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More or Less Europe? The European Leaders' Discourses on the Refugees Crisis

Abstract

The refugees' crisis has set the public agenda on European topics throughout 2015. Considered by many as (another) existential test for the European project, this new type of crisis has triggered frustrations and extreme disappointment, leading to a further aggravation of the already existing intra-EU cleavages, such as those between the West and the East, the "net debtors" (now labeled as the net supporters of the refugees) and the "net creditors" (now intensely recognized as adversaries of migration). Noteworthy, Angela Merkel declared that the refugees' crisis is "testing Europe's mettle" (2015), whereas Jean-Claude Juncker posed that a "blame-game" is shattering the EU, with Member States accusing "each other of not doing enough or of doing the wrong thing" (2015). This paper argues that the European leaders have tacitly fueled – through their emotional and solidarity-centered discourse – the intra-EU cleavages between the Member-States, as well as public attachment to far-right xenophobic ideologies. By means of a combined narratives' and frames' analysis, this paper focuses on the discursive means employed by the European leaders in order to tackle the sensitive topic of the migration crisis. Firstly, some background information about the causes and developments of the migration crisis is presented. Secondly, frames and narratives are approached as two different yet complementary instances of discourse analysis. Lastly, two key discourses given by Angela Merkel and Jean-Claude Juncker are investigated with the purpose of identifying how frames and narratives combine to tell the story of European integration under the pressure of the refugees' flows.

Keywords: refugee crisis; discourse; narratives; frames.

The Migration Crisis – the Missed Effect of Conspicuous Causes

According to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the number of internally displaced people (IDP) – understood as people who, due to extreme violence and armed conflict, had to leave their homes and move within the borders of their own countries – has been steadily increasing since 2000. Between 2011 and 2013, following the "Arab Spring", the average yearly number of IDP has dramatically raised from approx. 40 million to over 60 million, giving birth to a true crisis of IDP, which in 2014 turned into a true refugees' crisis, as the number of people fleeing conflict by passing at least one internationally recognized bor-

der had grown by 20%. UNHCR data shows that, at the end of 2014, 53% of the refugees came from Syria (3,88 mil.), Afghanistan (2,59 mil.), and Somalia (1,11 mil.). By the end of 2015, the number of refugees in the world has reached more than 65 million, the highest level ever recorded (UNHCR, 2016). It is the equivalent of one in every 113 people on the planet, according to the UN Refugee Agency, and if considered a nation would make up the 21st largest in the world (www.independent.co.uk). One interesting development is that while the refugees flow increased with over 70% in 2014, the USA were the only peaceful regions on the globe where the number of refugees dropped (-5%).

The European Union, due to its untroubled and prosperous climate, seemed like a logical destination for many refugees. Owing to extreme military and political unrest in Syria and Iraq, it is estimated that 1.5 million migrants entered the EU in 2015, most of them after a life-threatening journey. Almost 4000 migrants were reported to have died trying to cross the Mediterranean in 2015. Dramatic images and dreadful stories with women and children desperately trying to find salvation in Europe have made the headline of most media outlets in the summer and fall of 2015. This has pressured Member States to answer to requests for humanitarian aid, asylum and integration.

2015 has become an emblematic year for the EU migration crisis. Germany took the "moral leadership" (Varoufakis, 2015) in the refugees' question, with chancellor Angela Merkel declaring that "If Europe fails in this refugee crisis, it betrays its founding principles." (www.dw.com) However, at the end of 2015, the EU was still not one of the "top hosts", as five low- and middle-income countries bore most of the migration burden: Turkey, Pakistan, Lebanon, Islamic Republic of Iran, Ethiopia, and Jordan (UNHCR, 2016).

European leaders and institutions, pressured by what appears as a never-ending flow of unfortunate people fleeing violence, have been forced to advance solutions within incredible time and political constraints. No wonder that tensions rose, while technicalities – so necessary given the complexity of the migration phenomena – were set aside. The Ten Point Action Plan on Migration, issued by the Joint Foreign and Home Affairs Council in April 2015, contains nothing but vague strategic directions, too wide to work as pragmatic guidelines. In September 2015, Member States agreed in principle to resettle 160.000 refugees, but failed to reach a consensus on which countries would take them in. The much-debated "compulsory quota system" brought to light dramatic differences of opinions between member states, thus delaying the response further and fueling a deep conflict inside the EU. A new divide has been created between the "solidarity-centered states", led by Germany, and the more "reluctant states", such as Hungary or Slovakia. However, the compulsory quota system has failed so far, not least because the centers designed to process and relocate refugees (so-called 'hotspots' in Italy and Greece) are not functioning (Bond, Korteweg, & Mortera-Martinez, 2016).

