

Control and Compassion

The Framing of the Migration-Security Nexus
within the Migration Policy of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in the Context of Increased Irregular Migration towards Europe between 2015 and 2017

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Prologue

What lies before you is a thesis on the framing of migration policy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Netherlands. I collected my data during my internship there at the Taskforce Migration. The reason that I applied for an internship at the Taskforce Migration was that I was intrigued by international discussions on the increased arrival of irregular migrants from Africa and Asia into Europe. Responses of politicians, civil society and journalists in both the international and the national arena made me feel eager to learn about how policy was shaped within the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs surrounding the migration topic.

Before I started my research, I was well aware of the fact that I had chosen a topic about one of the most challenging and controversial societal debates of today. Hence there were several struggles that I stumbled upon throughout the writing process. First, the situation of increased irregular migration is very sensitive, because of the national and international polarization on how to engage with it. Having spoken to many people inside and outside the ministry made me anxious that I would not do right to all of their standpoints, or that I would give a biased or inaccurate view even though I tried to create an inclusive and objective academic analysis. Therefore, I have aimed to write my thesis as well-balanced as I could. Second, the fact that my thesis is about 'framing' caused me to be extremely conscious of every term that I used myself. I thus critically reflected upon all my word choices, and consequently felt the need to explain my choice for them throughout the thesis when I believed it was necessary. Third, I did not want to bring out information that was sensitive or meant in a different way than I interpreted it. Therefore I have preserved a moral integrity in order to prevent this. Fourth, due to my daily work as an intern I started to realize that migration processes were more nuanced and layered than I thought in advance.

Due to these personal dilemmas I was aware of potential pitfalls, yet also felt increasingly motivated to write a deliberate thesis. Throughout the internship and writing process I learned how to integrate multiple and sometimes diverging viewpoints, while also staying close to the core message of my thesis. In every way, my research process has felt like an adventure. I have been racking my brains on finding the overlap between practical knowledge and theoretical knowledge, and enjoyed the process of putting together the pieces of this incredibly sensitive and complex research puzzle.

I am thankful to all the people who have aided me in doing this. I thank my supervisor Chris van der Borgh for his feedback and support. Furthermore, all interviewees were kind and generous in sharing their visions, experiences and concerns. I thank my colleagues for their willingness, time and openness to share their ideas and knowledge, and their support and encouragement throughout the internship. In particular I would like to thank the Head of the Taskforce Migration, Robert-Jan Sieben, who took the time to provide me with advice for my thesis.

Abstract

The aim of this research is to analyze the framing of migration policy at the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the context of increased irregular migration from Africa and Asia towards Europe in the time period of Summer 2015 until Summer 2017. Framing is considered here as a process in which actors with different viewpoints create a discursive interpretation of a situation. I will show that the policy framing of the Dutch government hinges on negotiations of actors who are situated in a polarized national force field. The framing reflects a balance between control and compassion in the realm of migration due to diverging political views on the so-called migration-security nexus, which refers to the relation between migration and security. The migration-security nexus is represented in securitizing frames and humanizing frames. These frames are reflections of two theoretical notions of security. The first is securitization. This is a notion in which national security is prioritized. The second is human security. This is a notion in which the individual security of migrants is prioritized. The dominant frame of the Dutch government thus merges plural conceptions of the migration-security nexus. The academic relevance of this research is to demonstrate how policy framing can be ambiguous and therefore can be used to legitimate different political viewpoints. My goal is not to give an analysis of actual policy measures of the Dutch government, nor to give a moral assessment of its practices. Instead, I aim to provide an evaluation of the framing of the policy, and illustrate how an ambiguous policy framing is useful in legitimizing a wide range of policy practices.

Chapter 1

Introduction

"The cabinet's policy is focused on preventing that people undertake the dangerous cross-over to Europe."

- The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs¹

If one looks at this sentence, the core message might be debatable. Is it emphasizing that people should be prevented from reaching Europe? Is it emphasizing that people who aim to make the cross-over should be protected from danger? Does it show both? And does it even matter which of the two emphases it bears? For the thesis that I am presenting here, the above sentence summarizes the essence of my argument. My goal is to analyze how framing can illustrate a merger of conflicting viewpoints within migration policy.

1.1 Control and Compassion

In February 2017, an article was published by the independent think tank European Stability Initiative, in which it was advocated that the European Union (EU) should combine "border control with compassion" for the "refugee crisis in the Mediterranean" (European Stability Initiative 2017: 1). It argues that the EU has to combine control of external borders to "deter migration" while simultaneously respecting the Refugee Convention that was signed in 1951 by the United Nations to "treat asylum seekers respectfully". The belief is that the EU migration policy can be both "humane and effective". The article reflects a dual notion of security, namely of securing European borders and securing human wellbeing. It is illustrative of a typical attempt to bring together two goals that may be conflicting at times.

The aim of this research is to explore this in the realm of framing of migration policy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Netherlands. Comparable to the framing at a European level, the framing at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs consists of a combination of a human security notion, which focuses on securing human lives, and a securitization notion, which focuses on securing European borders. The core claim here is that this framing is ambiguous due to the attempted merging of various standpoints in the political and societal arena. My analysis aims to contribute specific insights on how policy framing in general plays a role in policy processes and how it may incorporate an assembly of views. I will now explain in what context my research is embedded, and how this has led me to my research question.

1.2 The Migration-Security Nexus

My research is situated in the context of increased irregular migration from Africa and Asia to Europe between 2015 and 2017. During this period, a relatively large number of people attempted to migrate to Europe with reasons varying from fleeing civil wars to escaping scarce economic opportunities. These people are often called either asylum-seeker, migrant or refugee. These terms are contested and often mixed up in daily word usage, especially because it is uncertain upon people's arrival to which category they belong. For the sake of analytical simplicity I will use the term 'migrant' as the overarching category that

¹ 'Nieuwe Commissievoorstellen en initiatieven van de lidstaten van de Europese Unie', Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kamerstuk 22112 No. 2319.

includes multiple groups and individuals, varying from a Syrian refugee to a person from Sudan who seeks an alternative livelihood. Broadly defined, I will consider a migrant here as a person who is moving or has moved across an international border and who has to complete legal procedures in order to obtain the right to stay in a new country (IOM 2017: 11). The salient feature of the migrants under study in the current context is that they migrate in an irregular fashion. Although the term "irregular" or "illegal" migration is also sometimes contested, it is considered here as a form of migration whereby people try to enter a country without valid travel documents or the authorization that is required under immigration regulations (IOM 2017: 1).

The situation under study is often coined "migration crisis", a term regularly criticized for the negative connotation it bears, the misplaced stress it implies, or the Eurocentric perspective it represents. It often remains controversial or vague what exactly constitutes the migration crisis, for whom it is a crisis, or how it compares with earlier periods. Therefore, I will use a more neutral term by calling it the 'migration issue'. I define this as the increased irregular migration from Africa and Asia across or towards European borders that stirred up many public debates and political responses in Europe between 2015 and 2017. Although arrivals were already rising in 2014 (Table 1), the migration issue got its salience due the explosive international attention.

Table 1: Arrivals via the Mediterranean Sea into Europe²

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Eastern Mediterranean Route	4.370	11.831	44.057	856.723	172.090	Until July 10, 2017: 9.566 (and counting)
Central Mediterranean Route	15.151	45.298	170.664	153.842	173.799	Until July 10, 2017: 85.197 (and counting)

Scheffer (2015: 1) analyzes how the migration issue created an uncomfortable balance within Europe. There grew a feeling of moral responsibility and humanitarian duty to take in migrants, while there also was concern for societal tension and absorption capacity. The migration issue stirred up public and political discussions that varied from a focus on individual security for refugees to a focus on national security for citizens who felt threatened. This shows that security is contested (MacDonald 2002: 277), because security can be interpreted in different ways. In this regard, it is relevant to incorporate the notion of Pinyol-Jiménez (2012) on the so-called "migration-security nexus", which is the complex and politically sensitive connection between migration and security (ibid.: 36). Especially since the attacks of September 11, 2001 in New York, migration gradually became linked to security in everyday discourse. Some actors in Europe connected migration to security to legitimize their means of dealing with it (ibid.: 54).

Broadly, European countries have seen two general responses to migration (Pinyol-Jiménez 2012: 42). On the one hand, there has been a development of practices to increase control, for example by securing borders against an uncontrolled influx with an enhanced European Border and Coast Guard. On the other

² Based upon data of: 'IOM launches study: "Migration Trends Across the Mediterranean: Connecting the Dots"', IOM, n.d., <http://www.iom-nederland.nl/en/466-iom-launches-study-migration-trends-across-the-mediterranean-connecting-the-dots> (visited June 18, 2017). And: 'Mediterranean Situation', UNHCR, 2017, <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean> (visited July 11, 2017).

hand, there has been attention to fighting xenophobic attitudes, promote integration and equal treatment, and propagate the positive impact of migration in European societies. Although both responses might happen simultaneously, some governments seem to have put emphasis on one of them. Lindvall (2015) investigated whether British Prime Minister Cameron and German Chancellor Merkel discursively linked the migration issue to security in 2015. She concluded that the government of the United Kingdom depicted the migration issue as a threat to British society and prioritized the security of the nation, while the government of Germany depicted the migration issue as a human tragedy and prioritized the security of migrants (ibid.: 28). This shows how the migration-security nexus can be differently framed across European governments.

To build further on Lindvall's observation, I will analyze the framing of the Dutch government, taking into account internal friction within one government instead of treating a government as a coherent entity. A close inspection of dynamics within one government might add new insights to how the migration-security is framed. By analyzing the Dutch government I thus hope to provide new insights on the migration-security nexus in the EU. Concretely, I argue that the Dutch government represents a middle ground between the British and German perspectives. I will explain this by analyzing how its framing is built upon two notions of security, namely securitization and human security.

Securitization is a notion that focuses on the migration issue as a threat for EU societies, which resembles the conclusion of Lindvall (2015) on the securitizing perspective of the United Kingdom. I will speak of a 'securitizing frame' when I analyze statements that are based upon this notion. Contrastingly, human security focuses on the migration issue as destructive for human wellbeing and survival of migrants themselves, which resembles the conclusion of Lindvall on the humanitarian German perspective. I decided to coin the term 'humanizing frame' for analyzing language that reflects such a human security notion, because I believe this is an overarching term for multiple values that point to human wellbeing, varying from human rights to humanitarian aid. In general, my aim is to illustrate how the framing of migration policy at the Dutch government seems to reflect the notion of the European Stability Initiative that policy can combine "control with compassion" (2017: 1). My research question is thus as follows:

Research Question

How is the migration-security nexus framed
within the migration policy of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
in the context of increased irregular migration towards Europe between 2015 and 2017?

I will show that the framing is not based on generally accepted interpretations of the migration issue, but instead hinges on negotiations of actors who are situated in a polarized national force field. More specifically, the Dutch government represents plural conceptions of the migration-security nexus, comparable to the British and German conceptions, and has merged these in order to create a coherent policy framework. I would argue that in its framing the Dutch government is constantly aiming to find a balance between helping people in need and complying with human rights agreements on the one hand, while protecting the perceived absorption capacity of Dutch and European society by curbing the influx on the other hand.

My goal here is not to make a judgment on the framing, nor to assess the morality of policy practices. Instead, I aim to provide an analysis of framing, by displaying the complexity of a framing that legitimizes a government's policies and satisfies a range of actors. Furthermore, the current thesis is not meant to give an overview of the large amount of Dutch migration policy measures. Practices and topics that the government daily engages with, such as resettlement programs, EU solidarity, combating human smuggling, and cooperation with third countries, are not under investigation here.

1.3 Research Setting: The Taskforce Migration at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The research took place during my internship at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I will refer to this ministry from now on as BZ (Dutch: *Buitenlandse Zaken*) which is how its employees often call it. BZ is occupied with the external dimension of migration, which refers to foreign policy with regards to the EU and countries from which people migrate. As a comparison, the Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice is more focused on the internal dimension of migration, like integration. However, the latter is simultaneously responsible for the external dimension, for example by creating repatriation procedures. Therefore, policy responses to the migration issue are created within close cooperation of both Ministries, sometimes causing blurred lines between their functions or output. In the current thesis it might occasionally be that described actions or framings are a co-product of both Ministries. It is beyond the scope of this text to go into detail about this, especially because other Ministries are involved as well. My research is focused on BZ on the assumption that its policy processes reflect those of the Dutch government in general and thus provide a rich case study through which larger processes can be illustrated.

