursive framework was that the 2015 and 2022 migration crises involved different national groups. For this reason, it is assumed that MEPs may have different ideas and different discursive patterns about migration crises. Secondly, in the light of studies in the field, the different ideological positions of MEPs will affect their discourse on immigration. It is expected that MEPs with left and liberal ideology, as clearly shown in the literature, will develop more liberal and pro-immigration discourses, while conservative and nationalist MEPs are expected to use more anti-immigrant discourses and will favor restrictive policies. It is expected that the discursive frames that will continue in the 2015 and 2022 migration crises will be similar due to the existence of same political parties.

1.6. Justification of the Selected Case Studies and the Time Frame

Migration crisis has been defined broadly as an unexpected increase in human mobility caused by different reasons or in a short time, and this mobility may be in the form of internal displacement or may happen internationally (IOM, n.d.). They cause vulnerabilities for people and communities affected by migration and cause disruptions and difficulties in migration management (IOM, n.d.). Considering the data of IOM and Eurostat, asylum applications to the EU tripled in 2015-2016 compared to previous years, reaching the highest number of the 21st century. In 2015, 1,255,600 first time asylum seekers applied for international protection in Member States, and Syrian nationals constituted the largest group applying for asylum (Eurostat, n.d.). There were 362,800 asylum applications made by Syrians, which was twice as much as the number of applications made by them in 2014 (Eurostat, 2016, p.1-2). In 2017, applications for asylum decreased to 677,470, which corresponds to

the figures before 2015 (Eurostat, n.d.). In summary, the reason for the 2015 migration crisis, which increased suddenly and continued for two more years, was the Syrian civil war, which led to a migration wave exceeding millions, and the difficulties EU experienced in governing this migration. For the solution of the 2015 migration crisis, the EU concluded a deal with Turkey which came into effect in 2016 (European Council, 2016). In this way, cooperation was established in the fight against migrant smugglers, in the accommodation and care of Syrian refugees (European Council, 2016).

In the 2022 migration crisis, Ukrainians fleeing the war between Russia and Ukraine reached the EU borders, and when Russia started to invade Ukraine on February 24, 2022, it was impossible for Ukrainians who were forcibly displaced by the war, to return to their countries (the European Commission, n.d.). The EU's policy during the 2022 migration crisis was to re-introduce the temporary protection mechanism (the European Commission, n.d.); the mechanism that was put into effect for the first time during the Yugoslav War was used but was activated in March 2022 (the European Commission, n.d.). 4 million Ukrainians benefited from temporary protection for by the end of 2022 (the European Council, n.d.). Since the Ukrainian forced migrants are given temporary protection status, the number of Ukrainians in 2022 asylum application statistics is 26,715 (Eurostat, n.d.). As a result, those Syrians, who fled the Syrian civil war, and the Ukrainians, who fled the war with Ukraine and Russia, were the groups that have the greatest number of nationals in the migration flows in 2015 and 2022 and they arrived at the European Union borders to save their lives. This research thus seeks to analyze the similarities and differences of the discourses adopted by MEPs with specific reference to these two migration crises that have had significant social, political and economic impact within the EU.

1.7. Methodology and Data

Qualitative research methods try to explain why and how people, institutions, societies behave in the face of events and facts, and what the reasons behind attitudes and behaviors are (Baltacı, 2019). Qualitative research methods are more appropriate since the scope of this research will analyze how the EP plenary debates produced discursive frames during the 2015 and 2022 migration crises and the reasons behind these

discursive frames. Among the qualitative research methods, the content analysis method will be carried out for this research because the data will be analyzed using verbatim reports published on the official website of the European Parliament, as the primary source. Since verbatim reports are a text version of MEPs' speeches, the qualitative content analysis method will be consulted in the research. In summary, the discursive frames referred by MEPs in the EP plenaries that took place in the first years of the 2015 and 2022 migration crises will be conducted with the qualitative content analysis method.

The data should be complete enough to explain the research and also narrow enough to show the depth of the information (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008, p.109). To give an example from this thesis, analyzing all migration discussions in the EP general assemblies will make it difficult to preserve the context of the information. Since the context that was intended to be shown in the research was the discursive frames developed by the EP in the migration crises, the data on the debates held during the migration crises were analyzed. In other words, in content analysis, as in other qualitative research methods, the aim will be the depth and originality of the information to be found, rather than large generalizations (Baltacı, 2019; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Since this research does not seek to analyze all the migration debates in the EP meetings, but focuses on, the migration debates carried out in the first years of the 2015 and 2022 migration crises, the content analysis method will help reveal deeper and more detailed information when compared with quantitative methods.

Content analysis does not only involve counting the words and sentences used in the collected data set, but also includes examining the contents, which in this research corresponds to MEPs' speeches, in a detailed and in-depth manner. Therefore, during the analysis of the data, questions such as "who says what-where-when-how-with what effect and why?" need to be asked (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). In content analysis, researchers should familiarize themselves thoroughly with the text by reading it several times and then begin the analysis (Polit & Beck; 2004).

In the data organization phase of content analysis, there are two different approaches called inductive and deductive category developments (Baltacı 2019; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). In deductive category applications, the analysis works with previously formulated, theoretically derived categories (in the literature or

similar studies) and connects them to the text, so a deductive category is to determine exactly under what conditions a text passage can be coded with a category (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The goal of a directed approach to content analysis is to validate or extend conceptually a theoretical framework or theory (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). In inductive category applications, codes and categories cannot be explained broadly in the overview, so a limited and tentative definition criterion is formulated from the theoretical background and textual material derived from the research question (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Following this criterion, the material is studied, and categories are tentatively determined, and inference is made step by step, and then in a feedback loop, these categories are revised and eventually reduced to main categories (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

Inductive category development or traditional content analysis will be used in this thesis because inductive development provides the opportunity to create new categories and examine the data in detail. The data will be coded manually without using any software programme since the amount of data collected is not large and is of a size that can be examined manually. Based on the inductive category development, discursive frames are coded after a narrow examination of available text on the bases on the repetitions in words, sentences and paragraphs repeated in MEPs' speeches. (Baltacı 2019; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). In the relevant literature, discursive frames are accepted as interpretative schemes that emerge from speeches (Snow & Benf, 1992, as cited in Steinberg, 1998). What is understood from this interpretive scheme is that actors express their view about the outside world by selectively focusing on a particular event or topic (Snow & Benf, 1992, as cited in Steinberg, 1998). In other words, people who develop discursive frames to understand and make sense of certain facts and events for a certain purpose. In this research, what is meant by the discursive framework will be the expressions and ideas that MEPs voice out throughout the migration crisis to understand and make sense of the crisis. Moreover, the reasons why MEPs use these particular frames will be analyzed and it will be shown how and why discursive frames are formed.

In the coding phase of the content, the discursive frames adopted in MEPs' speeches will be analyzed. The number of discursive frames obtained during coding may be

very large and this makes analysis difficult to produce results. For this reason, categorizing is done, and similar or different discursive frames are included in the categories and the number of categories is reduced as much as possible (Baltacı 2019; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Frames containing similar discourses will be collected under subcategories, and similar subcategories will be collected under main categories (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Each main and sub-category and main is named using content-characteristic words (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The reasons behind the creation categories are to make understanding of the results easy, to provide an opportunity to identify phenomenon, and to generate knowledge (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008, p.111). Inductive category development will also contribute to the comparison part of the research. Since predetermined categories are not used in inductive content analysis and discursive frames within the text will create categories, ongoing and changing discursive frames will emerge in the 2015 and 2022 migration crises. In this way, a category that existed in 2015 may not exist in 2022, and a category that did not emerge in 2015 may emerge in 2022. The inductive category will be used in this research because it makes this analysis available.

1.8. Thesis Outline

This research, within the scope of the analysis of discursive frames produced by the European Parliament plenary debates MEPs that took place during the first years of the 2015 and 2022 migration crises, has three analytical chapters that are Chapter 2, Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 and it also includes a conclusion chapter. In Chapter 2, the discursive frames of the 2015 migration crisis were analyzed. In the introduction of the chapter, the context of the 2015 migration crisis is given under the title “2.1.the Context of 2015 Migration Crisis”. The context includes the historical background of the migration crisis and the causes behind it. Moreover, the reasons for time limitations, the content and the number of data collected are explained. Within MEPs’ speeches of the analysis, four main categories and seven subcategories emerged. The main and sub-categories that emerged during the 2015 migration crisis were examined under the title “2.2. Analysis of the European Parliamentary Debates During the 2015 Crisis” and the reasons behind the discursive frames were revealed. The results of the analysis are presented in the “2.3 Conclusion” section.

In Chapter 3, the discursive frames produced during the 2022 migration crisis were analyzed. In the introduction of the chapter, the context of the 2022 migration crisis is given with the title “2.1.the Context of 2022 Migration Crisis”. How the crisis broke out and the reasons that triggered the crisis were explained. In addition, it was explained why the focus was on the first year of the crisis and the scope, content and number of data that emerged as a result of this time constraint. Within the scope of the analysis, four main categories and seven subcategories emerged, and the main and subcategories that emerged during the 2022 migration crisis were analyzed under the title “3.2. Analysis of the European Parliamentary Debates During the 2022 Crisis” and the reasons behind the discursive frames were revealed. The results of the analysis are discussed in the “2.3 Conclusion” section.

Chapter 4 is the final analysis section and includes the analysis of discursive frames that were brought up, used repeatedly, and changed in the EP plenary debates in the first years of the 2015 and 2022 migration crises. On the one hand, the similarities and differences in the main and sub-categories that emerged in the 2015 and 2022 migration crises, and on the other hand, the similarities and differences in the discursive frames within these categories were compared and analyzed. During this comparison chapter, the reasons behind similar and different discursive frames were revealed. In the last part of the research, “Chapter 4. Conclusion”, a brief summary of the findings obtained in the previous chapters is given and the analyses are evaluated. The resemblance between the findings obtained within the scope of the analysis and the assumptions is explained. Finally, suggestions for future research were also discussed in accordance with the results.

2. CHAPTER: 2015 MIGRATION CRISIS AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

2.1. The Context Of 2015 Migration Crisis

The background of the 2015 migration crisis could be traced back to the political upheaval in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) in 2011. The upheaval against the dictatorship that started in Tunisia in January 2011 spread throughout Libya and Egypt and then to Syria within a few months (Canli, 2021). In March, many Syrians took to the streets to protest the Bashar Assad government (Yazgan et al, 2015, p.185). These protests started in support of young people arrested for anti-government graffiti in Daraa, and then the protests increased, tension broke out between security forces and the public (UNHCR, 2023). When the events intensified, the conflicts turned into a major civil war in Syria (Yazgan et al, 2015, p.185). The outbreak of the Civil War forced millions of Syrians and families to flee their homes (UNHCR, 2023). In the first years of the Civil War, Syrians fled to neighboring countries, such as Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan, and these became the top three countries that received the highest number of Syrian refugees (Yazgan et al, 2015, p.186). In January 2013, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) stated in the report titled “2013 Syrian Refugees at a Glance” that Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Turkey and Egypt would potentially end up hosting around 1.1 million Syrian Refugees by June 2013. In addition to these neighboring countries, asylum applications of Syrians also started in Europe in 2013. Thanks to the opening of the Syria-Sweden corridor in 2013, 17,000 Syrians applied for asylum in Sweden, and during 2014-2015, applications in the Syria-Germany corridor constituted 7% of all the Syrian asylum-seeker applications in the European Union (EU) (Connor, 2016, para.20).

There were various different reasons why Syrian migration turned into a crisis in 2015. The first and the most important one was that Syrians lost their belief that the war would end (Kingsley, 2015). Russia’s presence in the region created fear that the conflicts would continue and signaled that life in Syria would not return to the stable

and conflict-free state it was before the war. (Lehne et al., 2015). Secondly, those forced migrants living in the neighboring countries did not have any legal refugee status and did not have basic rights such as the right to work, access to healthcare, and education (Kingsley, 2015). Moreover, after the monthly financial support provided by the United Nations (UN) was cut off, lives of those Syrians who had already been living without refugee protection in countries such as Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey became even more difficult (Kingsley, 2015). As a result, the search for new migration routes began and transit routes from the Western Balkans and the Aegean to the EU were discovered as safer and cheaper than the Mediterranean route such as crossing to Italy via Libya. (Kingsley, 2015). The passage from Turkey to Greece took between 20 minutes and 1 hour, depending on the route of boats, and the Mediterranean route costed between 5,000 and 6,000 USD, while the Aegean route costed between 2,000 and 3,000 USD (Sly, 2015). Under such circumstances, the Aegean Sea turned into a heavily used passageway as more people, the majority of whom were composed of Syrian forced migrants, attempted at reaching the EU borders throughout the summer of 2015.

The migration crisis emerged in the public, media and political agendas of the EU and Member States as a pressing matter with a boat incident. The boat, which was estimated to be carrying seven hundred people, capsized in the Mediterranean on the night of April 18, 2015, which constituted an important turning point in terms of shaping the EU-wide debates on the issue (Spindler, 2015). The rescue operations conducted by the Italian naval and coastguard ship called the Bruno Gregoretti, and Maltese Navy and cargo vessels, along with three helicopters in seventeen miles from the Libyan coast (BBC, 2015). In the end of rescue operation, ultimately some 50 of an estimated 700 people could be saved (Spindler, 2015). On 23 April 2015, the European Council met to discuss the accident in the Mediterranean and agreed on four priority action plans (European Council, 2015). The plans agreed by the Council were to stop smugglers, support search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean, such as tripling Triton's budget, halt "illegal migration flows" by signing return agreements with origin and transit countries and strengthen unity and solidarity within the EU with the first voluntary pilot project on resettlement (European Council, 2015, para.3). Following this summit, the former United Kingdom (UK) Prime Minister David

Cameron said, “Today’s meeting has got to be about saving lives. Of course, saving lives means rescuing these poor people, but it also means smashing the gangs and stabilizing the regions.” (Traynor, 2015, para.5). The decisions agreed by the Council and the speech of the former Prime Minister showed that the EU would continue implementing the political plans on irregular crossings, search and rescue in the Mediterranean.

Another incident occurred in the Aegean Sea on September 2015 transformed the tone of the EU migration debates. The image of two-year old toddler from Syrian, Aylan Kurdi, whose body washed up on the shores of Turkey from a boat that sank in the Aegean Sea while trying to reach Greece, caused the rise of humanitarian debates on migration crisis not only in the EU media but all over the world (Spindler, 2015). Making a statement to the Rheinische Post newspaper, Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel said, “That photo shook me and made me sad, and I am also angry at those who put desperate people on boats and leave them in the middle of the sea without a life jacket” (Anadolu Agency, 2015, para.2). After the tragic incident in September 2015, the discussions on the migration crisis shifted from policies to be implemented in order to halt irregular arrivals via the Mediterranean and Aegean to measures to be taken to prevent death toll from increasing.

While migration flows and fatal incidents in the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas were rising, the migration flows were scaling up in Western Balkan routes because of Balkan States’ statements about reducing border security and allowing forced migrant crossing. In June 2015, the Macedonian government lifted the strict measures against migrants and opened the Balkan route to the EU (Sly, 2015). When Greece, Serbia and Croatia, as well as Macedonia, reduced their controls and greatly facilitated the passage of refugees from their own lands to other Member States, migrants turned towards to the EU borders on Western Balkans (Sly, 2015). Just as migration movements in the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea resulted in shipwrecks and deaths, the same situation also occurred in the Balkans. The first migrant related human tragedy in Central Europe of the 2015 migration crisis eventuated, after the Western Balkans route warmed up as Balkan States reduced controls in June, (Spindler, 2015). In August, the bodies of 71 migrants found in a cooling truck on the Austrian-Hungarian border and Austrian police reported more than 200 migrants were found

overnight (BBC, 2015). By the end of 2015, more than 911,000 migrants had reached European shores, and approximately 3,550 people had died along the journey (UHNCR, 2015). The mobility and sudden increase in the number of arrivals at the EU borders was a situation that the EU had never experienced before, and the unprecedented migration flows ensued a crisis to the EU's management.

As a result, the migration crisis, which started in April with the fatal accident in 2015, peaked during the summer and continued throughout that year. While the number of people crossing the Aegean Sea via Turkey and arriving in Greece was 43,000 in 2014, this number increased to over 750,000 in 2015 (Kingsley, 2015). In the Mediterranean, the number of people arriving to Italy decreased from 170,000 in 2014 to approximately 144,000 in 2015, but when added together with the Aegean route, the total number of migrant arrivals, including the arrival of asylum-seekers, at the EU's shores reaches to roughly 1 million (Kingsley, 2015). At the end of 2015, Syrians were the nation with the highest number of asylum applications in 13 of the 30 EU Member States, including the EU-28, Norway and Switzerland (Connor, 2016, p.21). The first six of the 13 countries that receive the most asylum applications from Syrians are Romania, Cyprus, the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway (Connor, 2016, p.21). Syrians constituted 46% of all the refugee applications made in 2015 in Romania. Cyprus and the Netherlands were in second place with 43%. These rates were 42% in Denmark and 35% in Norway (Connor, 2016, p.21). These figures clearly indicate that in 2015, the arrival rates at the EU borders were at a level that had never been experienced by the EU before. In addition, the death of thousands of people on their risky journeys to the EU with the dream of reaching somewhere where they can start a new life c turned the 2015 migration crisis challenge for the EU to manage.

2.2. Analysis of the European Parliamentary Debates During the 2015 Crisis

The starting date of the analysis is 1 April 2015 because April is the month when the tragic accident happened in the Mediterranean. In addition, as the weather temperature improved during summer by becoming warmer, sea crossings increased, and during the first year, border crossings via the Mediterranean, the Aegean Sea and the Western Balkan routes were at their highest level and European Parliament (EP) plenary

debates became more frequent in the first year. Therefore, this chapter analyzes the first year of the crisis, covering a one-year period covering between 1 April 2015 and 1 April 2016, where the latter date marks the final date of the EP plenary debates providing relevant data for this chapter. While plenary debates were collecting from the EP database, the term “migration”, “asylum”, “refugee” and “migrant” in the debates titles were included in the analysis because the plenaries that meet the criteria focus solely and entirely on migration, refugees and asylum, and MEPs prepare their speeches specifically within the framework of the discussion. migration crisis. Ten EP plenary debates that meet these criteria from the selected one-year period.

Table 2. 1. European Parliament Party Groups and Political Positions in 2015

Party Groups	Political Positions
EPP - Group of the European People’s Party	Center-right, Christian Democracy
S&D - Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament	Center-Left, Social Democracy
ECR - European Conservatives and Reformists Group	Right-Wing, Conservatism
ALDE - Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Center, Liberal
GUE/NGL - Confederal Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left	Far- Left, Green
Greens/EFA - Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance	Greens, Regionalism
EFDD - Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy Group	Far-right, Euroscepticism
ENF - Europe of Nations and Freedom Group	Far-right, Nationalists

Source: Calossi & Cicchi, 2019

One hundred fifty-three speeches in English whom members of party groups with different ideologies shown in Table 2.1 were examined in line with the specific focus of this chapter. The speeches included in the analysis belong only to MEPs and the speeches of the European Commission (Commission) or the European Council (Council) representatives and rapporteurs attending the meetings will not be included since, due to time and space limits, this thesis only seeks to determine and analyze the types of discursive frames that are used by members of the parliament, and does not

focus on the migration related discursive frames adopted by other actors, such as the Commission and the Council.

Ten European parliamentary debates and one hundred fifty-three speeches were examined through the use of inductive content analysis method; words, phrases and sentences in content (e.g. migration crisis, migration routes, immigrants, refugees, refugee rights, asylum, asylum seeker applications) repeated by MEPs were organized. Depending on the repetition of the migration crisis related contents, one hundred fifty-three MEPs' speeches are grouped under four main categories. MEPs' speeches collected under these four main categories were divided into sub-categories to deepen and elaborate the analysis. As well as the main categories, the sub-categories were comprised of repetitions of words, phrases and sentences in MEP speeches regarding the migration crisis at the EP plenary debates. The section 2.2.1 titled "Debates toward Arrivals" introduces the first main category of the 2015 migration crisis EP plenary debates which involve the discussions on the arrivals or attempts to arrive at the EU's border. Throughout the ten plenary debates analyzed, thirty-nine MEPs' speeches referred to the arrivals, and the content of these speeches was to try to determine whether people who come or try to come to the EU borders are refugees or not. Based on fifty speeches, the content referring to arrivals is divided into three sub-categories: non-refugee-based frames, refugee-based frames and conditional refugee-based frames. The second main category is explained in section 2.2.2 which is titled "Debates on Crisis Policies" and that includes discussions about the policies that the EU and its Member States will enact and implement during the 2015 migration crisis, and asylum application systems, the EU law, regulations and the EU agreements proposed, brought to the agenda and produced by MEPs in the first year of the crisis. In one hundred and fifty-three MEP speeches, ideas about domestic crisis policies were expressed one hundred and one times, and these ideas were divided under two sub-categories. The first is policies aimed at those trying to reach the EU borders, which sought to reduce the immigration flow and also to prevent deaths in the Mediterranean and the Aegean. The second sub-category of speeches focuses on policies for the reception and management of those who have already reached the EU borders.

The third main category emerging as a result of the analysis of the relevant EP debates is dealt in sub-section 2.2.3, which is titled "Debates on the EU Stakeholders"

and that includes discussions regarding the EU stakeholders. During the debates that took place in the first year of the crisis period, MEPs made calls, warned and asked questions to the EU institutions like European Council (Council), European Commission (Commission) to manage the process, introduce new pieces of law and enforce existing sets of law. One hundred and twenty-two MEP speeches conducted related on Member States, the Commission, the Council, the EU Agencies such as Frontex, Europol, and Eurojust and society, which are the sub-categories under the third main category, are included in the analysis. The fourth and last main category of the 2015 migration crisis EP debates is analyzed under sub-section 2.2.4, titled “Debates on Relevant International Stakeholders”. Under this main category, speeches regarding the EU’s position in the international arena, diplomacy and foreign relations during the crisis period were analyzed. In the first year of the 2015 migration crisis, debates on the relevant international stakeholders were expressed in thirty-four speeches in the EP discussions. MEPs brought up how relations with origin and transit countries, and how relations with intergovernmental organizations (IGO) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) should be and what policies should be implemented.