The waves of refugees came as a surprise for Europe, even though there they should have been regarded as anything but abnormal. According to Fischer – Germany's former foreign minister – "all of the migration that Europe currently faces is rooted in grave crises in its own neighborhood". In a nutshell, the main causes of the current migration to Europe are "the Western Balkans' continuing economic malaise; the turmoil in the greater Middle East; and Africa's civil wars and conflicts. Intensification or expansion of the war in eastern Ukraine would quickly add a fourth cause of flight" (Fischer, 2015). Looking at these rather conspicuous causes, one might say that the migration crisis did not appear out of the blue. It will not drop out of sight either. Moreover, it appears that the migration flow is intensifying and will soon be regarded as a *status quo* in the EU and elsewhere, with national governments constantly striving to find integration solutions for the refugees, amidst populist and xenophobic trends.

Two Instances of Discourse Analysis: Framing and Narratives

The anti-migration platform has proved electorally successful both at national and European levels. For instance, Grabbe counted 114 members of anti-migration parties in the European Parliament (15.2% of MEPs) with explicit xenophobic views (Grabbe, 2015). In 2016, Filippo Grandi, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, warned of a "climate of xenophobia" gripping Europe (Yeung, 2016). According to a recent study done by the Institut français d'opinion publique (IFOP), citizens embracing the far-right ideologies are less inclined to favor the refugee relocation scheme and more tempted to label the refugees as "economic migrants" (IFOP, 2015). "Beyond the opinion polls and the results of elections, the 2015 migration/refugee influx has turned extreme anti-immigration right-wing positions into mainstream positions, mobilizing right and left-wing governments and political leaders in dramatic fashion" (Balfour *et. al.,* 2015, p. 46). Anti-establishment movements have been activated at both national and European levels. Premised on the fact that the populist challenge could be partially regarded as an effect of a flawed EU communication strategy, this paper identifies the key frames and narratives employed by European leaders when tackling the refugees' crisis. Its aim is to contribute to a better understanding of how the mainstream EU discourse on migration should be redesigned so that it could cope with increasing public resistance to refugees' integration and xenophobic attitudes (IFOP, 2015). Discourse are essential to understanding the dynamics of human thought, for "our ways of talking do not neutrally reflect our world, identities and social relations but, rather, play an active role in creating and changing them" (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 2).

One of the most cited definitions of framing belongs to Robert Entman, who poses that "to frame means select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communication text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (Entman, 1993, p. 52). The framing theory argues that the sender's perspective on the message often shapes the receiver's evaluation of the respective topic. Framing effects refer to the way in which information is presented in the public discourse and impact upon how the audience processes the message (Scheufele & Iyengar, 2010). In dedicated literature, there is a firm distinction between media frames – understood as "devices embedded in the political discourse" and individual frames, defined as "internal structures of the mind" (Kinder & Sanders, 1990, p. 74).

Wettstein reveals that there are two factors that facilitate the adoption of frames: "the accessibility of an issue, and the correlation between a subject and the audience's pre-existing opinions" (Wettstein, 2012, p. 320). Shuck and de Vreese (2006) showed that attitudes and knowledge preceding the exposure to the message play an important role on determining the framing effects. In other words, framing effects are influenced by the receiver's inclination to look at a debated topic from a certain perspective. Technically, these inclinations or predispositions are activated or not, depending on how the sender chooses to frame the subject. Kinder and Sanders (1990) found correlations between low levels of political information, on the one hand, and the predisposition to adopt frames, on the other one. Meyers-Levy and Maherswaran (1990) and Shah *et. al.* (2004) showed that, in general, the public is more affected by negative frames than the positive ones. Kahneman and Tversky's (1984) experiments revealed that the type of framing directs audience's attention to specific aspects of reality, which means that, simultaneously, the frames can distract the public from other aspects.

According to de Vreese, "the consequences of framing" can be analyzed at individual, and societal level. An individual level consequence may be altered attitudes about an issue based on exposure to certain frames. On the societal side, frames may contribute to shaping social level processes, such as political socialization, decision-making, and collective actions" (de Vreese, 2005, p. 52). De Vreese differentiates between issue-specific frames and generic frames. The issue-specific frames pertain to a specific topic and can be identified only in some contexts, having also a direct connection with the analyzed events. Generic news frames are applicable to a wide range of topics, and even in different cultural environments.