In addition, I am aware that BZ is influenced by policymaking of the EU. Therefore I do not pretend like BZ is a pioneer of its policies, or that its framing is a purely Dutch phenomenon. It reflects an overarching EU framing of both securitizing frames and humanizing frames that is sometimes tangible in statements of the European Commission:

"The EU's external borders have increasingly been the scene of human tragedies to which the EU, together with its Member States, must take immediate action. At the same time, migration needs to be better managed in all its aspects" (European Commission 2017: 1).

Importantly, this does not imply that all EU Member States have adopted a similar framing. As was noticeable in the research of Lindvall (2015), there is much variation across EU countries, and therefore the Dutch government can be investigated in its own right. It is beyond the scope of this text to explain where the framing originates from. Although I have inquired factors such as the value towards human rights treaties in the Netherlands, I think it suffices to say that the Dutch government is inspired by or reinforces a framing that is also tangible at the EU.

My research took place during my internship at the Taskforce Migration at BZ from January until June 2017. The Taskforce Migration was founded in 2015 during the migration issue. It is responsible for coordinating migration policies within BZ and with relevant authorities such as other Ministries and the European Commission. During my internship, the focal point of the Taskforce Migration was the Central-Mediterranean Route, which is a sea route from Libya, Tunisia or Egypt to Italy through which currently most irregular migrants try to reach Europe. The Mediterranean Sea has become a priority region for the

EU in its aim for a coherent external dimension of migration policy (Pinyol-Jiménez 2012: 40). Therefore, my research does not look at national migration topics like Dutch asylum procedures, but at the external dimension of migration.

During my internship I contributed to policy notes on migration, had the responsibility for the drafting of two weekly migration news updates for policymakers and government members, aided in designing a training seminar of migration topics, and prepared meetings amongst other things. Although it was not my initial intention to investigate within BZ itself but instead to do literature research and consider my internship as separated from it, my daily experiences and support of my colleagues at BZ gradually led me to the current research. I noticed how the Taskforce Migration is embedded within a complex totality of political objectives, institutional factors, national concerns, and the international context. Therefore, I realized that policy processes with which it is equipped are an interesting reflection of larger processes of the migration-security nexus. In the next section I will describe what strategy I undertook to research this.

1.4 Research Strategy

To start with, the ontological and epistemological nature of my research question and methods can be categorized as interpretative structuralism. Theoretically, this means that I interpret how social structures tell people which rules they should follow (Demmers 2017: 18). In practice, this means that the framing of migration policy tells policymakers how to reproduce the framing and carry it out in their daily work. I undertook a constant comparison method, which means that theory was generated as my research was progressing. It thus was inductive research, because I did not create a hypothesis beforehand but instead interpreted cumulative data (DeVault 2017: 3).

My research strategy is based on a process of triangulation. This means that I used different methods that collectively aided me in creating a coherent image of how the migration-security nexus is framed within migration policy. First, I did qualitative semi-structured interviews. Second, I did textual analysis of policy documents. Importantly, the documents and interviews were translated from Dutch. Translation processes should ensure linguistic equivalence (Peña 2007: 1255). I am aware of a potential translation bias, but have striven for an almost literal translation, with linguistic adaptations when necessary. Third, I undertook observation and gained experience by being part of BZ as an intern. I will now elaborate on all three methods.

First of all, I interviewed seven women and eleven men. Fifteen of them were employed at BZ, one at the Ministry of Security and Justice, one at Amnesty International, and one was a former Member of the House of Representatives. The interviews were conducted to gain understanding of the context in which policy framing takes place (Dekkers 2016: 7). The interview process had two phases. The first phase was an exploratory stage in which I discovered important themes (Nichols 1991: 13). It consisted of informal conversations in which I developed a general picture of policymaking. This preliminary work aided me in sharpening my focus. The second phase consisted of in-depth interviews between 30 and 90 minutes in which I zoomed in on themes I believed most relevant. The interviewee group was based on non-random sampling, which is selection based on the judgment of the researcher (Nichols 1991: 67). I consciously selected interviewees from different departments, varying from the Department of Sub-Saharan Africa to the Department for Multilateral Institutions and Human Rights, based on what I knew about their relevant relation to migration policy. The interviewees were familiar with me, which I believe was constructive for

the atmosphere and course of the interview, and made it possible for me to be unafraid to delve deeply and critically into the topics. Furthermore, the interviews were semi-structured. This means I had a list with specific questions based on what I knew about the interviewees, and left room for other topics that could come up during the interview in order to explore a wide range of views (Nichols 1991: 14). All interviewees gave me their consent to record them, and I respect their privacy by keeping them anonymous. The interviews aided me in grasping the policy world and provided me with insights on how policymakers relate to, reproduce or reflect upon the framing of the institution within which they are situated

Furthermore, the interviews were helpful in undertaking textual analysis of policy documents, which brings me to my second research method. I scanned many Letters of Parliament and other policy notes from the time period between Summer 2015 and Summer 2017, the era most relevant to the new migration policy framing. After having examined dozens of texts I eventually selected one key document, namely the Letter of Parliament of September 8 2015, because I would argue that this document reflects the general framing of the migration-security nexus within migration policy at BZ. As an operationalization I integrated the idea of Schneider (2013: 1) to examine both individual statements and macro-features of a text. I categorized sentences as either representing a securitizing frame or a humanizing frame, to illustrate how the migration-security nexus is framed.

My third research method was observation. Initially I did not plan to investigate the institution I was part of, and thus did not start my internship through a research lens. However, I gradually saw how the continuous flow of information could actually aid me in understanding how migration policy is framed. Due to my own curiosity and intrinsic enthusiasm to learn, I accidentally became a participant-as-observer (Bryman 2008: 410), participating as an intern and observing policy processes through attending meetings, writing minutes, summarizing reports, learning policy jargon, talking over lunchbreaks, and scanning e-mails. Besides observation at BZ, I gained experiences by for example visiting conferences and participating in a buddy project with former asylum-seekers. I undertook such endeavors because I believed they were crucial for understanding in what societal context BZ is embedded, and they aided me in creating a holistic view on the complexity of the migration debate in the Netherlands.

My role as both a researcher and an intern calls for reflection upon my positionality. I was aware of my plight of not disseminating sensitive information, and it was not my goal to be an eavesdropper. Instead, I respected the boundaries of observation, my colleagues were aware of my research, and I preserved a moral integrity by being transparent and sincere about my intentions. In addition, I do not claim to be a fully independent researcher, since I was stationed at BZ and thus connected to viewpoints in my surroundings there. Importantly, the main goal of observation was to have triangulation, so that I could better comprehend data of my interviews and textual analysis.

Taken together, the combination of interviews, textual analysis and observation aided me in grasping how the migration-security nexus is framed within migration policy. It is possible that my personal lens might have influenced my interpretations. Social research is inevitably influenced by the cultural or social background of the researcher (Breuer, Mruck & Roth 2002: 1). My position as a young female, born and raised in the Netherlands, might have played a role in how I framed my questions, engaged with interviewees or analyzed my data. Throughout my research I therefore took into account the advice of Stepputat (2012) to reflect upon my own filters and blinders (ibid.: 444).

In the following chapters I will analyze policy framing in general and how it can incorporate the migration-security nexus in particular. In Chapter 2 I will outline the analytical framework on which my research is built. Subsequently, in Chapter 3 I will describe the migration issue and contextualize sensitive political discussions within Europe and the Netherlands to illustrate that the framing of migration policy is embedded in a complex societal debate. In Chapter 4, I will analyze a public policy statement of the Dutch government, by categorizing statements as either securitizing frames or humanizing frames. I will do this to illustrate the ambiguous character of the migration-security nexus. In Chapter 5, I will look at how policy framing is legitimized in daily practices.

Chapter 2

The Analytical Framework

The current research investigates policy framing in general, and how policy framing reflects the migration-security nexus in particular. Concretely, my research question is how the migration-security nexus is framed within the migration policy of BZ in the context of increased irregular migration towards Europe between 2015 and 2017. In this chapter I will unpack my research question by outlining the theoretical framework upon which it is built. Firstly I will conceptualize policy framing. Secondly I will analyze two notions of security on which framing is based, namely securitization and human security. Lastly I will explain how these two notions create an ambiguous framing.

2.1 Policy Framing

The larger theoretical tradition of my research traces back to academics like Nietzsche, Gramsci and Foucault, who wrote about discourse theory (Demmers 2017: 125). The analytical purpose of discourse theory is to understand how situations are constructed and legitimized by discursive processes (ibid.: 140). Through interaction with a wide variety of actors, subjective interpretations of a situation are turned into a discourse, and this discourse consequently has social and political implications. The last decades have seen a rising attention for such discursive practices in the realm of policy. I will narrow my analysis down to the discursive practice of framing. The concept of framing is frequently used in literature most useful to my research and a suitable concept for investigating the migration-security nexus.

Framing is the construction of an interpretive scheme that simplifies and condenses situations, comparable to how journalists might frame a story by highlighting certain elements (Snow & Benford 1992: 137). It refers to mental and social processes that shape how people perceive and act upon the world (Lakoff 2014: xii). According to Van Hulst and Yanow (2016: 102), a narrative of a situation has nothing to do with the inherent meaning of that situation, but with the social, political and cultural context. Furthermore, in line with Goffman (1974: 21), I consider framing here as a process, being an interactive construction of reality that enables actors with different interpretations to jointly identify and label events. In the realm of policy, framing is an important tool for state actors to gain support for their policy (Tarrow 2011: 32). I will look at this framing of policy in particular.

Colebatch (2009) argues that there are many discussions on how policy can be defined. I define policy here as a "law, regulation, procedure, administrative action, incentive, or voluntary practice of governments and other institutions," (CDCP 2017: 1). Although I am aware that policy can apply to a wide range of institutions, such as universities or corporations, I will focus on policy in the realm of governments. Therefore, I will treat policy here as a course of action by a government with the goal to achieve certain results (Bridgman and Davis 2000: 6). Within analyzing policy, many authors have looked at its framing. Rein and Schön (1977, cited in Van Hulst and Yanow 2016: 97) were pioneers in theorizing how policy-related actors make sense of a controversial situation by integrating varying interests, values and positions. Involved actors can have different observations of the same situation, and framing is made up of an integration of their diverse conceptions. Policy framing is a concept that explains how actors feel confronted by a situation, create an understanding to make sense of that situation, and consequently act on it (Zito

2017: 1). More specifically, I treat policy framing here as a process in which various political actors narrate a situation to help define problems and shape the policy agenda (Nie 2003: 321).

As announced before, I will look here at the discursive practices of policy framing. Stone (2000) described policymaking as a discursive process in which diverse interpretations of problems are integrated (ibid.: 11). Van Hulst and Yanow (2016) analyzed how policy-relevant actors use language that reflects their understanding of a situation, leading them to select which elements will be either prioritized or discarded, and which course of action is taken (ibid.: 96). In a similar vein, Fischer and Forester (1993) theorized the argumentative turn in policy analysis, an interpretative approach that considers policy issues as socially constructed and policy documents as subjective. Rhetoric within policy "depicts and selects, describes and characterizes, includes and excludes" categories (ibid.: 2). Building on this, Colebatch (2009) analyzed the social construction account of policymaking. It means that policy processes involve the "difficult task of constructing a basis for collective action among participants with quite diverse views" (ibid.: 4). Policymaking depends on problematization, meaning that:

"While we can see policy formation as 'problem-solving', it can also be seen as 'problem-finding': interpreting the world in a way that makes particular forms of organized response appropriate," (ibid.: 30).

Consequently, policy framing serves as the legitimation of practices (ibid.: 8). By legitimation I mean here the process through which a "social system comes to be accepted as appropriate and generally supported by those who participate in it" (Crossman 2017: 1).

Policy framing can be specifically analyzed through a so-called public policy statement. According to Zittoun (2014), a policy statement consists of a framing that outlines the perceived problems, objectives, values, categories and consequences around a policy (ibid.: 9). Discursive processes enable actors to transform fragmented ideas into a coherent statement. This statement serves as a guideline for practical agenda-setting to restore the perception of disorder to order. It is the product of how "knowledge on a particular issue gets constructed, crafted, stabilised, and institutionalized" (ibid.: 73). Actors participate in a sort of language game, and constitute a "discursive coalition" in jointly developing a policy statement (ibid.: 130). A policy statement can thus be useful and important in analyzing the general policy framing, because it reflects the larger tendency of a government within one condensed piece of text. That is why I will analyze a policy statement of the Dutch government in Chapter 4, in order to operationalize my research question on the framing of migration policy.