2.2.1. Debates towards Arrivals

During the first-year of 2015 migration crisis continuing from April 2015 to April 2016, people who arrived and attempted to arrive at the EU borders were discussed in the ten EP plenary debates. MEPs were putting forward perspectives about from where these groups came to the EU borders, their nationality and the reasons why they tried to come to the EU. Opinions about the arriving groups were expressed in fifty speeches during the ten plenary debates and these are included in the analysis conducted in this chapter. MEPs explained and discussed the push factors for arrivals together with those who actually arrived at the EU borders, who were caught at the borders and lost their lives in their attempts to reach the EU. Speeches of MEPs are categorized into three sub-categories: refugee-based frame, non-refugee-based frame and conditional refugee-based frame. The refugee-based frame explains the arrivals as refugees escaping from war, and they need protection under international refugee laws. This frame, which is the most recurring with twenty-six times repeated in MEPs’ speeches, will be explained first. The non-refugee-based frame is the second most repeated

theme expressed twelve times by MEPs. Speeches making such a reference to those arriving were based on the assumption that people who arrived at the EU borders during the migration crisis were economic migrants who were not escaping war, and they came to the EU to benefit from the welfare systems, so they did not qualify for a refugee status. Finally, the third most frequently repeated frame emerged in the EP plenaries is conditional refugee frame which appeared eleven times. MEPs explained that thousands of people arriving at the EU borders were fleeing from war, conflict, but also, they were running away from unemployment. Furthermore, under this category, there were debates where different MEPs argued in favor of differentiating between refugees who were fleeing war and economic migrants who were coming to the EU. Then, those who deserved refugee status should be allowed to stay in the EU, and those who were economically motivated should be sent home.

The most frequent frame in MEPs' speeches during the 2015 migration crisis about people coming or attempting to come to the EU borders was the refugee-based one. Refugee-based frames were mentioned in twenty-six of the fifty speeches addressed by MEPs about the arrivals. The perspective of the frames illuminates that people came to the EU to escape from war and for a better life, and that they made this journey at the expense of their lives, and that they arrived in the EU by risking their lives, therefore people's needs should be supplied, and their asylum applications should be received. Sophia in 't Veld (2015) from ALDE provides the most convenient example of refugee-based frame by underling "What we are talking about here today is rescuing people who are drowning in the Mediterranean because they are fleeing war and conflict, and exactly the people that you are talking about" (para.15).

People who came to the EU borders to escape from war are accepted as refugees and their procedures must be carried out in accordance with the law. Claude Moraes (2016) from S&D drew attention to the Geneva Convention by saying "then just understand that in the coming weeks, minors will be coming from Syria as genuine asylum-seekers. There is no ambiguity to their status under the Geneva Convention, whether the European Union exists or not" (para 103). Centre-Left, and Far-Left parliamentary groups with Liberal, Socialist and Green ideologies are more likely to use refugee-based frames. The Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE), The Greens - European Free Alliance Group (Greens/EFA), and the

European United Left/Nordic Green Left Group (GUE/NGL) stated merely refugee-based frames throughout the ten EP plenary debates. Moreover, the EP political groups supporting this frame referred to the idea of being the EU and European means respecting human rights and being there for asylums who are needy. During the plenary, Ska Keller (2016) from Green/EFA may be the clearest speech how refugee-based frames are grounded the values of European and the EU:

On Monday it was national egoism that won out. European solidarity and the refugees themselves were on the losing side – people who are fleeing from war and terrorism who are currently being turned away at our borders. This is unacceptable if we want to uphold the Europe of freedom, solidarity and human rights. (para. 20)

In the first year of the 2015 migration crisis, non-refugee-based frames were repeated twelve times at the EP plenary debates towards the arrivals or people attempting to arrive at the EU borders. According to some of MEPs, those who came to the EU during the migration crisis were not those escaping from war, but economic migrants who came to find work and live a wealthier life, therefore, it is not right to accept them with refugee status. The speech of Jussi Halla-aho (2015) from ECR, one of the Conservative groups in the EP gave a good example of a non-refugee frame with “These are mostly young men from Iraq and Somalia and sub-Saharan Africa. They are coming because they were told by smugglers that they will get a free apartment, a well-paid job and a good life in Europe” (para.17). Speeches of MEPs grounded the economic crises of the 1970s. After 1970’s economic crises hit the EU, economic migrants and those who came with family reunification created a financial burden for Member States and affected welfare and unemployment, therefore, attributing the economic crisis and unemployment to economic migrants which caused migrants to be unwelcome in the EU (Huysmans, 2000). This idea, which initially emerged during the 1970s, re-appeared during the 2015 migration crisis. Not only economic-based but also the groups arriving during 2015 migration crisis brought to the EU by jihadists and even ISIS under non-refugee-based frame. Janice Atkinson (2015) from the Europe of Nations and Freedom Group (ENF) describes migrants as radical Islamists and states that they are a threat to domestic security:

Every day we receive reports about violent and aggressive migrants, some with jihadist backgrounds, including the Paris attackers. In Calais British truck drivers are

threatened and attacked on a daily basis whilst trying to do their job. We hear appalling stories of British lorry drivers who are threatened with weapons including knives, baseball bats and even guns. Their safety and lives are at risk. Hundreds of migrants arriving in Norway have been found with jihadi pictures on their cameras. (para .38)

Especially since the end of the Cold War, with the September 11 terrorist attacks, there were discussions that migrants would be a danger to the EU without internal borders and migrants were associated with terrorism, drugs and crime (Bigo 1994, Huysmans 2000). The security threat approach to immigrants was used in non-refugee-based frames during parliamentary speeches. Additionally, the frame has also been exploited by the ideologically more Conservative and also Far-Right Parliamentary groups, such as EFDD, EFN and ECR. In the first-year of 2015 migration crisis, EFDD and the ENF expressed only non-refugee-based frames towards the arrivals.

In the EP debates on the 2015 migration crisis, MEPs' speeches possess refugee-based and non-refugee-based frames, as well as conditional refugee frame which is the alternative theme to classify arrivals to the EU borders during the first year of migration crisis. The basis of conditional refugee frames is selection, and this selection is to distinguish whether people coming to the borders are escaping from war or coming for economic reasons. Conditional refugee frame was repeated eleven times in one-hundred fifty-three speeches. MEPs explained that in case of innocent people escaping from war, the needs of refugees should be met, but at the same time, EU borders should not be open to everyone in an uncontrolled manner. Another common point of the discussions was that the processes of people who could not obtain refugee status or were sent back after arriving in the EU should be in line with human rights and refugee rights and be as fast as possible. Roberta Metsola (2016) from The European People's Party Group (PPE) expressed her opinions on the return of those who did not have refugee status as "We must give those seeking protection the chance to ask for it, but if you are found to be unsuitable for protection you must be returned safely and quickly" (para 195). Behind conditional refugee frames grounded the idea that those who arrive should not be defined automatically as either purely refugees or purely economic migrants. If the EU applies this approach, they will support those who need help, but also precautions against the arrivals during migration crisis will be fulfilled for safety of EU citizens. Conditional refugee frames are adopted mostly by

parliamentary groups with central-right and Center-Left political positions that support moderate policies. For example, EPP (Center-Right position) and S&D (Center-Left position) adopted the frame of conditional refugees.

As a result, during the ten EP plenary debates held in the first year of the 2015 migration crisis, refugee-based, non-refugee-based and conditional refugee frames were used in MEP speeches regarding those who arrived at or attempted to reach the EU borders in the first year. The distribution of these frames among different MEPs depended on the ideologies and positions of the EP Groups to which these MEPs belonged. Far-Right and Conservative groups repeated the non-refugee-based frame the most, and the conditional refugee frame second because they tend to put forward more anti-migration position when compared with the other groups. More Liberal and Center political groups used refugee-based and conditional refugee-based frames since they avoid supporting one idea but promote moderate ideas. Finally, Far-Left and Green ideology groups used only refugee-based frames in their speeches since these groups generally advocate pro-migration ideas.

2.2.2. Debates on Crisis Policies

The pressing issues in the 2015 migration crisis's EP plenary debates between April 2015 and April 2016 involved domestic policies that were developed during that time period since unprecedented numbers of people were arriving or trying to arrive the EU borders. MEPs expressed and discussed their opinions on the management of the crisis, such as how to control migration, how to receive asylum applications in Member States, and the implementation of the Schengen System and Dublin Regulations. In one hundred fifty-three MEP speeches examined as part of this thesis, issues related to domestic policies and regulations were repeated a total of one hundred and one times. During the debates of crisis-related domestic policies, answers of two question urged upon in the EP plenaries which first one is how the EU should manage the flow of migration coming from the Mediterranean, Aegean Sea and Western Balkan routes and the second one is how the management of those who have already arrived at the EU borders should be, including border controls, asylum applications, resettlement, relocation and humanitarian visa.

The 2015 migration crisis came to the fore due to an unexpected rise in the number of people reaching the EU borders and also significant numbers of lives that were lost during the highly dangerous migration journeys in the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea. MEPs discussed ideas on how to stop and defuse the flow of migrant arrivals on these roads. Ideas discussed for managing migration routes at the EP general assembly were to launch search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea, to prevent people from boarding boats, and to create legal migration routes to prevent dangerous journeys. Migration route ideas were brought to the agenda thirty-five times in total, and among these speeches, attention was drawn to the creation of legal routes ten times, to the prevention of boarding of boats twelve times, and to search and rescue operations thirteen times.

In the first year of the 2015 migration crisis, the most popular policy regarding migration routes was the EU's creation of legal migration routes for refugees, because the necessary way to reduce the migration flow was to open legal migration routes, implement humanitarian visas and resettlement, rather than search and rescue operations in the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean. Policies to create legal migration routes have been brought to the agenda by groups that make refugee-based frames, because the aim of these groups is not to stop immigrants and prevent them from accessing the EU, on the contrary, to prevent deaths and manage migration by reducing congestion at the borders. Martina Anderson's (GUE/NGL) speech (2015) gave an excellent example by saying "We do not need the 'search and destroy' operation that is being advocated. We need EU governments to increase the number of resettlement places, humanitarian admissions and visas for people in need of international protection" (para. 44).

The second most repeated migration routes policy involves the idea that the search and rescue operations and regular migration routes will only attract more migrants to the Union, and therefore, the main goal is to prevent people from landing on boats and keep them at where they already are and away from the EU borders. The idea emphasizes that the main purpose of the EU is to work to ensure that migrants stay in the countries they are in. Since the main purpose of this policy is to prevent migration rather than regulate, it was expressed by those MEPs who resorted to non-refugee-based frames, because they argue that the people who were arriving to the EU were

not refugees escaping from war but instead economic migrants, therefore these MEPs favored policies that emphasized stopping migration by keeping migrants where they were. Jussi Halla-aho from ECR (2015), exemplified by giving “That we stop thinking about ways to bring people to Europe and start thinking about how to help as many people as possible where they are” (para. 69).

The third migration routes policy advocates that in order to prevent deaths in the Mediterranean, Aegean Sea and Western Balkans, it is necessary to fight against smugglers and criminals, prevent human traffic and initiate search and rescue efforts. These policies were pointed out by parliamentary groups that mostly use conditional refugee and non-refugee-based frames, because the aim of these two frames is to prevent migration or to accept a minimum number of refugees by selecting among them. Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (2015), a member of the PPE Group and also a delegate of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE), explains the importance of search and rescue operations:

The search and rescue operation in the central Mediterranean is proving effective thanks to coordination between the Italian operation Mare Sicuro, Eunavfor Med, Triton and the NGOs. We also found that military means and EU cooperation in humanitarian operations are essential to save lives and to combat smugglers. (para. 12)

During the 2015 migration crisis, the most repeated expressions in the discussions on how to manage people who have already arrived at the EU borders was for the effective implementation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) and the Schengen System, and MEPs illustrated the EU policies in sixty-six times at the EP plenaries. Conducting border checks, uploading the fingerprints of those who apply for asylum to the EU, and participation of all Member States in binding quotas and resettlement were the policies required for the effective implementation of CEAS. Jean Lambert (2015) from Greens/EFA announced a call as “We can use the Common European Asylum System that we have much better. So can we please use the system that we have got, make it more humanitarian and actually stop letting people die at sea” (para.63).

Those who support the common refugee system and call for its implementation have two different underlying reasons. The first group of these, as in MEP speech above, is

the fact that people coming to the borders of the Dublin Regulation within the CEAS will be treated in accordance with refugee rights and EU law, and because of this idea, groups that make refugee-based frames and invite refugees to the EU through legal means support because under the CEAS, refugees Their rights will be protected and they will be treated in accordance with the law. On the other hand, there are those who support the CEAS from a security-based perspective. Refugees will be kept under control through border controls and fingerprinting, and those who do not have refugee status can be easily identified within the Schengen zone. For this reason, parliamentary groups that use non-refugee-based or conditional refugee frames and aim to reduce or stop migration still emphasize the implementation of CEAS. The introduction of internal security controls due to the non-implementation of CEAS in the 2015 migration crisis is explained as follows in Anna Maria Corazza Bildt's (PPE) speech (2016) was one of the best examples how MEPs correlated fingerprints and conditional refugee frames as "That is why it is so important to take fingerprints and to differentiate between those who have the right to international protection and economic migrants" (para. 170).

There were also the criticisms of CEAS in the discussions on the domestic policies that the EU would implement during the migration crisis. Twenty MEPs' speeches viewed existing EU laws and systems as inadequate and dysfunctional, and they proposed new policies. Groups supporting refugee-based frames and refugee admissions argued that the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) should be activated because the TPD was a system created specifically for the wave of migration after the Kosovo Crisis in 2001, prepared for unexpected sudden and large numbers of migration flows. The EU's need in 2015 was to re-introduce the TPD. Martina Anderson (2015) from GUE/NGL which was one of the Far-Left political groups explained that special policies should be developed as "We must activate the Temporary Protection Directive, enhance the Syria Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme, and suspend the Dublin Regulation, which forces refugees and asylum seekers to register in the country they land in" (para.30). In addition to activating the TPD, a proposed refugee admission system was also brought up in the EP discussions. The Australian System was a system that enabled the acceptance of skilled workers and collected points according to the immigrants' age, gender, language status and

abilities, and whether they were accepted or not as a result of the score (Thompson, 2020). This system was supported by groups that defined immigrants as economic immigrants and at the same time they advocated that each Member State should have its own system. Nigel Farage (2015) from EFDD which was one of the Far-Right and Eurosceptic political group praises the Australian system:

What we want in Britain is an Australian-style points system so that we can choose who comes to live, work and settle in our countries. I would bet that, if such a proposal were put to all of your electors in your Member States, they too would opt for that policy. (para. 28)

In the first year of the 2015 migration crisis, the policies to be implemented during the crisis period were expressed one hundred and one times in ten EP general assembly meetings that were held on the issue of migration. ALDE, Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL groups tended to support policies to manage migration flows because they considered the incoming groups as refugees and supported their admission to the EU and the EU's creation of legal pathways. Additionally, while these groups supported the implementation of the CEAS because it is based on refugee rights and law, they also suggested activating the TPD. On the other hand, PPE, S&D, ECR and EFDD groups tended to support policies aimed at stopping or reducing migration flows, as they supported the CEAS mainly for the provision of border controls and the control of refugee fingerprints. In addition, these groups did not accept the arriving groups as refugees, or they predicted that refugees would be selected among the arrivals in accordance with the conditional refugee frame. Finally, these groups also tended to support ECR and EFDD Australia points system because they were the ones most likely to repeat non-refugee-based frames.

2.2.3. Debates on the Relevant EU Stakeholders

During the ten EP plenaries of the 2015 migration crisis, held from April 2015 to April 2016, debates about the groups that reached or attempted to reach the EU borders in the first year of the crisis, and domestic policy debates necessary for the management of the crisis, as well as discussions about EU stakeholders, became a current issue. In a total of one hundred and twenty-two speeches, MEPs discussed the EU stakeholders. They were Member States, the Council of the European Union (Council), the European

Commission (Commission), the European Union Agencies (Agencies) and the EU public. The reason why these stakeholders were included in the EP discussions was that the Union needed to work together to produce and implement policies during the crisis. In the Lisbon Treaty signed in 2007, in accordance with the co-decision procedure, the Commission, the Council and the Parliament were required to work together to make a law. For this reason, the Commission and the Council are the essential stakeholders on policy issues related to migration management during crisis periods. The Commission and the Council were the subject of debates a total of twenty-three times. In addition, Member States and the EU Agencies were other significant stakeholders in the execution and implementation of policies in the EU and were mentioned in speeches a total of seventy-nine times. Finally, MEP made twenty calls to the European Union as Europe and society in twenty times to manage the migration crisis.

Member States were the most popular stakeholders during ten EP plenary debates, and they were referred to sixty-seven times in these debates during the time period examined as part of this thesis. MEPs called on Member States twenty-four times for unity, trust, burden sharing and responsibility. MEPs emphasized that each Member State should share burdens equally and take responsibility to overcome the crisis and manage migration, and that they should trust each other and manage the crisis in solidarity. Jeppe Kofod's speech from S&D which was the Social Democrat political groups summarized this idea as:

This situation is a direct result of the lack of solidarity and of a common European approach to the refugee crisis. It is due to the lack of efficient control of our European external borders and the fact that too many Member States are failing to take their share of refugees. While some count their asylum applications in tens of thousands, others are counting them only in hundreds or even less. (para 164).

Those who call on Member States for unity and solidarity in their parliamentary speeches are also parliamentary groups that call for EU policies and systems, such as the CEAS, Dublin Regulations and Schengen System, to be adhered to and implemented, because according to them, the situation that increases the crisis is a lack

of trust and solidarity between Member States. At the same time, pro-European¹ parliamentary groups called for greater unity and solidarity because, in their opinion, trust and solidarity are the solution to the migration crisis and for this, Member States must take equal responsibility and share the burden. Contrary to the speeches calling Member States for solidarity and paying attention to trust among the members, MEPs made nine speeches at the EP plenaries, stating that the EU common migration and asylum policies were dictated to Member States, and this dictation created the pressure over them. EFDD and ECR which are the Far-Right political groups in the EU suggested introducing the Australian system as opposed to common migration and asylum policies since they support that common policies were failed and useless during the crisis. In addition to ideologies, these groups were supporting the importance of the sovereignty of Member States should be respected more than the EU integration. For example, EFDD already had a pro-Brexit² position during the first-year of 2015 migration crisis, and ECR had a soft-Eurosceptic³ political position. Timothy Kirkhope (2016), on behalf of ECR Group, explained the details of this position as “Let us be truthful with each other: some Member States feel as though the system was forced on them, and migrants only want to go to certain Member States. It is not a recipe for a long-term successful system” (para. 84).

In the first year of the crisis, after the German and Swedish governments announced that they would accept more Syrian refugees, EFDD members gave a total of seven parliamentary speeches, accusing the two Member States for attracting further migration and triggering the political crisis within the EU. Their Eurosceptic and anti-migration ideas were the main factors in this reaction. At the EP meeting Diane James (2016) on behalf of EFDD Group explains this criticism and reason behind it clearly

¹ Pro-Europeanism refers to supporting the full integration of the EU, and Pro-Europeans want to strengthen the EU institutions, especially the Commission and the EP, as central authorities and reduce the power of national governments (Arató and Kaniok, 2009: 40).

² Brexit is used as an abbreviation for “British Exit” and covers the process of the United Kingdom (UK) leaving the EU. Since the Brexit Referendum date was 23 June 2016, Brexit discussions were continuing during the migration crisis. EFDD group was supporting the idea that the UK should leave the EU in both the EP and the UK parliament (Robins & Mueller, 2021).

³ Soft Eurosceptic parties are those that are not entirely opposed to the European Union but support certain aspects of the European project and criticize others. These parties may have different ideologies, different economic and cultural positions. Each soft Eurosceptic party can support and criticize different EU policies (Arató & Kaniok, 2009: 43).

as:

Dictated quotas, unreasonable deadlines and relaxed processing systems to resolve the resettlement logjam have only exacerbated the problems caused by Mrs. Merkel's ill-judged siren call, and the UK media and press have covered the instances of German and Swedish communities overwhelmed by resettled migrants, with stories of arson, street violence and increasing crime levels. (para.18)

While messages of unity and solidarity were given to Member States in the discussions in the first year of the 2015 migration crisis, there were also criticisms against them. In addition to EFDD's criticism of Germany and Sweden, MEPs criticized Member States for violating human rights at the borders and violating the rights of refugees in nineteen times. These criticisms arose mostly from the Verst/ALE and GUE/NGL groups, because these groups are prone to support refugees and support the EU's activation of the TPD in migration policy debates. Ska Keller (2016) from Greens/EFA talked about violations of refugee rights and border closures at the borders of Greece as:

I hope that you are also being as clear to Heads of State and Government who have been proposing – again to Greece – that Greece should close its borders, because you cannot close the border unless you violate the Geneva Convention and let people drown. (para.55)

In the ten debates in the first year of the 2015 migration crisis, there was a clear distinction between the Commission and the Council. In a total of ten speeches that included the Commission, MEPs congratulated and praised the Commission because these MEPs were those who supported EU policies and argued that the crisis was caused by the lack of implementation of policies. In other words, parliamentary groups that called for implementation in crisis policy discussions and explained to Member States to take responsibility tended to support the Commission more. For example, the EPP Group emphasized the implementation of CEAS and solidarity among Member States throughout the crisis. Csaba Sógor (2015) from EPP spoke highly of the Commission as "The Commission deserves credit for acknowledging the magnitude of the problem and for identifying both short and long-term solutions to address the refugee crisis" (para.100).

