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Migration's Effect on State Sovereignty – An Exploration of the Italian Experience

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I, Sóley Ívarsdóttir, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature: *Sóley Ívarsdóttir*

Date: 14.05.2019

"This is our world, a common world. Everybody should feel a common responsibility."

- Ban Ki-moon

Abstract

Migration is a topic of increasing significance in the field of international relations. Migration challenges state sovereignty in new ways, and there is therefore a need for more research on the issue. The migration issue is especially relevant considering the recent migration crisis in Europe which peaked in numbers in 2015. Italy is a highly relevant case when researching such issues because of its location, where it is in practice governing one of the European Union's outer borders. This thesis aims to explore how Italy's current migration policies affect its state sovereignty. The thesis will be building on existing theories and concepts related to state sovereignty, migration, securitization and human rights. These theories and concepts are essential for understanding the complexity of this transnational issue as there are two main aspects to consider: protection of state and the human rights of migrants.

The findings in this thesis indicate that there is increasing scepticism towards migrants in Italy, while also showing that Italian migration policies have recently become stricter. An additional observation is that Italy has complicated relationships with actors such as the European Union and NGOs. The main results retained from exploring the issue are that Italy's sovereignty has been strengthened by recent policy changes, and that the country is neglecting international obligations related to human rights in favour of increasing the power over its own borders. It would be beneficial to conduct further research on migration's effect on sovereignty, both by focusing on Italy and other European countries, to be able to find a collective European solution that has a perfect balance between the two main aspects to consider when tackling migration.

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1. Introduction

Migration is an evolving topic in international politics because it challenges state sovereignty in new ways. This has become highly visible in European cooperation on the issue. Migration is a transnational issue that involves and affects several different actors, both domestically and internationally. In 2015, Europe experienced a crisis that has been referred to as a 'Refugee Crisis' and a 'Migration Crisis'. The high influx in refugees travelling to Europe over the Mediterranean Sea created a difficult situation which the European Union struggled to tackle collectively. The purpose of this thesis is to contribute to the understanding of the complexity of issues related to migration and state sovereignty.

This thesis focuses on current political implications and development regarding state sovereignty in the turmoil of the migration crisis that affected Europe in 2015, by focusing on one of the countries that received the most migrant arrivals from the Mediterranean Sea. It can be argued that Europe was highly unprepared for such an increase in migrants (especially refugees and asylum seekers) and lacked adequate policies and strategies to deal with the situation in the best possible manner. The case of Italy is therefore highly relevant for understanding more about how migration and the tackling of migration plays out in Europe. This thesis will therefore be a specific case study of Italy's current migration politics. The main objective of this case study is to contribute to a broader discussion in international politics concerning migration and state sovereignty.

When analysing how migration affects state sovereignty, Italy is an especially interesting case. This is because the country is located at the European Union's outskirts and therefore, in a way, enforces one of the outer borders of the European Union. Italy's location next to the Mediterranean Sea makes the country a main entry point for migrants not only into Italy, but to the whole of the European Union. This is because of the European Union's policies. The Dublin Regulation is one of the policies that has made the tackling of migration especially challenging for Italy. The current government in Italy was elected in 2018 and has recently made several changes to the country's migration policies. It appears that the populist coalition currently in government views migration as an issue of negative implications for Italy, and the populist coalition prioritizes migration as one of the country's main issues. This is most likely a consequence of the high influx of migrant arrivals at their shores in recent years, and the lack of a sufficient collective strategy in cooperation with the European Union and other

actors.

The research question that this thesis aims to answer is: *How does Italy's current tackling of migration from the Mediterranean Sea affect the country's state sovereignty?*

2. Core Concepts: in a Literature Review

In this chapter, I will present the different concepts that are important for answering the research question of this thesis. These concepts are *migration*, *state sovereignty*, *securitization* and *human rights*. I will explain why these concepts are essential and how they are connected to each other by presenting the concepts as explained by other researchers. I have also briefly explored the concept of *populism* in this literature review because it is essential to have knowledge regarding this when focusing on Italy.

In table 1, I will explain briefly why the different concepts explored in the literature review are important tools for the analysis in this thesis. See table 1.

Table 1

Concept	Reason
• Human Rights	Human rights are essential for understanding in what way migrants are supposed to be treated and what rights they have when arriving in a country. This is an especially relevant concept to have in mind when looking into reports from Human Rights organizations.
• Humanitarianism	These principles are essential for understanding the viewpoint of any reports from humanitarian organizations. It is also essential for understanding one of the main aspects of why migration can become an issue. Humanitarian principles will often collide with state security and protection.
• Migration	This concept is the main focus of this thesis. It is critical to know what migration is to be able to analyse what is happening in the country. The concept describes the different

	components of migration and that it is a process.
• Migrant	This is perhaps more a term than a concept but should still be highlighted because the term is such an important part of the thesis. This thesis will be using this term for all types of migrants: refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants etc. But it is important to know the difference because sometimes the term refugee will have to be mentioned as well to describe different aspects.
• Populism	Populism is an important part of Italian politics and shapes the political landscape in the country. Italy has for a long time been shaped by populist politics, both left-wing populism and right-wing populism.
• Securitization	This concept is essential for understanding the trend (especially in Europe) of protecting its country against threats, where migration has become such a threat for many. It will be interesting to investigate whether this applies to Italian policies and politics. Securitization can be seen as the counter-part to humanitarianism because they are two conflicting aspects in the tackling of migration.
• State sovereignty	Sovereignty, in this thesis highlighted as state sovereignty, is the second most important component of the research question. This concept will be used to measure and investigate the effects migration has had on Italy at a national level

	concerning their power over their own territory.

The concepts above will as explained be used to describe and analyse the effects of Italy's tackling of migration from the Mediterranean Sea, and to explore how sovereignty is being enforced. The concepts were chosen through a process of exploring different theories and concepts in different articles. The concepts highlight different parts of the transnational issue that migration is, and the different actors involved. Migration and state sovereignty are the most essential concepts for this thesis since they are the main components of the research question, while the rest of the concepts are components for researching the issue and for exploring the way sovereignty is being enforced.

The theoretical concepts that will be presented in the literature review establish why Italy is a relevant case for understanding how migration challenges state sovereignty in new ways. Since migration is a relatively new topic of analysis and discussion in international relations, it is important to conduct research on it. Italy is an excellent example of this given the current situation the country is in when it comes to issues related to migration and how this affects their obligations and expectations to outside actors. The concepts will not be explored in the same order as in table 1.

2.1 Migration

Migration is an increasingly important topic in international relations because it describes a process where people move permanently or temporarily from one place to another. It becomes most relevant in international relations when this relocation crosses borders, and when many people at a time choose to reside in different countries than their place of birth or citizenship (OHCHR, 2019, p. 19). Migration has a long history of being a part of human society since people have always searched for new places to reside. There can be many different reasons as to why a person changes location of residence and the term migration is used to describe all types of migrants. The United Nations, in short known as the UN, explains that it is essential to be aware of the difference between a refugee and a migrant.

Refugees are by the UN defined in short as follows:

"Refugees are persons who are outside their country of origin for reasons of feared persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or other circumstances that have seriously disturbed public order and, as a result, require international protection. The refugee definition can be found in the 1951 Convention and regional refugee instruments, as well as UNHCR's Statute," (Refugees and Migrants, 2019).

While migrants are defined as follows:

"While there is no formal legal definition of an international migrant, most experts agree that an international migrant is someone who changes his or her country of usual residence, irrespective of the reason for migration or legal status. Generally, a distinction is made between short-term or temporary migration, covering movements with a duration between three and 12 months, and long-term or permanent migration, referring to a change of country of residence for a duration of one year or more," (Refugees and Migrants, 2019).

2.2 Why is Migration an Issue in IR?

Migration is an evolving topic in international relations. Most importantly, migration involves international processes and can tell us something about the world in a global context. Migration is both based in individual interests and in ongoing processes in different countries and regions. For instance, most of the migration occurring across the Mediterranean Sea is based in political instability and insecurity in both the middle eastern and African region. Mitchell (1989, pp. 682-683) describes three claims as to why migration is an interesting topic in an international context:

1. *"International relations help to shape international migration."*
2. *"Migration may influence and serve the goals of national foreign policy."*
3. *"'Domestic' immigration laws and policies may have an unavoidable international political projection."*

Mitchell (1989, pp. 684-686) emphasizes that migration is an essential factor to the understanding of developments in international political economy. He has in his findings viewed capitalism and other processes as important drivers of migration and drawn a parallel

between migration and migration patterns to several international developments such as states' roles in international relations and states' foreign policies. Mitchell (1989, pp. 703-704) argues that there are major links between migration patterns, migration policies and states' relationships with other states. He states that there is a need for better communications among studies of migration and broader studies on global change. He further claims that "…*findings on the political relations of migration may contribute importantly to the general study of international political economy,*" (Mitchell, 1989, p. 704). His arguments bring forth the importance of studying migration in international relations as it can contribute to understanding how states interact with each other.

According to Mingst and Arreguín-Toft (2011, p. 362), migration is a transnational issue, or at least *brings* transnational issues. They explain that refugees stemming from locations that since the late 1970s have been affected by "*organized crime (sex and drug trafficking), terrorism, pandemics, famine and natural disasters*" and that this has contributed to make such issues affect the developed world more directly (Mingst and Arreguín-Toft, 2011, p. 362).

2.3 State Sovereignty

Mingst and Arreguín-Toft define sovereignty as follows: "*The authority of the state, based on recognition by other states and by nonstate actors, to govern matters within its own borders that affect its people, economy, security and form of government,*" (Mingst and Arreguín-Toft, 2011, p. A28 Glossary). According to Mingst and Arreguín-Toft (2011, p. 21), sovereignty is a core concept in contemporary international relations. They explain that the concept was "*...one of the most important intellectual developments leading to the Westphalian revolution,*" (Mingst and Arreguín-Toft, 2011, p. 21). Mingst and Arreguín-Toft (2011, p. 21-22) explain that the French philosopher Jean Bodin (1530-96) was important for the development of sovereignty as a concept, and that this can be found in his writings. Bodin defined sovereignty as follows: "*the distinguishing mark of the sovereign is that he cannot in any way be subject to the commands of another, for it is he who makes the law for the subject, abrogates law already made, and amends obsolete law,*" (Mingst and Arreguín-Toft, 2011, p. 21).

The concept of sovereignty is, as explained, one of the core concepts in international relations.

It has therefore been a concept of importance in several theories. Mingst and Arreguín-Toft (2011) explain that realist and liberalist theories are focused on an erosion of sovereignty, while constructivists are more sceptical to the definition and argue that sovereignty is and always has been a contested concept. They highlight that this is natural because sovereignty is *"a socially constructed institution that varies across time and place,"* (Mingst and Arreguín-Toft, 2011, p. 366). An observation by Mingst and Arreguín-Toft is that *"transnational issues such as health, the environment, and human rights permits us to examine the depth long-standing but varying practices of sovereignty. These issues give rise to new forms of authority and new forms of governance, stimulating us to reorient our views of sovereignty,"* (Mingst and Arreguín-Toft, 2011, p. 366). This observation is relevant for this thesis because migration is a transnational issue, and it is therefore valuable to investigate how it affects state sovereignty.