In empirical research on framing, two types of variables are often used. The first type consists of "framing mechanisms" or "symbolic mechanisms", which are "focal points that serve to identify a particular frame" (Azpi´roz, 2014, p. 77). Symbolic mechanisms are expressed, for instance, through key words and phrases, metaphors, examples, historical and cultural references. The second is made of "reasoning mechanisms" and "framing functions" (idem), which are more subtle, involving a more in-depth analysis of consequences and effects, and providing justifications or arguments for the adoption of certain frames (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989, pp. 3-4).

Frames and narratives have long been considered as two key instances of discourse analysis. However, they have been rarely approached as complementary analytical tools. While framing is more concerned with what happens at the "backstage" of discourse generation, narratives could be regarded as the actual means by which frames are expressed. "Narratives are analytic constructs that unify a number of past or contemporaneous actions and happenings […] into a coherent relational whole that gives meaning to and explains each of its elements and is, at the same time, constituted by them" (Griffin, 1993, p. 1097). Polkinghorne suggests "narrative is a meaning structure that organizes events and human actions into a whole" (1988, p. 18).

Modern approaches to narratives analysis could be grouped into three streams: the first treats narrative as a sequence of events and focuses on principles of narrative structure; the second, exemplified in part by the French structuralists, treats narrative as a manner of speaking about events (a "discourse" produced by a narrator); the third treats narrative as verbal acts constructed "between" narrator and audience (Davis, 2002).

"Narratives give external expression to assumed representations of individual, internal representations of phenomena – events, thoughts and feelings" (Squire, Andrews & Tamboukou, 2013, p. 7). Frames and narratives or story telling are interconnected, in the sense that "narrative is used to make packages of frames cohesive and compelling" (Olsen, 2014).

Over the past two decades, scholars have demonstrated the importance of narratives for understanding the social world (Somers, 1994; Andrews, 2007). In the European integration context, in contrast, the study of narratives, with some notable exceptions, is relatively new (see Gilbert, 2008; Eder, 2009). The discursive approach of Europeanization considers that this process is intrinsically linked to the *meta-narrative of Europe as a social entity*: European society (Trenz, 2014). Eder emphasized the role played by narratives in building collective identities, posing that "Europe is a space with contested stories and that it is through contestation that stories that bind can be told" (Eder, 2009, p. 17). Gilbert (2008) analyzed the implications of the supra-nationalism narrative and found that "the principal narrative accounts of European integration are impregnated with the belief that supra-nationalism is a desirable ideological goal and recount the history of European integration in terms of the progress Europe has made towards achieving this goal" (Gilbert, 2008, p. 658). Trenz (2014)

believes that narratives are used as collective imaginings that tell how society constitutes itself. Narratives of Europeanization compete with existing narratives that imagine the social bonds of national societies or postulate the bonds of a global or world society. Narratives of Europeanization are about the manner in which the social bonds that gave birth to the EU are either maintained or corrupted (Trenz, 2014). He identifies four processes (see Table 1 below) that occur in the narrative construction of the European society:

1. *Triumphant Europeanism:* the assertion of the extraordinary (sacralization);

2. *Trivialized or banal Europeanism:* expression of everyday life;

3. *Euroscepticism*: extraordinary contradiction (de-sacralization);

4. *Crisis*: disaggregation of daily life.

Table 1. Narratives of Europeanization.

Europeanization	Affirmation	Disruption
The extraordinary (heroic)	1) Triumph	3) Trauma
The ordinary (banal)	2) Routine	4) Crisis

Source: Trenz, 2014, p. 7.

"The first two variants are success stories based on the alleged integrative effects of Europeanization on the emergence of a European society. The last two variants are stories of failure, testing out the disintegrative effects of Europeanization on society" (Trenz, 2014, p. 2). When we witness glorification, the narratives of Europeanization can be linked either to triumph or to trauma. By "triumph", Trenz refers to stories of the extraordinary achievements of Europe. By "Trauma", the Europeanization discourse is altered through stories of lost European values and crisis. When Europeanization remains unobserved, EU is narrated as a banal entity and loses its "symbolical appeal" (Trenz, 2014).

Methodology

Drawing upon a constructivist approach, I argue that discourse becomes the core of the EU's legitimacy (de)construction as a post-national and developing political order, and as a global actor (Crespy, 2015). Discourse on European integration contributes to the building of the European public sphere, and generates institutional and political change. The latter effect can be assimilated to the discursive dimension of Europeanization (Trenz, 2014), which forms the focus of this research.