With an eye on policy framing I will now narrow my analysis down to the realm of security and migration. According to Stepputat (2012), what is perceived and framed as a security issue is a socially constructed process (ibid.: 439). Huysmans (2006) speaks of a "linguistic turn in security studies", meaning that language is central to the creation of security (ibid.: 8). This is especially tangible in the context of migration, where there has been increased attention for the discursive construction of security within policy framing (Van Houten and Lucassen 2017: 80). In this regard, it is relevant to refer back to the analysis of Lindvall (2015). She illustrated how the British and German governments communicated different framings of security about the migration issue, by describing migration as respectively a national security threat and a humanitarian threat for migrants. Her investigation is useful in understanding how the migration-security

nexus is framed. As described before, the migration-security nexus is the complex and politically sensitive connection between migration and security in the EU (Pinyol-Jiménez 2012: 36). I will now discuss the two varying connections between migration and security by looking at theories on securitization and human security.

2.2 Securitization of Migration

This section will be devoted to analyzing how migration can be framed through securitization. Securitization is defined as a process wherein an event, group or topic is transformed into a security issue (Buzan, Waever, & De Wilde 1998: 23). A perceived threat is placed upon the urgent political agenda, which is why securitization differs from politicization. In the latter, situations are placed upon the regular political agenda but not necessarily prioritized. Securitization can be interpreted as state-level security, wherein the goal is to preserve the perceived security of a society. Within the securitization of migration, migration becomes portrayed as a threat to the political, cultural, or economic security of a society (Emmers 2007: 118).

According to Bigo (2002), securitization of migration is rooted in the idea that a country should be protected from infiltrators (*ibid.*: 82). Especially since the attacks of September 11, 2001 in New York, there have been Islamophobic attitudes and stricter border controls in both the United States and European countries (Pinyol-Jiménez 2012: 36). Since that time, migration has become contested, being increasingly linked to terrorism and other forms of criminality or violence. Furthermore, migrants are often perceived as competing with locals on the labor market, threatening national cohesion, or impeding upon the capacity of social welfare systems (Koser 2014: 1; Balzacq 2016: 494). Such ideas have stirred up negative sentiments towards migrants and a rise of anti-immigrant parties across Europe.

Different academic schools, such as the Copenhagen School and the Paris School, have theorized securitization. Although they vary in their focus, they seem to agree that migration can become securitized. In principle, securitization has five basic elements (Emmers 2007: 123). First, there are powerful securitizing actors who securitize a situation. For example, the Dutch political opposition leader Geert Wilders prioritizes stopping "mass migration and asylum, terror, violence and insecurity" in his party program (PVV 2017: 1). Securitizing actors are motivated by different reasons, such as reinforcing their role as providers of security (Bigo 2002: 82), or attracting voters. Importantly, securitization does not only come from powerful politicians. The German grassroots movement Pegida exemplifies how actors from civil society can also contest migration and convince other people to endorse their ideas (Thran & Boehnke 2015: 1).

Second, securitizing actors use discursive practices, so-called speech acts, to frame a security threat. This is of special relevance here, because it brings the analysis back to framing. For example, Hungarian Prime Minister Orbán said in October 2016 that "mass migration without control means a real threat. It endangers the peaceful and safe European way of life" (cited in Al Jazeera 2016: 1). Importantly, there is debate on how framing of securitization relates to non-discursive forms. The Paris School argued that speech acts are insufficient to understand securitization (Balzacq et al. 2010: 7). Situations do not have to be directly described as threats, but can be securitized through practices. For example, the EU has databases in which it stores migration statistics. This might reflect control to protect EU security without public speech acts. Policy measures are thus not necessarily preceded by speech acts or framing, but can already exist or

even influence framing (Huysmans 2006: 8). It is however beyond the scope of this text to elaborate on this.

Third, there are referent objects that have to be protected, in this case EU citizens, and fourth, there is an entity that threatens the referent objects, in this case the migration issue. Fifth, securitization needs a relevant audience that accepts whether an issue poses a threat. This happened for example when many people in France embraced the anti-immigration rhetoric of politician Marine le Pen (Nowak & Branford 2017: 1). Lastly, a collective acceptance of a perceived threat leads to responses and policies, which can be called extraordinary measures (Balzacq 2016: 494). For example, the EU has developed stricter border control in response to the "challenges emerging from irregular immigration through the common external borders" to strengthen security (Pinyol-Jiménez 2012: 41).

Taken together, migration can be securitized, and framing is important in this process. For the current analysis, the most important characteristic is that the framing of migration policy can be done through speech acts. Therefore, securitization is one notion of how the security-migration nexus can be framed, and I will refer to its discursive usage as 'securitizing frame'. The second notion is human security.

2.3 Human Security

I will describe here how the framing of migration can be based upon the notion of human security. A human security approach puts the individual human aspect at the center of policy (McIntosh & Hunter 2014: vii). In contrast to securitization, which prioritizes state-level security, the approach of human security thus puts the individual security of potential migrants at the center of policy. The United Nations Development Programme theorized the human security approach in 1994. The aim was to reconceptualize security into a new framework with attention for subjects like humanitarianism or refugee movements, focusing on people who are threatened in their survival or dignity (McDonald 2002: 278). It was a response to traditional security framing and practices, which were considered as failing to respond adequately to threats for individuals (ibid.: 278). A human security approach originates from the idea of a shared universal affinity with fellow human beings, regardless of nationality, race, religion or gender. Part of this approach is the human rights tradition, in which a government is considered as having the responsibility to guarantee universal human rights and promote development. Human security is a policy framework for addressing widespread threats, and focuses institutional attention on "threats to the security and well-being of individuals and communities" (United Nations 2017: 1).

Just like securitization, the connection of human security to framing is that in order to understand human security, an investigation of the role of speech is important. According to Gasper (2006: 222), the "language of human security" is an important addition for analyzing how security can be framed because it aims to mobilize concern for human wellbeing, instead of concern for national security. In a similar vein, Chandler (2012) emphasizes the important discursive dimension of human security, when a situation is framed in terms of human capacities and resilience (ibid.: 215). McDonald (2002) argues that it is relevant to stay alert to whether governments benefit from positive perceptions of human security framing by talking the talk but not walking the walk:

"If states supplement traditional security concerns with Human Security, there exists the potential for the mechanisms and priorities of security to remain fundamentally untouched, while Human Security concerns are added on to security language," (ibid.: 281).

In the context of migration, human security is considered as prioritizing wellbeing for migrants. Displaced people should enjoy a degree of social, legal, physical and psychological security (Adelman 2001: 14). As described in Chapter 1, I decided to coin the term 'humanizing frame' for analyzing language that reflects a human security notion.

2.4 The Ambiguous Character of Policy Framing

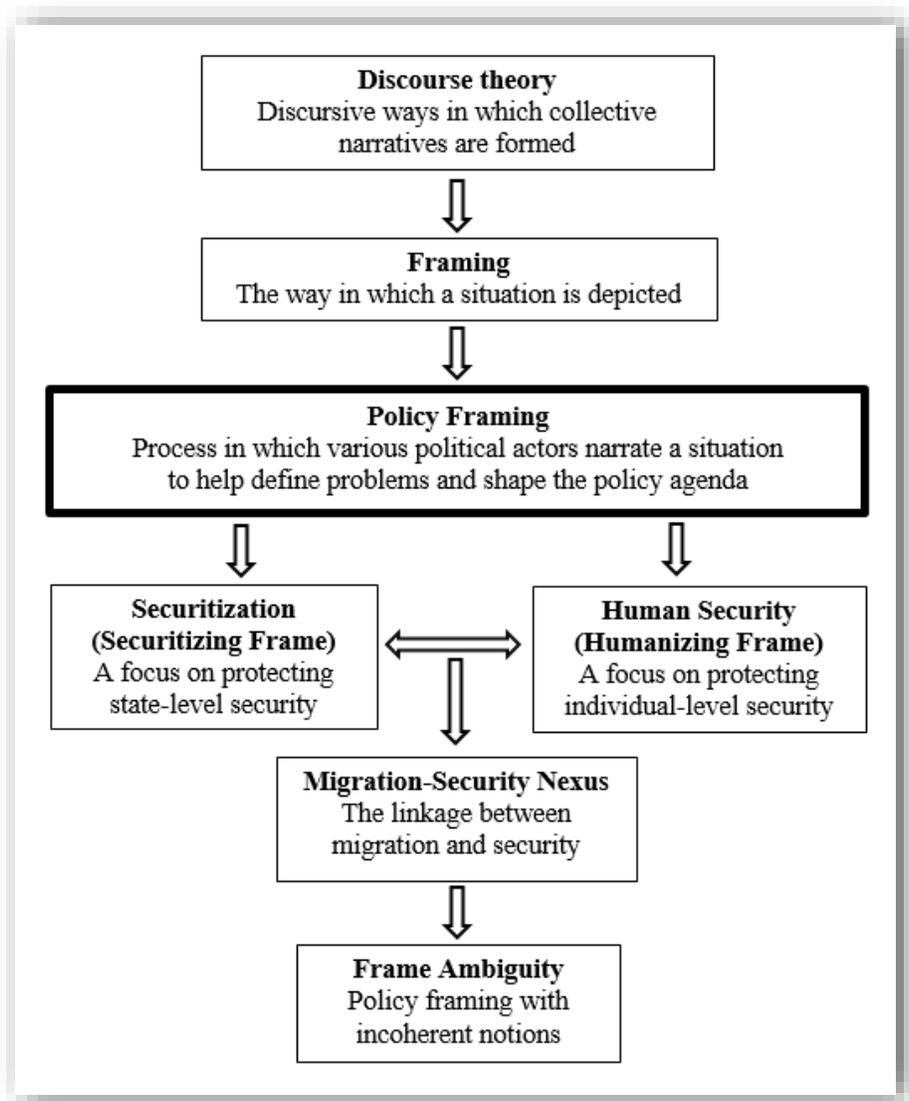
In the foregoing sections I have analyzed policy framing and linkages between migration and security, analyzing how securitization prioritizes state-level security and human security prioritizes individual-level security. According to Koser (2014), some people argue that it is "impossible to resolve the dual imperatives of security" of national security and the migrant's security (ibid.: 1). My thesis will investigate how it is possible to incorporate these dual imperatives of security within the framing of migration policy. This seems comparable to Scholten and Van Nispen (2008), who showed in their study of Dutch policy on integration of immigrants that controversies can be resolved by building bridges between conflicting frames (ibid.: 181). This resembles what is sometimes called the "Dutch polder model", which is a "distinctively Dutch style of policy making in the social and economic sphere: consultation-intensive and consensus-seeking," (De Vries 2014: 100). It is a form of policymaking whereby compromise and dialogue are believed to create the best outcome for the most stakeholders involved. Endeavors like these might lead to ambiguity within policy framing.

The ambiguity within policy framing has been pointed out in studies on ambiguous language in immigration policy texts. For example, Dekker (2016) believes that policy framing is not a coherent and unitary interpretation of a situation, because it results from political negotiation and thus leads to an ambiguous character. She defines "frame ambiguity" as policy frames that display incoherent problem definitions and policy strategies (ibid.: 2). In her study of local migrant integration policies in Antwerp and Rotterdam, Dekker writes that there can be frame ambiguity in a controversial policy domain. Building on this, I will argue here that framing can become ambiguous due to the incorporation of varying security concerns of different actors.

Conclusion

Figure 1 summarizes all the discussed concepts and shows each concept's taxonomic place within my analytical framework. The diagram indicates that policy framing is my key concept, falling under the umbrella of framing and the larger theoretical tradition of discourse theory. Equipped with my analytical framework I will now analyze the framing of the migration-security nexus within migration policy of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and how it combines securitizing frames and humanizing frames.

Figure 1. Diagram of Concepts



Chapter 3

The Polarized Debate

The goal of this chapter is to describe how the migration issue created heated debates in the international arena and how the Dutch government was confronted by polarized views in the national arena. As described in Chapter 1, I coined the term 'migration issue' for the increased irregular migration from Africa and Asia across or towards European borders that stirred up public debates and political responses in Europe between 2015 and 2017. It is important to take into account the context to understand how a framing is developed (Sjöstedt 2007: 239). This chapter thus lays the foundation for analyzing a policy statement in Chapter 4.

3.1 Varying Standpoints in the International Arena

Although migration towards Europe is a century-old phenomenon, the migration issue between 2015 and 2017 stirred up heated debates due to different factors. Although I am aware of the multitude of factors at play, I will highlight only two, because I believe they were key in putting the migration issue in the spotlight and crucial in feeding a polarized debate. I will first discuss the increasing number of people who arrived irregularly in the EU, and then the increasing number of people who died on their way to the EU. What both factors have in common is that they were made visible by increasing media attention.