The term sovereignty is used to describe a state's authority. State sovereignty has two levels: internal and external. The internal level, like the word inclines, explains a state's authority inside its territorial borders; the power and authority it has over its citizens and visitors. The external level has to do with a state in an international setting and the power and authority the state has in relation to other states and actors in the international arena (Lake, 2003, p. 305). Lake (2003, pp. 304-305) explains sovereignty as an authority relationship. He also clarifies that authority never is absolute nor without limit (Lake, 2003).

There are now several perspectives on sovereignty and critique of them in the field of international relations. The classical perspective bases on realist and neorealist theories and argues that sovereignty is a fixed and absolute principle (Lake, 2003, p. 305). This conception of sovereignty bases on the assumption that states are the highest possible authority in the international arena and that no actor can have a higher position in the international hierarchy than states. This classical perspective views the international community as an anarchy where all 'international' organizations and cooperation are simply tools for states and can therefore not be actors in the international arena in the same way as states (Lake, 2003, pp. 305-306).

A critique of the classical perspective on sovereignty comes from constructivist theory. As Lake (2003, pp. 307-308) describes, sovereignty is a concept that has been taken for granted in international relations. Because of this critique, the understanding of sovereignty in international relations has developed and transformed. For constructivists, sovereignty is a

socially constructed concept. (Lake, 2003, p. 308). In this view, sovereignty 'exists' because of the way states operate and because of social norms and practices.

2.4 International Obligations Concerning Human Rights

The United Nations describe human rights as follows: "*Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. Human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more. Everyone is entitled to these rights, without discrimination,*" (United Nations, 2019) As described in the quote above, human rights are universal and applicable to all human beings. These rights are essential in the tackling of migration, no matter the circumstances. The international arena has a set of values and laws that states are expected to respect in terms of treatment and other aspects of migration. An example of this is the human rights law (United Nations, 2019).

Human rights are not only essential for migrants in general, they become especially relevant for refugees as refugees might not be able to return to their home countries for serious reasons such as the safety of their own lives. Human rights in a way puts a pressure to welfare states to welcome people in need and to help make their life better. Sassen (1996, chapter 3) argued that the human rights regime operates partly inside the national state. She also explained that migration brings out a tension between the protection of human rights and the protection of state sovereignty (Sassen, 1996, p. 38). These two interests of protecting the state while respecting human rights make tackling of a state's migration issues more complex.

When conceptualizing human rights, it is beneficial to be aware of the human rights regime. The human rights regime is shaped by several global and regional, general purpose and specialized as well as governmental and non-governmental organizations. These organizations engage in different activities that are of relevance to issue areas relevant to the human rights regime. Regimes are, by Mingst and Arreguín-Toft (2011) defined as "*principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given issue area,*" (Mingst and Arreguín-Toft, 2011, p. 351). The human rights regime includes not only branches of the UN, but also other special monitoring committees established based on different human rights treaties (Mingst and Arreguín-Toft, 2011, p. 351).

There is a large sphere of actors concerned with human rights issues, these not only include state actors and international organizations, but it also includes NGOs. Examples of this are Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the International Committee of the Red Cross. According to Mingst and Arreguín-Toft (2011), such organizations *"have played a key role in publicizing the issues, including abuses; in putting pressure on states (both offenders and enforcers); and in lobbying international organizations capable of taking concerted social movements,"* (Mingst and Arreguín-Toft, 2011, p. 357). They further explain that the work done by NGOs is becoming more effective and visual with the use of internet and social media.

2.5 Securitization

Huysmans (2000) is also interested in the complexity of sovereignty (in his focus: national security) and human rights. He has a clear view on the issue where he describes that *"immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees are framed a security problem which is different from an approach by the means of a policy which emphasizes that asylum is a human rights question and/or which proposes human rights instruments to deal with the issue,"* (Huysmans 2000, p. 757). In his view, there is a clear lack of consideration for a method that clearly respects and is based on human rights. Instead, the focus in on the state and its security. Huysmans argues that states, especially western European states, in a way are afraid of migrants and the damage they can do to their society. In his view, this is problematic. He argued that migration has become securitized (Huysmans, 2000).

The concept of securitization is developed from The Copenhagen School in international relations. According to Knudsen (2001, p. 359), securitization focuses on agenda-setting in political science. Knudsen criticizes the securitization concept and highlights that it is problematic because, in his view, the theory expects items on the political agenda to have no intrinsic value and that they are only on the agenda because political actors want them to be there (Knudsen, 2001, p. 359). He further explains that a key concept in securitization theory is *"...to create awareness of the (allegedly) arbitrary nature of 'threats' to stimulate the thought that the foundation of any national security policy is not given by 'nature' but chosen by politicians and decisionmakers who have an interest in defining it in just that way,"* (Knudsen, 2001, p. 359). He further criticizes the emphasis on the subjective rather than the

objective regarding security threats.

The researcher Ole Wæver is one of the scholars who have contributed the most to the concept of securitization. In 1997, Wæver explained security as follows: "*One can view 'security' as at which is in language theory called a speech act: it is not interesting as a sign referring to something more real – it is the utterance itself that is the act,"* (Wæver, 1997, referred to in Knudsen, 2001, p. 360). Knudsen disagrees with this definition of security as he believes it is problematic to disregard the objective factors of security. He also fears that the consequence of this is that threats are reduced to purely being matters of domestic politics (Knudsen, 2001, p. 360).

Interestingly, Knudsen (2001, p. 361) views securitization as a concept that downgrades security threats. He argues that having such an approach might "*...be ill-advised because it detracts from the significance of issues like crisis management in Europe, which ought to have a fairly high priority,"* (Knudsen, 2001, p. 361). However, Huysmans (2000) argued that the concept of securitization describes Europe's view on and tackling of migration, which is a transnational issue that affect not only states on a domestic level but the whole of the European Union.

Huysmans (2000) argued that there is a security continuum that connects border control, terrorism, international crime and migration. This is the core of the factors that are securitizing the migration issue. In his article "The European Union and the Securitization of Migration", he cited Philip Rudge's conclusion from a short overview of the European initiatives on asylum in 1989 which is a clear illustration of the security continuum: "*To an alarming degree decision making in the area of asylum is moving away from the traditional human rights and humanitarian field of policy-making. It is increasingly the subject of fora dealing with terrorism, drug trafficking and policing on one hand, and with economic streamlining on the other*," (Rudge, 1989, referred to in Huysmans, 2000, p. 760). This argument brings forth the tension between human rights and protection of state.

In Huysmans view, migration has become securitized in the way states tackle migration issues. He focuses especially on Europe and member states of the EU. He draws parallels between the Europeanization of migration policy and securitization. Since migration policy has been integrated with internal security frameworks, it has become a 'security issue' in the

way it is tackled. He also clarifies that many politicians use migrants and migration as a 'scapegoat' for issues in their welfare states that perhaps have nothing to do with the migration in itself in the first place. This goes further into a negative politization of migrants (Huysmans, 2000).

Huysmans also argues that the negative rhetoric in Europe regarding migration and its 'implications' that migration and migrants go hand in hand with riots, domestic instability, transnational crime and welfare fraud increases the issue and plays in important role in the securitization of the issue (Huysmans, 2000, p. 770). This stretches to the discussion regarding 'who gets to belong', which the states themselves get to decide because it is not implemented in international law. Most states have the choice to accept the migrants that they want and decline those that they do not wish to reside in their country. I say most states because, even though there is not international law forcing them to accept all migrants, there might be other organizations or actors that persuade these states to accept migrants they did not initially wish to grant permission to their territory. This might be the case for several European countries based on several factors such as European policies and the country's location, perhaps especially for countries located in Europe's borderline areas.

The respect for human rights and the securitization of migration are two highly different aspects of the debate regarding state sovereignty. States find it necessary to be restrictive regarding the protection of their nation state and the security of its citizens regarding several factors such as welfare, socio-economic and cultural factors (Huysmans, 2000, p. 753). At the same time, states must take into consideration that migrants are human beings and that they deserve to be treated in a decent manner where their rights are respected. This is especially important regarding refugees that are unsafe in their country of birth or citizenship (Huysmans, 2000).

2.6 In What Way(s) Does Migration Challenge State Sovereignty?

Ambrosini (2018) argues that migration control is one of the strongest and most symbolic ways to enforce sovereign power. In his chapter, 'Becoming a Borderland: The "Refugee Crisis" in Italy and Beyond', he argues that states demonstrate their power to their citizens and electors by enforcing borders. Since border authorities have much power when interacting with migration patterns, the governing of borders becomes "*selective and targeted*"

(Ambrosini, 2018, pp. 90-91).

Sassen (1996, chapter 3) argued that economic globalization denationalizes national economies and that immigration renationalizes national politics. She drew the connection between migration and the nation state's desire to have a sovereign right to the control of its own borders. Her observation went further to question why sovereignty is in some ways willingly weakened and some ways willingly strengthened by the state (Sassen, 1996, chapter 3). This is an important question because it applies to the current policies of many states, perhaps especially in the European Union. International organizations and cooperation are affecting state sovereignty. This becomes relevant in the topic of migration because organizations and cooperation have different expectations to states and their behaviour (Sassen, 1996, chapter 3).

The migration issue can therefore be divided into two different aspects. One of the aspects desires stricter policies and the other encourages more open policies. On one hand, there is the sovereignty and protection of state. On the other hand, there is the human rights aspect (Sassen, 1996, chapter 3). This claim is also backed by Ambrosini's (2018) argument that there are "*political tensions between the aim to defend one's territory from unwanted strangers and the humanitarian obligations to rescue people in danger and to allow asylum applications,*" (Ambrosini, 2018, p. 92).

According to Mingst and Arreguín-Toft (2011), *"transnational issues pose direct challenges to state sovereignty, setting off a major debate about the nature of sovereignty,"* (Mingst and Arreguín-Toft, 2011, p. 364). Migration is such an issue, not in itself, but by the issues it might bring (or is suspected to bring) to different countries. They make a relevant observation about how the rise of nonstate actors, NGOs and supranational organizations (such as the European Union) undermine the traditional Westphalian notions of state sovereignty. This also includes forces such as globalization (which also can include migration). Mingst and Arreguín-Toft further this argument by highlighting that human rights were traditionally the concerns of sovereign states and that interference by outside actors was intolerable, and that this has developed and changed since the end of World War 2. Today, such issues (that were to be handled exclusively by sovereign states) are *"...increasingly susceptible to scrutiny and intervention by global actors,"* (Mingst and Arreguín-Toft, 2011, p. 365).

Mingst and Arreguín-Toft (2011) argue that transnational issues such as human rights, drug and human trafficking, transnational terrorism and international crime have: "broken down the divide between the international and the domestic," (Mingst and Arreguín-Toft, 2011, p. 366). They back up this point by explaining that such issues threaten state security but at the same time have no possible military solution, and therefore requires cooperation that goes beyond the notions of traditional state sovereignty (Mingst and Arreguín-Toft, 2011, p. 366).