The methodology takes into account two constitutive elements of the political discourse on the European Union: frames and narratives. The research goal is to qualitatively assess the manner in which the EU is constructed in the political discourse on the refugee crisis. More specifically, I am interested in the way in which the EU-related frames are expressed through specific narratives of Europeanization.

The discourse analysis is based on an analytical matrix combining four narratives of Europeanization and six frames (see Table 2).

Table 2. Narratives matrix (template).

Frames / Narratives	Responsibility (incl. blaming)	Conflict (incl. intra-EU divide)	Economic consequences	Morality (incl. EU historical legacy)	Human interest	EU solidarity or supra-nationalism
The extraordinary (affirmation) – **Triumph**						
The extraordinary (disruption) – **Trauma**						
The ordinary (affirmation) – **Routine**						
The ordinary (disruption) – **Crisis**						

The matrix above integrates the four main narratives of Europeanization as identified by Trenz (Triumph, Trauma, Routine, Crisis) and six frames, out of which five are generic (i.e. conflict, the economic consequences, morality, human-interest, and responsibility frames) and the last one is specific (i.e. the solidarity frame). The responsibility frame has been first described by Iyengar and Kinder (1987) and originates in the need to find those accountable for actions that affect people's lives in one way or another. The "blame-game" idea, as conveyed by Jean-Claude Juncker in many of his speeches, belongs to this generic frame, as it focuses on who might be held responsible for the aggravation or the bad management of the migration flows. The conflict frame is mostly encountered in political news, especially in electoral contexts (Capella & Jamieson, 1997), and reflects the urgent need for the sender to cover events as they happen, stressing the emotional side of the stories. The intra-EU divide is a variation of the conflict frame focusing on internal cleavages or fractures (i.e. either among Member States or between the EU and Member States). The economic frame relates to the economic consequences of events on an individual, group, institution, region, or country (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). The human interest frame invites to an emotional and often dramatic reading of the message, by emphasizing the human side of each event. Such frames are constructed to increase audience numbers and pertain to social topics, such as the refugees' crisis. The morality frame places the discourse in a religious, moralizing or value-oriented perspective. The historical legacy of Europe as a "spring" of democratic values is also accounted for in this frame. Finally, the solidarity or supra-nationalism frame is based on the assumed resilience of the European project and builds on Gilbert's (2008) supra-nationalism narrative emphasizing the implicit belief that EU and/or Member-States are continuously striving to achieve a greater degree of integration and are part of a joint European future.

The corpus of the research consists of two speeches delivered by two prominent European leaders. The first speech, entitled "State of the Union 2015: Time for Honesty, Unity and Solidarity", was given by Jean-Claude Juncker – President of the European Commission on the 9th

of September 2015 in Strasbourg. The second one, the Statement by Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel to the European Parliament, was given on the 7th of October 2015 in Strasbourg. Both speeches tackle the sensitive topic of the refugees' and are held in a period when the migration crisis was the hottest issue on the European agenda, with thousands of refugees knocking at the EU's doors in a desperate attempt to escape violence at their home-countries. As mentioned above, September and October were the most dramatic months on the timeline of the refugees' crisis, when thousands of migrants tried to reach Europe in life-threatening journeys.

Findings

Jean-Claude Juncker's Speech: More Europe is a United Europe

Juncker's speech combines the morality and the solidarity-centered frames (see Annex 1), which are extensively expressed through narratives of Europeanization owning to the Extraordinary, be it in the form of the "Triumph" or the "Trauma". The resulting stance is highly emotional.

The morality frame is predominantly expressed through "Triumph". In some contexts, the morality and solidarity frames are intrinsically linked, as in the following fragments:

> "*We Europeans* should remember well that Europe is a continent where nearly everyone has at one time been a refugee. Have we really forgotten that after the devastation of the Second World War, 60 million people were refugees in Europe?" (*my italics*)

> "*We Europeans* should know and should never forget why giving refuge and complying with the fundamental right to asylum is so important."

> "*Europe* is the baker in Kos who gives away his bread to hungry and weary souls. Europe is the students in Munich and in Passau who bring clothes for the new arrivals at the train station. Europe is the policeman in Austria who welcomes exhausted refugees upon crossing the border."

Narratives of disruptive European morality (or traumatic morality) are also present, though are mainly employed as a means of illustrating the "lessons learned" from our historical past and, thus, the urge to behave properly and take the right decisions – no matter how difficult or costly this might be.

> "Europe has made the mistake in the past of distinguishing between Jews, Christians, Muslims."

> "There is no religion, no belief, no philosophy when it comes to refugees."