Contrary to the praise given to the Commission, the Council received no praise in the EP, and instead it was criticized a total of thirteen times. MEPs criticize the Council for either being inadequate in implementing existing policies or for being slow and incompetent in decision-making. S&D and EPP, groups that drew attention to the implementation of policies during the crisis, tended to criticize the Council for this reason. Claude Moraes (2016) from S&D expressed the Council's reaction by speaking "The problem is the Council; The problem is the incoherent, often aggressive, reaction to established plans on a number of fields" (para. 22). In addition to the Council's inadequacies in implementation, another criticism made by MEPs was that the Council turned a blind eye to human rights violations. These reactions came mostly from Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL groups, because these groups, on the one hand, accepted those who came during the 2015 crisis as refugees, and on the other hand, emphasized that they must be treated in accordance with the law and human rights, and criticize stakeholders who did not do this. In the first migration crisis, Malin Björk (2015) from GUE/NGL drew attention of the Council to the problems at the EU borders as "That is why the Council conclusions are nothing less than shameful because they do not focus on saving lives and opening this continent to people seeking refuge. Instead, they focus on keeping people away" (para.17).

During the 2015 migration crisis, Frontex, Europol, Eurojust, the European Asylum Support Office made a total of twelve speeches at the EP general assembly meetings. MEPs, who were from the parliamentary groups supporting unity and solidarity, border controls and the implementation of CEAS, emphasized that the Agencies would support Member States for border enforcement and support the EU in the management of the crisis. Additionally, during the 2015 migration crisis, Agencies were supported by the political groups which referred to increase border controls to stop migration. Timothy Kirkhope (2015) from ECR pointed out importance of the EU Agencies for migration crisis as speaking "We do agree on the important role of Frontex, EASO, and Eurodac, and the need for increased funding in tackling the issue at source, and we look forward to working with the Commission on this important issue" (para. 13).

Finally, there are a total of twenty speeches on the EU and society stakeholders that came to the fore in the 2015 migration crisis discussions. These speeches emphasized that the Union should act together during the crisis, and at the same time, it was argued

that this should be done in line with European unity and solidarity because the party groups advocating this idea throughout all ten debates advocated that the existing policies for crisis management should be implemented and that this should be carried out by all EU stakeholders, and also these groups support integration as pro-European. Afzal Khan (2015) from S&D emphasizes European security and unity in his speech as:

For the security of our citizens, as well as incoming refugees, the proper management and control of our external borders is paramount. The burden of this crisis must be shared. Europe must stand together in solidarity and unity committed to its values. (para. 36)

Contrary to the speeches about the moral values and solidarity of the EU, there were also criticisms directed against the EU and its institutions. These criticisms included human rights violations in migration and asylum policies and practices. Same as solidarity supporters, groups that point out the inadequacy of crisis policies and violations in practice during the meetings, also criticize the EU's behavior during the crisis. Martina Anderson (2016) from GUE/NGL expressed such criticism as:

The institutions of the EU have displayed nothing but continuous inhumanity by maintaining the 'fortress Europe' approach to this crisis. After fleeing wars, battling the winter elements and making crossings via land or sea, refugees are faced with enforced detention. (para.53)

In the first year of the 2015 migration crisis, MEPs drew attention to the EU stakeholders in their one hundred and ten parliamentary speeches. EPP, S&D, and ALDE groups tended to call on Member States for unity and solidarity, burden sharing and responsibility, to congratulate the Commission for the regulations it had initiated, to criticize the Council for its shortcomings in implementation, to emphasize the importance of the EU Agencies in crisis management and to give a message of unity and solidarity for the Union, because these groups support a message of unity and solidarity to the EU in managing the crisis. They supported the idea that migration and refugee policies should be implemented, and the crisis policies would be successful when implemented by all stakeholders. For this reason, according to these party groups, every stakeholder had to work in unity and solidarity, take responsibility and

trust each other. Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL groups, on the other hand, thought that the EU policies were not sufficient for crisis management and that new policies should be initiated and that refugees would be treated in accordance with international refugee law such as 1951 Geneva Convention and Dublin Regulations. For this reason, in debates with stakeholders, they criticized Member States and the Council for human rights violations and emphasized that the EU institutions did not fulfill their responsibilities during the crisis. EFDD and ECR, other party groups that criticized the Commission and the Council and the entire Union, likewise argued that the EU policies were insufficient to manage the migration crisis, but their starting points were not the same as Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL. EFDD and ECR advocated that migration flows should be prevented and stopped, and Member States should manage the migration crisis independently and away from the EU pressure

In conclusion, in the first year of the 2015 migration crisis, the stance of EU party groups towards migration policies and EU integration are factors that affect their speeches on the Commission, the Council, Member States, EU Agencies and the EU Stakeholders in general. If, for instance, party groups, such as EPP and S&D, support the EU common migration and asylum policies and regarded them as adequate policy responses for managing the migration crisis, they called on Member States and the EU Agencies to effectively implement the common migration and refugee policies and congratulated the Commission for effective plans. Party groups such as Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL, which see the EU common policies as inadequate and support immigrant-friendly policies such as the TPD, criticized the Council and the Commission for their shortcomings in decision-making. Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL party groups also called on Member States and the EU Agencies to pay attention to the Dublin Regulations and the Geneva Convention, as they were the groups that drew attention to violations of the CEAS. Regarding the other factor, the positions on the EU integration, the Eurosceptic party groups EFDD and ECR found the EU policies ineffective during the migration crisis, while at the same time they brought to the political agenda the criticism that common policies put pressure on Member States. Finally, on the one hand, party groups such as ECR and GUE/NGL, who did not appreciate the migration crisis policies, emphasized that the EU is unsuccessful and inadequate in this process, on the other hand, party groups such as EPP and S&D

invited the EU to act in solidarity and unity because they supported the existing EU policies as sufficient.

2.2.4. Debates on Relevant International Stakeholders

In the ten general assembly discussions held in the EP in the first year of the 2015 migration crisis, debates on arriving groups, debates on crisis policies and debates on the EU stakeholders were explained. As the last main topic to be analyzed, debates on relevant international stakeholders were expressed thirty-four times by MEPs speeches. Non-EU countries, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are included in the main category of relevant international stakeholders and identified discussions on how the EU should engage and conduct diplomacy with third countries and non-state actors during the crisis. Discussions regarding third countries appeared in the EP debates for a total of twenty-one times. In these speeches, the idea was that the EU should support the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region in the long term in order to stabilize the origin and transit countries of the migration crisis, to support them financially. EPP and ECR which were Cent-Right and Nationalist groups tended to support partnerships with third countries, which they hoped would help reduce and prevent migration flows. Davor Ivo Stier (2015) from EPP explains what the EU needed to introduce as a long-term political approach in order to reduce migration flows from the MENA region as “This is exactly why we need to refocus our external and development policies on combating corruption, fostering the rule of law and good governance, promoting peace and security, and confronting, where necessary, corrupt and oppressive regimes” (para. 95).

Contrary to the talks about providing financial support and establishing partnerships with third countries, criticism also emerged in the Parliament. These criticisms mostly referred to the fact that the origin and transit countries did not provide humanitarian conditions such as food, water and shelter for immigrants and that they were not treated under refugee status. Those who criticized relations with third countries were announced by GUE/NGL and Greens/EFA groups that specifically focused on human rights. Ska Keller (2015) from Greens/EFA explained the concerns about the EU-Turkey agreement as:

The Minister has said that non-refoulement is a key principle of European policy, and I agree. I hope that was your statement in response to the policy proposal that Greece should return refugees back to Turkey, where they cannot find refugee protection and would even possibly be returned to Syria. (para. 55)

In addition to relations with third countries, relations with non-state actors, namely IGOs and NGOs, were the subject of discussions in the EP thirteen times during the migration crisis. In all thirteen speeches, non-state actors and partnerships such as the United Nations (UN), the World Food Program (WFP), and the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) were supported by MEPs. But there were two different reasons, the first was that non-state actors were working internationally to manage the crisis and were actually supporting the origin and transit countries. There were groups that used this justification mostly to support partnerships with third countries and try to prevent migration. EPP's Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (2015) emphasizes that supporting international organizations is important for regional development and for the region to receive the necessary support as:

We need to give more funding to international organizations like UNHCR and the World Food Programme, and increase regional support programs. It is not enough to pledge money: funding has to be disbursed fast and through a simple procedure, and humanitarian support on the spot is not enough. (para. 12)

Another reason why relations with non-state actors were supported by MEP was that the actors treated refugees in accordance with international law. MEP's who considered that the third countries like Libya, Syria and Turkey were not capable of providing humanitarian needs of forced migrants underline the assisting the UN financially to supply humanitarian aid. Guy Verhofstadt (2015) from ALDE Group made the following suggestion as:

Organize it and help the United Nations to organize it, and I am pretty sure that if they receive not USD 7 a month but USD 78 a month for a family, they can organize themselves in an appropriate way. (para. 7)

As a result, in the first year of the 2015 migration crisis, EP discussions brought relations with third countries and non-state actors to its agenda. The analysis under this main heading was formed according to the approaches of the AP party groups, as in

the previous main categories. They welcomed agreements and financial support with third countries, such as PPE and ECR, because they support stopping migration and keeping people where they currently live. Additionally, these groups tend to accept support for non-state actors working with refugees in countries of origin and transit. On the other hand, ALDE, Greens/EFA, GUE/NGL groups tend to question partnerships with third countries more because they are reactive to compliance with the rights of refugees and human rights violations. Moreover, these groups view relations with non-state actors such as the UNHCR and the WFP positively because they believe that their work in countries of origin and transit is in line with international law and respects the rights of refugees.

2.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, ten EP plenary meetings and fifty-three MEP speeches were analyzed from April 2015 to April 2016 that took place during the first year of the 2015 migration crisis. Based on the counting of repetitions of specific discursive frames in the speeches given by MEPs from different party groups, four main categories were identified. These four main categories involve (1) debates on arrivals; (2) debates on crisis policies; (3) debates on the relevant EU stakeholders; and (4) debates on relevant international stakeholders. The first main category, which involves debates on arrivals, was about the specific labels used for identifying those who attempted to cross the EU borders and who arrived at the EU borders during the 2015 migration crisis (e.g., refugee, asylum seeker, economic migrant) and was mentioned a total of fifty times in speeches. In the first year of the migration crisis, MEPs held debates about where arrivals came from and the reasons that motivated these arrivals.

Three subcategories were identified on the basis of the frequency of the use of repeated discursive frames in these discussions. These sub-categories are defined as refugee-based, non-refugee-based and conditional refugee frames. Refugee-based frames relied on the assumption that the incoming groups were fleeing from war. In non-refugee-based frame those arriving or seeking to arrive at the EU borders were viewed predominantly as economic migrants who come to benefit from Member States' welfare systems or members of Islamic extremist groups. Lastly, conditional refugee frames advocated distinguishing between refugees and economic migrants. The main

reason for this distinction was the ideologies of the party groups in the parliament. The Far-Right, and Conservative party groups mostly resorted to non-refugee-based frames, and the Far- Left, Socialists and Greens repeated the refugee-based frame. In addition, Liberal groups have tended to use refugee-based and conditional refugee-based frames.

Another main category was crisis policies and it emerged in the plenary debates one hundred and one times. The types of migration and asylum policies that the EU should implement during the crisis were discussed. This main category also involves two sub-categories which are (I) debates that focused on the policies towards migration routes and (II) debates about the policies towards forced migrants who already arrived at the EU borders. In the first theme, the migration route policies contained initiating the search and rescue operations to stop human traffic, preventing smuggling in the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea, and preventing people from dangerous journeys with boarding boats by financially supporting countries of origin and transit. These migration routes regulations were preferred by Center-Right and Conservative political groups such as EFDD, ECR, and EFN, who wanted to reduce and stop the migration flow to the EU. On the contrary, establishing legal migration routes and managing the migration flows were mostly promoted by the Center-Left and Far-Left party groups such as GUE/NGL, and Greens/EFA, because they supported the legal asylum admissions, and they defined arrivals as refugees.

In the crisis policies' debates regarding forced migrants who have already arrived at the EU borders, and the effective implementation of the EU's common migration and asylum policies or the creation of new policies we produced by MEP's speeches. EPP, S&D, ALDE and Greens/EFA party groups argued that the EU's current policies are sufficient for this, and that the management of the migration crisis will be successful if the CEAS is implemented effectively and fully by EU stakeholders with unity and solidarity. There were two different reasons behind this support. While EPP and S&D supported the CEAS for increased border controls and controlled admission of arrivals to the EU, ALDE and Greens/EFA advocated the CEAS for arrivals to be treated in accordance with the Geneva Convention and Dublin Regulations. The reason why EU migration and asylum policies were criticized is that these policies were not seen to be contributing to the solution of the crisis. EFDD group proposed the Australian Points

System, which is the system that involves creating pathways for attracting the arrival of skilled migrants into labor market, to replace the CEAS because EFDD group is known for supporting Eurosceptic ideas. GUE/NGL criticizes the CEAS because they argue that it is not sufficient for crisis periods and the TPD should be activated to provide more comprehensive protection for refugees. As a result, the position of party groups and the ideologies they support come to the fore on the basis of the categorization of crisis policies.

In the ten EP plenary debates that continued during the 2015 Crisis period, MEPs expressed their opinions about the EU stakeholders one hundred and twenty-two times. The analysis of this main category is based on previous crisis period discussions. Party groups supporting the implementation of CEAS invited Member States to cooperate, share the burden and take responsibility. While they speak highly of the Commission for common migration and asylum policies, they blame the Council for slowing down the legislative process and human rights violations. Moreover, they emphasized the support of the EU Agencies in the implementation of migration policies. In order to solve the crisis, the Union must act in harmony with all stakeholders. On the other hand, party groups with more Left and Green ideology, who argued that the EU migration and asylum policies were inadequate, criticized Member States for human rights violations and the commission and council for not fulfilling their supervision and implementation responsibility. Right-Wing and Eurosceptic party groups criticized Germany and Sweden by accusing them of triggering further immigration into the EU.

The last main category, the debates on relevant international stakeholders, appeared a total of thirty-four times in the first year of the crisis. Within the scope of these debates, relations with third countries and non-state actors were addressed. Party groups aiming to prevent or at least reduce the flow of refugees be in sight to financially support collaborations with origin and transit countries, and the missions of IGOs and NGOs in origin and transit countries, because thanks to these collaborations, people will continue to stay in their regions and the density at the EU borders will decrease. Yet, political groups that draw attention to human rights violations have also expressed the same reservations about agreements made with third parties. These groups support the missions of NGOs and IGOs in countries of origin and transit, as they are carried out

in accordance with international law.

As a result, in the first year of the 2015 migration crisis, the EP political groups and their ideologies were the determining factors shaping the dominant discursive frames in one hundred and fifty-three MEP speeches analyzed in this chapter that took place during April 2015- April 2016. The discursive frames analyzed in this section are in line with findings in the literature. Party groups and ideologies have formed the basis of approaches against immigration. Center-Left and Green groups supported more pro-immigration and liberal policies, and Center-Right and Far-Right groups had anti-immigration attitudes and supported restrictive policies (Servent 2014; Lopatin 2013; Hix and Noury 2007; Krotký & Kaniok, 2020). In addition, during the 2015 migration crisis, pro-refugee and liberal policies more defended restrictive and anti-immigration rhetoric in MEP speeches, which was similar to the result of the Krotký and Kaniok (2020) study.

3. CHAPTER: 2022 MIGRATION CRISIS AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

3.1. The Context of 2022 Migration Crisis

According to the UNHCR dataset, the largest migration flow after World War II (UNHCR, n.d.) started from Ukraine with the war where Russia occupied Donbas basin, which covers the much of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, on February 24, 2022, leading to large numbers of forced migration which was estimated to include around 6.3 million people (Duszczuk & Kaczmarczyk, 2022, p.165). The Russian occupation led to the migration crisis of 2022 and 2013 was a turning point on the road to Ukraine's occupation. In November 2013, former President of Ukraine Yanukovich faced great reaction from Ukrainians when he signed a similar agreement with Russia instead of signing the EU-Ukraine partnership plan, and protests against Ukraine's government, called Euromaidan, spread and reached the masses in the country (McNabb, 2016, p.149). As the clashes between Ukrainian security forces and citizens increased in Euromaidan, President Yanukovich fled to Russia, and on February 24, 2014, the interim government accused Yanukovich of mass murder in the protests and issued an arrest warrant (McNabb, 2016, p.149).

After Euromaidan, the pro-Russian government collapsed and the pro-Western government came to power (Demir, 2022, p.15). Russia, which initially had responded towards the anti-government protest and government reshuffle in Ukraine with economic sanctions, later on annexed Crimea by passing the Crimea annexation law in its parliament in March 2014 (McNabb, 2016, p.154). Since Russia's annexation posed a threat to Ukraine's territorial integrity and political stability, Ukraine needed protection and called for NATO membership (Demir, 2022, p.15). After Zelensky became president of Ukraine in 2019, he improved Ukraine- NATO relations and demanded Ukraine's NATO membership (Demir, 2022, p.15).

The new Ukrainian National Security Strategy (NSS), approved by President Zelensky

in September 2020, included, on the one hand, the increase in military power and defense capacity required for the country's EU and NATO membership, and on the other hand, the deepening of the partnership with NATO and the EU (Szeligowski, 2020). The NSS published by the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine on its website on March 24, 2021, emphasized the liberation and reintegration of Crimea and Sevastopol from occupation (Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine, n.d.). In addition to the policies of Ukraine, NATO carried out the Steadfast Defender 2021 exercise in Europe, covering May and June (NATO, 2021). In addition, the statement of support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine at the NATO summit held in Brussels on June 14 caused an increase in military activity on the border of Russia and Ukraine (NATO, 2021). By the end of 2021, Putin had deployed 100,000 Russian troops in Ukraine's border since Russian security demands were not met, including NATO's withdrawal of its troops and weapons from the Eastern Europe and prevention of Ukraine's NATO membership (Aloisi & Daniel, 2022).

On February 24, 2022, Putin authorized "special military operations" in Ukraine, and Russian forces began to conduct missile and artillery strikes that hit major Ukrainian cities, including the capital, Kiev (Aloisi & Daniel, 2022, para.22). This large-scale military occupation of Ukraine by Russia caused civilian deaths and large-scale destruction of Ukraine's infrastructure (Gerlach & Ryndzak, 2022, p. 18). Millions of Ukrainians had to leave their countries in order to ensure the safety of their lives. From the beginning of the war on 24 February 2022 to mid-April 2022, 12 million people had to leave their homes and 5.1 million emigrated from Ukraine (Gerlach & Ryndzak, 2022, p.18). The EU was one of the places to which 5.1 million people fleeing the Russian and Ukrainian War took refuge. Additionally, the arrival of unprecedented numbers of people at the EU border has become an unmanageable challenge for the Union, and the management of migration flow was discussed in the public, media and political agendas of the EU and its Member States.

On 4 March 2022, eight days after the Russian occupation to Ukraine, the Council unanimously activated the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) (European Commission, n.d.). In 2001, the TPD was created as a system particularly to address the challenges arising as a result of the migration flow in the aftermath of the Kosovo

War. The TPD aimed at providing emergency and temporary protection for large-scale of war wearies (European Commission, n.d.). In 2022, the EU extended and reactivated temporary protection for those fleeing the Russia-Ukraine War. People who got the TPD status receive a residence permit, they can have access to the following: asylum procedure; employment; housing; social benefits; medical resources and banking services (European Commission, n.d.). Furthermore, the TPD provided the right to family reunion, and the right to free movement within EU countries for 90-180 days after obtaining a residence permit, and the right to access public education for people under the age of 18 (European Commission, n.d.).

According to Eurostat's data, as of 31 August 2023, more than 4.15 million non-EU citizens who fled the Russian occupation had temporary protection status in the EU Member States, and Germany hosts the highest number of people with temporary protection status, with 1,175,695 (Eurostat, 2023). Poland follows Germany with 960,550 people and the Czech Republic is in third place with 365,085 people (Eurostat, 2023). The 2022 migration crisis, the biggest migration influx Europe has experienced since the Second World War, meant more people arrived at the EU's borders than it had ever faced before. The war on the EU border, with millions of people flocking to the borders to escape death, has turned into a difficult challenge to manage.

3.2. Analysis of the European Parliamentary Debates During the 2022 Crisis

Since the outbreak of the war between Russia and Ukraine forced displacement of millions of Ukrainians, the beginning of the analysis is 24 February 2022 which was the first date of Russian occupation. Since the most fevered phase of the war occurred in the first year and the migrant movement at the EU border was at its highest, the first one-year plenary debates in the European Parliament (the EP) was included in the analysis, therefore, 24 February 2023 conducted as the last date of the analysis. The EP plenary debates from 24 February 2022 to 24 February 2023 were collected from the EP's database. Only debates that involve the words "migration", "asylum", "refugees" and "migrants" in their title are gathered, and nine European parliamentary debates were examined in one year period. These nine EP plenaries convened specifically to discuss the themes of migration, refugees, and asylum, but two different

contents of these discussions existed, which were the EU general migration and asylum debates and the specific discussions about forced migrants from the Ukrainian-Russian War. The five EP plenary debates that took place on 8 March 2022, 24 March 2022, 5 April 2022, 5 May 2022, and 18 October 2022 were the meetings about the migration flow caused by the Ukrainian and Russian War. In addition, four plenaries that happened on 6 April 2022, 13 September 2022, 23 November 2022, and 1 February 2023 involved discussions about migration flows, refugees and asylum seekers within the scope of the entire Union.