2.7 Populism

Populism is a growing political phenomenon in the world, perhaps especially in European countries. Mudde (2004, p. 542) argues that the term populism has two dominant definitions, which are highly charged and negative. The second definition he presents is the most relevant to this thesis. In this definition, populism is *"used to describe opportunistic policies with the aim of (quickly) pleasing the people/voters – and so 'buying' their support – rather than looking (rationally) for the 'best option'*," (Mudde, 2004, p. 542). Mudde (2004) further explains that populism can tell us something about the relationship between 'the elite' and 'the people' in a country.

Canovan (2004) explains that the term New Populism is more relevant for the type of populism we are seeing today. She further argues that new populism is a "*collection of movements, broadly on the right of the political spectrum, that have emerged in many established liberal democracies, challenging existing parties and mainstream policies,*" (Canovan, 2004, p. 242). Mudde (2004) agrees that current populism is mainly on the radical right side of the political spectrum. Both bring up Italy as an example of a state which is highly influenced by such populism. However, populism can be on the radical left side of the political spectrum as well. Populism can not only be seen as a type of 'ideology' but also as a tool for politicians, political parties and the people.

2.8 These Concepts' Relevance to the Case Study

The concepts of *migration*, *human rights*, *securitization* and *state sovereignty* are highly connected and will be helpful tools to be able to analyse the case of Italy and how migration is impacting the country through an international relations' lens. The concept of *populism* has also been briefly explored in the literature review because it is important to keep in mind

when analysing a country such as Italy.

As the literature review revealed, there are two different aspects that are relevant to understanding contemporary state sovereignty. These are obligations to the human rights regime and the protection of state (which securitization is a result of). The theory on securitization points out Europe as an example, which makes Italy even more interesting. This is because Italy in a way governs one of Europe's outer borders.

These theoretical concepts will therefore assist in creating an interesting and important analysis of what implications the migration issue is causing in Italy, and what the issues connected to the migration crisis are. This is relevant for both the Italian aspect, the European aspect and the humanitarian aspect. There are many actors involved and affected by the situation surrounding Italy's tackling of migration, and the theoretical concepts explored in the literature review will be helpful when exploring the findings of this thesis and reaching a conclusion to the research question while taking the aspects of the various actors into consideration.

3. Methodology

In this chapter, I explain the research methodology I have followed to answer the research question. The research question for this study is: *How does Italy's current tackling of migration from the Mediterranean Sea affect the country's state sovereignty?* The aim of this study is to explore the hypothesis that Italy's state sovereignty is weakened by the country's current tackling of migration. I will first discuss my research strategy and chosen design before explaining how I have collected data. In the end of this chapter, I will explain how I have assured quality during the research process.

3.1 Research Strategy

The research strategy of this thesis is a qualitative strategy. A qualitative research strategy focuses attention on words instead of quantity when collecting and analysing data (Bryman, 2016, p. 374). In qualitative research, theory is highly important and is used to be able to analyse research academically. There is a focus on the relationship between theory and research (Bryman, 2016, p. 374). To be able to analyse this topic in a theoretical manner, a qualitative strategy is highly beneficial. A qualitative strategy therefore felt natural regarding the topic of this thesis, and what I wanted to look at. Qualitative research has an in-depth focus and is therefore a useful perspective when looking at a specific place during a specific time period, regarding a specific theme. This is applicable for this thesis because its focus is Italy from 2011 to 2019, and the theme is migration's effect on state sovereignty.

It is essential to keep the limitations of qualitative research in mind when using it as a strategy. Qualitative research is subjective and can be difficult to replicate because of individuality. Because of this, the strategy also has problems with generalization and lack of transparency. Qualitative research provides insight and highly interesting analysis, but it is difficult to come to a general conclusion because of the research's individuality (Bryman, 2016, p. 398-399). My aim is however to reach a specific conclusion to a specific case, and in this way contribute to a broader political discussion. I will come back to how I have assured quality later in this chapter.

Bryman (2016, p. 23) explains that a deductive approach goes from theory to

observations/findings, while an inductive approach goes from observations/findings to theory. I have worked with theories and concepts and based my case study on these. The theoretical concepts explored in the literature review have been my analytical lens that I have applied to my case study. In this way, my research approach has been deductive. However, later in my research process I went back to the literature after having made new observations. This was necessary to deepen my understanding. I tied this data to the theoretical concepts. This is visible in the structure of my case study. Therefore, my approach went from being deductive to inductive.

3.2 Research Design: A Case of Italy's Current Migration Politics

The research design of this thesis is a case study. A case study is a *"research design that entails the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case,"* (Bryman, 2016, p. 688). The most typical feature of a case study is that it focuses on a location. It is also typical for case studies to use qualitative methods as a research strategy. As Bryman (2016) explains *"With a case study, the case is an object of interest in its own right, and the researcher aims to provide an in-depth examination of it,"* (Bryman, 2016, p. 61). According to Bryman (2016, p. 60-62), case study designed research typically wants to bring forth what is unique about a specific case and is therefore concerned with "*the complexity and particular nature of the case in question,"* (Bryman, 2016, p. 60).

The case I have studied is an in-depth examination of Italy's current migration politics. This case is an exploration of Italy's tackling of migration and how it affects the country's state sovereignty. The time-period I have chosen (2011-2019) is based on the time Italy experienced a high increase in migrant arrivals in the aftermath of the Arab Spring which erupted in the very end of 2010. These high numbers of migrant arrivals affected Italy in the years to come, until it experienced a significant decrease in numbers in 2018 because of a change in policies. This specific time-period is therefore interesting for the case I wanted to study.

The case study of this thesis is based on and consists of a selection of secondary data sources such as reports, statistics, policies and articles. The relevant findings from this selection is presented in part I of the case study in an order based on three sub-questions that I will come back to later in this chapter. In part II of the case study, I analyse the findings from part I

based on the core concepts explored in the literature review. The objective of my case study is to come to a specific conclusion for my in-depth examination of Italy's current migration politics, and that this case will be a contribution to a broader discussion in international politics.

3.3 Levels of Analysis in International Relations

According to Mingst and Arreguín-Toft (2011), *"the most important differentiation in theory must be made between the international and the domestic level"*, (Mingst and Arreguín-Toft, 2011, p. 69), when theorizing in international relations. It is however even more beneficial to differentiate between three levels: individual, state and international system (Mingst and Arreguín-Toft, 2011, p. 69). This is a strategy adopted in the case study of this thesis, as it will be highly beneficial to look at the big picture of the issue by researching and analysing these different levels and if/and in what ways they affect each other.

It is important and beneficial for the structure of my case study to differentiate between the individual, state and international level because they are all relevant to state sovereignty and in what way it is enforced. This is because migration is a transnational issue that crosses borders. My case study will take this into consideration by structuring the issue from the political landscape in Italy (what parties have the most support by the voters etc), to what the political parties at power in Italy are doing, to how international actors such as the European Union and NGOs are involved in the issue.

3.4 Analytical Strategy

I have created three sub-questions to aid me in my research. See table 2. Table 2 gives an overview of the questions, how I will conduct research on it and why the question is relevant to my research question and topic. These questions are presented in a logical and thought-out order, which will become visible in chapter 4 and 5. The aim is to tackle these questions systematically to get the best possible insight into issues relevant to the research question. The questions will guide the structure of my case study because it will be presented from sub-question 1 to sub-question 2 and then sub-question 3 to be sure that all levels and actors are covered.

Table 2

Sub-question	How?	Why?
A. What does the political landscape in Italy and its development in recent years indicate when it comes to public opinion regarding the country's tackling of migration?	Looking into policies, reports and especially media. Media such as newspapers will be an important source here as this is such a current topic. Looking into statistics regarding support of political parties.	It is relevant to gain knowledge about the public opinion in Italy regarding migration's impact on sovereignty. It is also relevant to explore whether they think the EU's migration policies are unjust.
B. How does Italy currently act 'outwards' to limit the (negative) impact that migration might have on the country?	Using media as sources for this, especially newspapers. Looking at the websites for the largest political parties, what are they campaigning and/or doing? Looking into new policies.	It is relevant to know explore how Italy acts outwards and what it is doing regarding border control. (This is also based on public opinion because the public elects the parties in government)
C. How does the international community respond to Italy's tackling of migration from the Mediterranean Sea?	Looking into information from the EU and Human Rights/ humanitarian organizations. Policies from the EU regarding migration. Reports from Human Rights/ humanitarian organizations.	It is relevant to explore how the international community responds to and/or affects Italy's actions.

The sub-questions' contributions to this thesis:

<u>Sub-question A:</u>

It is likely that migration affects Italy's domestic political landscape, and that some of the political debate concerns state sovereignty with hindsight to the theory presented by Mingst

and Arreguín-Toft (2011, p. 354). Perhaps Muddes' (2014) theories of populism are present the current practice of Italian politics. This sub-question will provide an insight into the political landscape in Italy by looking at what parties are in government and what the Italian people feel when it comes to the issue of migration. If there is a division in the population, this question will also highlight that. The question will bring forth if there have been any changes in government since 2015, and if so, what the winning parties' campaigns had to say about Italy's tackling of migration. The question will also bring forth public and/or political opinion regarding the EU.

Sub-question B:

With reference to Huysmans (2000), migration has become securitized in the way states tackle migration issues. Sub-question B will provide an insight into what Italy is doing at the borders and outside its borders regarding migration. Here it will be beneficial to mention any arrangements Italy has with other countries, especially countries many migrants travel by boat from. This question will most particularly provide an insight into Italy's relationship with the EU (from Italy's point of view), which is essential to understanding how Italy's tackling of migration plays out. The EU has a strong impact on Italian policies. The question will also investigate if Italy has changed any migration policies since 2015, and if so, what changes have been made.

Sub-question C:

According to Mingst and Arreguín-Toft (2011, p. 364-365), actors such as NGOs and supranational organizations undermine the traditional Westphalian notions of state sovereignty, while human rights issues are "*increasingly susceptible to scrutiny and intervention by global actors,*" (Mingst and Arreguín-Toft, 2011, p. 365). The final sub-question will provide information regarding external views on Italy and their tackling of migration. Sub-question C will bring forth points of view from especially the EU and humanitarian organizations, as these actors are most relevant to the country and to migration. The question will provide an insight into what the EU is doing and whether they are assisting Italy in the best way for Italy and perhaps what limitations are present. The question will bring forth issues that might be a challenge to Italy as a sovereign state. Additionally, it will look into if there are any human rights/humanitarian reports regarding Italy's tackling of migration and whether this is of consequence to the country's state sovereignty.

3.5 Data Collection and Analysis

My case study is based on secondary literature and data, therefore my sampling approach for data collection was critical. The core concepts I explored in the literature review have been used to create an analytical lens' in my case study. The sub-questions explained above, have guided me in directions as to what type of data I would need to answer them and therefore been helpful tools in my data collection process. These sub-questions are based on different actor perspectives and have therefore been valuable to be able to collect data that takes different actor perspectives into consideration. This has helped me to analyse my case study through different views concerning Italy's current state sovereignty. The core concepts in my literature review have been highly valuable in my data collection process because they are useful and appropriate concepts for analysing different aspects of how sovereignty is enforced. I am aware that my view and knowledge of the world will have some influence on how I view the topic, because this is a typical limitation of qualitative studies. Another type of study would be if I were present in Italy to observe and interview to gain another type of perspective of the issue. I have however chosen to focus on secondary literature and base my case study on this. I have done my best to remain neutral and objective in my effort to analyse the case, because I am aware that this can be an issue in qualitative studies.