> "Pushing back boats from piers, setting fire to refugee camps, or turning a blind eye to poor and helpless people: that is not Europe."

The solidarity or supra-national frame is evident in the Juncker's speech and even more visible than the morality frame. Similarly to the morality frame, it is extensively expressed through narratives marking the "extraordinary", with an emphasis placed on Triumph:

> "But now is not the time to take fright. It is time for bold, determined and *concerted action* by the European Union, by its institutions and by all its Member States."

> "A truly united, European migration policy also means that we need to look into opening legal channels for migration."

The "more Europe" narrative is embedded into Juncker's discourse and is often linked to "more Union". Noteworthy, Europe stands for the European Union, thus Juncker tacitly evoking the supra-national stance. The resulting pattern is that "more Europe" means "more Union":

> "We need *more Europe* in our Union. We need *more Union* in our Union."

> "We need *more Europe* in our asylum policy. We need *more Union* in our refugee policy. A true European refugee and asylum policy requires *solidarity* to be permanently anchored in our policy approach and our rules."

The EU solidarity frame is also used to highlight the historical responsibility of the EU to act compassionately and responsively in the refugees matter.

> "But when, generations from now, people read about this moment in *Europe's history books*, let it read that *we stood together* in demonstrating compassion and opened our homes to those in need of our protection."

Juncker tells the story of "more Europe", implying that the EU could only succeed if all countries stand together. In his view, a triumphant Europe could be anything but a fractured Union, more preoccupied to solve its internal disagreements than to act as a whole and to ensure a solid position on the world's map. The Trauma narratives are also present in the solidarity frame, but only to warrant the story of Triumph a better impact. As we can see below, the "more Europe" narrative is also employed as a counter-narrative, thus suggesting that not having enough Union in Europe is simply unacceptable or a senseless:

> "There is not *enough Europe* in this Union. And there is not *enough Union* in this Union."

Furthermore, the Trauma narrative of solidarity is used to justify the need for "more Europe":

> "Where Europe has clearly under-delivered, is on *common solidarity* with regard to the refugees who have arrived on our territory."

> "To me, it is clear that the Member States where most refugees first arrive – at the moment, these are Italy, Greece and Hungary – cannot be left alone to cope with this challenge. (…)This requires a strong effort in *European solidarity***.** Before the summer, we did not receive the backing from Member States I had hoped for. But I see that the mood is turning. And I believe it is high time for this."

Other frames (i.e. responsibility, economic consequences, and human interest) are seemly represented and they are mainly employed for justificatory or illustrative reasons. Unlike the solidarity and morality, these frames are often expressed through narratives belonging to the "Ordinary" groups – Routine and Crisis:

> "We tripled our presence at sea. Over 122,000 lives have been saved since then." (Human interest – Crisis)

> "Over time, migration must change from a problem to be tackled to a well-managed resource." (Economic consequences – Routine)

> "I am encouraged that some Member States are showing their willingness to significantly step up our European resettlement efforts." (Conflict – intra-EU divide – Routine)

The responsibility frame is predominantly narrated as a Crisis triggered by the "blame-game" among Member States:

> "There has been a lot *finger pointing* in the past weeks. Member States have accused each other of not doing enough or of doing the wrong thing. And more often than not fingers have been pointed from national capitals towards Brussels."

> "The attempt of *blaming others* is often just a sign that politicians are overwhelmed by unexpected events."

In a nutshell, the speech held by Jean-Claude Juncker reveals an evident inclination to adopt a triumphalist approach to European integration and to justify the need for "more Eu-

rope" through morality and EU solidarity framing. The economic consequences and the human-interest frames are only employed as legitimizing vehicles for a United Europe. The blame-game or the responsibility frame is narrated as an ordinary mechanism of Europeanization: amid the need to tackle the migration crisis, common internal disagreements should be orderly addressed by any means. Technical aspects, such as the political, social, and economic implications are not treated at all, their very rational nature being somehow in contradiction with the emotional stance of the speech.

Angela Merkel's Speech: More Europe is a an Accountable Europe

Angela Merkel's speech bears some similarities, but also some differences as compared to Juncker's speech. The most striking similarity is that the solidarity frame is dully constructed by means of extraordinary narratives, which are even more powerful than those employed by the President of the European Commission. The emphasis is exclusively placed on stories of European triumph:

> "Today we can look back with gratitude and some pride on the historic achievements that *we Europeans were responsible for over these years of continental bonding*. And now it seems a matter of course to us that *Europe is free and united*. (…) In brief, they have brought us *more Europe*, because we Europeans have learned in the course of our history to make the most of our diversity."