The first factor was the increasing amount of so-called irregular or illegal arrivals. As described in Chapter 1, this refers to migration whereby people try to enter a country without valid travel documents or the authorization that is required under immigration regulations (IOM 2017: 1). Contrastingly, legal or regular migration refers to migration whereby people cross a border with valid travel documents under legal immigration regulations, for example with a work permit. In 2015, an estimated 2.4 million citizens of non-EU countries immigrated in a regular fashion to an EU Member State (Eurostat 2017: 1). By contrast, the amount of people that reached the EU in an irregular fashion, often aboard ships run by human smugglers, was about one million in 2015, which was a record number (UNHCR 2015: 1). A question that follows is why irregular migration has raised much attention while regular migration numbers are higher. One policymaker at BZ believed the images of overloaded boats to be decisive for public perception:

*'During the peak of the crisis, images of those small boats were daily breaking news. It remains a very powerful image of tragedy, but also an image that raises fear within European citizens, because it creates a feeling of uncontrolled mass migration. It doesn't matter if professors say that in terms of statistics the amount of people arriving via small boats is like 0.01 per cent of the European population. These comments will eventually achieve nothing, because the image remains of an uncontrolled mass migration without knowing who those people are, ISIS followers perhaps (...) Well, you cannot change that image with facts and numbers ... it has more to do with public perception. That is the most important factor that creates more resistance against migrants in the Netherlands and in the EU.'*³

³ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 12, May 12, 2017.

This quote illustrates how news coverage created unrest on the increased arrivals. Widespread images of overcrowded boats and people waiting in front of fences made irregular migration a visible phenomenon, stirring up a feeling of insecurity in many EU societies.

The second factor concerns the amount of people that died on sea during their attempt to reach Europe. The reported number of drowned people at the Mediterranean Sea was 3.784 in 2015 and 5.143 in 2016 (IOM 2017: 1). In 2017, the number until July is 2.247 and counting. Such numbers have been unprecedented, and raised much media attention. For example, an image of the Syrian toddler Aylan, whose body washed ashore after a shipwreck, caused a shock throughout the international community. Such images shone a new light on the migration issue by giving migration a human face (Koolhof 2016: 1). This induced compassion, not only because of the drowning, but also due to the general value that many actors attached to the Refugee Convention. The Refugee Convention is an international agreement about helping people who seek protection from harm (UNHCR 2017: 1). For example, people fleeing from the war in Syria were believed to be in need of asylum. Across Europe, there grew a feeling of a moral responsibility for the lives of migrants who fled from conflict regions (Scheffer 2015: 1). Many policy documents of BZ refer to the upholding of the Refugee Convention.⁴

The two factors of the increasing number of people who either arrived or passed away at sea exemplify the migration-security nexus because they relate to different concerns towards migration. The first factor shows securitization of migration, which was described in Chapter 2 as a concern for protecting the security of a state. Ranging from the far left to far right political spectrum, a rising number of parties wanted to reduce the amount of arrivals (Pardijs 2016: 1). In multiple EU Member States, politicians explicated anti-immigrant rhetoric. For example, Hungary's Prime Minister Orbán said that "every single migrant poses a public security and terror risk" (Gutteridge 2016: 1). Importantly, not only anti-immigrant politicians pointed out negative sides of migration. However, they did contribute in creating an incentive for governments to put it on the urgent political agenda. The second factor raised attention for human security, described in Chapter 2 as a concern for the protection of human wellbeing.

The two described factors thus illustrate how the debate on migration became polarized. There was friction between curbing the arrival of migrants and protecting human wellbeing. According to Pinyol-Jiménez (2012), "the sea route for irregular immigrants who generally travel under unsafe conditions in overloaded boats ... emphasizes the perception of immigration –as a whole– as a security threat," (ibid.: 40). In other words, whether the migration issue was seen from the securitization perspective or the human security perspective, it was clear that it was perceived as a matter of security. The two security notions consequently influenced how the migration issue was framed within migration policy of the EU in general and the Netherlands in particular.

3.2 Varying Standpoints within the Netherlands

In this section I will describe what the migration issue caused in the Netherlands, and how the Dutch government was situated within this. By taking into account the context, one can more sharply analyze the framing that policymakers develop (Zittoun 2014: 5).

⁴ For example, the letter 'VN-top over grootschalige vluchtelingen- en migratiestromen op 19 september 2016 en VS-top over noden van vluchtelingen op 20 september 2016', number 26150-155, published on September 8, 2016, https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/brieven_regering/detail?id=2016Z16165&did=2016D33265 (visited on July 15, 2017).

The Netherlands was one of the EU Member States that received an increasing number of irregular migrants. The total number of first asylum requests, repeated asylum requests and family reunification in 2015 was around 58.900, of which 43.100 were first requests (IND 2017: 1). This was the highest number since the Netherlands produces statistics on migration (Besselink 2016: 1). It was a doubling of the 29.890 people in 2014, and higher than the peak of 52.575 in 1994. Moreover, peaks of sometimes 1800 arrivals per week were not reached before. In 2016, the total number was 31.600. The migration issue became and still is a hot topic for the media, civil society and political arena. Throughout TV talk shows, Facebook posts and debates within the House of Representatives, people have been heatedly debating on social cohesion, national security, absorption capacity and public support (Dutch: *draagvlak*).⁵ Academics, mayors, journalists, civilians, ministers, students and community workers raised their voice. Some argued about the pressure on the welfare state, while others believed that the Netherlands could easily handle the influx. One policymaker said:

*'Although the criticism on migration policy has never been this much, the number of people that signed up as a volunteer to help with integration or shelter of refugees has also never been this high.'*⁶

Nationwide there were protests against the influx of irregular migrants on the one hand, and demonstrations to welcome migrants on the other hand.

Due to the heated debates, the Dutch government felt increasingly urged to address it. According to one interviewee:

*'For everybody it was clear that the continuously rising stream of people from Turkey to Europe was not tenable. Also left-wing politicians knew that although we have to be open for refugees, this uncontrollable stream was too much, and the public support was starting to diminish.'*⁷

In January 2016, Dutch Prime Minister and party leader of VVD Mark Rutte said that restricting the influx of irregular migrants was the most important goal of the Dutch European Presidency of the EU Council in 2016, and that the influx had to be reduced to zero (Hekkens 2016: 1). According to one policymaker:

*'There was a perception here of: there is a big problem and we have to do something about it. Especially with the upcoming Presidency of the EU in sight. There was a lot of political pressure (...) Like, we have a problem over which we have no control yet, there is no perception of control.'*⁸

The pressure on the Netherlands to create solutions was thus rising, and the topic of migration was put on the urgent political agenda.

In this regard, it is relevant to describe the coalition of the Dutch government during this time period. The relevance is to show how seemingly incompatible standpoints of different political parties not

⁵ Such discussions were held for example in an episode of Buitenhof on June 18, 2017, https://www.npo.nl/buitenhof/18-06-2017/VPWON_1265968 (visited on June 21, 2017).

⁶ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 4, April 12, 2017.

⁷ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 12, May 12, 2017.

⁸ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 6, April 7, 2017.

only reflected the larger societal polarization on migration, but also how those standpoints had to be merged to find common solutions. During the migration issue, the Dutch government consisted of a coalition of two political parties. The first was the Partij van de Arbeid (PvdA), a progressive social-democratic party, and the second was the Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (VVD), a relatively conservative liberal party (Parlement & Politiek 2017: 1). When they obtained the most votes after the elections in 2012, they decided to form a coalition together. They differed in their fundamental principles on various subjects, of which the subject of migration was no exception. During my interview with someone who was a Member of the House of Representatives (Dutch: *Tweede Kamerlid*) in this time period, she said that the migration issue confronted the PvdA and VVD with their divergent perspectives and caused difficulty for them in creating a migration policy that would satisfy both parties. However, the Member believed that a coalition with such varying standpoints can actually be constructive, because it can obtain broader public support for a certain policy than if only one standpoint would be represented.⁹

The following passages illustrate standpoints of VVD and PvdA. I have translated the first seven sentences from their websites.¹⁰ These passages were not published during the negotiations in 2015, but are visible on the websites in Summer 2017. However, I consider the standpoints as reflecting the same essence as they had in 2015.

 'Such a big stream of asylum-seekers: not again. Not long ago, the war in Syria caused a refugee crisis. Hundreds of thousands of people fled and arrived in small ramshackle boats in Europe. This scared many Dutch people: so many people who are suddenly coming here, we cannot handle that, right? What will happen with your trusted neighborhood when suddenly there will be an asylum-center with young guys from another culture who don't have a job? Due to the terrible images that we saw daily, almost all of us felt that we had to do something to help the real war refugees. When the Netherlands was President of the European Union, we have brought the refugee stream under control.'

 **PvdA** 'As long as war, repression, hunger and extreme inequality will remain, people will keep fleeing. It is our duty as Europe to help the most important countries of shelter, like Jordan and Lebanon. Also the coming years will the amount of refugees increase. Europe remains hospitable towards refugees due to human solidarity and the universal right to protection. We do differentiate between economic migrants and people who are fleeing war or persecution. Economic migrants do not have a right to asylum. We are guarding the UN Refugee Convention, which decides who has a right to asylum.'

The passages show different emphases on security. The VVD emphasizes the fear that Dutch people felt, which might reflect securitization, while the PvdA emphasizes human solidarity, which might reflect human security. However, the VVD cannot be equalized with a securitization notion, and the PvdA cannot be

⁹ Author's interview with former Member of the House of Representatives, June 8, 2017.

¹⁰ VVD: 'Niet nog eens zo'n grote stroom asielzoekers', <https://www.vvd.nl/pijlers/niet-nog-eens-zon-grote-stroom-asielzoekers/> (visited on July 5, 2017). PvdA: 'Vluchtelingen,' <https://www.pvda.nl/standpunten/internationaal-defensie/vluchtelingen/> (visited on July 5, 2017).

equalized with a human security notion. For example, they both attach value to protecting "real" refugees, but not to protecting people who arrive out of economic motives. Policymakers at BZ told me that everyone on the political spectrum agreed that a 'credible immigration and asylum policy requires effective return'¹¹ of migrants who do not obtain asylum. I am therefore not implying that the VVD is not concerned about the security of migrants, or that the PvdA is not concerned about securing EU borders and limiting the intake of migrants. On the contrary, I believe that they both share elements of securitization and human security. However, in their political programs and public statements they put more emphases on either of them. One policymaker at BZ said:

*'I think that in Dutch politics, this is dominating the debate, between people who ... think that we have to shelter everyone who comes here, and people who are more critical about that, not necessarily because they don't want to protect those people, but out of concern for integration issues and resilience of the society.'*¹²

The divergent standpoints were clearly explicated throughout my interviews. Interviewees described the VVD as prioritizing the resilience of Dutch society, reduction of the influx of irregular migrants and restriction of the intake of migrants. The VVD was often depicted as communicating a realist and functional standpoint in which the limited public support was accentuated. It was seen as tougher, less charitable and less compassionate compared to the PvdA. The PvdA was described by interviewees as emphasizing the wellbeing of migrants, being more generous with ideas on the intake of migrants, and prioritizing solidarity, compassion and a humane policy. One interviewee said that although the PvdA could agree to some extent agreed with the VVD's concerns, it communicated more attention for humanitarian aspects.¹³

The PvdA and the VVD thus had to find unity in establishing a coherent policy on migration. In the words of one interviewee, the government had to balance between guarding the borders and investing in humanitarian endeavors.¹⁴ Another policymaker said:

*'So there is constantly a tension between that. And that reflects also the tension within Dutch society.'*¹⁵

Three people have been mostly in charge of the migration policy. These are State Secretary of the Ministry of Security and Justice Klaas Dijkhoff (VVD), the Minister of Foreign Affairs Bert Koenders (PvdA), and the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Lilianne Ploumen (PvdA). Representing both coalition parties, they are key players in crafting a revised migration policy. For example, in August 2015, a letter was published about the establishment of a temporary Ministerial Commission Migration (Dutch: *Ministeriële Commissie Migratie*). It stated that the Ministerial Commission Migration was created because

¹¹ 'Kamerbrief over Europese Asielproblematiek', Ministry of Security and Justice, Kamerstuk 19 637 no. 2030, published on September 8, 2015, page 6. <file:///C:/Users/Gebruiker/Downloads/tk-europese-asielproblematiek.pdf>

¹² Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 5, April 12, 2017.

¹³ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 4, April 12, 2017.