The eighty-nine MEPs' speeches in English were analyzed within the scope of the nine EP meetings conducted. Since the aim of this research is to analyze the contents of the EP meetings during the migration crisis, and also to understand the ideas put forward by the EP during the crisis and to show the reasoning behind these ideas, only the relevant speeches of MEPs from political party group with different ideologies given in Table 3.1 are included in the analysis. Eighty-nine speeches were examined by the inductive content analysis method, and repeated words, phrases and sentences such as migration crisis, migration routes, immigrants, refugees, refugee rights, asylum, asylum seeker applications repeated by MEPs were organized. Depending on the repetition of the migration crisis related contents, eighty-nine MEPs' speeches are grouped under four main categories. In order to provide a detailed analysis of the plenary debates and reflect on the rationale behind selected MEPs' speeches clearly, the sub-categories were identified in a way similar to the classification of the main categories which included counting the repeated words, phrases and sentences of the relevant MEP speeches.

Table 3. 1. European Parliament Party Groups and Political Positions in 2022

Party Groups	Political Positions
EPP - Group of the European People's Party	Center-Right, Christian Democracy
S&D - Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament	Center-Left, Social Democracy
ECR - European Conservatives and Reformists Group	Right-Wing, Conservatism
Renew - Renew Europe Group	Center, Liberal

GUE/NGL - Confederal Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left	Far- Left, Green
Greens/EFA - Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance	Greens, Regionalism
ID - Identity and Democracy	Far-right, Nationalists

Source: Calossi & Cicchi, 2019

The first main category of the EP plenaries is composed in section 3.2.1 titled “Debates towards the Arrivals” where MEPs discussed where of those arriving and also the reasons that motivated the groups arriving or attempting to arrive at the EU borders. MEPs repeated discursive frames towards arrivals during the first year of the 2022 migration crisis forty-eight times. Four sub-categories arise by MEPs which are (1) refugee-based, (2) conditional refugee, (3) non-refugee, and (4) frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination. In the second section 3.2.2 which is titled “Debates on Crisis Policies”, the plenary debates on crisis policies conferred about how the EU should manage the migration routes, and how the EU should manage those migrants who had already crossed the EU borders. In the second category of the 2022 migration crisis, MEPs expressed the appropriate migration and asylum policies, such as the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD), the CEAS, the CARE to manage the crisis in fifty times at the plenary debates.

The third main category in the analysis from 24 February 2022 to 24 February 2023 is composed of the debates on the EU stakeholders, with the sub-categories of Member States, the European Commission (Commission), the European Council (Council), the EU Agencies (Agencies), the Union and society in section 3.2.3. titled “Debates on the EU Stakeholders”. MEPs talked about stakeholders in their speeches a total of seventy-six times because the Parliament needs these stakeholders to properly manage the migration crisis. For example, Parliament, the Commission and the Council need to work together to legislate a bill. In the first year of the 2022 migration crisis, MEPs appealed to and asked questions to the EU stakeholders to manage migration, to legislate new policies and to implement existing the EU migration and asylum regulations. Last but not least, the fourth main category analyzed in 3.2.4. section which is titled “Debates on Relevant International Stakeholders”. Third countries, non-state actors, which are intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental

organizations (NGOs), and diplomacy towards war crimes are sub-categories of the fourth main category. With forty-three repetitions in MEPs' speeches, the EU's position in the international arena, debates about diplomacy and foreign relations during the crisis period were enucleated.

3.2.1. Debates towards Arrivals

5.1 million people fled from Ukraine in the first two months of the Russia-Ukraine War which eventually led the 2022 migration crisis, where a total number of 5.7 million refugees and asylum seekers crossed the EU borders by the end of 2022 (UNHCR, n.d.). In MEPs speeches, the reasons that pushed people to reach or attempt to reach the EU borders and also their countries of origin were deliberated. The discussions included not only those who escaped from the Russia-Ukraine War and reached the EU borders, but also people who came to the EU borders via the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea. Discursive frames about the arrivals were expressed in forty-eight speeches of the nine plenary debates collected and split up based on repetition and similarities of speeches. MEPs' speeches were classified into four sub-categories: refugee-based frames, frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination, conditional refuge frames and non-refugee-based frames.

Refugee-based frames refer to the arrivals as refugees escaping from war, trying to save their lives, and this type of discourse has been mentioned thirty-one times at the EP plenaries. The second most popular sub-category was frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination which involved MEPs speeches in thirteen times that emphasized the equal treatment of all those coming under the Geneva Convention through all migration routes. Conditional refugee frames were the third most repeated sub-category, which three MEP's speeches had specific discursive frames and explain that thousands of people arriving at the EU borders come for escaping war, poverty, finding better life. Therefore, those arriving should be treated in accordance with their primary source of motivation (e.g., fleeing war vs economic motivation). Last but not least, the fourth sub-category toward arrivals was non-refugee-based frame which was mentioned once and reflected a certain conviction that people who arrived at the EU borders during the migration crisis came to find a job, and benefit from the welfare system of those Member States which were used as arrival

points.

In the eighty-five MEPs' speeches analyzed throughout the first year of the 2022 migration crisis, the refugee-based frames were the most dominant among debates toward arrivals. During the EP plenaries, most of MEPs' statements referred to people who arrived or attempted to cross to the EU borders as refugees and emphasized that these individuals were trying to save their lives by escaping from the Russian invasions. Therefore, the doors of the EU had to be kept wide open to these people who escaped from the war. At the same time, MEPs accepted that not only Ukrainian nationals should be accepted as refugees but also, non-Ukrainian nationals who have residence permit in Ukraine ought to be treated equally as refugees. Petras Auštrevičius (2022) from Renew Group draws the refugee-based framework in his speech as follows "Putin's war against Ukraine is first and foremost a war against civilians, against women, against children, against all the Ukrainian people. We need to ensure the EU presence in every single border crossing and refugee reception center" (para. 6).

Refugee-based frame grounds the idea of being European and being a Union since Russia-Ukraine War took place in the European continent and, in a geography, close to the EU, and the EU had to manage the migration crisis in Europe in order to show its influence in the region. This particular frame was raised by a diverse range of parliamentary groups, and it was raised by five party groups in the EP out of a total of eight. These groups were Group of the European People's Party (EPP); Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament (S&D); European Conservatives and Reformists Group (ECR); Renew Europe - Renew Europe group (Renew); Confederal Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL). All of these groups identified Ukrainians and third nationals with residence permit in Ukraine as refugee. Jeroen Lenaers (2022) from EPP which was the Center-Right political group summarized the situation clearly in the following way:

Two million individual stories of separation, loss and pain. Well, this is our region. This is our continent and it's our duty to step up. And Europe is stepping up, and it's heart-warming to see the warm welcome provided all over Europe. (para. 4)

In the first year of the 2022 migration crisis, conditional refugee and non-refugee-

based frames were referred a total of four times on four EP plenary debates dated 6 April 2022, 13 September 2022, 23 November 2022, and 1 February 2023. The four plenaries also touched upon the issue of migration flows in the Mediterranean Sea and the Aegean Sea routes, so conditional and non-refugee-based frames were only adopted towards arrivals from these two routes. When the conditional refugee frame was used, which was repeated three times, MEPs emphasized the importance of identifying whether people who have already arrived at EU borders or those who were trying to come are refugees or not. The speeches also included that the EU should attend to the needs of refugees escaping from war, and asylum seekers should be treated by paying respect to their human rights, in accordance with the Geneva Convention and Dublin Regulations. However, these speeches also emphasized that the EU borders should not be open to everyone in an uncontrolled manner. The speech of Assita Kanko (2022) from the European Conservatives and Reformists Group (ECR) explained exactly what conditional frame is in the following statement as:

We must be clear; we must be firm, and we must be fair. We must be strict with illegal migrants with no need for protection and fair to actual victims. Only then can we implement true solidarity with migration policy that is aligned with our sense of humanity. (para. 9)

Moreover, in the eighty-five MEPs' speeches examined throughout the first-year migration crisis, a non-refugee-based frame was found only once. MEP adopting this frame emphasized that the arrivals were not people escaping from war but were economic migrants who were crossing the EU borders in order to find a job. Charlie Weimers (2022) from ECR Group claimed how the EU should act to irregular migration and economic migrants coming from these routes as:

As illegal migration decreases in the western Med, it soars in the central Med: almost 300 000 illegal entries into the EU this year alone. As the Commissioner pointed out, right now we see economic migrants from Bangladesh, Egypt and Tunisia. The Danish asylum plan must be recognized as a serious attempt to safeguard social cohesion – our European way of life. (para. 25)

In the first-year of 2022 migration crisis, MEPs' discursive frames were defined variously by where the migrant arrivals came from. For example, the non-refugee-

based and conditional refugee frames were never used for those coming from the Ukrainian border. However, MEPs from EPP, ECR used non-refugee-based and conditional refugee frames in debates about those coming from the Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea routes in 2022. Discursive frames that involve geographical differentiation among migrants had the reasons that on the one hand, the war between Russia and Ukraine was taking place in Europe and Ukrainians were considered Europeans in MEP speeches. On the other hand, in debates on Mediterranean and Aegean Sea routes, conditional refugee and non-refugee-based frames were referred as the dominant opinion in the EU about immigration due to the ideas that irregular migration would pose a danger to the EU social cohesion (Delanty, 1997; Huysmans, 2000). In the 2022 migration debates, Center and Center-Right groups such as EPP, ECR, and Identity and Democracy (ID) party groups tended to use conditional refugee and non-refugee-based frame.

In the forty-eight speeches made towards arrivals who arrived at or attempted to reach the EU borders in the first year of the 2022 migration crisis, MEPs expressed frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination thirteen times in total. These discursive frames tended to be brought up by groups with pro-migration and Left-Wing ideologies, such as Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL. The reasons behind were that the EU positively treatment people coming from the Ukrainian border in accordance with the EU migration and asylum law and human rights such as Geneva Convention and Dublin Regulations, but human rights violations and repatriations such as pushbacks and mass refoulement systematically took place in the case of those coming via the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea. MEPs from Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL underlined that every human life has equal importance, so they brought forward that everyone who seeks a better life by escaping from violence, war and oppression should be treated equally. Regarding frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination were the second most repeated discourse, and Tineke Strik (2023) from Greens/EFA brings up the anti-discrimination stance clearly as:

The EU seems to forget that a refugee is a refugee, no matter the country of origin. And most asylum seekers in Europe, they come from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Turkey. Those refugees are pushed back at Europe's borders or face huge obstacles in asking for asylum and getting a proper reception. (para. 43)

As a result, in the nine EP plenary debates held during the first year of the 2022 migration crisis, refugee-based, non-refugee-based and conditional refugee, and frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination were used in forty-eight MEP speeches. Among these discursive frames, the refugee-based was the one used the most frequently because there was the idea that those who came escaping from the Ukrainian and Russian War were Europeans and that the war was taking place in Europe. For this reason, all EP groups tended to define those who came from the Ukrainian war as refugees. In the debates carried out on all refugees at the EU borders, those coming via the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas were subjected to conditional refugee and non-refugee-based frames, because the party groups having Conservative and Right-Wing ideologies, such as ECR and ID, adopt an anti-migration position and at the same time they consider economic migration as a danger to the social cohesion of the EU. For example, speech of Charlie Weimers (2022) from ECR mooted that “we see economic migrants from Bangladesh, Egypt and Tunisia. The Danish asylum plan must be recognized as a serious attempt to safeguard social cohesion – our European way of life” (para. 25). Another frame about the arrivals has been explained based on party groups’ ideology is anti-discrimination and was brought to the agenda mostly by Left and pro-migration party groups, such as Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL. MEPs from these party groups emphasized that everyone arriving or attempting to arrive at the EU borders should be treated equally, fairly and in accordance with the Geneva Convention and the Dublin Regulations.

3.2.2. Debates on Crisis Policies

In the nine EP discussions that took place between 24 February 2022 and 24 February 2023, the first year of the 2022 migration crisis, discussions about the policies to be implemented by the EU during the crisis period constitute the second main category of the research. 5.1 million people arrived at the EU borders in the first two months of the crisis, turning the migration flow into a difficult challenge to manage. MEPs spoke about crisis period domestic policies a total of fifty times in meetings, and crisis period policies are divided into two areas for managing migration flows. The first sub-categories of crisis policies in the 2022 migration debates carried out on migration routes which comprised search and rescue operations in Mediterranean and Aegean Sea, legal migration routes for all forced migrants and the opening of humanitarian

corridors in Ukraine's border, and MEPs have been repeated eleven times in the parliamentary debates. The second area of crisis period policy area concerns those on the management of all migrants who have passed through the EU borders. These policies, which were discussed thirty-nine times in the EP, are about meeting the humanitarian needs of refugees, activating the Temporary Protective Directive and implementing the Common European Asylum System.

There were two key reasons for why MEPs supported the need to create legal migration routes for people fleeing conflicts and coming to the EU borders, and to ensure that those fleeing the Ukrainian-Russian War could reach the EU by creating a humanitarian corridor. The first reason was that all MEPs classified forced migrants coming from Ukraine's borders as refugees, so they tended to embrace refugees from Ukraine. Urmas Paet (2022) from Renew Group clearly emphasized the need to create a humanitarian corridor between Ukraine and the EU in the following statement:

But the massacres of Putin's regime in Ukraine continue, meaning that the flow of refugees will continue. Hundreds of thousands of people are trapped in Mariupol and other cities. These people need safe humanitarian corridors, and they need them now. (para. 99)

The second reason was that if party groups promoted pro-migration ideas, refugee-based frames and frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination such as Greens and GUE/NGL, their speeches advocated the creation of legal and safe migration routes which should be created not only for those fleeing the Ukraine-Russia war, but also for everyone attempting to come to the EU borders throughout Mediterranean and Aegean Sea. Jordi Solé (2023) from Greens/EFA Group draw attention to the human rights violations at the EU borders and called for states that safe migration routes should be created for everyone as:

We need safe and legal routes for migrants. We need to guarantee the right to asylum for those who need shelter, so they are not shamefully piled up in refugee camps or illegally pushed back or drowned in the Mediterranean Sea. (para. 15)

MEPs supported the creation of legal migration routes and humanitarian corridors because, first of all, they supported the admission of those fleeing the Ukrainian and Russian War to the EU and accepted them as refugees. In this context, the humanitarian

corridor became a policy receiving the general support of MEPs for refugees arriving from Ukraine. Secondly, MEPs who put forward frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination on behalf of all migrant groups, not just Ukrainians, and those who support EU admission in line with human rights tended to advocate the creation of legal pathways.

Another line of policy that was put forward for migration routes was to prevent human traffic and smuggling in the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas throughout search and rescue operations. These policies were asserted by those MEPs who adopted the refugee-based frames to save lives in the sea by emphasizing the need to manage migration rather than putting forward a control-oriented view as a result, they underlined the need to save lives and direct migrants to legal ways and manage the migration routes in their speeches. Damian Boeselager (2023) from Greens/EFA Groups supporting pro-migration policies explained the importance of search and rescues operations as “Please set up a European search—and—rescue mission. Please ensure that we have mechanisms to embark asylum seekers and please make sure that maritime law is upheld, and NGOs are safeguarded” (para. 55).

In the migration policies repeated fifty times in the nine plenaries held in the first year of the 2022 migration crisis, the second sub-category was the migration policies implemented toward those have already arrived the EU border projected thirty-nine time. The crisis policies that were brought forward by different party groups included the following: providing the basic needs of refugees, including access to health, food, housing, and participation in the workforce, re-activating Temporary Protection Regulation (TPD), and enactment of migration and asylum pact. Activation of the TPD and initiating the CARE, along with the pressing issue of meeting the needs of people who came to the EU borders escaping from the Russian occupation was not criticized at all in the EP. Furthermore, EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL having 559 of 751 seat in the EP praised the activations (European Parliament, 2019 July 2). Jeroen Lenaers (2022) on behalf of EPP Group speaks highly of the TPD as “And the EU delivered on this TPD. And we can be proud about how millions of refugees received a warm welcome all over Europe, particularly in countries bordering Ukraine – Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Moldova” (para. 3).

Focusing on the needs of refugees escaping from the Ukrainian-Russian War during

the 2022 migration crisis, activating the TPD and approving the launch of the CARE is actually based on the idea that party groups should not define arrivals as refugees. Humanitarian corridors should be opened for those who want to come to the EU borders to save their lives, their needs should be met, and their legal protection should be provided immediately to help them start their new lives in the EU, because according to MEPs, the war is taking place in Europe and those arriving are European. This idea has shaped policies towards those coming from the Ukrainian border. Nonetheless, only MEPs from pro-migration groups such as Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL suggested that the TPD should be expanded to include all refugees in the EU, not just Ukrainians and those with permanent residence permits in Ukraine, because MEPs put forward a frame emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination tended to support equal and fair treatment for all migrants, not just those coming from the Ukrainian border. Mick Wallace (2023) from GUE/NGL which was the Far-Left political group proposed extending the TPD to all refugees as:

The EU rightly acted quickly to provide protection and reception conditions to millions of Ukrainians in a matter of months under the Temporary Protection Directive. This proves that humane treatment of non-Ukrainian asylum seekers and refugees from Syria, Afghanistan and Libya is absolutely possible. We should welcome people fleeing persecution or repression from all places and not be selective about it. (para. 59)

In migration policy discussions, in addition to the TPD and the CARE, MEPs talked about the production of a new migration and asylum pact. The policies for those coming to the EU borders from other migration routes rather than Ukraine during the 2022 migration crisis were discussed because the TPD was not expanded to cover all arrivals, in this case, the gap remained regarding the management of those coming to the EU from the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea. Common migration and asylum policies were supported by groups such as EPP, S&D, and Renew because these groups had Center political positions and yet they did support conditional frames toward arrivals, they generally tended to refer the Migration Pact⁴ for the

⁴ The New Pact on Migration and Asylum is a series of legislation and policies aimed at making the European Union's migration and asylum processes fairer, more efficient, and more sustainable. The Pact is designed as a long-term solution to control and normalize migration by providing predictability, transparency, and good circumstances for persons coming into the EU. It also aims to build a shared

Mediterranean and Aegean Sea routes. Tomas Tobé (2022) from EPP being in the Center-Right expressed the necessity of the Migration Pact as “Yes, we need a system that will provide protection to refugees and, yes, that is firm to those who are not. That is why we urgently need the Migration Pact” (para. 40).

As a result, the perspective and judgements of party groups towards the arrivals were decisive in the domestic policies of the crisis period, which were put forward fifty times in the meetings held in the first year of the 2022 migration crisis. Since MEP’s identified Ukrainians escaping from the Russian invasion as refugees, and as Europeans, an outbreak of the war was in Europe, policies that focus on and meet the needs of refugees was not controversial such as activating the TPD, the CARE. While no one criticized these policies, the supporting parties EPP, S&D, Renew, Verts/ALE, GUE/NGL constituted the majority of the EP. In addition, pro-migration party groups such as GUE/NGL and Verts/ALE showed an anti-discrimination stance in their speeches towards the arrivals, suggesting that legal routes should be created on all migration routes and rescue operations to prevent people from dying at sea. Notwithstanding, party groups that used conditional refugee frame for those coming via the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea routes emphasized border security, because inspections were required to prevent migration and to understand whether people were refugees or not. In contrast to border security, the idea of a common migration and asylum pact was warmly welcomed by parties supporting EU integration, as it included respecting the human rights of people arriving at the borders and the joint action of all Member States, and a call was made to enact the pact.

3.2.3. Debates on the Relevant EU Stakeholders

In the first year of the 2022 migration crisis, in addition to debates about arrivals and crisis policies, MEPs’ speeches mentioned the EU Stakeholders seventy-six times in the nine EP plenary debates. Under the third main category, the stakeholders as sub-categories are the Member States, the Council of the European Union (Council), the European Commission (Commission), the European Union Agencies (Agencies), the EU and society. Since the EU should work together to legislate and implement

approach to migration and asylum that is based on solidarity, accountability, and respect for human rights (European Commission, n.d., para. 1).

policies, the stakeholders were the pressing issue in the EP to manage migration crisis. For example, according to the co-decision legislative procedure, the Commission-Council-Parliament must work together to legislate a bill and the execution of that law must be within the sovereignty of Member States. In addition to the executive power of Member States, European Union Agencies such as Frontex and the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) also support the implementation of policies. For this reason, all domestic policies enacted and activated within the EU during the migration crisis could exist with the joint work of these stakeholders. In the EP discussions, MEPs were talking and discussing about the Commission and Council in law-making process, and Member States and Agencies in terms of enforcement. Out of the seventy-six speeches analyzed, there were thirty-three mentioned Member States, five of them mentioned the Council, seven of them mentioned the Commission, nine of them referred to the EU Agencies and twenty-two of them made references to the EU in general.