> "In the refugee crisis we must not give in to the temptation to fall back on national government action. On the contrary, what we need now is *more Europe*. More than ever we need the *courage and cohesion that Europe has always shown when it was really important*."

"United Europe" is not constructed as a *sine qua non* condition for "more Europe" and maybe not even the only conceivable image of Europe, as Juncker regards it. Still, in Merkel's discourse, "staying together" is an instrumental condition for achieving success in both internal and external affairs:

> "For only *together will Europe succeed* in mitigating the root causes of flight and displacement worldwide. *Only together will we succeed* in effectively combating criminal human trafficking rings. *Only together* will we succeed in better protecting the external borders of the European Union with jointly operated hotspots and manage not to jeopardize our internally border-less Europe."

In Merkel's discourse, the rationale for "staying together" is strongly built on grounds of shared values and, importantly, shared responsibility:

> "I therefore advocate the adoption of a new approach based on *fairness and solidarity in sharing the burdens.*

> For Europe is a community of *shared values*, a community founded on *shared rules and shared responsibility.*

> Pan-European challenges are not to be solved by a few member states on their own, *but by all of us together."*

> We will have to continue working hard to convince people of the *value of our Europe*.

The most important distinction noticeable in Merkel's discourse, however, is related to the absence of the morality frame, which is so obvious in Juncker's discourse. The Chancellor replaces the morality stance with the responsibility frame, which, similar to the solidarity one, is narrated in extraordinary terms:

> "It will take a *determined contribution from Europe to solve this crisis* – by taking action against war and displacement, terrorism and political persecution, and against poverty and despair."

"We also *have a duty to treat the people who come to us in need with respect*, to see them as human beings and not as an anonymous mass – regardless of whether they will be allowed to stay or not."

"We have *to deal responsibly with Europe's gravitational pull*. In other words, we have to take greater care of those who are in need today in our neighborhood."

The only instance when the responsibility frame is narrated as a Trauma is when Angela Merkel speaks about the need for Europe not only to "stay together", but also to behave responsibly and stand for its "shared values" that make up its identity. It is only through wise and well-coordinated actions that Europe will pass the historical test brought forward by the migration:

"Retreating from the world and shutting ourselves off is an illusion in the age of the Internet. It would not solve any problems, but would create additional ones, for we would be *abandoning our values and thereby losing our identity.*"

While the human interest and morality frames, respectively, are quasi-invisible, the conflict and economic consequences frames become justifying discursive means pleading for European solidarity and accountability. For instance, in this fragment, the economic frame is often used to reinforce the need for European solidarity:

"Now more than ever, there is a need for an *economically strong Europe*, which uses the opportunities of the single market."

"If we view this challenge as a *joint European* and worldwide challenge, we will also be able to identify and seize the *economic and social opportunities* that this historic test brings."

Furthermore, the conflict frame backs the "staying together" narrative, by evoking the historical significance of a united Europe:

"The healing of the divide in Germany was ultimately followed by the *healing of divisions in Europe*."

Ordinary narratives of Europeanization are seldom employed. The Chancellor's discourse is as emotional as Juncker's, with the striking particularity that it lacks the moral stance. Merkel builds her persuasiveness by framing Europe as an extraordinary entity, which has the ultimate responsibility – in front of its citizens, as well as in front of the World at such – to stay united. The rational or technical considerations or arguments are totally eclipsed by the solidarity touch.

Conclusion: in Today's Europe, Less is More

This research reveals – through qualitative analysis is subject to limitations – some of the discursive mechanisms employed by EU leaders when referring to the migration crisis. One compelling particularity is the predominance of extraordinary narratives of Europeanization, by which a mystical Europe is re-constructed through political discourse. The Europe evoked by political leaders is an almost fantastic entity, which can use its magic in order to create de facto solidarity and genuine joint accountability. This is the political leaders' attempt to re-cover the lost symbolical appeal of European integration.

However, the emotional logic pertaining to EU leaders contrasts with the media, citizens', and national elites' discourse on European integration. The fact that trust in the EU has again dropped significantly in the past year (according to the Fall 2015 Eurobarometer) is an proof-based certainty. Furthermore, even in the most Europhile countries, such as Romania, national elites are not able anymore to narrate Europe in triumphant terms, and often construct it as

an ordinary or banal reality (Radu & Baragaoanu, 2015). When choosing between the mainstream European discourse, on the one hand, and the national discourse, on the other one, the public will always go for the latter. And this happens because national proxies play a tremendously important role in orienting opinions and attitudes towards the EU (Anderson, 1998; Franklin *et. al.,* 1994; De Vries, 2010; Radu, 2016). In line with Gilbert (2008), we might conclude that European leaders should be more cautious when taking the supranational stance for granted. EU leaders' blind faith in the resilience of the European project could explain their reluctance to understand that "there is popular discontent with the democratic deficit in Europe and that the EU is widely regarded as a big part of a wider problem of disenfranchisement and disempowerment" (Gilbert, 2008, p. 659).