¹⁴ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 12, May 12, 2017.

¹⁵ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 4, April 12, 2017.

the increased instream of migrants required a coordinated national and European effort.¹⁶ Members of government of the most involved departments would discuss the following pillars:

"Measures to reduce causes in third countries that make people migrate to Europe; proposals that contribute to a balanced EU-policy to limit the migration flow and come to a proportional responsibility distribution within the EU; measures that warrant a quick and careful shelter and procedure of both asylum-seekers and statholders in the Netherlands."¹⁷

On a lower governmental level, this new migration policy would be largely coordinated by the Taskforce Migration, to which I will turn now.

3.3 The Taskforce Migration

This section will describe why BZ established the Taskforce Migration. Before 2015, there were only about three people at BZ focusing on migration. This turned out to be insufficient, because the migration issue created a need for more staff:

*'We were lacking behind. At a certain point, there was complete chaos... because we were at the height of the crisis.'*¹⁸

That is why a dozen policymakers became tasked with the migration file. However, they were scattered across different departments. Gradually, there grew a need for more coordination. This led to the establishment of the Taskforce Migration in October 2015.

The goal of the Taskforce Migration is to coordinate migration policy by connecting departments at BZ and in some cases other Ministries or external actors on the external dimension of migration. Attached to the Taskforce Migration is the Special Envoy Migration, who visits actors such as African governments, humanitarian organizations and EU Member States to exchange ideas on migration policy. The Taskforce Migration functions like a metaphorical spider in a web, which I have tried to visualize in Figure 2. The figure is not as exhaustive as reality, because some actors are omitted here. Furthermore, it does not imply that the Taskforce Migration is the most powerful or central organ from which all information flows. The goal of the figure is to show that the Taskforce Migration functions like a spider in a web, is influenced by higher forces and mutually exchanges information with other units.

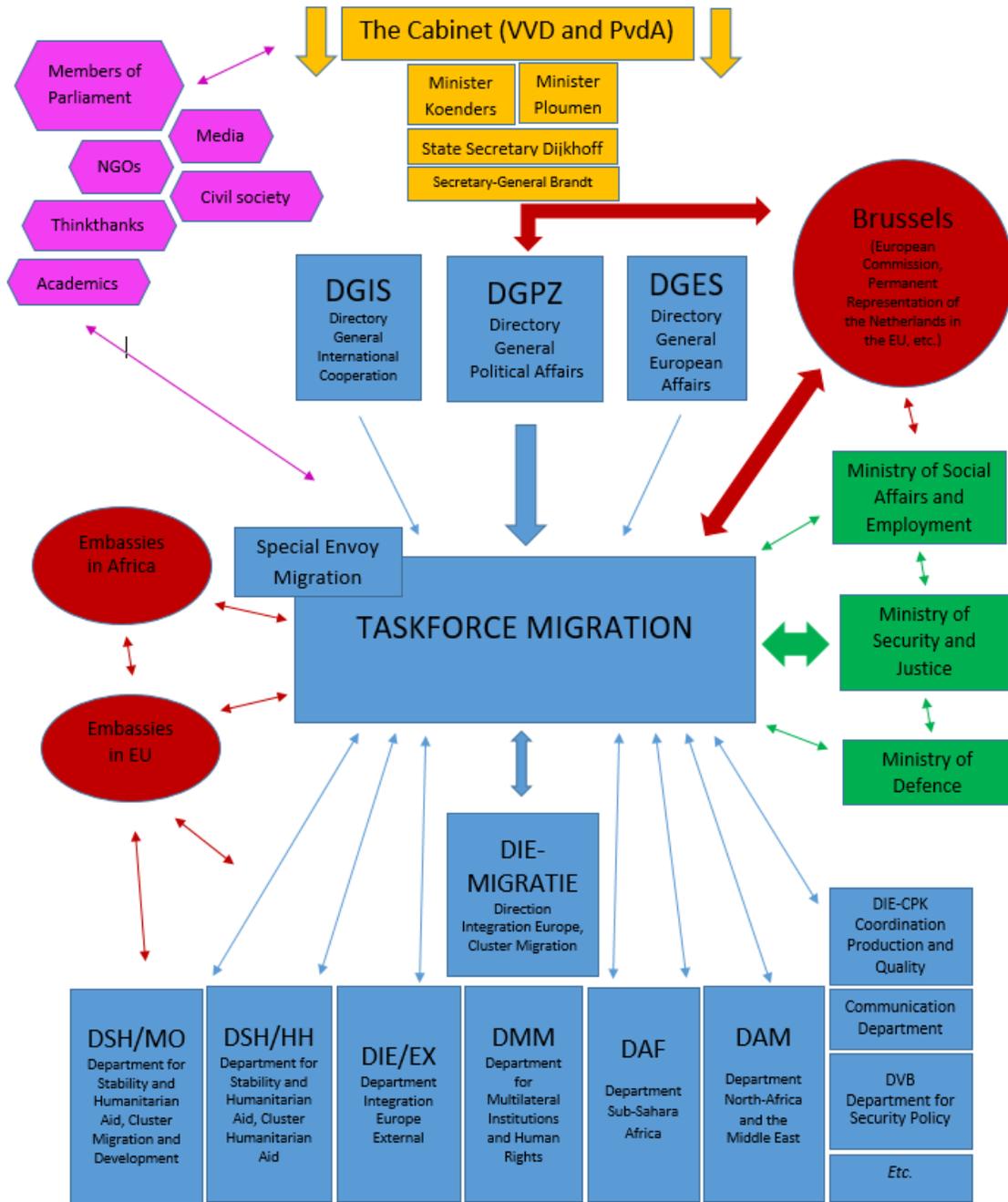
Figure 2. The Web of the Taskforce Migration¹⁹

¹⁶ 'Ministeriële Commissie Migratie', Ministry of Security and Justice, 19637 no. 2028, published on July 27, 2015. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/regering/bewindspersonen/klaas-dijkhoff/documenten/kamerstukken/2015/08/27/brief-tweede-kamer> (visited on May 27, 2017).

¹⁷ 'Ministeriële Commissie Migratie', Ministry of Security and Justice, 19637 no. 2028, published on July 27, 2015. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/regering/bewindspersonen/klaas-dijkhoff/documenten/kamerstukken/2015/08/27/brief-tweede-kamer> (visited on May 27, 2017).

¹⁸ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 12, May 12, 2017.

¹⁹ Author's interpretation and design.



The Taskforce Migration is tasked to make sure that involved departments are synchronized in their standpoints and share important information. For example, it leads weekly meetings with policymakers varying from the Department of Stability and Humanitarian Aid to the Department of North Africa and the Middle East, organizes videoconferences with embassies in Africa, and meets with policymakers from the Ministry of Security and Justice. It is constantly weighing concerns of external stakeholders as well, varying

from the European Commission to academics. In a similar vein, humanitarian organizations are regularly invited because their input is valued by BZ.²⁰

The Taskforce Migration is thus one of the units that operationalizes how 'the political world has to balance all varying interests and find the best solution.'²¹ It exemplifies how policy is grounded in shared understandings that are created by integrating disseminating voices of different stakeholders. Comparable to the social construction account of Colebatch (2009), the daily work of the Taskforce Migration involves the construction of collective action among participants with diverse views (ibid.: 4). In some way, it might even be seen as showing some elements of the "Dutch polder model", a form of policymaking that is based on consultation and consensus by incorporating concerns of multiple actors (De Vries 2014: 100).

Conclusion

This chapter has described how the migration issue since 2015 created a polarized debate on an international and national level, and how this was reflected within the Dutch government due to its composition of two parties with different viewpoints. Furthermore, I described how the Taskforce Migration was established to streamline departments. In the next chapter I will analyze how the Dutch government frames its migration policy, and how this illustrates a convergence of standpoints of the VVD and PvdA.

²⁰ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 16, June 1, 2017.

²¹ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 7, April 10, 2017.

Chapter 4

The Public Policy Statement

In the foregoing chapters I described the polarized debate on the migration issue. Within the Dutch government there grew a sense of urgency and a need to communicate a coherent policy response. Despite their varying standpoints, the VVD and PvdA together published a Letter of Parliament (Dutch: *Kamerbrief*) on September 8, 2015. This letter can be seen as a form of framing in which the government linguistically presented to the Dutch public how it perceives the migration issue. In this chapter I will analyze the letter because it is an example of what Zittoun (2014) calls a policy statement. As described in Chapter 2, a policy statement communicates a government's interpretation of a situation and its acknowledgment that the situation cannot remain unresolved (ibid.: 10). The letter that I will examine has been a guideline for both framing of migration policy and policy itself since 2015. I will make a simple analysis by comparing securitizing frames and humanizing frames. The goal is to illustrate how the migration-security nexus within migration policy is framed by the Dutch government. Furthermore, in accordance with Dekker (2016: 2), I will demonstrate how policy framing can have an ambiguous character.

4.1 Securitizing Frames and Humanizing Frames

The Letter of Parliament, from here on referred to as the *Kamerbrief*, was published with the title "European asylum problems" and consisted of six pages.²² Its purpose was to inform the House of Representatives (Dutch: *Tweede Kamer*) about the Dutch approach on the "mode of operation of the inflow of refugees".²³ It was written by the Dutch cabinet consisting of the VVD and PvdA. The *Kamerbrief* can be seen as a product of intersubjective negotiation over the understanding of the migration issue.

I do not claim that this *Kamerbrief* is the only relevant letter to analyze the policy framing. The reason for analyzing this letter instead of others is two-folded. First, policymakers at BZ pointed out that this *Kamerbrief* was decisive for the course of action within migration policy since 2015. They considered it the 'basis of the cabinet's policy wherein the foundation is laid for what we do'²⁴, and the 'spirit in which we operate'²⁵. It was crucial for subsequent framing and agenda-setting, which is why I consider it a key policy statement and one of the starting points from which ministries acted upon. Second, after I read about thirty other parliamentary papers (Dutch: *Kamerstukken*), and dozens of policy notes, I concluded that this *Kamerbrief* accurately represents the framing in general, and thus suffices to illustrate my argument.

To analyze the *Kamerbrief*, I have drawn on the work of several discourse analysts. It is not my aim here to fully describe their analyses, nor to systematically replicate their methodologies, but merely to show that I have been inspired by them. For example, according to Van Dijk (1994), political discourse is replete with linguistic figures such as metaphors. In the depiction of arrival of migrants, water metaphors like "stream" or "flood" emphasize the threatening nature of the situation. Furthermore, I have built upon elements that Schneider (2013) outlines. Schneider describes components of discourse analysis by

²² 'Kamerbrief over Europese Asielproblematiek', Ministry of Security and Justice, Kamerstuk 19 637 no. 2030, published on September 8, 2015, page 1. <file:///C:/Users/Gebruiker/Downloads/tk-europese-asielproblematiek.pdf>.

²³ 'Kamerbrief over Europese Asielproblematiek', Ministry of Security and Justice, Kamerstuk 19 637 no. 2030, published on September 8, 2015, page 1. <file:///C:/Users/Gebruiker/Downloads/tk-europese-asielproblematiek.pdf>

²⁴ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 3, April 7, 2017.

²⁵ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 11, May 17, 2017.

integrating analyses of Jäger (2004), Fairclough (1994) and Chilton (2004). He advises to look for linguistic and rhetorical mechanisms. For example, so-called modalities are sentences that indicate a call to action. The Kamerbrief indeed mentions actions that should be undertaken, with sentences like "the entire instrumentarium that is at the service of the EU has to be deployed".²⁶

However, I will concretely use one specific feature of discourse analysis. I will follow Schneider's advice to extract the dominant discourse of a text by collecting and examining discursive statements. By zooming in on individual sentences, one can figure out so-called "discourse strands" (2013: 1), or in my case frames. Although I do not replicate Schneider's analysis, I followed his advice of assembling statements with key themes. I gave the statements a code, like 'borders', 'solidarity', 'burden', 'empathy' and 'measures', to examine what they indicated about the migration-security nexus. Consequently, I extracted a sample of twenty sentences based on purposeful sampling, meaning that I selected specific sentences because I found them representative of the general framing. Importantly, I do not consider these sentences as together giving a summary of the content of the Kamerbrief. I left out topics which I did not consider as creating ambiguity within the framing.

To analyze the 20 sentences I used a simple typology in which I categorized statements as representing either securitization or human security (Table 2). This is a very simplified categorization, and I am aware that framing might be more complex than this. However, for the sake of analytical clarity, I believe the categorization is useful because it operationalizes in a comprehensible fashion how policy framing can show two notions of security.