In the first year of the 2022 migration crisis, analyzed from 24 February 2022 to 24 February 2023, Member States constitute the most frequently mentioned EU stakeholders in the EP, which was mentioned thirty-three times. Member States enforce different pieces of the EU migration and asylum law such as the Geneva Convention, the Dublin Regulations and the Temporary Protection Directive. Furthermore, MEP discussed how Member States implemented these policies successfully and the mistakes they made in four discussions. In the first them, MEPs' discussion involves praises to Member States, because they accepted the Ukrainians fleeing the Russian attack at the EU borders in accordance with the EU law and met their humanitarian needs such as food, water and accommodation. The second debated issue was about provision of financial and technical support to those Member States that were the first point of arrival of refugees by the EU. Since the temporary protection procedure for those fleeing the Russian and Ukrainian War had been activated, implementation of the regulations has a significant role for successful crisis management. Therefore, EPP, Renew, S&D, Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL groups tended to support Member States for their accomplishment. Moreover, the same groups, which identified Ukrainians as European, underlined the war in Europe and approved the TPD, more likely support Member State in migration crisis to avoid

management problems at the borders. Urmas Paet (2022) from Renew Group which promote Liberal ideology and a Center political position, describes these two discussions with the example of Poland on the success at the border as:

I am grateful to the Polish people and to others on the border of Ukraine who are helping the incoming refugees as best they can. The whole of Europe must give its full support to Poland and the countries that receive the refugees first. (para. 99)

In the EP plenary debates, in contrast with the praises and support for the Member States bordering with Ukraine, the border states in the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea were criticized for failures in implementation of common migration and asylum policies. On the one hand, MEPs called on Member States to take responsibility, observe the migration law and show solidarity, while on the other hand, they criticized human rights violations at the borders, pushbacks and mass refoulement. The criticisms raised against Member States having borders in the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea arose for two different reasons. Firstly, groups such as S&D, EPP and Renew, which refer to the conditional refugee frame or support common migration policies, have invited Member States to fully implement border controls and practicing asylum seeking admission, because implementation of migration regulations is as important as making law for the management of migration crisis. Moreover, the aim of these groups is to separate refugees and economic migrants when they arrive at the EU borders. Cyrus Engerer (2023) from S&D which was the Center-Left political group criticized Member States for not implementing refugee policies as:

On one hand, Member States are not voluntarily relocating refugees, on the other hand they oppose mandatory solidarity leaving peripheral states on their own; On one hand, trying to stop boat arrivals, on the other not creating legal routes for those entitled to seek refugee or migration. (para. 65)

The second reason for criticism directed at Member States is that Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL groups took into account for violations of human rights and the EU refugee law such as Geneva Convention and Dublin Regulations in the EU borders, because the political groups tend to state refugee-based frames and create legal pathways without discrimination against incoming groups and ensure to expand the TPD for all refugees. For example, Tineke Strik (2022) on behalf of Greens/EFA

Group, drew attention to violation of refugee rights by saying “In Greece, the pushbacks have become a daily and systematic practice. If a refugee manages to apply for asylum, the Greek authorities refer them back to Turkey, even when they know that they are not allowed to re-enter Turkey” (para. 6).

In the first year of the 2022 migration crisis, the Commission and the Council, which are the EU partners of the EP in the legislative process, were the subject of MEP speeches a total of twelve times. The basis of these speeches was about the processes of introducing pieces of draft law to the Commission and the Council or enacting them into law. MEPs noticed that the Commission and the Council activated the TPD eight days after the Russian attack, which started on February 24, 2022, and took rapid action for refugees on the Ukrainian border. At the same time, MEPs must have liked the policies towards Ukrainians and those with permanent residence permits in Ukraine, as they did not criticize them at all. At the EP meeting, Jeroen Lenaers (2022), on behalf of EPP Group underlined success by speaking as “We called for the activation of the Temporary Protection Directive, and it’s a strong signal that the Commission and the Council acted so quickly” (para. 3).

Since no party group in the EP criticized the migration and asylum policies enforced such as the TPD and the CARE coming into force immediately, and refugee right violations did not occur in the EU- Ukraine border, Member States, the Commission, the Council, and the EU Agencies were not criticized by MEPs. Stakeholders, which worked in solidarity and unity for Ukrainians and those with permanent residence permits in Ukraine, received criticism for the legalization of the Migration Pact and failures in its implementation. Conversely, Left-Wing party group Greens/EFA criticized the Commission for turning a blind eye to Member States’ violations at Aegean Sea, because this group already supports immigration as a policy and brings human rights violations to the EP agenda, so they criticize the Commission as well as Member States. Damian Boeselager (2022) from Greens/EEFA criticized the Commission for not examining human rights violations, one of the twenty criticisms as:

But I just explained, no one is being returned to Turkey. So, this was, from the beginning, absolutely trying to stop the right to seek asylum. I ask the Commission to do something about this to guarantee the right of asylum in Europe. (para.15)

The crux of the criticism against the Council was that it was late in making the necessary decision to enact the common migration and asylum policies, which stopped and slowed down the legislative process. The group that expressed these criticisms were EPP, because this group promoted common migration policies in policy debates, so it criticized the Council for disrupting the legislative process. Tomas Tobé (2022) from EPP which was Center-Right and Conservatives group draws attention to the Council's action as:

The events of last week have highlighted the urgency of a predictable, operational and truly common approach to asylum and migration. This House has been waiting for the Council to get ready. (para. 36)

In the first year of the 2022 migration crisis, Frontex, Eurojust, and Europol are the EU Agencies that came to the fore nine times due to their contributions to border security and the investigation of war crimes. Members of the European Parliament called for increasing the role of these Agencies in migration management, and for Frontex and Europol to provide equipment, technical and personnel support to Member States and organize operations. Dita Charanzová (2022) from Renew being Liberal and Center political group pointed to Frontex's support for the management of migration flows by underlying "All this could be facilitated by having Frontex on the ground to help local officials deal with the immigration wave and provide safe transport of refugees further to other European countries" (para. 39).

In addition to supporting Member States in migration management, MEPs gave full support to the Joint Investigation Team, which was established to investigate war crimes in the Russia-Ukraine war and provide support to Ukraine and Ukrainians. Members of Parliament frequently drew attention to Eurojust in the legal process of pursuing crimes such as genocide, rape and torture. Vladimír Bilčík (2022) from EPP congratulated her for working with the EU's agencies on war crimes as:

As Russia's aggression continues, we have to make sure that we are ready to start prosecuting war crimes as soon as possible. I am proud of the EU's leading role – for instance, Eurojust's Joint Investigation Team into alleged core international crimes committed in Ukraine. (para. 49)

EPP, Renew and Green/EFA party groups kept the EU Agencies on the political

agenda throughout the 2022 migration crisis and supported their work, because they are the ones who support common migration and asylum policies with this group, and Member States and the EU Agencies need to work together for the full and effective implementation of these policies. At the same time, groups that are Center-Left, Center-Right and Center such as EPP, Renew, S&D supported unity and solidarity and therefore generally support the EU Agencies working with Member States during times of crisis. On the contrary, groups that criticize EU policies and draw attention to violations in practice are expected to also criticize the violations of the Agencies. The criticism against the agencies was for their brutal and illegal push-back practices against refugees in their operations in the Mediterranean and Aegean seas. Mick Wallace (2022) from GUE/NGL which was the Far-Left political group criticized the agencies by speaking “as Europe rightly welcomes Ukrainian refugees, the EU border agency Frontex is engaged in a brutal and illegal push-back campaign in the Aegean Sea against asylum seekers from Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Yemen and much of Africa” (para.33).

The unity and solidarity shown by the EU and society on the Ukrainian border was congratulated twenty-two times by MEPs. The main reason for congratulations is the success in the management of 5.1 million people who escaped from war and came to the EU borders and 4.3 million people who received the TPD status. Furthermore, Member States, the Commission and the Council, as well as society helping refugees at the borders, showed that the EU works in solidarity. Therefore, congratulations to the EU and society were brought to the agenda by EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL groups because they jointly identified arrivals from Ukraine as refugees, supported activations of TPD, underlined importance of the joint work in the EU. Katalin Cseh (2022) from Renew summarized the solidarity at the border as:

People showed up to cook warm food. Local governments set up hotlines and temporary shelters. They housed the refugees in schools and public buildings. Small town mayors suddenly became international humanitarians. They are the face Europe shows in this crisis, and it is a beautiful face. (para. 15)

While praise was expressed for the unity and solidarity shown by the EU and society at the borders of Ukraine and the EU, on the other hand, the EU’s failure to act in unity and solidarity in the Mediterranean and Aegean was criticized. These criticisms were

mentioned by EPP (Center-Right), Renew (Center) and S&D (Center-Left) groups because these groups were also defending the common migration and asylum pact during policy debates and supported the Migration Pact's entry into force. Alfred Sant (2022) from S&D following speech is one of the best examples of these criticisms that "To be sure, EU action over the Ukrainian refugee emergency has been admirable. But that very success has served to cloud the issues that need to be resolved over asylum and migration from Africa and Asia" (para. 66).

As a result of the third main category, two factors came to the fore in the discussions of MEPs for the EU stakeholders. The first of these is that MEPs are satisfied with the systems and practices that have been introduced in the debates about those refugees who came to the EU borders escaping from the war between Ukraine and Russia. Apart from the fact that the abortion law in Poland also covers refugee women, no criticism of the EU stakeholders was brought up in the Parliament. Member States and the EU Agencies were congratulated by MEPs for their effective and full implementation of the regulations, the Council for quickly activating the TPD, and the Commission for ensuring communication between institutions. The unity and solidarity demonstrated by the EU with all its institutions on the common borders of Ukraine and the EU was the most frequently mentioned success for MEPs. The reason behind these praises is that the war is taking place in Europe and Ukrainians are considered Europeans and refugees. The EU showed its power by being able to manage this crisis in Europe with all its institutions in unity and solidarity, and in this case, it was welcomed by pro-European groups such as EPP, Renew, S&D, Verts/ALE.

In contrast with the harmony at Ukrainian borders, in general in the migration debates of MEPs, human rights violations at the borders by Member States and the EU agencies were criticized by pro-migration party groups. In addition, the Commission's failure to make Member States take responsibility and the way it turned a blind eye to human rights violations was also criticized by GUE/NGL and Greens/EFA groups, as these groups called for the implementation of the Geneva Convention to ensure order at the borders and emphasized the need to create legal entry routes for immigrants. Therefore, they also tended to point out violations in practice. Moreover, the Council was criticized for slowing down and disrupting the process of enactment of the Migration Pact and common migration and refugee policies. The EU institutions were

invited to work in unity and solidarity and sharing the cost burden of migrants. EPP, S&D and Renew were the party groups that brought this to the agenda the most because they stated that the migration crisis would be solved with the unity of the EU stakeholders and through the adoption of common migration policies.

3.2.4. Debates on Relevant International Stakeholders

In the first year of the 2022 migration crisis, analysis of the discussions regarding arrivals, domestic policy and EU stakeholders were completed at the nine plenary meetings held from 24 February 2022 to 24 February 2023. Discussions related to relevant international stakeholders, which were expressed forty-three times in total, constitute the fourth main category. Relations with third countries and migration diplomacy, relations with non-state actors such as intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and war crimes constituted the subcategories of relevant international stakeholders. Relations with the countries of origin where migration begins and relations with transit countries are an area of interest to the EU, as they will affect the migration wave. The Russia-Ukraine war, which displaced millions of people, was at the center of discussions focusing on the 2022 migration crisis, so the EU's relations with Ukraine and Russia were the top of the political pressing issues. MEPs stated that aid and support should be sent to Ukraine not only to manage migration but also to bring order and stability to the country. The importance of addressing the needs of those who experienced internal migration due to war was also underlined. In addition to financial aid, this aid would also cover basic needs such as food, water, shelter and medicine. Witold Jan Waszczykowski (2022) from ECR being the Far-Right and Nationalist part group emphasized the need to provide support to Ukraine as "The hot issue right now is humanitarian assistance. Delivering it to Ukraine is extremely difficult, but we have to spare no effort to deliver" (para. 9).

According to the EP debates, bringing stability back to Europe and ending the war for the 12 million displaced people would be the most permanent solution, and the EU's assistance to end the war was not only important to Ukraine but also its relations with Russia. MEPs argued that an end to the war would be the best thing for Ukrainians and that this required a review of relations with Russia. Frances Fitzgerald (2022) from

EPP which was Christian Democrat party group explained how relations with Russia should be as “We must isolate Russia comprehensively, not in a piecemeal way. We must have measures that are economic, social, cultural and business that must be comprehensive” (para. 94). Relations with third countries was not only concerns for the Ukraine and Russia axis. MEPs argued that improving relations with countries of origin and transit along the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea routes is necessary to manage migration. At the EP meeting, Tomas Tobé (2022) from EPP emphasized partnerships with third countries to manage migration, focusing on countries of origin and causes as “We must also do more to address the root causes and the drivers of migration. For this reason, we must deepen our cooperation with third countries” (para. 36).

Relations with third countries were generally supported by all groups in the EP. But there are different reasons behind its support. Those who were in favor of providing support for Ukraine, applying sanctions against Russia, and investigating war crimes were party groups such as EPP, S&D and Renew that argued that the EU should demonstrate its power in the region because these party groups tended to put emphasis on being Europe and the EU. Apart from this, the reason for EPP and ECR groups that support third countries in the Mediterranean and Aegean is to reduce and stop migration flows. By supporting countries of origin and transit, they aim to prevent people from coming to the EU by bringing stability and order to the region.

Furthermore, relations with third countries referred in twenty time, relations with non-state actors referred thirteen times, namely non-governmental organizations and NGOs, were also turned to pressing issues in the EP during the migration crisis. In ten of the thirteen speeches, MEPs supported close relations and partnerships with non-state actors such as the United Nations (UN), the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Ukrainian NGOs. The first type of relations was sending financial support to organizations that worked in Ukraine and provided humanitarian support to civilians, as the war continued. The reason for this is that EPP, Renew and S&D groups could want to increase the role of the EU by supporting IGOs and NGOs because they have been supported the EU migration politics in the Ukrainian border since the beginning of the war. Petras Auštrevičius (2022) from Renew (Liberal and Center party group) called on The UN Refugee Agency regarding the humanitarian corridor

necessary for the passage of refugees:

The Russian aggressors seek to impede the evacuation of civilians, oftentimes by taking advantage of humanitarian corridors in order to force the resettlements of Ukrainians to Russia. The UN Refugee Agency must facilitate the safe return of all Ukrainian refugees. (para. 14)

The second type was to support NGOs for completing the EU's mistakes in the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas. GUEL/NGL Verts/ALE groups have voiced the need to support NGOs working on migration routes because these groups are pro-migration and argue that the EU should manage and accept migration. Tineke Strik (2022) from Verts/ALE explains that the EU's incompetence was covered up by NGOs as "And how cynical is it that NGOs filling this gap and saving lives are criminalized, whereas the states violating their obligation enjoy impunity" (para. 46). In addition to supporting IGOs and NGOs and drawing attention to their impact on the migration crisis, criticism has also been directed against them. The first of these criticisms was that the Red Cross opened a refugee camp in Moscow because it was argued that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) turned a blind eye to the human rights violations in Russia's Bucha region. Barry Andrews (2022) from Renew points out what the Red Cross's mission actually is as:

And that is a very difficult thing for the ICRC to do, and it's very difficult for Members of the Rada to accept. The ICRC should be a lot more sensitive in circumstances where there is clearly an asymmetric approach to respect for international humanitarianism. law, where the Russian side has been so systematically in breach. (para. 59)

The second criticism was that the United Nations transferred all its material and technical power to the Ukrainian and Russian War and overlooked the needs of the displaced in other war zones. This criticism came from GUEL/NGL group because this group expressed all double-dealing of the EU during the crisis. For example, the activation of the TPD only for Ukrainians, pushbacks in the Mediterranean and frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination were adopted by this group. For this reason, they also brought up this discrimination of IGOs. Clare Daly (2022) from GUE/NGL which was Far-Left party group criticizes the UN as "Visas for Afghans have dried up and as the UN humanitarian coordinator for Somalia put it,

funds for emergencies are drying up too because Ukraine seems to suck all the oxygen that is in the room” (para. 41).

As a result, four main conclusions emerged in a total of forty-three speeches about relevant international stakeholders. The war between Russia and Ukraine was first on the agenda in establishing relations with third countries in twenty times. Pro-European MEP groups, who also wanted the EU to increase its role in the war, advocated supporting Ukraine militarily and economically, imposing sanctions on Russia, and legally prosecuting war crimes. The aim of ECR and EPP groups, which support cooperation with countries on the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea migration routes, is to stop migration before it starts by ensuring stability in the region or to reduce migration to the EU by ensuring that migrants stay in transit countries. In relations with non-state actors, supporting and collaborating with IGOs and NGOs working in the war zone was supported by pro-European groups because it would increase the EU’s influence in the region, and by groups supporting human rights because it would meet the needs of the displaced. Finally, the criticism of IGOs and NGOs was that they turned a blind eye to human rights violations in Russia and focused only on Ukraine. In this case, it can be said that the parties’ positions on relevant international stakeholders are shaped according to their perspectives on migration and EU integration.

3.3. Conclusion

In this chapter, nine EP plenary meetings and ninety- seven MEP speeches were analyzed that took place in the first year of the 2022 migration crisis covering between 24 February 2022- 24 February 2023. The four main categories that emerged as a result of the analysis were formed based on the repeated specific discursive frames of MEPs’ speeches. These four main categories were debates on arrivals, debates on crisis policies, debates on the EU stakeholders, and debates on relevant international stakeholders. The first main category, the debates on arrivals, was about finding the right label for those who attempted to arrive or who arrived at the EU borders during the 2022 migration crisis and MEPs made reference to this specific matter a total of forty-eight times. The question of where and why those arriving and attempting to arrive in the EU came from was discussed, and MEP speeches were divided into four

sub-categories based on the repetition of specific words, phrases and sentences (e.g., asylum, economic migrant, illegal migration). The first subcategory is composed of the refugee-based frames, where arrivals are considered, refugees fleeing war and seeking protection. In the second main discursive frame, which is non-refugee-based, it is claimed that the arrivals are economic immigrants, and uncontrolled acceptance of economic immigrants will pose a danger to EU social cohesion. The third subcategory involves the conditional refugee frame and is based on the idea that the EU should determine at the borders whether people arriving are refugees or economic migrants and treat them accordingly. The last subcategory, frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination, criticizes the EU's practices towards specific groups of immigrants coming from Mediterranean and Aegean Sea routes such as border controls and fingerprints, as discrimination based on where they come from, and emphasizes that everyone arriving at the EU borders should be treated under equal and fair conditions.

Two factors were found to underlie the four discursive subcategories that emerged from MEPs' speeches in connection with the 2022 migration crisis. First of all, the type of discursive frame MEPs adopted depended on the party groups and their specific migration concerns and priorities. Right-Wing parties with Conservative and Nationalist ideologies such as ECR and ID used non-refugee-based frames, EPP, S&D and Renew being Center, Liberal and Democrat parties used conditional refugee or refugee-based frames, and green and Left-Wing parties such as Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL used refugee-based frames and frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination. Secondly, it was observed that depending on where the migratory arrivals originated from, the types of discursive frames adopted by MEPs showed significant variations. For example, the non-refugee-based and conditional refugee frames were never used for those coming from the Ukrainian border. However, MEPs from EPP, ECR used non-refugee-based and conditional frames in debates about those coming from the Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea routes in 2022. Since generally the EP identified the war and Ukrainians as European and as escaping from Russia's attack, none of party group in the parliament defined them by non-refugee or conditional refugee frames. Nonetheless, refugees who came from Africa and Asia were identified by non-refugee or conditional refugee frames.

Another main category involved in MEPs speeches around the issue of the 2022 migration crisis is domestic policies and has taken place in Parliament discussions fifty times. The domestic policies that the EU should activate and implement during the crisis were discussed, and two sub-categories comprised migration route policies for management of migration flows, and policies for asylum seeker who have been already crossed the EU borders. Migration route policies was to determine the practices to be carried out by the EU on migration routes and included initiating search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas, establishing legal migration routes and managing humanitarian corridors. Policies towards asylum seekers who have already crossed the EU borders included activating the Temporary Protection Directive, meeting the needs of asylum seekers, border controls and implementation of common migration policies. There were two basic distinctions in discussing policies for the crisis period. These are the geographical differentiation frames and the ideological stance of the party groups. First of all, opening the humanitarian corridor for those coming from the Ukrainian border, providing the basic needs of those arriving and activating the TPD tended to be supported by both Center-Right and Center-Left party groups, because since the war took place in Europe, supporting refugees and managing migration were the two key goals to be achieved by the EU for the EU to show its power in the region and also manage the migration crisis. Practices such as search, and rescue operations and increased border controls were never brought to the agenda for those coming from the Ukrainian border. On the other hand, ideological differences of the EP's groups affected the policies towards those coming from the Mediterranean and Aegean routes. Groups that define the arrivals as refugees and underlined anti-discrimination emphasized that the TPD should be extended to all refugees and that the EU should create legal migration routes for them. Moreover, groups using the frames of conditional refugees suggested increasing border security, rescuing refugees through search and rescue operations to stop illegal crossings.

The 2022 migration crisis continued to be addressed in the nine EP plenary debates; MEPs expressed their opinions about the EU stakeholders seventy-six times. The analysis of the third main category is based on the discussions of previous crisis policies. Party groups, which were satisfied with the policies that were put into force for managing the migration flow at the European and Ukrainian border, underlined the

success about the implementation of Member States and the EU Agencies at the borders. The rapid and joint decision-making of the Commission and the Council was also applauded by MEPs. Party groups such as EPP, Renew, S&D and Greens/ALE praised the unity and solidarity shown by the EU and society on the border with Ukraine and emphasized that the EU should support the border states because these groups, in meetings that continued for a year, emphasized that this crisis in Europe should be managed in unity and solidarity by all stakeholders of the EU. Besides, the Greens/ALE and GUEL/NGL party groups criticized Member States, the Commission, the Council, the Agencies, and the EU was acting hypocritically because these groups supported anti-discrimination statements and pro-migration ideas during the first-year of 2022 migration crisis. In this case, they criticized the Member States and the EU Agencies for their human rights violations in implementation of the EU common migration and asylum system, the commission for remaining a spectator to the human rights violations of Member States, the council for not expanding the scope of the TPD, and the EU for not working together in the Mediterranean and Aegean.