Another important characteristic of EU leaders' discourse is that the refugees' crisis has lit the flame of European integration and has made politicians – perhaps for the first time after many years – publicly and explicitly defend the supra-national reach of the European project. Put it in Habermas's words, "both, the terror and the refugee crisis, are – perhaps for the last time – dramatic challenges for a much closer sense of cooperation and solidarity than anything European nations, even those tied up to one another in the currency union, have so far managed to achieve" (Habermas, 2015). However noble it might be, the idea of a shared European future should be wisely constructed so that it could resonate with austerity-hit citizens, who need – more than ever – tangible arguments for supporting the idea of "more Europe". Habermas explains this too well: "The perception of the drastic rise in social inequality and the feeling of powerlessness […] form the background […] for leaving Europe behind, for hating Brussels. In an insecure daily life 'a national and cultural sense of belonging' are indeed stabilizing elements" (Habermas, 2016).

To conclude, there are at least two arguments that today's European leaders should not overstate the power of the solidarity frame and extraordinary narratives in their discourse. Firstly, there is a marked contradiction between the Brussels's discourse (i.e. supra-national stance, EU as a shared identity), on the one hand, and that embraced by many domestic politicians (i.e. raise of populism, focus on the instrumental nature of European integration), on the other one. The wider this gap, the bigger citizens's inclination to give credit to national proxies, as already mentioned. Secondly, by oversaturating the public with idealistic images of a united Europe, which need to survive despite its multiple seizures, EU leaders overshadow important public concerns, such as unemployment or wealth distribution. Naturally, citizens need to understand how and why the latest developments at the EU level impact upon their lives. It is high time for European leaders to capture in their discourse rational accounts of Europeanization, thus helping people clearly see why more integration is the solution, and not the problem. Only then EU leaders could hope that their way of constructing Europe through discourse will mobilize sentiments towards greater integration and unity. If oversaturated with emotional messages, which are anchored in an agenda they perceive as having little or nothing to do with their actual concerns, citizens will assume that Brussels does not care about their interests. In today's Europe, less is more.

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Annex 1. Table comparing the EU frames and narratives in the speeches held by Jean-Claude Juncker and Angela Merkel

Frames / Narratives	Responsibility (incl. blaming)	Conflict (incl. intra-EU divide)	Economic consequences	Morality (incl. EU historical legacy)	Human interest	Solidarity or supra-nationalism
Jean-Claude Juncker						
The extraordinary (affirmation) - **Triumph**		Europe today, in spite of many differences amongst its Member States, is by far the wealthiest and most stable continent in the world.		We Europeans should remember well that Europe is a continent where nearly everyone has at one time been a refugee. Have we really forgotten that after the devastation of the Second World War, 60 million people were refugees in Europe? We Europeans should know and should never forget why giving refuge and complying with the fundamental right to asylum is so important. Europe is the baker in Kos who gives away his bread to hungry and weary souls. Europe is the students in Munich and in Passau who bring clothes for the new arrivals at the train station. Europe is the policeman in Austria who welcomes exhausted refugees upon crossing the border.	It is Europe today that represents a beacon of hope, a haven of stability in the eyes of women and men in the Middle East and in Africa.	But now is not the time to take fright. It is time for bold, determined and concerted action by the European Union, by its institutions and by all its Member States. It is high time to act to manage the refugee crisis. There is no alternative to this. We need more Europe in our asylum policy. We need more Union in our refugee policy. A true European refugee and asylum policy requires solidarity to be permanently anchored in our policy approach and our rules. A truly united, European migration policy also means that we need to look into opening legal channels for migration. We can no longer afford to be ignorant or disunited with regard to war or instability right in our neighbourhood. We need a stronger Europe when it comes to foreign policy. We need more Europe in our Union. We need more Union in our Union. But when, generations from now, people read about this moment in Europe's history books, let it read that we stood together in demonstrating compassion and opened our homes to those in need of our protection.