Bryman (2016, p. 310) explains that secondary data often have extremely high quality. Secondary data can therefore provide higher quality to research and strengthen its integrity. I have used literature and concepts from different scholars, and I have done my best to apply them to the case study without focusing on my personal opinions and perspectives. As I mentioned earlier, the different data sources I have chosen are relevant for different perspectives of the actors involved in the issue. It has been an important part of the process to find sources that provide different perspectives regarding the enforcement of sovereignty in Italy. The concept of securitization has for instance been valuable for looking at how migration is an issue that affects state sovereignty. It has also been critical to include perspectives from international actors such as the EU and humanitarian organizations to be able to analyse and get an overview of the bigger picture.

The sampling approach for this thesis is based on finding relevant and reliable literature through search engines such as Google Scholar and Oria. Literature has also been recommended to me by my thesis advisor Kirsti Stuvøy, whom I trust to have knowledge

about what researchers are trustworthy and respected. It has also been beneficial for me to go through the references of relevant articles to see if these articles could turn out to be relevant as well and provide more understanding and other perspectives. It has been important to be careful when choosing literature to focus on and to find trustworthy and reliable research from authors in relevant academic fields. This to secure that the literature will be applicable and valid for my case study.

The reports I have explored and analysed are from trustworthy and respected sources such as the United Nations and Human Rights Watch. This is to secure the trustworthiness and reliability of this thesis. Policies used in the case study are sources from the European Union and the Italian Government. Information regarding some of them were however found in online newspaper articles because it in some cases has been difficult to navigate the different online spheres of these actors. Furthermore, any online newspaper articles used in my case study are used with caution, where the most trustworthy, reliable and respected newspapers are chosen. These articles are from well renowned newspapers and are highly valuable for this thesis as they provide more context and current data to the case study. This is especially important for an issue such as Italy's current migration politics because it is current and in development. I have also used statistical figures collected from Statista, which is considered to be a highly reliable source. The statistics collected from Statista is of much higher quality than I would have been able to produce independently. Additionally, since secondary data can be of such high quality while being cost and time efficient, relying on secondary data makes more time for analysis (Bryman, 2016, p. 311).

When I have used statistics from Statista, my limitation is that I do not have access to the raw data, and do not know what variables were measured in what way. This is important to be aware of even when using a source that is considered to be reliable. However, in the case of this thesis, this is not a major issue because the statistical data required to explain the certain processes would have been impossible to collect independently. Secondary data is also much more cost and time efficient than data one has to collect individually. Since there are many great data sources available in different archives online, collecting data individually is not always the best option. There are many reliable sources for information which have been collected and analysed by researchers available in different online spheres. Secondary data can therefore be a highly valuable source to information, especially if one knows what to look for. Time and money are also valuable and not always necessary to exaggerate. Bryman

(2016) highlights that the possibility of saving cost and time is a great advantage when using secondary data (Bryman, 2016, p. 310).

Since I am basing my case study on current policies and events, written material on this is somewhat scarce. It turned out to be highly beneficial to look up authors that had been cited in relevant articles I discovered and studied to deepen my knowledge. Once I started finding highly relevant articles, the knot loosened and lead me in the direction of other interesting articles. Consequently, I had some issues regarding access to documents which in some ways may have limited my research. I spent much time reading and analysing material in order to find the material that would be the most beneficial to this thesis and its research question. Some articles that seemed relevant, turned out not to be. It was also critical to find articles from different points of view to ensure the objectivity and reliability of the research.

It has been essential to study at policies, reports and the media to gain current information relevant to my case study. For instance, some of the most relevant literature for my research is based on political decisions and actions. An important decision I will come back to in chapter 4 and 5 is the Salvini Decree. Some of the media sources I have studied articles from are BBC News, The Guardian, The Local (an Italian media source written in English), Politico and Reuters. Since the issue of this case study is a current issue, it has been essential to study several media sources such as online newspapers.

Since there has been such tension between the different actors surrounding migration to Italy and many incidents occurring that are related to this topic, it has been essential to investigate such issues. An example of this is an incident where a rescue boat with migrants was stuck in the Mediterranean Sea for almost two weeks, as I will come back to in chapter 4 and 5. Such issues have mainly been highlighted in different media sources, and reports from NGOs. I have studied several reports and articles from Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Sea Watch 3 as well as the United Nations (which is not an NGO but also relevant) and included their perspectives in the case study.

3.6 Quality Assurance

Bryman (2016) proposes two primary criteria to be the most suitable for assessing the quality of a qualitative study. These criteria are trustworthiness and authenticity (Bryman, 2016, p.

384). He highlights that there are ongoing debates regarding what criteria to use when assessing a qualitative study. This is because many of these criteria, in his findings, are mainly used to assessing quantitative research. This makes it problematic to fully rely on them when researching qualitatively because there are so many components and layers in a qualitative study. Bryman (2016) explains that it is problematic because *"there are no absolute truths about the social world that is the job of the social scientist to reveal,"* (Bryman, 2016, p.384).

Even though there are some issues in finding an absolutely applicable approach in assessing the quality of qualitative research, the criteria of trustworthiness and authenticity can be helpful and highly important when conducting research to ensure quality and validity. Validity involves making the research and data collection suitable for the research question. In my case study, I am working to come to a concrete conclusion in a specific case. It is essential to get the quality of the case to such a level that it I can show that I have valid case-specific insights. The most interesting aspect of this is that my case study is relevant to a broader discussion in international politics. I have therefore been especially aware of the importance of trustworthiness and authenticity to ensure the quality of my research. I will explain how I have taken this into consideration below.

3.6.1 Trustworthiness

According to Bryman (2016), trustworthiness is one of the most important criteria when assessing the quality of a qualitative study. He divides trustworthiness into four criteria: *credibility, transferability, dependability* and *confirmability* (Bryman, 2016, pp. 385-386). To make my research credible, I am clear on the sources I use and how I analyse them. I have also relied on a diversity of sources that provide me with different perspectives relevant to the case. The credibility of my research is the foundation for its transferability, because my clarity concerning sources and how I analyse them makes it possible for others to see what I have done. I also ensure dependability by being clear regarding my sources and my research strategy.

According to Bryman (2016) *"Confirmability is concerned with ensuring that, while recognizing that complete objectivity is impossible, the researcher can be shown to have acted in good faith; in other words, it should be apparent that he or she has not overtly*

allowed personal values or theoretical inclinations to sway the conduct of the research and the findings deriving from it," (Bryman, 2016, p. 386). The aspect of confirmability has been especially important to me because I am basing my study on secondary sources of data, and because this aspect is known to be a challenge in qualitative methods. To ensure confirmability, I have been concerned with studying a variety of sources, to include different perspectives. My impression is that the most important thing is to be aware because then it is easier to make decisions of higher quality.

3.6.2 Authenticity

Ensuring authenticity, or at least attempting to ensure it in the best way possible, can be a key criterion in assessing good quality research. Bryman (2016, p. 386) explains that authenticity is concerned with the broader political impact of research. Ensuring authenticity is important for the research in my case study because it is looking at political processes, where the potential of finding biased sources is high. The broader political impact of my research is one of my main concerns because I am hoping it will contribute to a broader issue in international politics. I have ensured authenticity by making sure that I take different actor perspectives into consideration in my case study, to best understand the bigger picture surrounding Italy's current migration politics.

3.6.3 Reliability

Bryman (2016) explains that *"reliability refers to the consistency of a measure of a concept,"* (Bryman, 2016, p. 157). It is difficult to measure reliability when research is conducted by using existing literature only. Still, it is important to make an effort to ensure that it is taken into consideration during the process, especially during data collection and analysis. Since subjectivity is one of the predicted 'flaws' of qualitative research, I have been concerned with nuances and different perspectives and attempt to ensure reliability in my study of these by being clear in my assessments regarding the concepts and sources I have chosen for my thesis. This has been done to ensure that others have the possibility to assess my assessments.

3.6.4 Replicability

Replicability is defined by Bryman (2016) as *"The degree to which the results of a study can be reproduced".* This is a clear limitation of qualitative research because of its subjective nature. However, my study might be replicable presuming that the researcher would be using the same exact concepts and data when conducting the analysis. The chance that the conclusion will be the same, is however not measurable. The theoretical concepts might point the data in a direction, but a researcher will also analyse the theories subjectively to some extent. This is makes it difficult to ensure replicability for this thesis, and for qualitative research in general. However, since I have been clear about what my sources are and in what way I will be analysing them, it could be possible to replicate my study and reach the same conclusions.

3.7 Connecting the methodology to the case study

My intention has been to make sure that the structure of my case study will be clearer after having read chapter 2. The case study is divided into two different parts: part I explores the findings from the data collection phase of my research process, and part II connects these findings with the core concepts from the literature review. In part II, my objective has been to use analyse the findings through an analytical' lens with the core concepts in mind. This is my strategy for measuring how Italy's state sovereignty has been affected by migration and for reaching the best possible conclusion to the research question. I have divided the case study in this way to ensure that the perspectives of the different actors involved in the issue are explored in a clear and orderly manner.

4. Italy's Current Migration Politics, Part I

Findings

Chapters 4 and 5 are dedicated to the case study. The case study is structured by the sub-questions explained in chapter 3. Mainly, the case study is divided into two separate chapters. In chapter 4, I present my findings in an order based on the sub-questions from the individual level, to the state level, and finally to the international level. The case study has been structured in this way to ensure that all perspectives and aspects are included in an orderly manner. In chapter 5, the second part of the case study, I have analysed the findings from part I. Chapter 5 involves an analysis and discussion of the findings by using the core concepts from the literature review, with a focus on tying it to state sovereignty. It is in chapter 6 that I reach a conclusion to my research question.

4.1 Background

The ocean is an important travel route in the world, particularly in the Mediterranean Sea. Since Italy is the Mediterranean Sea's neighbour and is located on the very outskirts of Europe, relatively close to Libya and the African continent, Italy has a long history with migration and has often had migrants arriving in Italy. The eruption of the Arab Spring in the very end of 2010, the war in Syria and the Libyan civil war however contributed to a high influx in migrants and refugees heading for Europe from 2011 (Ekinci, 2018, p. 1). The term migrant will be used to describe migrants and refugees in this case study.

4.1.1 The Emergence of the Migration Crisis

Because of Italy's location, it is a key entry point to the EU for migrants travelling by sea routes in the Mediterranean. Migrants arriving in Italy mainly depart from Libya. The Italian islands of Lampedusa and Sicily have been the main points of entry for migrants travelling from Libya. Around year 2011, Italy started to experience a high increase in migrants arriving at these islands. There was also a need for humanitarian search and rescue missions at sea, in which Italy got highly involved. This development affected Italy politically on several arenas; locally, nationally and internationally. Because of all these factors, Italy is one of the countries that are most directly affected by the migration crisis (Berry et al., 2016, p. 257). It has been especially challenging for Italy to deal with the influx brought by the 'refugee crisis'

that hit Europe around year 2015. The focus of this case study is therefore migration to Italy in the time period from year 2011-2019.