The last main category, the debates on relevant international stakeholders, appeared a total of forty-three times in the first year of the crisis. Within the scope of these debates, relations with third countries and non-state actors were examined. In the discussion towards third countries, supporting Ukraine and isolating Russia were corroborated by party groups which support Ukraine and Ukrainian refugees in the war. Furthermore, these groups supported the coordination with IGOs and NGO working in Ukraine during time of war. Furthermore, party groups aiming to prevent or at least reduce the flow of refugees were inclined to financially support collaborations with origin and transit countries, and the missions of IGOs and NGOs in origin and transit countries in the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea routes. Besides, political groups that draw attention to human rights violations have also expressed the idea of NGO filling the gap of the EU by helping refugees. However, these groups criticized IGOs, especially the UN Refugee Agency, for centering only Ukraine and let refugees die in other conflict zone.

As a result, in the first year of the 2022 migration crisis, the EP's political groups, and their ideologies were the determining factors in the eighty-nine MEP speeches analyzed between 24 February 2022 and 24 February 2023. The discursive frames

analyzed in this section are in line with findings in the literature. Party groups and ideologies have formed the basis of approaches against immigration. Center-Left and Green groups supported more pro-immigration and liberal policies, and Center-Right and Far-Right groups had anti-immigration attitudes and supported restrictive policies (Servent 2014; Lopatin 2013; Hix and Noury 2007; Krotký & Kaniok, 2020). In addition, during the 2022 migration crisis, pro-refugee and liberal policies more defended restrictive and anti-immigration rhetoric in MEP speeches, which was similar to the result of the Krotký and Kaniok (2020) study. Moreover, geographical differentiations determined discursive frames in the debates, and this result is not one of the findings in the literature.



4. CHAPTER: COMPARISON OF THE MAIN DISCURSIVE FRAMES IN MEPs SPEECHES IN RELATION TO THE 2015 AND 2022 MIGRATION CRISES

In Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, the speeches of Members of the European Parliament (MEP) at the European Parliament (EP) plenary sessions during the 2015 and 2022 migration crises were examined. Chapter 2 focused on the EP debates that took place only in the first year of the 2015 migration crisis. April 2015 marked a tragic boat capsizing incident that resulted in the loss of the highest number of lives in the Mediterranean during that year. As a result, this event turned into a major political issue in the EU Member States and in the EU media. The start date of the EP discussions was thus selected as April 1, 2015. After April 2015, border crossings to the EU were at their highest level resulting in the conduct of frequent the EP plenaries. Therefore, the analysis in Chapter 2 focused on the first year of the crisis and April 1, 2016, was determined as the cut off point for examining the EP debates as part of this thesis. Chapter 3 analyzed the 2022 migration crisis, and its starting point was February 24, 2022, which marked the first day of Russia's attack on Ukraine. Similar to Chapter 2, in Chapter 3, the analysis of 2022 migration crisis was limited to a one-year period during which the EU plenaries were held the most and the migrant crossings through the EU borders were at their highest number. Therefore, 23 February 2023 was chosen as the cut off point for collecting and analyzing the relevant EP debates. In the first year of the 2015 migration crisis, a total of ten plenary debates took place and one hundred and fifty-three English speeches of MEPs were collected within the specific scope of the analysis conducted in this thesis. In the first year of the 2022 migration crisis, the EP plenary debates convened nine times to discuss the crisis and again, MEPs made eighty-nine speeches in English.

In the context of both the 2015 migration crisis and the 2022 migration crisis, MEPs' speeches were examined with the inductive content analysis method. The purpose of taking a one-year period in both of these migration crises and discussing only the

speeches of MEPs was to ensure the comparability of the two selected cases with the use of similar forms of data in Chapter 4, which compares and analyses MEPs discussions from the selected time periods. The main and sub-categories that were identified in the analysis of the EP plenaries over a one-year period emerged by repeating the words, phrases and sentences in the speeches of MEPs. Analysis of the 2015 and 2022 migration Crises demonstrated that the main issues involved touched upon during the EP discussions showed continuity and there was no difference between them. Based on the results of the analyses conducted in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, four main categories are identified both in 2015 and 2022, which include (1) debates about arrivals, (2) debates on crisis policies, (3) debates on the relevant EU stakeholders, and (4) debates on relevant international stakeholders.

The reason why there is no distinction in the main categories is based on the role of the EP within the EU and the contribution of the EP plenary sessions to the role of institution. After the co decision procedure was introduced to the migration policies with the Amsterdam Treaty in 1999, the EP gained the power of approving legislative processes, supervising the EU institutions, and approving the EU budget (European Union, n.d.). MEPs continued discussions on the management of migration under these three political powers during both of the migration crises. Additionally, the EP has two working phases, which are Committees where legislation is examined and amendments are discussed, and Plenaries Session where the Parliament meets to take a final vote on proposed legislation and amendments (European Union, n.d.). Therefore, plenary debates are the moments when all the EP groups and MEPs are present in the Parliament, unlike committees. Moreover, MEPs' speeches at general assembly meetings during the migration crises were pre-prepared for the final vote and within the framework of the political power of the EP. In summary, the reason for the similarity in the main categories in the 2015 and 2022 migration crises is that there is no change in the political power of the EP and the plenary session function.

The four main categories that emerged in the 2015 and 2022 migration crises were compared with their subcategories in MEP's speeches were explained. First, the debates regarding those who arrived at the EU borders and those who attempted to reach the EU territory during the migration crises were compared. The reasons why these groups migrate and where they come from to the EU borders and how they affect

the contents of MEPs' speeches were presented. Secondly, the policies that the EU will maintain or should implement during the migration crises were analyzed, and it was revealed that discursive frames towards immigrants affected the policy debates during the crisis period. While MEPs advocating refugee-based frames and discursive frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination brought up policy response such as TPD, humanitarian visas and resettlement in their speeches, MEPs referred non-refugee-based and conditional refugee-based frames underlined the importance of border controls and fingerprint policies. In the discussions regarding the EU stakeholders, which is the third main category, why and how the European Commission (Commission), the European Council (Council), Member States, the EU Agencies and the EU in general have become the subject of MEP speeches in plenary sessions. Finally, the fourth main category were the debates on relevant international stakeholders, who were origin and transit countries, IGOs and NGOs, and co-operations, agreements and partnerships that need to be maintained with relevant international actors during the crisis period were analyzed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. In this chapter, the discursive frames that MEPs constantly referred to, during the first years of the 2015 and 2022 migration crises will be evaluated. The reasons behind the overlapping discursive frames will be revealed. Furthermore, the reasons for the use of different discursive frames in MEP speeches during 2015 and 2022 migration crises will be analyzed.

4.1. Debates towards Arrivals

In the EP plenary debates that took place in the first year of the 2015 migration crisis and the first year of the 2022 migration crisis, MEP speeches about those who escaped from war and arrive to the EU borders or attempted to reach are the first main category. Subcategories are determined according to the number of repetitions of specific migrant and migration related words, phrases and sentences in the speeches of MEPs. While refugee-based, conditional refugee and non-refugee-based frames were subcategories in the 2015 crisis, these three subcategories appeared also in the 2022 migration crisis, while discursive frames that put emphasis on anti-discrimination emerged as a new subcategory. The two key factors have been identified that led to similarities and differences among the dominant discursive frames during the selected migration crisis.

The first one of these factors relates to the political positions and ideologies of the EP groups. Groups having Conservative, Nationalist, Right-Wing populist ideas have generally brought to the agenda non-refugee-based and conditional refugee frames. In the 2015 migration crisis, European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR), Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENF), and Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD) and in the 2022 migration crisis, ECR, and Identity and Democracy (ID) were the political groups in the EP that produced non-refugee based and conditional refugee frames because of their right political ideologies (Calossi and Cicchi, 2019: 8). The basic idea put forward by these groups is that irregular migration can be a danger to the EU's economy or that members of terrorist organizations may be mixed into the incoming groups, thus posing a danger to the domestic security of the EU. Paul Nutall (2015) from EFDD which was Far-Right brought up that ISIS had infiltrated the EU with the incoming groups of migrants:

Let me make it clear that the crisis we have in Europe at the moment is not a refugee crisis, it is an economic migrant crisis. Then, of course, there is the security aspect of this total farce. ISIS has already told us that it is going to flood our continent with their Islamist lunatics. (para. 21)

The basis of these non-refugee-based frames which arise during the 2015 migration crisis is to see migrants as a danger to the EU, and the attitude of Right-Wing parties was also brought to the agenda in the 2022 migration crisis, and they argued that economic migrants would contravene the EU migration and refugee system. Non-refugee-based frames are continued during the 2022 migration crisis and Charlie Weimers (2022) from ECR which was Far-Right and Nationalist political group given example of this frame as:

Right now, we see economic migrants from Bangladesh, Egypt and Tunisia Why? Because the EU will be overwhelmed by economic migrants using asylum as a means to enter our territory Illegal entry must mean forfeiture of the right to asylum. (para. 25)

On the other hand, party groups with Left, Green and Liberal ideologies tend to promote refugee-based frames. Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE), Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA), European United Left–

Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) in the 2015, and additionally, Greens/EFA, GUE/NGL and Renew Group (Renew) in the 2022 underlined refugee-based frames toward arrivals to the EU border during the migration crises since their political position is Left-Wing, Green and Liberal (Calossi and Cicchi, 2019: 8). Finally, Democrat groups have resorted to the frames of refugee-based and conditional refugee-based. European People's Party (EPP) and Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D) party groups used refugee-based and conditional refugee frames in discussions about arrivals in both the 2015 and 2022 migration crises.

The idea of the European Union and being European, came to the fore in MEPs speeches referring to refugee-based frames. MEPs made speeches by touching on the values and principles of the EU, define refugees as people who are escaping from war and in need of help, and state that the EU stands by those in need. In the conditional refugee frames, the emphasis that being on the side of the refugees and providing them a better life was coming EU values. In the speeches made by the members of these groups, it was stated that migration was basically reconciled with European and EU values. With an example from the 2015 and 2022 Crises, MEPs' emphasis on being European in their discussions about the arrivals and their approach towards refugees becomes clear. In the plenary session Ska Keller (2015) from Greens/EFA being the Far-Left party group explains what it means to be Europe as:

European solidarity and the refugees themselves were on the losing side – people who are fleeing from war and terrorism who are currently being turned away at our borders. It is our human rights; it is Europe and our idea of humanism and humanity. (para. 20)

Sophia in 't Veld (2022) from Renew which was Liberal and Center party groups gives a parallel frame to the speech from the 2015 Crisis in the plenary on March 8, 2022, this time for those who fled the Ukrainian and Russian War:

The warm welcome to the Ukrainian refugees is Europe at its best. Colleagues, it is the cradle of human rights, a community of values and Europe should also be a safe haven for those Russians fleeing the brutal Putin regime and the soldiers who refuse to Fight his dirty war. (para. 14)

The second factor that affected the EP conversations during the migration crises was the countries of origin of those who cross the EU borders or attempted to reach the EU

territories. Especially during the 2022 migration crisis, depending on where the migratory arrivals originated from determined the types of discursive frames adopted by MEPs. For instance, the lack of expression of non-refugee-based or conditional refugee frames for those coming to the EU from the borders of Ukraine during the 2022 migration crisis and the use of these frames decreased from twenty-four times in 2015 to four times in 2022 are the significant indicators for the restriction. These discursive frames that involve geographical differentiation towards arrivals had the reasons that on the one hand, the war between Russia and Ukraine was taking place in Europe and Ukrainians were considered Europeans in MEP speeches. On the other hand, in debates on Mediterranean and Aegean Sea routes, conditional refugee and non-refugee-based frames were referred as the dominant opinion in the EU about immigration due to the ideas that irregular migration would pose a danger to the EU social cohesion (Delanty, 1997; Huysmans, 2000). The parliamentary speech of Andrius Kubilius (2022) from EPP, which was the Center-Right and Christian Democrat party group, was one of the speeches that most clearly shows the geographical differentiation frames:

Unlike with the previous refugee crisis, we now have war on the European continent and Europeans from Ukraine are moving into other European countries for shelter. We have a simple European moral obligation to take care of all of them, our fellow Europeans. (para. 12)

Furthermore, MEPs' speeches brought geographical differentiation frames to the agenda in the 2022 migration crisis and were again based on ideological foundations. The groups chose non-refugee-based and conditional refugee frames in the 2015 migration crisis were Right-Wing political parties such as ECR, EFN, EFDD, ID supporting Populist, Nationalist and Conservative ideas that resorted to geographical differentiation frames in 2022. The reason for this is that Right-Wing parties are more skeptical about immigration. The most important example of this was the use of MEP speeches throughout both the 2015 and 2022 migration crises, which emphasized that there were members of terrorist organizations among the migration flow and there were economic migrants seeking for prosperity and wealth in the EU. On the contrary, Left-Wing political groups having socialist, and green ideologies such as Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL and Liberal political parties like Renew did not bring up geographical

differentiation frames in 2022, and, also, they did not choose non-refugee-based frames in 2015. Additionally, Left and Liberal parties, tend to support equality, freedom and human rights and are more prone to pro-migration ideas. Their production of refugee-based frames, and frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination throughout the 2015 and 2022 migration crises also proves their attitude in support of migration. MEPs from these party groups (e.g. ALDE, Renew, Greens/EFA, GUE/NGL) refer to EU values and law in their speeches. Tineke Strik (2022) on behalf of Greens/EFA underlines that the EU's application of different procedures to nations does not comply with European values:

It reassures us that European values and the right to protection do have a meaning in the European Union, but these principles leave no room for double standards. People fleeing a war, persecution or inhuman treatment all fall under the same protection regime. The situation people are fleeing from determines their right to protection, not the country that they left. (para. 6)

Moreover, Left-Wing party groups like GUE/NGL tended to support immigration to protect the labor market within the EU. They argue that the EU population is aging and that incoming immigrants are necessary to keep the workforce alive. Clare Daly (2023) (GUE/NGL) gave an example of why Left-Wing parties supported immigration for the continuity of the EU workforce and prosperity:

Over the next 30 years, our active workforce will decrease by 50 million. Without migration, we face enormous problems to keep our societies going. Our already overwhelmed health services will sink altogether without the migration needed to redress the balance between young and old. (para. 44)

As a result, the discussions about refugee-based, non-refugee-based and conditional refugee-based discussions regarding arrivals in the 2015 and 2022 migration crises continued, and frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination constituted a discursive subcategory used only in the 2022 migration crisis. The most important reason affecting the subcategories is thought to be geographical differentiation, because all groups, regardless of political ideology, have resorted to refugee-based frames for those coming from the Ukrainian border. Non-refugee-based or conditional refugee frames have been used in speeches for those arriving at the EU

borders from the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea. The reason for this geographical differentiation frames between Ukraine, the Mediterranean, the Aegean Sea and the Western Balkans was that Ukraine was considered as part of Europe, the Russia-Ukraine War was seen as a European war, and for this reason, all EP party groups resorted to a refugee-based frames only for those arrive from Ukraine. In addition, the ideologies of party groups and the ideas they support affected MEPs' discursive frames of arriving groups. Center-Right and Far-Right party groups such as ECR, EFDD, ID, and EFN tented to put the geographical differentiation frames and more likely referred non-refugee-based and conditional based frames toward arrivals because MEPs from these party groups underlined that there were economic immigrants and members of terrorist organizations in the migration flows from the Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea, and took into account that uncontrolled admission was a danger to EU social cohesion. Nonetheless, Left-Wing, Green and Liberal party groups like Greens/ALE, GUE/NGL, Renew, and ALDE produced discursive frame that put-on emphasis anti-discrimination and refugee-based because they supported human rights, refugee rights, freedom and equality, and believed that refugees will contribute to the EU's workforce and social life, rather than seeing them as a threat.

4.2. Debates on Crisis Policies

The second main category in both 2015 and 2022 migration crises was debates on crisis policies. In addition to the similarity in the main category based on MEPS's speeches, also there are parallel discursive frames in the subcategories. What laws and measures should be enacted to manage people arriving at the EU borders at unexpected times and in large numbers has been the fundamental question of the crisis periods. Policies on migration routes and policies towards migrants who have already arrived at the EU borders constitute subcategories of crisis period policies. The similarity in the subcategories is also reflected in the policies discussed. Although similar frames were used in both 2015 and 2022, differences were observed in the number of expressions of these discussions.

Two main reasons for the differences in the policy debates between the 2015 migration crisis and the 2022 migration crisis were explained in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. The first and most important reason is the perspective on arrivals and is related to the

previous main category. Party groups that support search and rescue operations on migration routes and policies to prevent boarding ships are in parallel with party groups that consulted non-refugee-based or conditional refugee frames in both crises. The reason for this is to preserve that people continue to live where they are and to prevent them from coming to the EU, through agreements with origin and transit countries, through investment or by establishing partnerships with local non-governmental organizations, because they do not want to accept people into the EU whom they define as economic migrants or members of terrorist organizations. At the same time, the aim of search and rescue operations is to save the lives of those fleeing war and endangering their lives at sea, but also to prevent human traffic in the Mediterranean by fighting against smugglers. Speech by Syed Kamall (2015) from ECR linked search and rescue operations while she is referring the conditional refugee frames as:

So last week's Council was really an important step forward: help for rescue operations, targeting people traffickers who profit and prey on the misery of others, helping to alleviate the problems of those at the sharp end. But we also need to seek to distinguish between economic migration and helping genuine asylum seekers. (para. 10)

In addition, during the policy debates on migration routes in the 2015 and 2022 migration crises, those who supported creation of legal routes, implementation of humanitarian visas, and opening of the humanitarian corridor are those who used refugee-based frames for arrivals. The speech of Ska Keller (2015) from Greens/EFA on shows that the policy supporting the need to open legal pathways is basically defining the incoming groups as refugees:

The only thing that helps against smugglers is to open safe and legal ways of entry for refugees, not claim that people fleeing from war and persecution are a problem that you can send the army against and that this is going to be the solution to it all. (para. 39)

While refugee-based frames were defended by party groups with Left, Green and Liberal ideologies in the 2015 Crisis, this picture changes for the 2022 Crisis because since there is only a refugee-based perspective towards those coming from the

Ukrainian border in 2022, the migration route policy for them is only the opening of the humanitarian corridor. However, those who produce geographical differentiation frames in 2022 support search and rescue and prevent people from getting on the boat for those coming from the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea routes. While the number of MEPs' speeches about search and rescue operations was thirteen in 2015, this number decreases to five in 2022. In addition, while the preventing people from getting on the boat were brought up twelve times in 2015, this number decreases to zero in 2022. As a result, the main factor in debates about migration routes is the perspective on the arrivals. While legal migration ways and corridors are the solution for arrivals whose refugee-based frames are used, rescue operations and anti-boarding policies are recommended for groups covered by non-refugee-based or conditional refugee frames.

In the first year of the 2015 and 2022 migration crises, discussions about accepting people who arrived at the EU borders formed the second subcategory of crisis policies, and the attitude towards the arrivals, as well as the migration routes, was one of the factors affecting these discussions. The implementation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) in the 2015 migration crisis was brought to the agenda thirty-six times. In 2022, Party Groups, which demonstrated geographical differentiation frames and conditional refugee frames such as EPP, S&D, and ECR made a call for the migration pact to come into force in addition to the CEAS, and the needs for a common migration policy were expressed, but only twelve times. These parties wanted those who arrived in the EU via the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea to be determined whether they were refugees or not and to be treated accordingly, so they supported policies that would cover the entire union, such as the CEAS and the migration pact, to ensure supervisory policies such as fingerprinting and border checks were implemented by all members. Furthermore, the activation of the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD), which was created in case the migration flow reaches unexpected numbers, underlined only two times by Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL groups which tend to refer to refugee-based frames.

Moreover, in the 2022 migration crisis, the TPD was activated for Ukrainians and permanent residents of Ukraine and activation of the TPD was congratulated by MEPs twelve times and was not criticized by any group since MEPs' speeches had an unanimity of refugee-based frames toward arrivals from Ukraine's border. Non-

refugee-based and conditional refugee frames towards those who came from the Ukrainian border were never mentioned in the EP debates because all party groups emphasized them as Europeans who escaped from war and are in need of help, so the EP did not consider them a threat like those arriving via the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea. In other words, since there was unanimity in refugee-based frames for those coming from the Ukrainian border in 2022, the activation of the TPD was therefore welcomed by MEPs positively. In addition, the groups that called for activation of the TPD in the EP plenaries in 2015 such as GEU/NGL and Greens/EFA have preferred refugee-based frames and frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination rather than making geographical differentiation frames in 2022. Speaking from the GEU/NGL Mick Wallace (2023) referred to both to the issue of anti-discrimination and criticized the TDP implemented by the EU based on geographical differentiation as:

The EU acted rightly quickly to provide protection and reception conditions to millions of Ukrainians in a matter of months under the Temporary Protection Directive. This proves that humane treatment of non-Ukrainian asylum seekers and refugees from Syria, Afghanistan and Libya is absolutely possible. (para. 59)

Finally, another refugee policy that was brought to the agenda six times in the 2015 migration crisis and is not on the agenda at all in the 2022 migration crisis is the Australian Point System. EFDD Group referred the Australian System to the agenda in 2015. Since this group has a more Eurosceptic political position, it has proposed a system that would be left to the initiative of Member States. When EFDD withdrew from the European Parliament after Brexit, the group was not in the EP during the 2022 migration crisis. For this reason, in the 2022 crisis, the Australian System or similar policies that would highlight the national preferences of Member States have not been proposed.