Angela Merkel			
The extraordinary (affirmation) - Triumph	It will take a **determined contribution from Europe to solve this crisis** – by taking action against war and displacement, terrorism and political persecution, and against poverty and despair. We also **have a duty to treat the people who come to us in need with respect,** to see them as human beings and not as an anonymous mass – regardless of whether they will be allowed to stay or not. We have **to deal responsibly with Europe's gravitational pull.** In other words, we have to take greater care of those who are in need today in our neighbourhood. Giving these people the chance to live their lives in dignity, in their home countries, without being scared to death by bombs and terrorists – **managing that is a European task, and ultimately a global task.**	The healing of the divide in Germany was ultimately followed by the **healing of divisions in Europe.** Now, …, Europe is facing a **tremendous challenge.** We are facing a test of historic proportions.	Now more than ever, there is a need for an **economically strong Europe,** which uses the opportunities of the single market. If we view this challenge as a joint European and worldwide challenge, we will also be able to identify and seize the **economic and social opportunities** that this historic test brings.	Today we can look back with gratitude and some pride on the historic achievements that **we Europeans were responsible for over these years of continental bonding.** And now it seems a matter of course to us that **Europe is free and united.** In brief, they have brought us **more Europe,** because we Europeans have learned in the course of our history to make the most of our diversity. In the refugee crisis we must not give in to the temptation to fall back on national government action. On the contrary, what we need now is **more Europe.** More than ever we need the **courage and cohesion that Europe has always shown when it was really important.** For only **together will Europe succeed** in mitigating the root causes of flight and displacement worldwide. **Only together will we succeed** in effectively combating criminal human trafficking rings. **Only together** will we succeed in better protecting the external borders of the European Union with jointly operated hotspots and manage not to jeopardise our internally border-less Europe. I therefore advocate the adoption of a new approach based on **fairness and solidarity in sharing the burdens.** For Europe is a community of **shared values,** a community founded on shared rules and shared responsibility. Pan-European challenges are not to be solved by a few member states on their own, **but by all of us together.** We will have to continue working hard to convince people of the **value of our Europe.**

Jean-Claude Juncker			
The extraordinary (disruption) - **Trauma**	-	-	Europe has made the mistake in the past of distinguishing between Jews, Christians, Muslims. There is no religion, no belief, no philosophy when it comes to refugees. Pushing back boats from piers, setting fire to refugee camps, or turning a blind eye to poor and helpless people: that is not Europe. Europe has failed the Syrian people. "…it is time for honesty. It is time to speak frankly about the big issues facing the European Union."	"There is not enough Europe in this Union. And there is not enough Union in this Union." Where Europe has clearly under-delivered, is on common solidarity with regard to the refugees who have arrived on our territory. To me, it is clear that the Member States where most refugees first arrive – at the moment, these are Italy, Greece and Hungary – cannot be left alone to cope with this challenge. This requires a strong effort in European solidarity. Before the summer, we did not receive the backing from Member States I had hoped for. But I see that the mood is turning. And I believe it is high time for this.
Angela Merkel			
The extraordinary (disruption) - **Trauma**	Retreating from the world and shutting ourselves off is an illusion in the age of the Internet. It would not solve any problems, but would create additional ones, for we would be **abandoning our values and thereby losing our identity**. If we forget that, we betray ourselves – it's that simple. But if we remember it, we will manage to pass this historic test and will, moreover, emerge stronger from this crisis than we went into it. Then **we will manage to persuasively stand up for our values and interests at global level**, too. By the way, that is what people outside of Europe, too, expect of us.		

Jean-Claude Juncker				
The ordinary (affirmation) - **Routine**	I am encouraged that some Member States are showing their willingness to significantly step up our European resettlement efforts	Over time, migration must change from a problem to be tackled to a well-managed resource.		We have collectively committed to resettling over 22,000 people from outside of Europe over the next year, showing solidarity with our neighbours. We must work together more closely to manage our external borders.
Angela Merkel				
The ordinary (affirmation) - **Routine**	We need a political process involving all regional and international actors to resolve the crisis in Syria – with a greater role for Europe.			It is fortunate that we in Europe acted together
Jean-Claude Juncker				
The ordinary (disruption) – **Crisis**	There has been a lot finger pointing in the past weeks. Member States have accused each other of not doing enough or of doing the wrong thing. And more often than not fingers have been pointed from national capitals towards Brussels. The attempt of blaming others is often just a sign that politicians are overwhelmed by unexpected events.		We tripled our presence at sea. Over 122,000 lives have been saved since then.	
Angela Merkel				
The ordinary (disruption) – **Crisis**				