The phrase 'migration crisis' started being used to describe Italy's situation in 2011. After the eruption of the Arab Spring, the Syrian war and the Libyan civil war, many migrants, mainly from Syria and Iraq on one side and sub-Saharan Africa on the other, left their home countries in search of a better life in Europe (Ambrosini, 2018, p. 94). Many of these migrants were refugees from countries such as Syria and Iraq that were fleeing from war, while there were also migrants arriving from other areas. Some of these migrants might have exploited the asylum channel and sea route as their only possible way of getting legal access to reside in the European Union's territory. This means that several types of migrants were mixed together in their quest for a better life in a European country (Ambrosini, 2018, p. 94). Therefore, the term migrant will be used in this case study, instead of refugees. The focus needs to be on migration as a whole, whether these migrants are refugees, economic migrants or other.

Southern European countries are for many migrants seen as the way into Europe, even though these countries might not be their goal destinations. Because of Italy's location, it is seen as one of these key entry points to Europe. In 2011, there was a 'crisis' in Lampedusa. In just a few months' time, 30,000 migrants had arrived on the shores of Italy, most of them in Lampedusa (Campesi, 2011, referred to in Ambrosini, 2018, pp. 99-100). Several incidents and increases in the number of migrants affected the following years. In 2013, several tragedies occurred close to Italian shores. 400 people, mainly from Eritrea, drowned when a fishing boat travelling from Libya caught fire a few hundred metres from Lampedusa early in October (Ambrosini, 2018). Another similar incident occurred only a few days later when 268 people escaping the war in Syria drowned because the Italian and Maltese authorities spent valuable time arguing who had the responsibility to save these migrants (Ambrosini, 2018, pp. 97-105).

A few days later, an important development started to take form. Italy was shaken by the recent events and became much more engaged in rescue operations at sea. The Italian government at that time initiated the aero-naval search and rescue operation Mare Nostrum which became highly important and managed to rescue more than 150,000 migrants. Despite this initiative's operational success, it became replaced after about a year's time by another

initiative called Triton. Triton was led by the EU agency FRONTEX and had a different operational focus where border surveillance and smugglers where more in focus than the rescuing of migrants (Ambrosini, 2018, p. 105).

Because of the acceleration of conflict in the Middle East and Africa in the following years, the increase in migrants to Italy continued to develop. The so-called 'Refugee crisis' hit Europe in 2015 but the massive increase in migrants affected Italy already in 2014. The development reached its peak in 2016, with 181,436 migrants in arriving in Italy in 2016 alone (Statista, 2018). Migrant arrivals in Italy have been significantly reduced since 2018. This development is illustrated in figure 1. See figure 1.

Figure 1

Number of migrant arrivals to Italy from 2014 to January 2019

2014	170 100
2015	153 842
2016	181 436
2017	119 369
2018	23 370
to January 11, 2019	53

Number of individuals

Source
Ministero dell'Interno
© Statista 2019

Additional Information:
Italy; Ministero dell'Interno; 2014 to June 2018
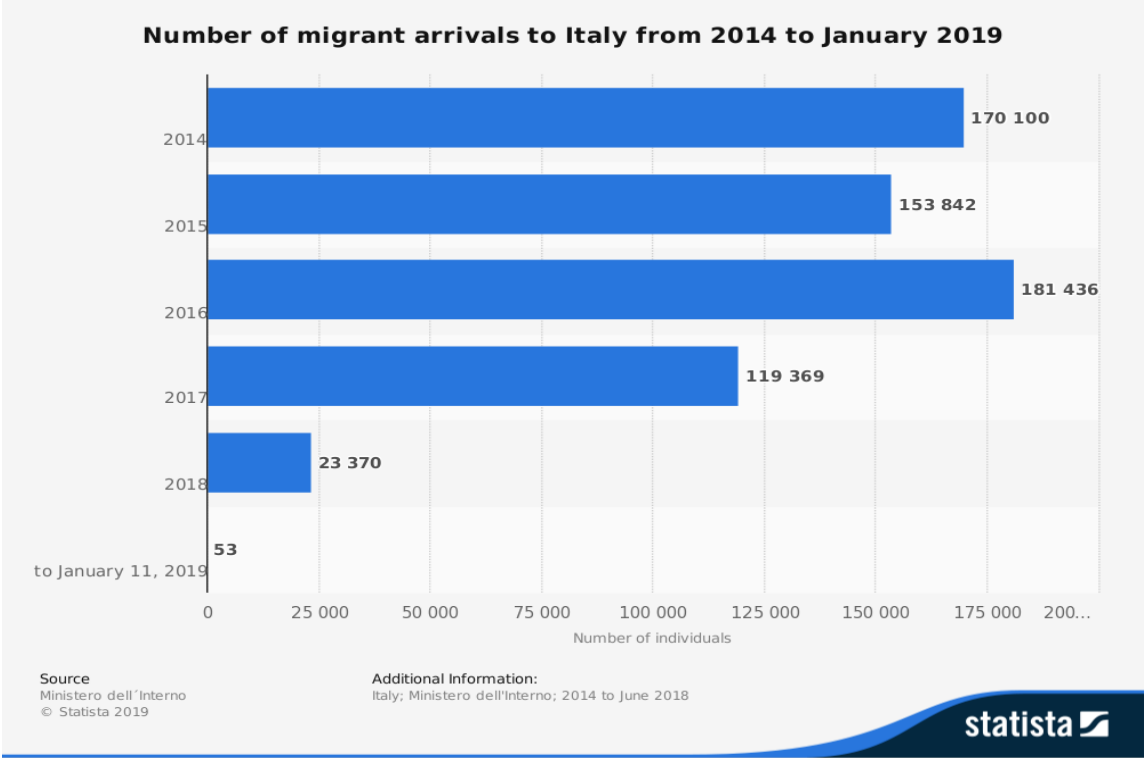
statista

(Figure 1: Statista, 2019, available at: https://www.statista.com/statistics/623514/migrant-arrivals-to-italy/)

As illustrated in figure 1, the increase in migrants travelling to Italy was at a high up until 2018, when measures taken by several actors made sure the migration flow was slowed down, I will come back to these measures later. Because of the high number of migrants arriving to Italy in the years 2011-2017, migration became a highly important topic in Italian politics. Even though the number of migrants arriving to Italy in 2018 was significantly lower than the last few years, challenges connected to migration are still affecting the country. Currently, the

populist right side of Italian politics is at power. However, the country is highly divided politically. Another key element of Italy's challenges lies in their relationship with the European Union, in which Italy has been a member state since the union's very beginning as the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1958 (European Union, 2019).

4.2 The Public Opinion on Migration in Italy

with reference to sub-question A

Italy is known to be a politically divided country. There is quite a strong left and a strong right side of political parties. The parliamentary election in Italy in March of 2018 resulted in a new populist coalition government (Statista, 2018; BBC News, 2018). This populist government is currently in power in Italy and consists of a coalition between the far right-wing part Lega Nord and the anti-establishment party Five Star Movement (M5S).

In Italy, the main public debate lies between the far-right and the centre-left political parties. According to Colombo (2017), it was the political party Lega Nord who first put immigration at the centre of the political agenda. Lega Nord, who has much support from the Italian population, especially in the north, defined the terms of the debate on immigration by setting a standard of using populist slogans (Colombo, 2017, p. 163). The Lega Nord is strongly sceptical of immigration and has mobilized for an ethnic view of citizenship while opposing residential citizenship (Colombo, 2017, p. 163). On the other side of the debate, the humanitarian aspect is receiving attention.

On the other side of Italian politics, the Democratic Party, a centre-left party, and catholic parties are in strong opposition of the right's view on immigration. This side of the political sphere is more concerned with the humanitarian aspect of immigration, especially from the Mediterranean Sea (Colombo, 2017, p. 163). According to the Third Report of the organization Carta Di Roma, there has been an substantial focus on humanitarian themes in Italian media (Colombo, 2017, p. 164).

4.3 Domestic Debates Regarding the European Union

with reference to sub-question A

A central part of the political debate concerning the 'migration crisis' in Italy is the EU's part in the tackling of the issue. In Italy's view, the EU has a responsibility to assist Italy in dealing with the large influx of migrants that have arrived and are arriving. Colombo explains that "*the attitude of the ruling coalition is that the migration crisis is not just an Italian issue but something that affects the whole of the EU, and because of this needs international support*," (Colombo, 2017, p. 164). Italy has raised concerns in debates regarding both humanitarian needs and shared security concerns with the EU (Colombo, 2017, p. 164).

According to a report prepared for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees in 2016, a high number of debates in Italian media are conducted between domestic politicians and EU officials (Berry et al., 2016, p. 257). According to the same report, "*the scale and cost of the Italian involvement, as well as the large number of refugees who have passed through Italy, has meant that the issue has been enormously controversial in Italian politics,*" (Berry et al., 2016, p. 257). The report further explains that the main themes of the debate in Italian media have been regarding the initiatives at sea, Mare Nostrum and Triton, and regarding who should have the responsibility of controlling the outer borders of the EU and accepting the hundreds of thousands of refugees that have arrived in Italy by sea (Berry et al., 2016, p. 257).

(Picture 1: Italy's prime minister, Giuseppe Conte. Reuters, 2019, available at:
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-italy-eu-conte/italy-pm-calls-for-fairer-europe-faces-eu-anger-idUSKCN1Q12C1)