As a result, the most important factor affecting the dominant discursive frames used during 2015 and 2022 migration crises was the political positions of party groups and their members towards the arrivals during migration crises. In the 2015 migration crisis, while search and rescue operations, preventing boarding, implementation of CEAS, and the Australian Points System were the solutions to the migration crisis, the EP party groups used non-refugee based and conditional refugee frames, and also other

groups advocating refugee-based frames mostly demanded for legal means, humanitarian visa, and activation of the TPD in the plenary session. This causality continued in 2022 and, one of the fundamental factors affecting the migration crisis policy debates was the perspective on the arrivals. Since only refugee-based frames were used for those coming from the Ukrainian border, the opening of the humanitarian corridor and the activation of the TPD were not criticized at all and were supported by parties with different ideological ideas such as EPP, S&D, Greens/EFA.

4.3. Debates on the Relevant EU Stakeholders

Debates on the EU stakeholders were held one hundred and twenty-two times in the ten EP meetings held in the first year of the 2015 migration crisis and seventy-six times in the nine EP meetings held in the first year of the 2022 migration crisis. Member States, Commission, Council, Agencies and the EU general have been the stakeholders of the EU in both 2015 and 2022. In other words, the same stakeholders were the subject of discussions in 2015 and 2022, a new stakeholder was not brought to the issue in the EP, or a stakeholder was not irrelevant from the discussions. The main reason for this similarity may be the role and political power because the EP has political powers, such as approving EU laws, together with the Council, based on Commission proposals, questioning the Commission and the Council, democratic supervision of all EU institutions, reviewing petitions of EU citizens and conducting investigations (European Union, n.d.), and the role of the EP did not change from 2015 to 2022.

In both migration crises, the most commonly debated EU stakeholders in the EP plenaries were Member States, firstly, because the border states were the first to encounter migration flows, and secondly, because it was Member States that would implement the EU's migration and refugee laws on the ground. Although discussions about Member States continue throughout crisis periods, different discursive frames were used in these debates. The most obvious of these differences was that in 2015, MEPs called on Member States for unity and solidarity, while in 2022, Member States were praised due to the implementation of EU common migration and asylum systems at their borders throughout the crises. The reason behind this difference is based on crisis policy debates. If MEPs called in 2015 for the full and the effective

implementation of CEAS such as receiving refugee applications in the first Member States asylum seeker reached, fingerprints being uploaded to the system at the borders, etc., they inclined to make calls to Member States to achieve unity and solidarity in the Union. Jeppe Kofod (2016) from S&D which was Social Democrat and Center-Left party group in the EP stated that the crisis could not be resolved, and the Dublin system collapsed due to the lack of unity of Member States and errors in burden sharing:

I think we all know that the Dublin system has collapsed, and now Schengen is next in line if we do not act. This situation is a direct result of the lack of solidarity and of a common European approach to the refugee crisis. While some count their asylum applications in tens of thousands, others are counting them only in hundreds or even less. (para 164)

Having said that they congratulated Member States for the full and affective implementation of the EU migration policies in the Ukrainian borders such as receiving the TPD applications, meeting water, food and shelter needs of forced migrants since MEPs supported the implementation of TPD. Jeroen Lenaers (2022) from EPP congratulated Member States on the successful implementation of the TPD: Over 4 million of them have registered for temporary protection in the EU. And we can be proud about how millions of refugees received a warm welcome all over Europe, particularly in countries bordering Ukraine – Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Moldova. (para. 3)

Moreover, another situation that affected MEPs' speeches towards Member States at the EP meetings was the political positions and ideologies of the party groups. In both 2015 and 2022, reactions to human rights and refugee rights violations such as mass returns and pushbacks were mostly put forward by Left, Liberal and Green party groups. A total of twenty-nine speeches were on human rights violations in the 2022 and 2015 migration crises. While GUE/NGL, Greens/EFA, ALDE and Renew groups had twenty-five of these speeches, EFN, EFDD, ECR, ID party groups did not refer to any speeches regarding violations. Other speeches in which the political positions of the party groups were effective were about the criticisms regarding Germany and Sweden's acceptance of refugees and the pressures on Member States. EFDD Group

accused Germany and Sweden of triggering the migration crisis by announcing that they would accept more Syrian refugees and criticized the EU for imposing the migration policies on Member States. These debates only came to the fore in the 2015 migration crisis and are not present in 2022 because EFDD had a Eurosceptic political position and was expected to develop these discourses. Secondly, EFDD was not included in the 2022 migration crisis discussions because it left the EP with Brexit.

The Commission and the Council are two of the EU stakeholders that were the focus of the EP discussions in the first year of the 2015 and 2022 migration crises. The fact that the EP has the power to question the Commission and the Council and to make different pieces of law together with the Council based on the Commission's bill were the reasons that shape MEP's speeches in the EP plenary sessions. MEPs expressed their opinions about the Commission and the Council regarding migration crisis policies in both 2015 and 2022. The changes in the conversations about the Commission and the Council were related to draft pieces of law and legislative processes. If MEPs were satisfied with the legislative proposals, monitoring of Member States and reporting, they praised the Commission, but if they were not satisfied, they criticized the Commission because proposals, monitoring and reporting are within the Commission's political role in the EU (European Commission, n.d.). Claude Moraes (2022) from S&D pointed out what the EP expects from the Commission as "The Commission has plans; Those plans would have matured over two years, and we would now be in a position of activity. But we are not, because some Members of the Council have been aggressive and done nothing" (para.24).

Moreover, criticisms directed at the Council were generally that it slowed down the legislative process. The Council was criticized by MEPs for being slow in making decisions or not taking the necessary decisions, as in the example above. If MEPs support the current EU migration and asylum policies, for example, EPP supported the CEAS in 2015, and all-party groups found the TPD successful in 2022, the Council was not criticized by MEPs. However, GUE/NGL and Greens/ALE party groups, which wanted the TPD to be activated in 2015, criticized the Council for not taking decisions quickly, because the rhetoric of this group found the current asylum system inadequate for crisis time. Martina Anderson (2015) from GUE/NGL being the Far-Left party group underlines the Council's failure in her speech as "The failure of the

Council meeting on migration to provide safe and legal access for refugees fleeing the harrowing impacts of conflicts is absolutely shameful” (para. 30).

While MEPs from Liberal, Center-Left and Green political groups such as S&D, Greens/ALE, ALDE frequently expressed their concerns in 2015 migration crisis about the congestion in decision making and implementation of relevant policy tools, an explicit dual approach towards the Commission and the Council prevails in 2022. On the one hand these party groups praised the Commission and the Council because the crisis policy response and practices regarding the Ukrainian border which were the TPD agreed as successful, on the other hand, same groups criticized the Commission and the Council for interruption legislative process of migration pact. Tineke Strik’s (20220) from Greens/EFA following speech showed links between the migration crisis policies in relation to the Commission and the Council:

It is unprecedented how quickly the number of refugees keeps growing, and the EU’s response is unprecedented as well, with the activation of the Temporary Protection Directive. We applaud the Commission and Council for the swift and united response to give their full support to the refugees and their families. (para. 7)

In addition, another EU stakeholder that was on the agenda of the EP plenary meetings during both the 2015 and 2022 migration crises was the EU agencies, such as the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust), and European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol). Since the mandate of EU Agencies is to support the implementation of migration and asylum policies during migration crises, they have been the subject of MEPs’ conversations for implementation issues. Since Frontex was monitoring Member States in areas such as ensuring border security, preventing illegal crossings, and combating smugglers and cross-border crimes (The European Border and Coast Guard Agency, n.d.), Frontex drew attention to discussions about implementation errors or deficiencies at the borders.

Additionally, EASO was responsible for providing support to Member States for the implementation of the laws within the scope of CEAS (The European Union Asylum Agency, n.d.), so if there were any problems in the implementation of CEAS, EASO

was turned to for assistance. Therefore, MEPs who wanted the implementation of CEAS drew attention to border security during the 2015 migration crisis advocated supporting the EU Agencies. Timothy Kirkhope (2015) from ECR pointed out importance of the EU Agencies for migration crisis as speaking “We do agree on the important role of Frontex, EASO, and Eurodac, and the need for increased funding in tackling the issue at source, and we look forward to working with the Commission on this important issue” (para. 13). While the importance of the support of EU agencies in managing the migration crisis was underlined in 2015, in 2022, the EU Agencies that contributed to the success of Member States in implementation were congratulated. The team established by the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust) to investigate war crimes in the Ukrainian-Russian War was congratulated by Vladimír Bilčík (2022) from EPP in his parliamentary speech, as “I am proud of the EU’s leading role – for instance, Eurojust’s Joint Investigation Team into alleged core international crimes committed in Ukraine” (para. 49).

The approach towards the implementation of migration policies was influential behind the support and congratulations directed to the EU Agencies in both the 2015 and 2022 migration crises. MEPs who emphasized the implementation of CEAS emphasized the importance of the Agencies, or party groups who found the implementation of the policies successful congratulated the Agencies, and MEPs who paid attention to the violations of the Dublin Regulations and the Geneva Convention in practice criticized the Agencies. Speaking in the Parliament, Mick Wallace (2023) from GUE/NGL expressed his criticism of Frontex and argued that the TPD should be extended to all refugees in his following statement:

The EU must immediately end the systematic criminalization of asylum seekers, end pushbacks and end the externalization of the EU’s borders now. Abolish Frontex. The EU rightly acted quickly to provide protection and reception conditions to millions of Ukrainians in a matter of months under the Temporary Protection Directive. This proves that humane treatment of non-Ukrainian asylum seekers and refugees from Syria, Afghanistan and Libya is absolutely possible. (para. 59)

The last stakeholder that is the subject of discussions in the EP general assemblies is the EU in general and society. It reflected the general judgments of the EU and society MEPs regarding the management of the migration crisis, which came to the agenda

both in the first year of the 2015 migration crisis and in the first year of the 2022 migration crisis. If MEPs were satisfied with crisis period policies and practices, they would make positive speeches about the EU in general and the EU public. In other words, MEPs, who promoted the current EU migration and asylum policies, work with the Commission and the Council, deemed successful Member States' and the EU agencies application of asylum policies, paid compliments toward the EU in general and society. There were twenty-two compliments about the EU and the EU public in general in 2022 since MEPs did not rise any criticism toward migration policies or any EU stakeholders. Katalin Cseh (2022) from Renew summarized the solidarity at the border as:

People showed up to cook warm food. Local governments set up hotlines and temporary shelters. They housed the refugees in schools and public buildings. Small town mayors suddenly became international humanitarians. They are the face Europe shows in this crisis, and it is a beautiful face. (para. 15)

Nonetheless, when MEPs paid attention to the absence of policy response for migration crisis, violations of the Dublin Regulations or Geneva Convention, and the Commission or the Council for their failure of quickly enacting crisis policies, so they called the EU to manage migration crisis in solidarity. During the 2015 migration crisis, MEPs called for more unity and solidarity and brought up that the EU was failing in crisis management. Jean Lambert (2015) from Greens/EFA explained how the EU would be successful in crisis management in the following way:

The European Union can do more. We can use the Common European Asylum System that we have much better. Member States can offer solidarity and deal with those claims in their own countries without return. So can we please use the system that we have got, make it more humanitarian and actually stop letting people die at sea. (para.63)

As a result, the main factor in the conversations about the EU stakeholders in the EP general assembly discussions in the first years of the 2015 and 2022 migration crises was MEPs' opinion on crisis management. When MEPs were in favor of crisis policies, they made positive and supportive speeches about the Council and the Commission. However, when MEPs were not satisfied with the policies, they criticized

the Council and the Commission, because in the legislative process, the Commission is a powerful stakeholder in the drafting of the law and the Council, like the EP, is the powerful stakeholder in the law voting process. In addition, MEPs' opinions about implementation deficiencies or violations during the crisis affected their conversations with Member States and EU Agencies. If MEPs saw any shortcomings in the implementation of the CEAS or the TPD, they called on Member States to take responsibility and agencies to support Member States. If, however, MEPs pointed out violations in practice, they criticized Member States and agencies for mass repatriations and pushbacks. Finally, whenever MEPs found the management of the crisis period successful, they praised the EU in general and society, while those who complained about the management were calling for solidarity and that the EU should do more. Considering the criticisms of the Council in the 2015 migration crisis, the call to Member States to implement the CEAS, the criticisms of human rights violations and the call for unity and solidarity for the EU in general, it was seen that the criticisms of MEPs towards the management of the 2015 migration crisis were high. Discursive frames on the EU stakeholders on the 2022 migration crisis were the praise of the Council and the Commission for the activation of crisis polices (e.g. the TPD and the Care), of Member States and the EU Agencies for efficient implementation of this policies, and MEP from party groups with different political positions such as EPP, S&D, Greens/EFA generally referred the EU and society for successful migration management.

4.4. Debates on Relevant International Stakeholders

The fourth and last main category of the ten EP plenary debates that took place in the first year of the 2015 migration crisis and the nine debates in the first year of the 2022 migration crisis involve debates on relevant international stakeholders. During both crises, the EU's relations with third states and non-state actors were discussed by MEPs. Origin countries, transit countries, intergovernmental organizations (IGO) and non-governmental organizations (NGO) were the international stakeholders, and the EU relations with these relevant international actors was another pressing issue in the EP to manage migration crises. Since the EP has the authority to decide on international agreements, international policies to be implemented during the migration crisis were also discussed in the meetings (European Union, n.d.). In 2015,

discursive frame towards establishing partnerships and cooperation with a certain set of countries for an effective control and management of migration in the direction of the EU was promoted in the EP a total of twelve times, and partnerships with IGOs and NGOs were supported a total of twelve times. MEPs underlined that in order to manage and control the migration flows, agreements, co-operations, and partnerships should be established with the key countries of origin and transit where refugees live, and also with non-state actors such as the UNHCR, the WFP. The following speech given by Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (2016) from EPP was one of the best examples of this as “Funds for refugees in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan have to be disbursed fast, including to the UN and NGOs” (para. 66).

In 2022, MEPs also emphasized that third countries, IGOs and NGOs should be supported, and partnerships should be established with them. A total of eleven speeches covered supporting cooperation with third countries and ten of these speeches made references to the importance of supporting co-operations with non-state actors. Andrius Kubilius (2022) from EPP emphasized the need for financial support for the Central Asian countries that receive migration from Russia, although they are not countries of origin or transit as “We need to financially help Kazakhstan, Georgia, Armenia, which accept massive flows of Russian refugees” (para. 24). In a total of seventy-seven discussions on the EU’s relevant international stakeholders during the two migration crises, the similarity is in supporting and establishing partnerships with third countries, IGOs and NGOs since the EP role and positions toward international relations were not changed. The differences were the reservations about agreements made with third countries in the 2015 migration crisis, and the approach towards Russia, criticism against NGOs and war crimes in the 2022 migration crisis. Although MEPs generally spoke about supporting relations with third countries for achieving better migration management during the 2015 migration crisis, reservations were made to these partnerships nine times. The basis of these reservations was the violations in international law and EU refugee law in the agreements made with third countries, and these reservations were raised mostly by Green and Left groups, who used refugee-based frames during the 2015 migration crisis, drew attention to human rights violations, and criticized Member States and EU agencies about the violations. Ska Keller (2016) from Greens/EFA expressed her reservations about Turkey being

considered a safe country in accordance with the agreement between the EU and Turkey as “Syrian refugees have been shot at by border guards or other Turkish police – do you think that this country can be qualified as a safe third country, as provided for under the EU Procedures Directive” (para. 28).

In the 2022 migration crisis, conversations about Russia and war crimes and criticisms about the Red Cross have differed from 2015. The fact that the Ukrainian-Russian War was taking place in Europe, MEPs’ use of the word European against Ukrainians, and referring only refugee-based frames for those coming from the Ukrainian border, led them to discuss the war as was the reason for the migration, and to question the war crimes committed from the war. In the first year of the 2022 migration crisis, a total of nine speeches were held on Russia and a total of ten speeches on war crimes. Lucia Ďuriš Nicholsonová (2022) from Renew Group argued that ending the war would be the best solution for Ukrainians:

The best way to help Ukrainian refugees is to stop the war in their own country and to deal with this criminal Putin once and for all. Putin is a war criminal, and I think decent countries should not be trading with war criminals. (para. 85)

Additionally, pro-Russian attitudes were criticized in the EP because the EU was the side that supported Ukraine in the Russia-Ukraine war. The most prominent criticism regarding the migration crisis was directed at the Red Cross opening a refugee camp in Russia. The reason for this criticism was that, allegedly, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) turned a blind eye to human rights violations in Russia’s Bucha region and opened the camp anyway. On this point, Petras Auštrevičius (2022) from Renew expressed criticism as “I sincerely do not understand and strongly question the agreements made by the head of the Red Cross, Peter Maurer, during his visit to Moscow, to open refugee camps in Russia. Can we allow this de facto human trafficking?” (para.14).

As a result, in a total of seventy-seven speeches held in the first year of the 2015 migration crisis and the first year of the 2022 migration crisis, discussions on relevant international stakeholders to support the EU’s partnership with third countries, IGOs and NGOs, establishing relations and signing agreements continued. Due to the political role of the EP in approving international agreements and the budget, MEPs

were involved in discussions on international relations and expressed their opinions. Additionally, supporting countries of origin and transit, the UN and its Agencies, and NGOs to reduce the burden of migration crisis management may be counted among the reasons why MEPs supported partnerships. Nevertheless, party groups, which drew attention to human rights violations in 2015, had a tendency to approach human rights violations in agreements approved between states cautiously. Accepting Turkey as the safe third country in the 2016 EU-Turkey Statements generated controversy for example Ska Keller (2016) asked that “Syrian refugees have been shot at by border guards or other Turkish police – do you think that this country can be qualified as a safe third country, as provided for under the EU Procedures Directive” (para. 28). In 2022, although the EU did not directly participate in the Russia and Ukraine War, there were also political discussions in the immigration debate, as the EU supported Ukraine militarily and financially and imposed sanctions on Russia. It was emphasized that the best way to contain the arrival of Ukrainian refugees would be to stop Putin. Moreover, NGOs working in Russia were accused of allowing Putin’s human rights violations. In the 2015 migration crisis, the need to intervene in the conflict to this extent or the work of NGOs was not brought up negatively because the war was not taking place in Europe.

4.5. Conclusion

A total of two hundred and forty-two MEP speeches were analyzed in the comparison of the ten EP plenary debates held in the first year of the 2015 migration crisis and the nine debates held in the first year of the 2022 migration crisis. It was observed that the same main discursive categories and similar discursive subcategories emerged during both migration crises. The reason for continuity in the dominant forms of discursive frames is the institutional role of the EP and its political power in EU politics. With the 2007 Lisbon Treaty, the EP had the co-decision power, supervisory EU institutions and approving budgets (European Union, n.d.), and within the framework of this power, the EP played a role in the management of the 2015 and 2022 migration crises. Additionally, Committees and General Assembly Meetings were two areas of work of the EP. Since all MEPs can participate in general assembly meetings, unlike the groups in the committees, and the final decision is taken by voting at the end of plenary meetings, MEPs prepared their speeches to directly affect the others during the

migration crises. Therefore, MEPs' speeches regarding the migration crisis may have ensured continuity in the 2015 and 2022 migration crises, since the role of EP was not change in the EU, and the importance of the plenary session in the working stage of EP.

In addition to the similarities, different discursive frames emerged in the analyses resulting from one hundred and fifty-three MEP speeches in the 2015 migration crisis and eighty-nine MEP speeches in the 2022 migration crisis. The formation of divergent discursive frames in the EP plenary debates occurred through a domino effect. The debates towards the arrivals affected the crisis policies, and from there the debates on the EU stakeholders, and then the debates on relevant international stakeholders. Therefore, firstly, it should be understood particular distinctions toward arrivals and reasons behind it. The main difference in the debates on the arriving groups was the creation discursive frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination in 2022, in addition to the refugee-based, non-refugee-based and conditional refugee frames in the 2015 migration crisis, and also, the decreasing the number of conducted non-refuge-based frames. The reasons for these changes were the ideologies of the party groups and geographical differentiation. While Right-Wing, Conservative and Democrat party groups applied refugee-based frames for those coming from the Ukrainian border, they used non-refugee-based and conditional refugee frames for those coming from the Mediterranean, Aegean Sea and Western Balkans. On the other hand, Left, Green and Liberal party groups were more likely to use refugee-based frames without avoiding geographical differentiation frames in both migration crises.

Comparisons have shown that the use of frames for incoming groups is a key factor influencing debates on crisis policies. MEPs' speeches towards arrivals in the 2015 and 2022 migration crises shaped their discursive frames on political responses during the first year of crises. In 2015, party groups who applied for non-refugee-based and conditional refugee frames supported policies such as controlling migration routes, increasing border controls, preventing boarding, and implementing the CEAS, while other party groups using refugee-based frames supported humanitarian visas, establishment of legal ways and activation of the TPD. In 2022, on the one hand, MEPs' speeches indicated similar discourses about arrivals who reach the EU borders via the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea due to geographical differentiation frames. On

the other hand, since non-refugee-based or conditional refugee frames were never used for those fleeing the Russia-Ukraine war, and refugee based discursive frames were adopted, there was unanimity in crises policy responses regarding Ukrainians and people with residence permits in Ukraine. For example, there was no criticism from MEPs regarding the activation of the TPD and the opening of the humanitarian corridor. The third main category, debates on the relevant EU stakeholders (e.g. Member States, Commission, Council, the EU Agencies and the EU), was also a pressing issue in both the 2015 migration crisis and the 2022 migration crisis.