Table 2. Frames

Framing	Notion	Migration-Security Nexus
Securitizing Frame	Securitization	A focus on protecting state-level security
Humanizing Frame	Human security	A focus on protecting individual-level security

I will categorize a sentence as reflecting a securitizing frame when I argue that its focus is on security of national or EU borders and citizens, which represents the notion of securitization. In contrast, I will categorize a sentence as reflecting a humanizing frame when I argue its focus is on security for migrants themselves, which represents the notion of human security.

It is good to mention that I am investigating the semantic content of the sentences, and not their effect in actual policies. In other words, I consider sentences as independent units on themselves, apart from contextual nuance or their practical consequences, because I aim to look at their pure linguistic framing. I thus agree with Zittoun (2014) that they "say nothing of the reality of what action becomes but rather focus on how actors end up reaching an agreement over a statement" (ibid.: 133). Furthermore, I am aware of my own subjectivity in interpreting sentences. However, textual analysis is inevitably selective, because there are always motivations for choosing to inquire certain components. According to Fairclough (2003), "there is no such thing as an 'objective' analysis of a text" (ibid.: 14), but it can nevertheless generate important insights.

²⁶ 'Kamerbrief over Europese Asielproblematiek', Ministry of Security and Justice, Kamerstuk 19 637 no. 2030, published on September 8, 2015, page 6. <file:///C:/Users/Gebruiker/Downloads/tk-europese-asielproblematiek.pdf>

The first category of sentences that I will analyze here are securitizing frames (Table 3).

Table 3. Securitizing Frames

Sentences that imply a securitizing frame
1. "Dealing with the problem in a way that is tenable for Europe" - page 1 -
2. "To be able to handle the current migration pressure it is necessary that EU Member States find a proportional distribution of not only the first arrivals of asylum-seekers, but also the treatment of the asylum requests" - page 4 -
3. "Where needed there should be a further improvement of the protection of the European external borders" - page 4 -
4. "The European Member States can no longer have discussions on which problem is the most important: our common problem of how to deal with the migrants who are here now, or our common problem of an untenable high instream" - page 1 -
5. "The European Union is under a growing immigration pressure, of which the expectation is that this will not be reduced in the short term" - page 1 -
6. "The limits of the institutions of first shelter and asylum in the EU Member States come quickly in sight or are in some cases already exceeded" - page 1 -
7. "Continually increasing numbers who reach the outside borders and continue to travel uncontrolled to other Member States" - page 2 -
8. "Even with the best solutions or measures, there will always be migrants who grab their chance outside of the applying rules" - page 5 -
9. "EU Member States are affected by the current asylum issues in different ways" - page 1 -
10. "In the long run reducing the migration flows towards Europe and make them more manageable" - page 4 -

Table 3 displays securitizing sentences. For example, calling the influx of migrants "untenable" in sentence 4 implies an extreme or unacceptable situation for a society and might therefore induce a perception of threat. By referring to a "protection of the European external borders" (3) and an "exceeding" absorption capacity (6), the migration issue is viewed from the perspective of the security of European states. Furthermore, descriptions such as "a growing immigration pressure" (5) point metaphorically to the threatening nature of the situation.

The individual statements demonstrate a concern for reducing the amount of irregular migrants. They reflect a framing that is tangible in other Letters of Parliament in which there is a repetitive reference to "reducing the migration flows" (10). Importantly, the sentences do not explicitly claim that migrants pose a threat or danger to EU security. However, I believe that their focus on protecting EU borders and capacities can be interpreted as implying a form of securitization, albeit not in extreme ways of actors like Hungary's Prime Minister Orbán who said that "every single migrant poses a public security and terror risk" (Gutteridge 2016: 1).

The next section analyzes humanizing frames (Table 4).

Table 4. Humanizing Frames

Sentences that imply a humanizing frame
11. "Protection of refugees on EU territory should be guaranteed" - page 4 -
12. "The fulfillment of our duty to protect refugees" - page 1 -
13. "Many people are looking for a safe haven because they have to flee war and misery" - page 1 -
14. "Also when it concerns young children who drown in front of our eyes" - page 1 -
15. "This [European approach] has to end drowning, suffocation and human smuggling and give form to the fulfillment of our duty to protect refugees" - page 1 -
16. "The human suffering that is accompanied with it, and the risks of exploitation by human smugglers, is unprecedentedly high" - page 2 -
17. "Lack of future prospects in camps and improvised shelters has to be replaced by shelter in important transit countries in safe and adequately equipped host communities" - page 2 -
18. "In [refugee] resettlement between Member States, the preference, characteristics, background and qualifications of the person will be taken into account within reasonable and feasible boundaries" - page 5 -
19. "Europe has to contribute to improving security and protection [of refugees]" - page 2 -
20. "There are people drowning at sea who would have had the right to protection if they would have survived the crossing" - page 2 -

As described in Chapter 2, in the context of migration, the idea of human security is that displaced people should enjoy social, legal, physical and psychological security (Adelman 2001: 14). Humanizing frames thus put the individual human aspect at the center of policy. The sentences in Table 4 illustrate this. Terms like "safe haven" (13), "misery" (13), "to end drowning" (15), "human suffering" (16) and the "right to protection" (20) can be interpreted as framing migration from the perspective of migrants, expressing concern for people who are threatened in their survival or dignity. Furthermore, sentence 18 shows a concern for social and psychological wellbeing of migrants, because it refers to matching individual migrants with locations that suit their identity. The concern for human rights values and saving human lives is reiterated in many other Letters of Parliament.²⁷

Taken together, the policy statement of the Kamerbrief illustrates an ambiguous framing, because it contains both securitizing and humanizing frames. However, the art of a policy statement is that it reflects a coherent statement or a "discursive whole" (Zittoun 2014: 73). In other words, a policy statement earns its credibility when the friction between different frames is somehow solved. It is thus crucial to see how both frames are integrated, or how their discrepancy is solved by connecting them within the text.

4.2 General Analysis of the Kamerbrief of September 8, 2015

²⁷ For example in the document 'Beantwoording vragen van de leden van de fracties van GroenLinks en de SP over Commissiemededeling over de externe dimensie van migratie', Ministry of Foreign Affairs, August 19, 2016, reference number TFM.159557u, <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2016/08/19/beantwoording-kamervragen-over-de-externe-dimensie-van-migratie> (visited on July 16, 2017).

According to Schneider (2013: 1), one should not only look at individual statements but also at structural macro-features of a text, to see whether sections either overwhelmingly deal with one discourse or show overlap of different discourse strands. In my case, it is thus relevant to see whether sections overwhelmingly deal with either securitizing frames or humanizing frames.

In general, I believe the Kamerbrief can be interpreted as a constant merger of different frames, because it rarely happens that a section only mentions one frame. The securitizing frames and humanizing frames interact within sentences, summations, short fragments, and even entire paragraphs:

Example: Sentence

"Europe cannot give shelter to all refugees [*securitizing frame*], but does share the plight to offer safety [*humanizing frame*]." – page 1 -

Example: Summation

"... offer protection to refugees [*humanizing frame*], dismantle the cynical business model of human smugglers, reduce migration streams to Europe and make them better manageable in the long run [*securitizing frame*], and fulfil our responsibilities as laid out in international and European law [*humanizing frame*]." – page 4 -

Example: Fragment

"The measures are inadequate [*securitizing frame*], considering the reality of constantly increasing numbers that reach the outside borders [*securitizing frame*] and uncontrollably travel through other Member States [*securitizing frame*]. The human suffering that is accompanied with it [*humanizing frame*], and the risks of exploitation by human smugglers [*humanizing frame*], is unprecedentedly high." – page 2 -

Example: Paragraph

"The European Member States can no longer have a discussion on which problem is the most important: our mutual problem of how to deal with the migrants who are here now, or our common problem of an untenable high instream [*securitizing frame*]. A European solution can only be effective if both problems are inextricably connected and approached simultaneously. The cabinet makes an effort to come to a common European approach. This approach has to end drowning, suffocation and human smuggling and give form to the fulfillment of our duty to protect refugees [*humanizing frame*] and to an approach of the problem in a way that is tenable for Europe [*securitizing frame*]." – page 1 -

These examples demonstrate how sections can mirror different frames at once. It thus appears as though "different strands of discourses", in the words of Schneider (2013), are constantly intersecting. Also in other parliamentary documents is it tangible how the framing displays both securitizing frames and humanizing frames.

The framing displays how the Dutch government justifies its migration policy by referring both to notions of securitization and human security. This reflects the plural conception of security that Pinyol-Jiménez spoke of (2012: 37), as well as the larger societal dissidence on migration. Within the polarized debate in the Netherlands, the VVD and PvdA had to have found mutual adjustment of standpoints in their policy framing. Policy framing is thus a discursive process in which conflicting viewpoints have to be merged into one policy agenda (Nie 2003: 321). The Kamerbrief shows that through framing, different political parties with varying viewpoints can reach an agreement and lay a collective basis for action.

In accordance with Dekker (2016: 14), I believe that the ambiguous policy framing can be seen as a "glove that fits multiple problem interpretations" which prevents a potential deadlock within policymaking. An ambiguous framing can appease multiple political actors in a controversial policy situation. Although the policy statement of the Kamerbrief was created by a small number of people, it can also appeal to a wider range of actors within a society or convince them of the validity and desirability of a policy. An ambiguous framing might perhaps be seen as a strategic endeavor to appease a larger range of citizens than if it would be more one-sided. According to Zittoun (2014), the broader a policy is framed, the better it can persuade a large audience (ibid.: 130). The Netherlands has been coping with the combination of taking care of the population within national borders and for taking care of people from outside the national borders (Scheffer 2015: 1). The Kamerbrief thus legitimizes a policy that would take into account two concerns that resonated in Dutch society, namely the concern for controlling the influx and the concern for human solidarity.

Conclusion

My main argument is that policy can incorporate different frames in a quite equal way, and thus can represent a middle ground in a polarized debate. The Kamerbrief displays a framing of the migration-security nexus that is built upon notions of both securitization and human security, because it varies from mentioning the perceived national absorption capacity to security for individual migrants. I would conclude here that securitizing frames and humanizing frames are simultaneously separate and connected, apart and intertwined, frictional and harmonious. On the one hand, the policy statement in its entirety can be interpreted as showing friction, due to its tension between emphases on different security elements. On the other hand, it displays a certain coherence and harmony, because of its balance of different standpoints and its constant incorporation of both securitizing frames and humanizing frames. Importantly, the letter does not explicitly link the word 'security' to migration, but I argue that the tendency of the framing does reflect general notions of security. Furthermore, there is not a winner within this framing. It has not been my goal to calculate the exact number of sentences that fit either framing or inquire which framing is triumphing. Regardless of which security perspective is dominant, there is attention for multiple conceptions of security. The analysis of framing calls for a reflection upon the practical context in which it is used. I will demonstrate this in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

The Policy Framing in Practice

The foregoing chapters showed how policy framing is developed. I illustrated how diverse political perspectives were merged into one policy statement. This policy statement exemplifies how there can exist ambiguity within policy framing. The ambiguous framing reflects the larger polarized debate in the Netherlands. In this last chapter, I will analyze how the framing of the migration-security nexus works in practice and how it is daily reproduced by policymakers at BZ. Due to the framing's ambiguity it is malleable to be employed for a wide range of contexts, and thus of much practical utility. First, I will describe how the framing is multifunctional in the realm of politics. Second, I will show how it is employable in the realm of policy practices. Lastly, I will analyze how it operates in the realm of personal ideas of policymakers. The relevance of this chapter is to analyze the notion of Colebatch (2009) that policy framing serves as the legitimation of practices (ibid.: 8). In Chapter 2, I defined legitimation as the process through which a "social system comes to be accepted as appropriate and generally supported by those who participate in it" (Crossman 2017: 1). I will thus illustrate how an ambiguous framing gives a useful legitimation for policymakers to justify the migration policy.

5.1 Legitimation in the Realm of Politics

I will explain here how the ambiguous framing is daily reproduced by policymakers in the realm of politics. At one meeting I attended, people suddenly started to discuss the term 'controlling the irregular influx'. One of them thought it sounded too vague, another believed it sounded too harsh. Alternatives of the word 'controlling' were proposed, such as 'damming', 'regulating', or 'drastically reducing'. They searched for a word that would reflect a concern for state-level security yet did not undermine a concern for human security. According to one policymaker:

I think that the choice of terminology shows where in the political landscape you are positioned. If you say: we have to limit or stop migration, then you are positioned on the harsh side. If you say: we have to manage migration, in order to make sure that people do not drown, then you are showing that you are politically more welcoming towards migrants.²⁸

Policymakers are constantly dealing with the sensitivity of framing, which is especially relevant in the realm of politics. When Minister Ploumen participates in an EU summit or when Minister Koenders visits his counterparts in Africa, the Taskforce Migration contributes to preparing their speaking points when it concerns migration. The essence of speaking points is often framed as follows:

"We appreciate your hard work and share your sense of urgency. What else should be done to reduce the influx of irregular migrants and loss of lives? What can we do to support you?"²⁹

²⁸ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 10, May 3, 2017.