4.4 Italy's Political Landscape
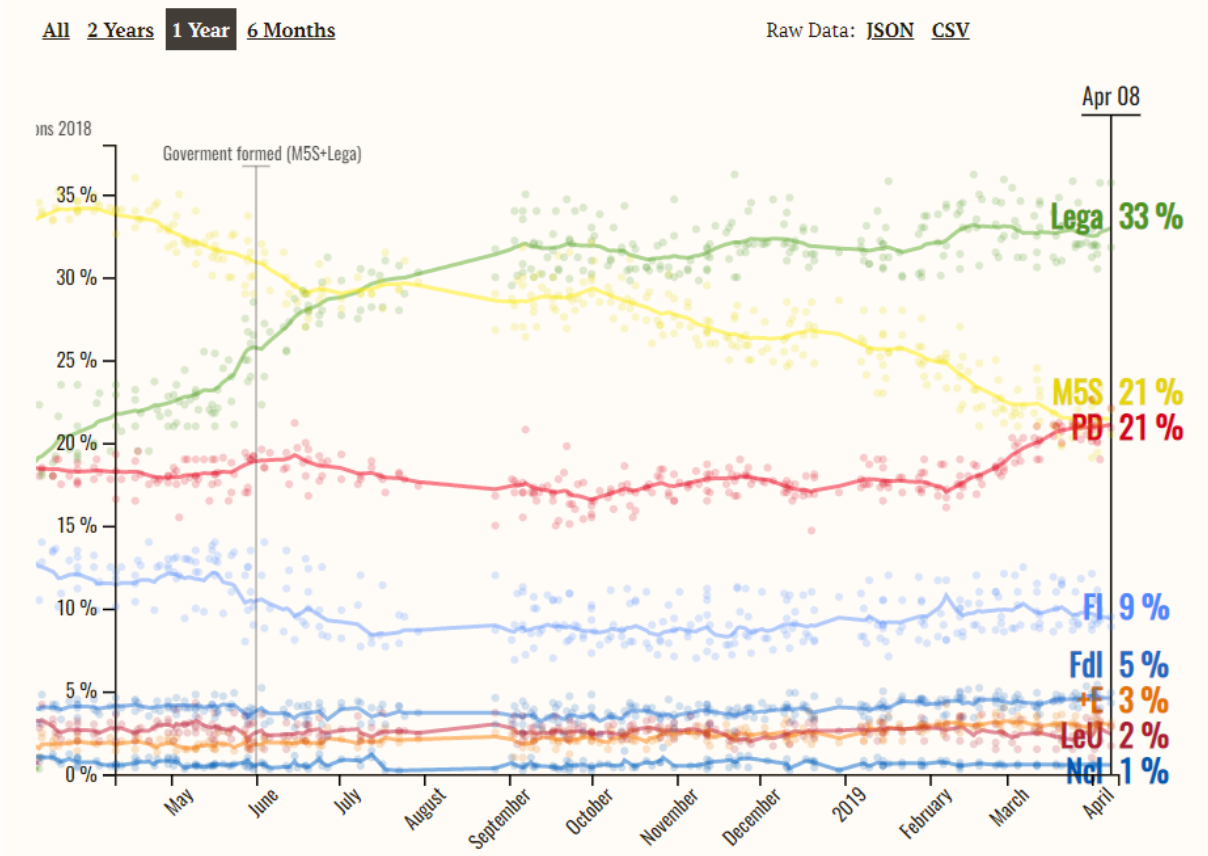
with reference to sub-question A and B

In 2018, a new populist government was formed in Italy. The current government is a coalition between the anti-establishment party Five Star Movement (Movimento 5 Stelle, M5S) and right-wing Lega parties with Giuseppe Conte as prime minister. The new government is known to be twofold, with economic policy as one of the main concerns. The second priority of the new government is the migration issue, where the priority is to reduce the flow of migration that Italy has been experiencing since 2013 (Marrone, 2018). Marrone (2018) establishes that Italy has experienced 624,747 migrant arrivals from 2013-2017(Marrone, 2018, p. 1).

Marrone (2018) describes that efforts to send migrants home has been topping the political agenda, especially during the election campaigns in 2018. In the campaigns, the leader of Lega Nord, Matteo Salvini, campaigned especially heavily on the issue and is known for his slogan: 'send them home', which describes his wish to send more than 500.000 migrants in Italy back to their home countries (Kirchgaessner et al., 2019; Marrone, 2018). Matteo Salvini is currently Italy's minister of interior and has taken measures to drastically decrease migration flows into the country. Salvini has closed Italy's ports to stop migrants from arriving in Italy (Larger, 2018). This drastic measure has made international and national news-headlines at several occasions, as it has affected many migrants while forcing other European countries, such as Spain, to receive the migrants instead (Larger, 2018; Marrone, 2018). Salvini and the government have even refused NGO-run migrant-rescue ships access to Italy's ports (ANSA, 2019).

An article published by Amaro in CNBC on the 4th of March 2019 describes Italian public political opinion quite well by explaining that Salvini's political party (Lega Nord) is, according to current opinion polls, the most popular among Italian voters. This has changed immensely since the elections last year, when their government coalition partner Five Star Movement (M5S) was ahead of Lega Nord by 10 percentage points. The article also highlights that: "The monthly survey in La Repubblica newspaper showed 58 percent considered Salvini the leader, while 16 percent picked Conte and 14 percent chose Luigi Di Maio, who heads the anti-establishment 5-Star Movement," (Amaro, 2019). The current

public political opinion (updated 10.04.19) is illustrated in a figure (figure 2) by Poll of Polls below:

Figure 2

(Figure 2: Poll of Polls, 2019, available at: https://pollofpolls.eu/IT)

4.5 Italy's Migration Policies

with reference to sub-questions A and B

As explained, Italy is known to be quite divided domestically, with different public opinions and ongoing processes within different areas in the country. This divide also applies to Italy's tackling of migration. There are, in practice, different strategies in the reception of migrants and refugees in different local areas. At the same time, there are several national initiatives and policies that are meant to be respected in the reception of refugees in Italy. There are for instance several reception centres for newly arrived asylum seekers (CARA). These were in 2016 hosting around 15,000 people (Ambrosini, 2018, p. 116).

4.5.1 Asylum policies

Marchetti (2017) explains Italy's reception of refugees and their asylum policies as being based on two different systems: SPRAR (Italian abbreviation, translated to Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees) and CAS (Italian abbreviation, translated to Centres of Extraordinary Reception). Both systems are managed by the Home Affairs Ministry, while CAS also contributes to funds to private actors, mainly NGO's. Even though the Home Affairs Ministry prefers the SPRAR system, very few asylum seekers are being taken in by this system in practice (Ambrosini, 2018, 117). This is because very few local authorities take the responsibility to manage a SPRAR project. The Home Affairs Ministry explains the SPRAR system as "*a structured form to achieve a widespread reception, overcoming extraordinary solutions, and taking into account, at the same time, variegated local situations, avoiding imbalances and non-homogeneous distributions,*" (Ambrosini, 2018, p. 117).

The CAS system on the other hand, is described as a messier system. It can therefore be problematic for Italy that this is the most applied system. The CAS system gives the local authorities more freedom and gives no clear role or corresponding responsibility to municipalities (Ambrosini 2018, Marchetti 2014). In the words of Ambrosini 2018, "*Many local governments, after declining an invitation to manage a SPRAR project, protest the settlement of refugees on their territories through CAS centres. In effect, they build local borders against newcomers,*" (Ambrosini, 2018, p. 117).

Ambrosini (2018) explains that there is a new wave of municipal exclusion policies in Italy that are different from those in the past. He proceeds in explaining this change as follows: "*First, the new policies openly target a category of immigrants, namely, asylum seekers, and generally reject the public policy of reception, even if doing so often foster confusion regarding the distinction between refugees and other immigrants. Second, this trend favours a framing of local policies of exclusion in which mayors and municipalities resist the imposition of refugees by national powers upon local communities. It is a typical populist frame, one that strengthens the victim complex that is often used to justify xenophobic positions. Third, it involves many regions and municipalities, not just the Northern regions of Italy, where the anti-immigrant Northern League has its strongholds. As a consequence, municipalities governed by centre-left coalitions are more involved in these policies than they were in the past,*" (Ambrosini, 2018, p. 117). His argument brings forth that the new wave of municipal

exclusion policies is based on populism and xenophobic views, and that such policies strengthen the scepticism towards migration from the Mediterranean Sea.

4.5.2 The 'Salvini Decree'

The new populist coalition government consisting of the Five Star Movement and Lega Nord, recently introduced a new immigration decree in Italy. This new security decree won a vote in parliament in the latest months of 2018 and has now been implemented. The main difference to the previous immigration policies, lies in the decree's abolishment of humanitarian protection for the migrants that are not eligible for refugee states but at the same time cannot be sent back to their home countries (Tondo and Giuffrida, 2018).

(Picture 2: From the left: Italy's prime minister Giuseppe Conte, Italy's minister of interior Matteo Salvini. MacGregor, 2018, available at: https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/12189/italian-government-approves-security-decree)

Matamoros (2018) wrote an article in Euronews explaining the changes to Italy's new policies on immigration in the new security decree in four different parts. These parts are included below:

"1) Cancellation of asylum protection on 'humanitarian' grounds

The new rules eliminate the possibility of granting protection to refugees on "humanitarian" grounds, which covered cases such as homosexuals fleeing countries with anti-LGBT laws.

Under the new decree, the Italian government will only grant asylum to refugees of war or victims of political persecution and hand out special permits of a maximum duration of one year for all other cases.

2) Extension of duration of foreigners in detention centres

Italy will now be able to detain foreigners up to 180 days before repatriating them. That's the period considered necessary to verify the identity and nationality of the migrant.

3) Easier withdrawal of protection

Asylum seekers will now be able to lose their protection if they are found guilty of a felony. The list of crimes for which migrants can now be expelled for includes threats or violence to a public official and a variety of theft charges.

4) Weakening of local integration programmes for asylum seekers

The new rules also weaken the network of integration programmes which provide asylum seekers with tools to better integrate into their local communities (known as SPRAR in Italian). The system will now only be open to those whose asylum requests have been accepted," (Matamoros, 2018).

An important observation made by Matamoros (2018) is that the new decree might increase the number of migrants in irregular situations (with an irregular status). A problem this might bring is that migrants in Italy in lack of proper papers and permits might not be able to be legally employed and/or receive social support when needed. This might increase the risk of migrants turning to illegal activities or illegal and low-paid work (Matamoros, 2018). She illustrates this with a statistical overview of the number of migrants in irregular situations (Stranieri Irregolari) from the Italian Ministry of Interior, illustrated in figure 3, by a research fellow at the Italian Institute for Political Studies, Matteo Villa. The interesting column in figure 3 is the one to the right, which predicts an increase (from December 2017) of about 130,000 migrants with an irregular status in 2020.

Figure 3

Figure 3: STRANIERI IRREGOLARI IN ITALIA | 2017 & SIMULAZIONE
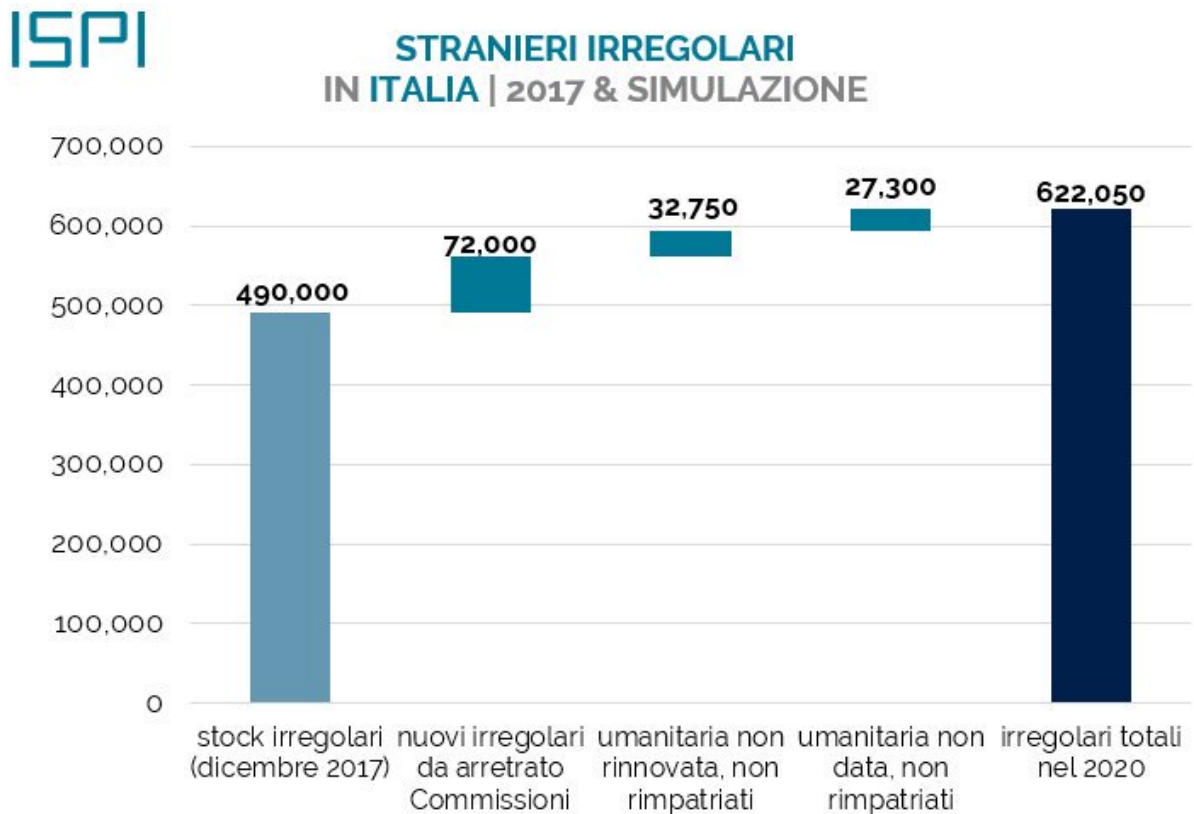
Dati: Ministero dell'Interno, Eurostat (simulazione: ISPI).