In the 2015 migration crisis, the speeches demanding from Member States taking responsibility and cost sharing of migration management, criticizing the Council's malfunction in decision-making process, and emphasizing the need for EU Agencies to support Member States were mostly made by party groups that emphasized search and rescue operations, border controls, and the implementation of policies such as the CEAS. Moreover, the party groups that drew attention to the human rights violations of Member States and EU agents in practice were advocated legal migration routes and the activation of the TPD. The factors affecting praise and criticism toward the EU stakeholders were affected by the attitudes of MEPs or party groups for crisis policies. In the 2022 migration crisis, duality prevailed again due to geographical differentiation frames. The speeches prepared about arrivals reaching the EU from the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas, had parallel frames as the 2015 were held. The Council was criticized for malfunction in ratifying the Migration Pact, and Greece and Frontex for their pushback at the borders. On the other hand, since there was unanimous acceptance with the policies towards those coming from the Ukrainian border, MEPs praised Member States and EU agents for their practices at the border in their speeches and congratulated the Commission and the Council for quickly activating the TPD. As a result, throughout 2015, MEPs tended to criticize the EU for not capable managing the migration crisis, while in 2022, the EU and society were praised for the migration management at the Ukrainian border.

Finally, although the parallels between 2015 and 2022 in MEP speeches on the relevant international stakeholders was based on the political role of the EP in international agreements, the particular distinctions were based on the perspectives of the EP groups on migration management that they maintained throughout the migration crisis

plenaries. During the 2015 migration crisis, one of the policies supported by MEPs, who applied non-refugee-based and conditional refugee frames in the discussions about arrivals, was to prevent them from boarding the ship, so they supported IGO and NGO partnerships and agreements with third countries because their aim was to prevent or reduce immigrants from coming to the EU. MEPs, on the other hand, resorted to refugee-based frames, defended the TPD and legal migration paths, and drew attention to human rights violations, therefore they were hesitant about situations that were open to violations in agreements with third countries. In 2022, while the consensus on support for Ukraine and sanctions against Russia continued, partnerships with IGOs and NGOs tended to be supported.

As a result, when the ten EP debates in the first year of the 2015 migration crisis and the nine parliamentary debates in the first year of the 2022 migration crisis were comparatively analyzed, it is seen that there are similar and different discursive frames in MEPs' speeches. It is especially noteworthy that the main and subcategories emerging through dominant frames adopted in different MEPs' discourses are the same. The main reason for this is the institutional position and political role of the EP within the EU, and this has not changed from 2015 to 2023. On the other hand, it is thought that the main reason for the differences in the discussions is the ideologies of the party groups and geographical differentiation, because these two factors affect the perspective on the arrival. Approaches towards arrivals during migration crises affect conversations about migration policies, and approaches to migration policies affect conversations about the EU stakeholders and relevant international stakeholders like a domino effect.

5. CHAPTER: CONCLUSION

Migration is not a new phenomenon for Europe, where, according to IOM's 2021 data, the proportion of international migrants to the total population is 30.9% (IOM, 2021), but migration has become a pressing issue in public and political debates within the European Union (EU), not once but twice in the twenty-first century. Migration has turned into a difficult challenge for Member States to manage due to the high numbers of migration flows to the borders, and unexpected arrivals in a very short period of time in 2015 and 2022. Asylum applications almost tripled in 2015 compared to the previous year, reaching 1,282,690, and in 2022, 965,665 first-time asylum applications and 4 million Ukrainians with temporary protection status created a crisis that forced the EU and its stakeholders to manage migration flows.

Since this intensity of migration flows and the difficulty in managing migration flows for Member States (e.g. inadequacy of border controls, inability to prevent boat incidents at sea) turned migration into a crisis, public and political debates were carried out by the EU institutions, Member States, the press and the EU public. The European Parliament's (EP) approach to migration crises, as one of the two bodies of the joint decision-making process, sheds light on the EU's approach to crisis management. In addition, in the plenary debates held by the EP before voting, the speeches of the members of the European Parliament (MEPs) allow them to control the agenda, influence other MEPs, and set a remarkable example for legitimizing decisions. Since the subject of the plenaries were determined in advance, MEPs' speeches are well-prepared, well-thought-out and persuasive texts designed to be effective and agenda-setting at the same time. For this reason, the discursive frames repeated in these speeches were found useful in this thesis for understanding the EP's and the EU's approaches to migration.

In this context, the discursive frames used by MEPs in the EP plenary debates during the first year of the 2015 migration crisis (1 April 2015 - 1 April 2016) and the first year of the 2022 migration crisis (24 February 2022 - 24 February 2023) were

analyzed. MEPs' speeches during both the 2015 migration crisis and the 2022 migration crisis were examined with the inductive content analysis method. The focus was on the first year of the crises, as it was the period with the highest number of border crossings in the EU and the most intense period of EP plenaries. Another purpose of taking a one-year period in both of these migration crises and discussing only the speeches of MEPs was to ensure the comparability of the two selected cases with the use of similar forms of data in Chapter 4.

In Chapter 2, ten EP plenary meetings and one hundred fifty-three MEP speeches were analyzed that took place during the first year of the 2015 migration crisis. In Chapter 3, nine EP plenary meetings and ninety-seven MEP speeches were examined that took into account in the first year of the 2022 migration crisis. The main and sub-categories of migration discourses were identified in the analysis of the EP plenaries over a one-year period by looking into repeated words, phrases and sentences in the speeches of MEPs. Based on the manual counting of repetitions of specific words, phrases and sentences in the speeches given by MEPs from different party groups, four main categories emerged in both Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. These four main discursive categories involved (1) debates on arrivals; (2) debates on crisis policies; (3) debates on the relevant EU stakeholders; and (4) debates on the relevant international stakeholders.

The first main category, which involves debates on arrivals, involved specific frames used for identifying those who attempted to cross the EU borders and who arrived at the EU borders during the 2015 and 2022 migration crises (e.g. refugee, asylum seeker, economic migrant). In 2015, three discursive sub-categories emerged as refugee-based, non-refugee-based and conditional refugee frames. In addition to these three sub-categories, frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination also constituted the fourth sub-category in the 2022 migration crisis. The most repeated discursive framework throughout the two migration crises was refugee-based definitions, which involved references made to those arriving to the EU primarily as "refugees". In this case, the transformation of the pro-migration attitude of the EP into an anti-migration attitude, together with the co decision procedure explained by Ripoll Servent (2010, 2014) and Lopatin (2013), has not been seen in this thesis because the most repeated ones in the discourses on arrivals produced in the EP were refugee-

based frames.

The first sub-category is composed of the refugee-based frames, where arrivals are considered as the arrival of refugees fleeing war and seeking protection. In the second sub- category of discursive frame, which is non-refugee-based, it is claimed that the arrivals are economic migrants, and the not imposing strict controls over an arrival of economic immigrants posed a danger to the EU's social cohesion. The third sub-category involves the conditional refugee frame and is based on the idea that the EU should determine at the borders whether people arriving are refugees or economic immigrants and then treat them accordingly. The fourth subcategory, discursive frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding anti-discrimination, involved criticisms of the EU's practices towards immigrants, such as border controls and taking immigrants' fingerprints, which were selectively applied depending on where immigrants were coming from, leading to discriminatory practices. Discourses under this category also emphasized that everyone arriving at the EU borders should be treated under equal and fair conditions.

Two factors were found to underline the four discursive subcategories that emerged from MEPs' speeches in connection with the 2015 and 2022 migration crises. First of all, the type of discursive frames MEPs adopted depended on the party groups and their ideologies. Far-Right parties with Conservative and Nationalist ideologies such as EFDD, ECR and ID used non-refugee-based frames, EPP, S&D and Renew being Center and Democrat parties used conditional refugee or refugee-based frames, and Green and Left-Wing parties such as Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL used refugee-based frames and frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination. Secondly, it was observed that depending on where the migratory arrivals originated from, the types of discursive frames adopted by MEPs showed significant variations. For example, the non-refugee-based and conditional refugee frames were never used for those coming from the Ukrainian border. However, MEPs from EPP, ECR used non-refugee-based and conditional refugee frames in debates about those coming from the Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea routes in 2022. Reasons behind discursive frames that involve geographical differentiation among migrants were that generally the EP identified the war in Europe and Ukrainians as European, and also none of party groups in the Parliament approached Ukrainians discursively through the use non-refugee or

conditional refugee frames. Nonetheless, refugees who came from Africa and Asia were identified by non-refugee or conditional refugee frames by Right-Wing and Nationalist party groups in 2015 and also in 2022.

The second main discursive category of the 2015 and 2022 migration crises was composed of debates on crisis policies which involved references (I) towards migration routes for management of migration flows, and (II) towards forced migrants who already arrived at the EU borders. The first theme of MEPs' speeches regarding the migration route policies contained initiating the search and rescue operations to stop human trafficking, preventing smuggling in the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea, and preventing migrants from boarding boats by supporting origin countries financially, but also establishing legal migration routes, and managing humanitarian corridors. In the second theme of MEPs' speeches, crisis policies towards asylum seekers who have already crossed the EU borders included the effective implementation of the EU's common migration and asylum policies or the creation of new policies such as the Australian Points System, and activating the Temporary Protection Directive, meeting the needs of asylum seekers.

In the first years of the 2015 and 2022 migration crisis, two factors emerged that affected the discursive frameworks produced for the migration and refugee policies implemented to manage the crises. These were geographical differentiation frames and the ideological positions of the party groups on the issue of migration. First of all, search and rescue operations, preventing smuggling, border checks, taking fingerprints of migrants were preferred by Center-Right and Nationalist political groups such as EFDD, ECR, and EFN, which wanted to control the migration flow, and also these party groups generally tended to refer the non-refugee or the conditional refugee frames. Legal migrations routes, humanitarian visa and human corridors were mostly promoted in the discourses used by the Green and Far-Left party groups such as GUE/NGL, and Greens/EFA, because they supported the legal asylum admissions, and also Green and Left-Wing party groups generally tended to refer the refugee-based frames or frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discriminations. As a result, the ideologies of the party groups influenced their discursive frames towards the arrivals, which also determined the discursive frames for the crisis policies.

Secondly, during the 2022 migration crisis, in addition to ideological positions,

geographical differentiation frames also determined the discursive frameworks for arrivals and also affected debates on the crisis policies. For example, practices such as search, and rescue operations and increased border controls were never brought to the agenda for those coming from the Ukrainian border in 2022. Moreover, opening the humanitarian corridor for those coming from the Ukrainian border, providing the basic needs (e.g. food, water and shelter) of those arriving the EU and activating the TPD tended to be supported by not only Far-Left and Green party groups (e.g. GUE/NGL, Greens/ALE, ALDE) but also Center-Right and Nationalist groups (e.g. EPP and ECR, ID), because the majority of MEPs had the view that the war was taking place in Europe, and Ukrainians were Europeans who needed supported,. Therefore, supporting Ukrainian refugees and managing their migration were seen as the responsibilities of the EU as a regional institution.

The third main category that emerged with the categorization of discursive frames in the EP discussions analyzed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 was the relevant EU stakeholders. In the first years of 2015 and 2022 migration crises, MEPs expressed their opinions about the relevant EU stakeholders which were the European Commission, the European Council, the European Agencies (e.g. the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), the European Union Asylum Agency (EASO), European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust), and European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol), and the society. The factors that determine the discursive frames of the relevant EU stakeholders consist of MEPs' ideological positions on crisis policies and political party groups. When party groups such as EPP, S&D, Renew and ALDE referred the implementation of Common European Asylum System (CEAS) (e.g. border controls, fingerprint, Dublin Regulations), they called Member States to cooperate, share the cost of migration management and take responsibility to implement the CEAS in the 2015 migration crisis. Moreover, Left-Wing and Green party groups like GUE/NGL and Greens/EFA criticized Member States for violations of Geneva Convention such as pushbacks and mass-refoulement, and Right-Wing and Eurosceptic party groups criticized Germany and Sweden by accusing them of triggering further migration into the EU during the first-year of 2015 migration crisis.

The discursive frames formed in the first year of the 2015 migration crisis showed that

if political parties did not find migration policies sufficient enough to manage the crisis, they criticized the Commission for not producing a new plan and not being able to carry out its monitoring duty. Party groups with different ideologies such as S&D, EPP, GEU/NGL jointly criticized the Council's slowness in decision-making and its attitude of acting independently throughout the crisis. Discursive frames for the EU Agencies were party groups that emphasized the implementation of CEAS, stating that them should support Member States in implementation, but on the contrary, party groups that criticized Member States for violations of rights and the EU laws at the borders criticized the Agencies for the same reason.

In Chapter 3, in the EP debates on the first year of the 2022 migration crisis, while the discursive frames on the relevant EU stakeholders regarding those coming from the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea routes were similar to those in 2015, different discursive frames developed for the Ukrainian border. The reason for developing two different discursive frames also depended on whether the crisis policies and practices were successful or not. For instance, party groups (e.g. EPP, Renew, S&D and Greens/EFA, GUE/NGL), which supported the policies that were put into force for managing the migration flow at the EU and Ukrainian border, underlined the success about the implementation of Member States and the EU Agencies at the borders. MEPs deemed successful the Commission and the Council for rapid and joint decision-making by activating Temporary Protection Directive (TPD). Party groups were not effective in these discursive frames, and party groups with different ideologies used the same frame. Moreover, the Greens/ALE and GUE/NGL party groups criticized Member States, the Commission, the Council, the Agencies, and the EU was acting distinctively migrant groups because these groups supported frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination and pro-migration ideas during the first-year of 2022 migration crisis. In this case, they criticized Member States and the EU Agencies for their pushbacks in Mediterranean and Aegean Sea, the Commission for remaining a spectator to the human rights violations of Member States, and the Council for not expanding the scope of the TPD.

The fourth main category was the debates on the relevant international stakeholders which were third countries (e.g. origin and transit countries) and non-state actors (e.g. intergovernmental organizations (IGO), non-governmental organizations (NGO). In

Chapter 2, Center-Right and Nationalist party groups such as EPP, ECR, aiming to control or reduce the migration flow were in sight financial support, collaborations, agreements with origin and transit countries, and the missions of IGOs and NGOs in origin and transit countries to reduce crisis's pressure on the EU. Yet, political groups that draw attention to human rights violations (e.g. ALDE, Greens/EFA) have also expressed the same reservations about agreements made with third parties. Same groups support the missions of NGOs and IGOs in countries of origin and transit, as they are carried out in accordance with international law, refugee rights. As discussed in Chapter 3, financial, equipment and technical supports Ukraine and isolating Russia with trade ban and cutting political relations, were corroborated by all groups in the EP which support Ukraine and Ukrainian refugees in the war. Furthermore, all MEPs supported the coordination with IGOs and NGO working in Ukraine during time of war.

Chapter 4 compared the discursive frames developed by MEPs in the first years of the 2015 and 2022 migration crises, analyzed the similarities- differences between main categories, sub-categories, and explained what the determining factors were. It was observed that the same main and sub-categories emerged during both migration crises. The reason for continuity in the dominant forms of all categories grounded the institutional role of the EP and its political power in the EU migration politics. With the 2007 Lisbon Treaty, the EP had the co-decision power and supervisory EU institutions (European Union, n.d.), and within the power of this political role, the EP played a role in the management of the 2015 and 2022 migration crises. Moreover, MEPs prepared their speeches to directly affect the others during the migration crises since all MEPs can participate in general assembly meetings and the final decision is taken by voting at the end of plenary meetings. Therefore, MEPs' speeches regarding the crisis may have ensured continuity in the 2015 and 2022 migration crises, since the role of EP was not change in the EU, and the importance of the plenary session in the working stage of EP.

There were two main reasons for the differences in discursive frames which were the ideologies of the party groups and geographical differentiation and they have affected all fourth main categories, subcategories and discursive frameworks with a domino effect. The discursive frames towards the arrivals affected the crisis policies, and from

there the debates on the EU stakeholders, and then the debates on relevant international stakeholders. Firstly, particular different frames toward arrivals were that emergence of frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination in 2022 migration crisis and the decrease in the number of non-refugee-based and conditional refugee frames. While Right-Wing, Conservative and Democrat party groups applied refugee-based frames for those coming from the Ukrainian border in 2022, they used non-refugee-based and conditional refugee frames for those coming from the Mediterranean, Aegean Sea and Western Balkans in 2015. Nevertheless, Left, Green and Liberal party groups were more likely to use refugee-based frames without referring geographical differentiation frames in both migration crises and also, they referred frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination.

Chapter 4 showed that the use of frames for arrivals is a key factor influencing debates on crisis policies. In 2015, party groups who applied for non-refugee-based and conditional refugee frames supported policies such as controlling migration routes, increasing border controls, preventing boarding, and implementing CEAS, while other party groups using refugee-based frames supported humanitarian visas, establishment of legal ways and activation of the TPD. In 2022, on the one hand, MEPs' speeches indicated similar discursive frames about arrivals who reach the EU borders via the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea due to geographical differentiation. Since refugee-based frames were adopted for those fleeing the Russia-Ukraine war, MEPs fully promoted the activation of the TPD and the opening of the humanitarian corridor.

The similar and different discursive frames in debates on the relevant EU stakeholders were the praise and criticism towards Member States, Commission, Council, the EU Agencies and society. There were more warnings and criticisms towards the relevant EU stakeholders in Chapter 2. For example, Member States and Frontex were criticized for violations of the Dublin Regulations, the Council was criticized for slowing down the legislative process and made crisis management difficult, and the Commission was criticized for failing to fulfill its monitoring duty. In Chapter 3, dual discursive frames prevailed again due to geographical differentiation. The speeches prepared about arrivals reaching the EU from the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas, had parallel frames as the 2015 were held. For example, the Council was criticized for failing to ratify the Migration Pact, and Greece and Frontex for their pushback at the

borders. However, MEPs praised Member States and the EU Agencies for their practices at the border in their speeches and congratulated the Commission and the Council for quickly activating the TPD yet there was unanimous acceptance with the policies towards those coming from the Ukrainian border in 2022 migration crisis.

In the fourth category which involved debates on the relevant international stakeholders, the particular distinctions in the discourses were based on the perspectives of the EP groups and also geographical differentiation frames that they maintained throughout the migration crisis plenaries. Since the frames regarding the arrivals in the 2015 migration crisis were shaped according to party groups and ideologies, the discursive frames for international stakeholders differed. For example, Right-Wing and Nationalist parties were more positive about cooperation with third countries, but Left-Wing and Liberal parties were wary of partnerships and bilateral agreements that might violate the Geneva Convention. In 2022, while the relations with the stakeholders on the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea routes are similar to the discourses in 2015, the discourses regarding the Ukraine route have newly emerged. Supporting Ukraine and Ukrainians financially, equipment and technically, regardless of ideological differences of party groups, and even supporting Ukraine in the war, isolating and preventing Russia through diplomatic and commercial means, and financially supporting IGOs and NGOs working in Ukraine were the discursive frames produced by MEPs.

As a result, similarities were often seen in the discursive frames used by MEPs during the 2015 and 2022 migration crises. The basis of these similarities was the continuity of the institutional structure of both the EP, and in this case, it was shown how institutions limit agents, as predicted by discursive institutionalists (Schmidt, 2002; 2008; 2010; 2011). In addition, coordinative discourses, which are one of the communication forms of discursive institutionalism (Schmidt, 2002; 2008; 2011), formed the basis of the third main category in this research. According to Schmidt (2008), in multi-actor political systems, actors frequently use coordinative discourses to persuade each other, and all MEPs' discourses towards EU stakeholders are examples of coordinative discourses.

In addition, there were also certain differences among the discursive frames adopted by MEPs throughout the 2015 and 2022 migration crises. Not using non-refugee-based

frames in the 2022 migration crisis, using frames emphasizing the importance of avoiding discrimination for the first time, and discourses that involved praising of all the relevant EU stakeholders are examples of changes that occurred in MEPs migration discourses during the selected time periods. In the discursive frames produced during the 2015 migration crisis, it was identified that the EP was criticized for failing to manage the migration crisis since MEPs criticized Member States, the Council and the Agencies. However, considering the discursive frames of the 2022 migration crisis, there were praises for unity and solidarity among the EU stakeholders. The Council and the Commission for the activation of TPD, Member States and the EU agencies for full implementation of TDP, society for welcoming refugees in the EU borders was mentioned by MEPs as the successful migration management. Specific discursive frames showed that the EP changed in ideas regarding the management of the 2015 and 2022 migration crises. This situation revealed the prediction of discursive institutionalism which was the institutions produced different ideas through discourses in different contexts (which were the 2015 and 2022 migration crises in this thesis) (Schmidt, 2008; 2010; 2011).

Based on the comparative results of the discursive frames produced in the 2015 and 2022 migration crises, two main factors were found behind the similarities and differences between the discursive frames. The first of these was the party groups and the ideologies of the party groups. As shown in studies in the literature (e.g. Krotký & Kaniok, 2020; Servent 2014; Lopatin 2013, Hix and Noury 2007), MEP speeches tested in this research showed that party groups and MEPs with left and liberal ideologies developed pro-migration frames such as refuge-based or anti-discrimination frames, activation of TPD, and re actions to violations of refugee rights while Conservative and Nationalist groups tended to develop anti-immigrant discourses and restrictive policies like non-refugee or conditional refugee frames, Australia Point System, and increasing border controls.

In addition, it became clear in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 that geographical differentiation frames were another factor affecting the speeches of MEPs. The variation in the types of discursive frames adopted by MEPs were determined by where the immigrant came from was not an assumption of this thesis but has been a strong factor because the discursive frames that members use for crisis policies and EU

stakeholders have been influenced by those related to arrivals. For example, more pro-migration policies such as the TDP and the CARE were supported by all party groups in 2022, as people from Ukraine were defined by the refugee-based frames. However, a single discursive frame did not emerge in crisis policy discussions in 2015, as non-refugee-based or conditional refugee frames were also used for those coming from the Mediterranean and Aegean regions. In the complex situation, ECR and EPP supported increased border controls, while Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL demanded the introduction of humanitarian visa regulations. Future research may test whether there are geographical differentiations in different EU institutions by analyzing the discourses of these other institutions. Moreover, while this thesis primarily focused on the analysis of discourse, future studies may investigate how the use of specific discursive frames during the migration crises affected policies developed. This may bring new contributions to the relevant literature.

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