²⁹ For the sake of privacy: No source.

Mentioning both the curbing of the influx and the loss of lives shows how the Dutch government communicates simultaneously a securitizing frame and a humanizing frame to political actors in the international arena.

I will now zoom in on the national political arena by looking at how policymakers answer Kamervragen. Kamervragen are questions asked by Members of Parliament to the cabinet, to request information about a Minister's policy (EPPA 2017: 1). I will argue that the Taskforce Migration is one of the units that relieves potential tension within the ambiguous framing by giving attention to both securitizing frames and humanizing frames when they are engaging with Kamervragen. In doing so, I show the flexible and multi-deployable character of the ambiguous framing.

Between Summer 2015 and Summer 2017 there were dozens of migration-related Kamervragen, and the Taskforce Migration cooperated with multiple departments to draft answers on behalf of the ministers. Although there are many Kamervragen of multiple opposition parties that could be analyzed here, I believe it is interesting to analyze some Kamervragen of the parties PVV and GroenLinks. The PVV, led by Geert Wilders, is generally known for its negative stance towards the increased arrival of irregular migrants and for its focus on state-level security.³⁰ Contrarily, GroenLinks, with Jesse Klaver as its party chairman, often emphasizes solidarity within the migration debate and focuses on individual-level security for migrants.³¹ The polarization on migration within Dutch society is thus tangible in their general standpoints, and a comparison of answers to two of their questions represents the multi-deployable character of the ambiguous framing of the Dutch government.

The first example is an answer to the PVV, who asked in April 2017 why the Dutch government would not consider to close the Dutch borders. The response that the Taskforce Migration drafted was eventually published by BZ as follows:

"Apart from the question whether the hermetic sealing of the Dutch borders is practical and legally feasible, the cabinet thinks that this seemingly simple solution will not take away all risks for society. Instead, the cabinet implements both bilaterally and in EU cooperation a large amount of measures to limit the security risks for the Netherlands, and looks where the Netherlands, in accordance with EU and international obligations, can also offer protection to asylum-seekers who actually are in need of protection."³²

The answer mentions to "limit the security risks for the Netherlands," which points to a securitizing frame, while also to "offer protection" for people in need, which matches a humanizing frame. Therefore, the ambiguous framing of the migration-security nexus is tangible here. The second example is an answer to GroenLinks who asked in July 2016 about policy goals of a so-called EU Partnership Framework:

³⁰ For a general impression of the standpoints of the PVV on migration, one can visit:

<https://www.pvv.nl/index.php/component/content/article.html?id=7046:-debat-over-opvang-syriers->

³¹ For a general impression of the standpoints of GroenLinks on migration, one can visit:

<https://groenlinks.nl/standpunten/vluchtelingen>.

³² 'Beantwoording Kamervragen over bericht EU watertaxis die 8500 migranten redden', Ministry of Security and Justice, published on May 11, 2017, reference number 2017Z05268, page 4, <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2017/05/11/antwoorden-kamervragen-over-bericht-eu-watertaxis-die-8500-migranten-redden> (visited on July 14, 2017).

"...[we] read the proposals in such a way as though they aim to let the EU intervene on the migration route or in the country of origin, to prevent that migrants reach the external borders of the EU (...) How do you think it can be prevented that human rights are being violated or that necessary protection is being withheld in the execution of such agreements?"³³

GroenLinks thus noticed potential friction in an EU policy that the Dutch government would incorporate, and wondered whether values of securitization and human security were at odds with each other. The answer stated:

"... the cabinet does not see human rights as a competing objective with the migration agenda, but instead as a pre-condition. In the European context, the Netherlands advocates that human rights form an integral part of the agreements in the compacts".³⁴

The answer described how policy objectives within for example development aid, economic growth and migration could actually reinforce each other by together making sure that people do not feel the necessity to migrate if they have better prospects in their own country. Although GroenLinks thus perceived a contradiction or tension, BZ seemed to refute this by pointing out how different security goals were intertwined.

The examples of PVV and GroenLinks show the utility and usefulness of the ambiguous framing. Complicated political questions about either state-level security or individual-level security of migrants can be handled by falling back on integrating both humanizing and securitizing frames. This shows the multi-deployable character of the policy framing as laid out in the Kamerbrief of September 8, 2015, and how units like the Taskforce Migration can utilize it to parry multiple political critiques. BZ is able to smoothen out potential political friction on its policy because its framing is grounded in a plural conception of security. It is not implied here that political friction is solved in practice, but merely that it appears to seek that on paper.

Furthermore, it is relevant to refer back to the idea of a former Member of the House of Representatives. In Chapter 3, I described her comment on how a coalition which represents various standpoints can be constructive, because it can obtain broader political support than if only one standpoint would be represented.³⁵ I indeed think that the ambiguity of the framing of the migration-security nexus allows the Dutch government to legitimize its policy from different standpoints that might soothe parties on the political spectrum varying from the PVV to GroenLinks. The legitimation of policy by using an ambiguous framing is not only tangible in the realm of politics, but also with policy practices. I will now

³³ 'Beantwoording vragen van de leden van de fracties van GroenLinks en de SP over Commissiemededeling over de externe dimensie van migratie', Ministry of Foreign Affairs, published on August 19, 2016, reference number TFM.159557u, page 3, <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2016/08/19/beantwoording-kamervragen-over-de-externe-dimensie-van-migratie> (visited on July 16, 2017).

³⁴ 'Beantwoording vragen van de leden van de fracties van GroenLinks en de SP over Commissiemededeling over de externe dimensie van migratie', Ministry of Foreign Affairs, August 19, 2016, reference number TFM.159557u, page 2, <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2016/08/19/beantwoording-kamervragen-over-de-externe-dimensie-van-migratie> (visited on July 16, 2017).

³⁵ Author's interview with former Member of the House of Representatives, June 8, 2017.

build on this by explaining how not only political challenges but also practices can be legitimized by an ambiguous framing.

5.2 Legitimation in the Realm of Policy Practices

Policy framing not only narrates a situation but also shapes the policy agenda (Nie 2003: 321). Since 2015, the Dutch government has been increasingly developing projects for combatting human smuggling, stimulating shelter in the region of Africa and Asia, returning people who are not granted asylum, and other endeavors. Its goal is to stimulate an integrated migration policy, which means that it intertwines goals within multiple geographical regions. For example, there has to be both a good asylum procedure in the Netherlands and a tackling of root causes of migration in countries of origin. It is not my intention to go into detail about the implementation or content of such practices, nor to morally assess their objectives. Instead, I aim to exemplify how they are legitimized by an ambiguous framing. I will explain that although different objectives of security might seem at odds with each other, as GroenLinks remarked in the foregoing paragraph, an ambiguous framing can legitimize their interrelation. The current section will thus outline how certain policy practices are legitimized by both securitizing frames and humanizing frames. The relevance is to show that an ambiguous framing can be employed as a legitimation in multiple contexts.

Throughout my research, I came across many reports in which projects were justified by mentioning both the reduction of arrivals and the saving of human lives. I realized that measures can be legitimized in an ambiguous way, because they deal with different aspects of the migration-security nexus. An example is the policy practice of addressing root causes of migration. In 2016 the Dutch government established the Addressing Root Causes Fund, in which 125 million euros were allocated for a five-year project to reduce political and socioeconomic root causes of armed conflict, instability and irregular migration.³⁶ For example, there are investments to increase employment opportunities for people in countries from which migrants originate. In one report, BZ legitimized the addressing of root causes as follows:

"By protecting human rights, improving the living conditions and promoting stability, root causes of migration are being tackled. After all, a better future perspective will contribute to a less urgent feeling of potential migrants to leave their homes and putting their lives in danger by trying to search for a better life somewhere else."³⁷

This framing demonstrates that BZ identifies vulnerabilities of "potential migrants", which is in line with how a human security approach addresses root causes behind threats to human wellbeing (Chandler 2012: 2015). It also reflects the idea of McDonald (2002) that "engaging in rhetoric of Human Security ... adds legitimacy to the normative context in which Human Security is embedded," (ibid.: 282). In other words, a humanizing frame gives legitimation for a policy.

³⁶ 'Beleidskader Addressing Root Causes Fund,' Ministry of Foreign Affairs, published on January 13, 2016, no. DSH-2016.18114, page 7. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/subsidies-voor-ontwikkelingssamenwerking-en-europa/documenten/besluiten/2016/01/13/beleidskader-addressing-root-causes-fund> (visited on May 20, 2017).

³⁷ 'Mensenrechtenrapportage 2016', Ministry of Foreign Affairs, published on May 16, 2015, page 33, <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2017/05/17/mensenrechtenrapportage-2016> (visited on May 20, 2017).

However, in a different light, the tackling of root causes can be legitimized by saying how this will prevent people from coming to Europe. In other words, tackling root causes would not only improve human conditions in countries of origin, but also curb the arrival of migrants and thus protect the perceived absorption capacity and security of European societies. According to one policymaker:

*'You can frame this in a left-wing way, by saying, we have to address root causes, to make sure that people there have a future and do not drown on their way to Europe. But in a right-wing way, you might say: it makes sure that people stay there and do not come here. It is the same policy, but everyone on the political spectrum can formulate it in a way that causes its voters to accept it as a legitimate policy.'*³⁸

Political actors with different standpoints might thus agree with the policy of tackling root causes, but might employ different legitimations. They might either emphasize that tackling root causes will prevent people from drowning, or that it will prevent people from coming to Europe. In practice, it comes down to the same policy, but is framed differently depending on the context or actor. Although actors might not find a policy practice completely satisfactory or fully synchronized with their opinion, they can at least justify its goal.

Policy framing thus serves as the legitimation of practices (Colebatch 2009: 8). In accordance with Dekker (2016), an ambiguous framing of both securitizing frames and humanizing frames can be a "glove that fits multiple problem interpretations" (ibid.: 14). An ambiguous framing functions like a middle ground within a polarized debate, and can be of practical utility in daily policymaking because it can legitimize policy from different angles. I do not imply that all policy practices constantly integrate securitizing frames and humanizing frames simultaneously or coherently. For example, project proposals on "good border control, registration and identification, measures in the realm of public order and national security"³⁹ might accentuate a securitizing frame, while policy proposals on giving "special attention for vulnerable groups such as women and children within large-scale refugee- and migration streams" and "countering xenophobia and racism"⁴⁰ reflect a more humanizing frame. However, my point is that most policy practices are legitimized by a convergence of frames. An ambiguous framing thus provides the opportunity for actors with diverging standpoints to find legitimation for their government's policy.

I do not assume that legitimation occurs without friction. For example, in March 2016 the EU made an agreement with Turkey. Turkey would stop irregular migration towards Europe and take in migrants from Greece to eventually redistribute them among EU Member States. In one report, BZ frames the agreement as a way to "make the influx with which the EU was confronted controllable (...) and to drastically reduce the amount of people who drown in the Aegean Sea".⁴¹ The agreement indeed both

³⁸ Interview 10, page 2.

³⁹ 'VN-top over grootschalige vluchtelingen- en migratiestromen om 19 september en VS-top over noden van vluchtelingen op 20 september', Ministry of Foreign Affairs, published on September 12, 2016, Kamerstuk 26150 no. 155, page 3, <https://www.parlementairemonitor.nl/9353000/1/j9vvij5epmj1ey0/vk7flyxzflz7> (visited on July 16, 2017).

⁴⁰ 'VN-top over grootschalige vluchtelingen- en migratiestromen om 19 september en VS-top over noden van vluchtelingen op 20 september', Ministry of Foreign Affairs, published on September 12, 2016, Kamerstuk 26150 no. 155, page 2, <https://www.parlementairemonitor.nl/9353000/1/j9vvij5epmj1ey0/vk7flyxzflz7> (visited on July 16, 2017).