(Figure 3: Matteo Villa, 2018 referred to in Matamoros, 2018, available at:

https://www.euronews.com/2018/11/29/italy-s-new-security-decree-clamps-down-on-immigration)

The 'Salvini Decree' has had negative consequences for migrants in Italy already. An article written by Tondo for the Guardian (2019) explains that Italy has rejected a record number of asylum applications in the past months. The article was published in mid-February 2019 and explains that 24,800 asylum applications have been declined in the four months prior to the date when the article was published. The new, much stricter, policies of the current populist government are claimed to have a devastating effect on migrants in Italy (Tondo, 2019). A quote by Salvini is presented in Reuters (2018), "*I'm willing to host women and children who are escaping from war ... But all the others, no,*" (Scherer, 2018). The quote shows Salvini's reluctance to host all the migrants that arrive in Italy.

New migration policies practiced by this government brings several consequences for migrants. As mentioned, Italy has in a sense closed its ports. This has resulted in Italy refusing rescued migrants to disembark in Italy, and in other cases taking a long time 'finding' a

location for them to disembark. Even though Italy is still highly involved in search and rescue operations at sea, the issue comes when these rescued migrants need to disembark at land. Italy has refused to give NGO search and rescue ships, military ships and even commercial ships that have rescued migrants at sea access to Italian ports, and at least been reluctant and taken a lot of time in finding an appropriate place for disembarking (Amnesty International, 2018, pp. 8-9). This has been seen as an attempt to put pressure to other actors, such as the EU, to contribute more to solving the issue (Amnesty International, 2018, pp. 9-10).

4.6 The Italian Politicians'/Political Parties' Expectations to the European Union

with reference to sub-question B

According to Ambrosini (2018, pp. 89-90), international and European politics' new view on borders have made it difficult for countries in Southern Europe. He explains that the way policies are today, in some ways are demands southern European countries to act as the European Union's border guards. In addition, Southern Europe, especially Italy, is viewed to be an entry point to the European continent and in a way functions as a bridge between Europe and Northern Africa and the Middle East. He also points out that this is especially the case for those seeking asylum in Europe (Ambrosini, 2018).

Because of the European policies, there is tension between the EU and Italy when it comes to the tackling of the migration issue. Italy has expectations to the EU regarding their assistance in the tackling of the crisis. Since Italy was one of the first member states of the European Union, the country's expectations to the organization because of their strong bond. Since there are policies and agreements in the EU that put Italy in a difficult position because of their location, Italy has requested more assistance on such issues as it seems unfair to Italy that they are carrying much of the burden when there is supposed to be burden-sharing between the member states of the EU (Lehne, 2018, p. 3).

An article from The Local in August 2018 describes that Italy's populist government was campaigning to make member countries of the EU take their share of migrants by turning away ships with rescued migrants in the Mediterranean Sea. Around this time, Rome also threatened to cut its annual contribution to the EU's budget (The Local, 2018). This has

triggered questions regarding whether the EU could become weakened or even dissolved because of its issues with Italy (Ezrati, 2018).

The tension between Italy and the EU is based on a twofold: economy and migration. According to Amaro (2019), such tensions have affected the relationship between Rome and Brussels on several occasions since the establishment of the populist coalition in 2018. In 2018, Salvi commented on their disputes with the EU as follows: *"Unfortunately, Italian governments over the past five years have signed agreements (in exchange for what?) so that all these ships disembark immigrants in Italy. With our government, the music has changed and will change,"* (Amaro, 2019). This comment indicates a clear dissatisfaction with the EU's contributions to the tackling of migrant arrivals.

According to MacDonald (2019) in an article in Reuters, Italy's prime minister Giuseppe Conte recently called for change in his contribution in the European Parliament in Strasbourg to a debate regarding the future of the EU. In his contribution, he stressed that Italy desires more assistance in the tackling of migration. Conte spoke about the need for the EU to end its long arguments regarding how to handle the migration from the Mediterranean Sea and rather focus on taking more action (MacDonald, 2019).

Lehne (2018) highlights that even though the EU is currently receiving fewer migrants and that the acuteness of the migration crisis has ended, the current situation regarding the issue is far from normal. He stresses that the Italian election in 2018 is proof that *"concerns surrounding migration and asylum continue to dominate the public space and shape national and EU politics. Border controls at several internal Schengen borders are still in place, and migration remains the top concern of EU citizens,"* (Lehne, 2018, p. 1-2). In other words, migration is one of the EUs most prioritized issues even though the number of migrants arriving in the EU is currently lower than it was a few years ago.

4.7 The European Union's Responses to Italy's Migration Issues

with reference to sub-question C

The EU is as a supranational organization and an economic and political union between 28 European states. A document written by the European Commission in 2018 explains that *"The*

unique feature of the EU is that, although the Member States of the Union remain sovereign and independent states, they have decided to pool some of their 'sovereignty' in areas where it makes sense to work together," (European Union, 2018, p. 8). The publication also describes what this means in practice, *"this means that the Member States delegate some of their decision-making powers to the shared institutions they have created, so that decisions on specific matters of common interest can be made democratically at a EU level,"* (European Union, 2018, p. 8). Below there is an overview of the European Union's member states. In this picture, it is clear that Italy is located at the union's outskirts, like it is stated in earlier paragraphs.
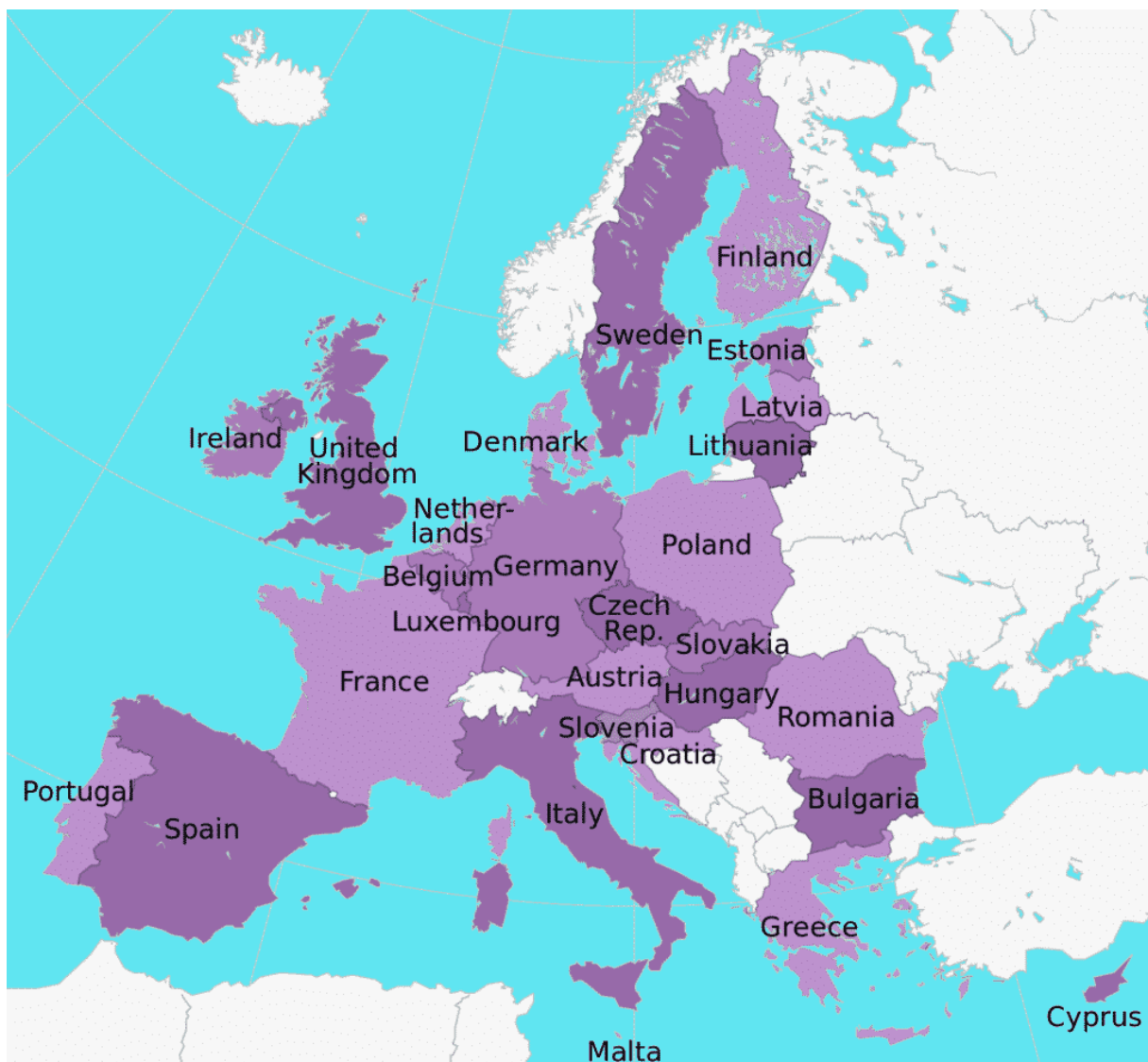
(Picture 3: Map of Europe, 2019, available at: https://mapofeurope.com/eu-map/)

Since the increase in the number of migrants to Italy started to escalate in 2011, the EU has

launched several different plans to tackle the issue. Unfortunately, their institutions have not yet reached a common solution (Ambrosini, 2018). One of the EU's main issues when it comes to tackling migration is that many of their member states are hesitant to receive more asylum seekers, even though they are obliged to do so according to the EU's relocation mechanism (an extension to the Dublin Regulation). These states have established measures to avoid receiving more immigrants and are therefore making it difficult for the EU to assist states like Italy on the migration issue (Ambrosini, 2018; Lehne, 2018).