⁴¹ 'Mensenrechtenrapportage 2016', Ministry of Foreign Affairs, published on May 16, 2015, page 33, <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2017/05/17/mensenrechtenrapportage-2016> (visited on May 20, 2017).

reduced the number of arrivals and the number of drowned people. For example, illegal border crossings from Turkey into Europe dropped from 115.000 in January and February 2016 to 3.300 in June and July 2016, and the number of drowned people fell from 366 to 7 (European Stability Initiative 2017: 3). Although the agreement might thus be legitimized by both securitizing frames and humanizing frames, the agreement has been so controversial in the international and national arena that people seem cautious to emphasize either frame. Furthermore, I wondered if the policy framing was merely a tool for legitimation in the realm of politics and policy practices, or that it also had a purpose in the personal realm. In the next section, I will therefore explain how policymakers reflected upon the framing.

5.3 Legitimation in the Realm of Personal Reflection

In this last section I will analyze how policymakers personally legitimize policy, and how they reflect upon the framing. Schön and Rein (1994, chap. 7, cited in Van Hulst & Yanow 2016: 96) advocate for frame reflection in the policy process, which means that policymakers should reflect on their role in framing processes. During my internship, I noticed my own reproduction of the framing. For example, in monthly invitations I sent out on behalf of the Taskforce Migration for videoconferences with embassies in Africa, I wrote that the purpose was 'to discuss the containment of the migration stream via the Central Mediterranean Route'. Why did I not leave out the word 'containment' and simply write 'to discuss migration'? Or why did I not call it 'to discuss the saving of lives on the Central Mediterranean Route'? This made me realize two things. First, how quickly and uncritically I adapted to the framing. I became so used to certain phrases that I did not realize how I was reinforcing the same framing as I was investigating. Second, I realized that the ambiguous character of the framing might create personal tension. Such realizations led me to inquire how policymakers from a wide range of departments at BZ reflected upon the framing of migration policy they reproduced. Eventually I concluded three things.

Firstly, policymakers preserved a professional loyalty towards the desired framing of the cabinet they were representing. They had to work within certain frameworks or boundaries, for example on stimulating the return of people who are not granted asylum, because 'that is our mandate'⁴². Throughout my internship I observed how policymakers were actively combining both securitizing frames and humanizing frames when they were developing projects. However, this did not mean that they internalized the framing or were uncritical of it:

*'I do have an opinion about this, and it can divert on certain elements from what the cabinet's policy is, but I just think, you are a civil servant, and your role is to decently carry it out.'*⁴³

Some mentioned that they were encouraged by the ministers to think out-of-the-box in search of new solutions.

Secondly, policymakers reflected upon the friction of the ambiguous framing. The policy was called 'schizophrenic', an 'uncomfortable compromise', and an 'awkward marriage' because of its assemblage of divergent political standpoints. Some policymakers described ethical dilemmas they

⁴² Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 9, April 21, 2017.

⁴³ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 6, April 7, 2017.

experienced with certain elements. For example, one policymaker believed that 'the Netherlands is balanced too much towards self-preservation, and maybe too little on responsibility for migrants'.⁴⁴ Another policymaker elaborated on his internal friction by explaining that on an individual level, he wanted to welcome every migrant because he understood their drive to search for better life prospects. However, on a 'macro level'⁴⁵ he believed it could be disastrous if all migrants would be taken in, because it might stir up more securitization. He feared that it might eventually induce European citizens to vote for right-wing parties who would build walls to hold migrants back. The policymaker thus legitimized the ambiguous policy framing by taking into account a long-term view.

Thirdly, many policymakers outlined their personal agreement with the migration policy. The ambiguous character of the policy was considered necessary for solutions that would do right to most actors involved:

*'If, let's say, you only have those extreme images, then that can lead to a too emotional approach of the topic (...) because it can lead to a focus on only saving lives. Which is very important, and it is definitely what we should do. Simultaneously, there are other perspectives on the problem. And you should keep an eye out for all those elements. (...) Because when a townhall or mosque is attacked here [in the Netherlands], then those are also parts of the problem for which we should have attention, because otherwise we have an unbalanced approach. If you explicate it in an extreme way, then you could say like, well if we see all those images of drowned people or those little boats, then that could lead to us saying that if we want to prevent that, then we have to make sure that those people can come to us in a safe way. Well then we should design a ferry service and let all those people cross over safely, to prevent all that human drama. But that will not be the solution for the problem in society here. It also would not be a durable solution. So each time you have to look for that balance.'*⁴⁶

It was thus believed appropriate that the framing needed to display a weighing of concerns, in order to handle migration from multiple angles. Someone said that policymakers from multiple departments not always shared the same opinion and that their focus on delivering different messages could be at odds sometimes, but that there was an atmosphere of general agreement.⁴⁷ Radical measures, like closing borders or taking in all migrants, were deemed as unfeasible, illogical and unethical. A middle ground within a polarized debate was thus perceived as important, not necessarily because it reiterated the dominant framing, but because of the genuine conviction that it created a proper balance.

*'For me, the most important drive is to find solutions that do right to all involved interests. Interests of the Dutch government, interests of (...) migrants. That we come to a system in which all interests are weighed against each other.'*⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 6, April 7, 2017.

⁴⁵ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 11, May 17, 2017.

⁴⁶ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 5, April 12, 2017.

⁴⁷ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 7, April 10, 2017.

⁴⁸ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 4, April 12, 2017.

In line with Scholten and Van Nispen (2008: 181), policymakers thus seemed to indicate that policy controversies can be resolved by building bridges between conflicting frames. I would argue that the ambiguous framing has a strategic and useful function, because of its objective to appease multiple actors in a society to relieve societal tension. Securitizing and humanizing frames were seen by some policymakers as not necessarily frictional, but as compatible to the extent that they both contributed to finding solutions for different actors. The term 'durable' was a key word in interviews, meaning that the migration policy should be an 'integral approach' of varying intertwined concerns to guarantee its long-term effectiveness. Regardless of whether people agreed with specific policy actions and irrespective of their own political standpoints, they evaluated the general policy as fruitful due to its durable character.

In general, policymakers thus explicated a deliberate agreement with the policy framing they represented and reproduced. Personal friction with specific policy elements could be resolved by an awareness of the importance of a holistic policy that reconciles multiple concerns. On the one hand, several policymakers said that experiences such as visiting refugee centers were important in emphasizing humanizing frames:

*'You have to understand people [migrants] and understand where they come from, because then you will be more cautious in what you are saying. So then you will not soon think in terms of, they are postal packages and we have to send them back as quickly as possible, but that they are also human beings, so there have to be pre-conditions to treat them well.'*⁴⁹

*'At some moments, I think like: oh, I really feel right now like if I don't properly finish my work today, but postpone it to tomorrow, then there are three people [migrants] less who have been helped.'*⁵⁰

On the other hand, people believed it was wise to keep a certain distance towards such emotions, because they found it unrealistic to take everyone in. The strength of an ambiguous framing is thus that it above all prioritizes a certain balance:

*'Look, I think that everyone here, both as a civil servant and politically, wants the best for as much people as possible.'*⁵¹

Conclusion

I have analyzed how the ambiguous framing of the migration-security nexus works in practice. I showed how the framing is being reproduced by policymakers within their daily work. In doing so, I illustrated how an ambiguous framing can be multifunctional, because it is flexible to be utilized for different situations. First, in the realm of politics, policy can be legitimized by using an ambiguous framing, and this is useful to parry multiple political questions. Second, policy practices are legitimized by both securitizing frames and humanizing frames. Third, I highlighted how policymakers personally legitimized and reflected upon the policy framing they represented.

⁴⁹ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 3, April 7, 2017.

⁵⁰ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 11, May 17, 2017.

⁵¹ Author's interview with BZ policymaker no. 9, April 21, 2017.

Conclusions

In this thesis I have illustrated how policy framing can be ambiguous due to the attempted merging of various standpoints. More specifically, I analyzed how the Dutch government in general and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (BZ) in particular frame the migration-security nexus. I have shown how the government incorporates different perspectives on security in the context of increased irregular migration from Africa and Asia towards Europe. In Chapter 2 I outlined my theoretical framework, explaining why I treated policy framing as a process in which various actors narrate a situation to shape the policy agenda. Additionally, I described the notion of securitization and human security. In Chapter 3, I described the political context in which the Dutch government was situated, to show how the coalition parties VVD and PvdA emphasized the migration-security nexus in different ways. In Chapter 4 I analyzed the policy statement that was published by the Dutch government, showing how different elements of the migration-security nexus reflect how policy framing can be ambiguous. Lastly, in Chapter 5 I outlined how an ambiguous framing is multi-deployable for legitimizing daily policy processes, and how policymakers reflect upon it.

The aim here was to show that the framing of the migration-security nexus is inspired by different notions of security. In this thesis I analyzed how BZ and its Taskforce Migration are constantly balancing between diverging concerns. I would conclude that BZ produces and reproduces a frame that reflects a concern for both control and compassion. On the one hand, BZ places the migration issue on the urgent political agenda, and reproduces a securitizing frame of concern for controlling the arrival of irregular migrants, to protect national absorption capacity or public support. This is linked to securitization, which refers to a focus on state-level security. On the other hand, BZ reproduces a humanizing frame of compassion for migrants. This is linked to the ideal of human security, which refers to a focus on security from the perspective of migrants. Taken together, an ambiguous framing has been created due to the polarization within the European context, Dutch society, and Dutch coalition.

Furthermore, I illustrated that an ambiguous framing is useful in legitimizing multiple political, practical and personal situations. Policy framing is not a unitary interpretation of a situation, but is ambiguous because it originates from a political negotiation over different standpoints (Dekker 2016: 2). The ambiguous framing reflects the larger polarized debate in the Netherlands in general and the coalition of the PvdA and VVD in particular. The policy framing can be seen as a "glove that fits multiple problem interpretations" (Dekker 2016: 14). The ambiguous framing seems like a middle ground between the securitizing frame of the British government and the humanizing frame of the German government that Lindvall (2015) analyzed. Moreover, the ambiguity displays an interesting mechanism. The framing itself might contain friction due to the various standpoints it represents, yet this friction is somehow solved because it simultaneously has the potential to satisfy people with varying opinions. This works as follows. On the one hand, the friction can be regarded as both a cause and a consequence of the ambiguous framing of the migration-security nexus. It is a cause because the frictional debate in Dutch society created the ambiguous framing in the first place, and a consequence because the framing created tension within its policy. However, on the other hand, the ambiguous framing is simultaneously an antidote for the friction it incorporates and creates. After all, the ambiguous character gives room for legitimation in many ways. Although the framing of the Dutch government thus reflects tension due to conflicting standpoints, it also

shows coherence and balance. The ambiguity of framing is some sort of reconciliation, and therefore has the potential to solve friction in a wide variety of political, practical and personal situations.

My analysis aims to contribute to an academic understanding of how policy framing in general can illustrate a convergence of conflicting viewpoints. The additive value of my research to literature is that I illustrate how policy framing works. I have shown how policy framing is a discursive process, in which political actors narrate a situation to help define problems (Nie 2003: 321) and decide which course of action is taken (Van Hulst & Yanow 2016: 96). This includes a convergence of different concerns of involved actors, and an integration of diverse interpretations (Stone 2000: 11). Furthermore, I have demonstrated how framing is an important tool for state actors to gain support for their policy (Tarrow 2011: 32). Policymakers can deploy different frames to legitimize measures in a wide variety of contexts.

Future research might inquire whether policy framing can change over time. For example, I have treated the Kamerbrief of September 8, 2015 as the policy statement that guided policymaking until Summer 2017, but perhaps there have been changes in the policy framing throughout the course of this period. Another idea for future research is to look at other EU Member States. Comparative analyses of intra-governmental ambiguity within policy statements might be valuable in understanding how the EU as an entity handles the migration issue. Furthermore, it has not been my goal to look at actual policy measures in practice. My theoretical delineation was to look at framing, and not policy in itself. In other words, it would be interesting to delve more deeply into the content of actual instruments, funds, actions, projects and partnerships that the government engages in, not only to see how they interact with framing but also whether they demonstrate a similar ambiguity as within framing.

According to the European Stability Initiative (2017), "European leaders could thus demonstrate to their electorates that it is possible to control external sea borders without undermining the refugee convention" (ibid.: 7). It is possible to have a framing of solutions for the migration issue that intertwines humanitarian responsibilities for migrants on the one hand with a concern for the perceived absorption capacity and cohesion of a country on the other hand. At the time of publication of the current thesis, the Dutch government is in a negotiation process to form a new coalition. Since the elections in March 2017, it is unclear which parties will find a common ground to form a government for the next years. Formation negotiations during Spring failed due to conflicting values of the parties VVD, CDA, D66 and GroenLinks on the topic of migration. It remains to be seen how the future government will handle diverging viewpoints on migration, and whether its framing will continue to reflect both control and compassion.

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