For instance, In September 2015, the EU made an effort to contribute to tackling the migration crisis. Lehne (2018) explains that "...*the EU committed to relocating 160,000 asylum seekers from Greece and Italy to other member states within two years, but the initiative ran into massive resistance from several Central European countries. The Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland outright refused to comply with the decision, triggering court cases, and in the case of Hungary, even a referendum,"* (Lehne, 2018, p. 3). As Lehne's quote describes, this relocation effort fell short because several countries refused to assist in taking in migrants.

When member states of the EU are denying asylum seekers to enter their countries and share these responsibilities, many of these refugees and migrants have limited options and their only choice might be to stay in their country of arrival in Europe, in many cases Italy. This contributes to Italy's problem in that not only do they have to receive and process migrants on their way to Europe; they are also forced to house most of these migrants themselves. This has raised concerns in Italy because of their lack of ability to tackle these problems alone. Since Italy has a lack of resources and has economic and political issues internally in the country, a good process and solution as to how to house these migrants successfully for all parties is lacking. Even though many have been granted asylum in Italy, many of the migrants are also staying in Italy illegally.

Because of Italy's new policies based on the decision to end the disembarkation in Italian ports for migrants rescued at sea, the EU has been forced to deal with these ships on a case-by-case basis. This has been arranged by member states located on the coast in coordination with other member states of the EU who are willing to consider assisting and 'taking in' these migrants in their countries. As mentioned, this has since the new populist government came to

power in Italy at several occasions resulted in migrants having to wait several days at sea before being allowed to disembark (UNHCR, 2019).

4.7.1 The Dublin Regulation

Member states of the EU are expected to share the responsibility of migration even though the Dublin Regulation obliges the first state of entry to process a refugee's asylum application. The Dublin Regulation obliges migrants to apply for asylum or visa in one member state only based on a set of criteria (European Commission, 2019). This means that all irregular migrants arriving in Italy must apply for asylum in Italy and get this granted before thinking about travelling further into Europe. One can say that this in practice means that Italy is doing the EU's dirty work. Since Italy is located on the outskirts of Europe, they are responsible for a border not only into Italy but also into the European Union. This is because of the way the EU is structured around agreements such as Schengen. Another essential part of the Dublin Regulation is that a migrant's only option for an asylum in the EU is given in their first country of entry. This means that migrants are not allowed to apply for asylum in other EU countries if the first country has declined their application. (Huysmans, 2000, p. 756).

Huysmans (2000) explains that the Dublin Regulation in a way improves the asylum-seeker's situation because it seeks a quicker and more targeted procedure in dealing with asylum applications. He also stresses the fact that even though the convention might have some positive implications for the asylum seeker, it is heavily undermined by the fact that it is a policy aimed at reducing the number of applications from refugees and migrants to EU countries. Since the convention only allows asylum-seekers to apply in one member state of the EU, there is a greater chance of denial and a smaller chance for these applicants to get asylum in western Europe (Huysmans, 2000, p. 756).

There was recently a change made to the Dublin Regulation. In 2015, tragedies at sea had reached the media and were influencing public opinion. Politicians in the EU were saddened by these tragedies and decided to extend the reception of Syrian asylum seekers to around 80,000 more than they originally had intended through the European Agenda of May 2015. This initiative extended to the creation of an exception to the core of the Dublin Convention by proposing that the relocation mechanism of the convention be made permanent (Ambrosini, 2018, p. 110).

4.7.2 The Schengen Agreement

Schengen is large area of 26 European countries, where Italy is a member. The Schengen Agreement is now one of the core agreements of the EU and was implemented in 1995. The agreement is named after the place it was established: Schengen, Luxembourg. It is essential to describe what the Schengen area is when discussing the case of Italy because it gives a better understanding of why Italy is frustrated with the EU's contributions to the migration issue.

The Schengen Agreement allows all people travelling in the member states (most of these are EU states) to move freely without border controls once you have crossed a border into the area. This in practice means that countries located at Schengen's outskirts are enforcing the EU's outer borders. This puts much pressure on states such as Italy because they in practice must perform border control for the EU and not just for Italy. The Schengen Agreement is well-known and therefore many migrants see Italy as an entry point not just to Italy but to the EU and therefore other European countries. The Schengen Agreement provides something called 'Freedom of travel'. This entails that people travelling in the Schengen area, between Schengen countries, do not need to show passports or visas (Dockery, 2017).

Considering the migration crisis, many Schengen member states have strengthened their border controls. This also applies to states located in the middle of the Schengen area (not at the outskirts). As explained in the chapter 4 regarding the Dublin Regulation, refugees and asylum seekers are not allowed to travel to other EU countries while waiting for their application to be accepted in their country of entry. It is only when they have been granted asylum status that they are allowed to move freely in the Schengen area (Dockery, 2017).

According to Lehne (2018), countries that are part of the Schengen Agreement have given up on one of the core elements of their state sovereignty. This core element has been abandoned in favour of freedom of movement inside between the countries. He highlights that this agreement was made without the necessary preparations to secure each country's best interest. Lehne explains that there should have been crucial agreements in place beforehand that secured the external borders of the area while having an agreement on how to tackle issues related to migration and asylum. In his view, the EU is very vulnerable at this time because of issues related to finance and perhaps especially migration. The EU is vulnerable in the case of a new migration influx because it has no well-functioning strategy for tackling it. Lehne

argues that the EU itself might be in serious jeopardy (Lehne, 2018, p.1).

4.7.3 The EU's action plan to assist Italy

Italy has struggled and is struggling with tackling the influx in migration to the country as well as with its incredibly valuable role in search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean Sea. Ekinci (2018) highlights that the EU and Italy have made decisions and taken measures to prevent new arrivals and reduce the number of deaths and missing people at sea. These decisions have come as a reaction to the increase of migrant arrivals in Italy and the increase in migrant death tolls in the Mediterranean Sea (Ekinci, 2018, p. 3).

In July 2017, The European Commission introduced an action plan to support Italy. This action plan included discussions around three different subjects. The first subject involved taking measures to increase the solidary of EU member states to reduce the pressure of migration in the Mediterranean Sea. Ekinci (2018) brings forth that *"These measures included a code of conduct for the activities of non-governmental organizations (NGO's), accelerating relocation within member states, and working with Libya by training the Libyan Coast Guard and applying return procedures in Italy with the EU's help,"* (Ekinci, 2018, p. 3.) The second part of the action plan amplifies the implementation of migration policies from the EU with Italy while the final part supports Italy by modifying the Dublin legislation to better fit the current and future migration challenges (Ekinci, 2018, p. 3).

4.7.4 The EU, Italy and Libya

Another measure taken to reduce and better the circumstances of migration from the Mediterranean Sea involves cooperating with Libya, since the largest proportion of migrants traveling to Italy travel from the coast of Libya. In July 2017, the EU's council of foreign affairs discussed how assisting Italy must be discussed alongside assisting Libya with its situation. The EU's council of foreign affairs decided to make some suggestions for tackling this issue. Ekinci (2018) describes these suggestions as follows: "*First of all, the EU member states should be willing to work with Libya against illegal activities such as smuggling and trafficking. Second, they should provide support to Libya to increase its control over its borders with neighbouring countries, especially its maritime borders, in accordance to International Law, to reduce migratory pressure. Thirdly, they should establish a monitoring mechanism to help the operations and the personnel become more effective in refugee*

tracking. Finally, the EU imposed restrictions on exporting certain products that might be used by smugglers and traffickers, such as inflatable boats and outboard motors," (Ekinci, 2018, p. 3). These suggestions show that there are several aspects to consider when attempting to reduce the migration flow to EU countries.

The measures suggested by the EU indicate that cooperation and assistance to Libya is key to reduce and better control the migration flow to Italy and Europe, therefore the EU is prioritizing it. Additionally, by making it more difficult for smugglers and traffickers to send people out to sea in boats that are not equipped for it, there might be fewer lives lost at sea. Still, one can wonder whether it is better for the people that want to migrate to Europe to stay where they are rather than making the journey to Europe. Hopefully, measures taken will benefit people in difficult positions. However, these measures by the EU are most likely most favourable for the EU's member states.

4.8 NGOs, as well as the United Nations, on Italy's Tackling of Migration

with reference to sub-question C

Lewis (2010) describes non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as "*key third sector actors on the landscapes of development, human rights, humanitarian action, environment and many other areas of public action,"* (Lewis, 2010, p. 1). He further explains that NGOs often act as delivery services to people in need. Mingst and Arreguín-Toft define NGOs as *"NGOs are generally private, voluntary organizations whose members are individuals or associations that come together to achieve a common purpose, often oriented to a public good,"* (Mingst and Arreguín-Toft, 2011, p. 210). The NGOs of focus in this case study are humanitarian NGOs and NGOs working for human rights.

The organizations I have reviewed are Amnesty International, Sea-Watch 3, Human Rights Watch and the United Nations. The United Nations is an intergovernmental organization and not an NGO, but it is also included in this section because it is concerned with many of the same principles as the NGOs I have chosen to focus on. Below, I will go into these actors' assessments of Italy's tackling of migration. It is essential to include critique of Italy's

policies and actions regarding human rights and humanitarian principles to be aware of how it affects the migrants that travel over the Mediterranean Sea in an attempt to reach the European Union's shores.

4.8.1 Amnesty International

As explained earlier, new Italian migration policies are significantly stricter than before the new populist coalition came to power. These new policies and ways of tackling migration have resulted in denying migrants who have been rescued at sea to disembark in Italy. Amnesty International (2018) criticizes Italy for practising such policies and suspects it to perhaps be a tactical political move. In their report *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Europe Fails Refugees and Migrants in the Central Mediterranean,* they argue that Italy's current policies, at best, is irresponsible. However, they suspect that there is a possibility that these policies are a *"conscious and callous attempts to undermine the very nature of search and rescue at sea for political purposes,"* (Amnesty International, 2018, p. 9-10). The report also points out that these policies are harming human beings who are already vulnerable and in an incredibly difficult situation (Amnesty International, 2018, p. 10).

In addition, Amnesty International criticizes Matteo Salvini's rhetoric. In their report, they highlight the way he speaks about NGOs, refugees and migrants. Amnesty International bring forth that "*The Minister has since continued to accompany the new policy of no disembarkations with the use of demeaning language to describe people rescued at sea, including belittling the enormous human suffering they endured, describing refugees and migrants' desperate journeys as "cruises", announcing that "the gravy is over" for them under his tenure, and promising that NGOs as well as refugees and migrants will only see Italian ports "in a postcard","* (Amnesty International, 2018, p. 14). It seems Amnesty International is worried because Matteo Salvini is highly negative towards both NGOs and migrants. This shows that there is significant tension between Italy and NGO when it comes to what to prioritize regarding migration over the Mediterranean Sea to Italy.

4.8.2 Sea-Watch 3

An important non-governmental organization that is present in the central Mediterranean Sea is Sea-Watch 3. Sea-Watch 3 describes the situation in the Mediterranean Sea as a humanitarian crisis. The NGO is providing emergency relief capacities, demanding and

pushing for rescue operations by European institutions and standing up for legal escape routes for migrants (which is now lacking). Sea-Watch 3 is working to eliminate the root causes of migration (Sea-Watch, 2019).

Sea Watch-3 rescue boats have been dealing with Italy's new policies in the most direct way. In January 2019, one of their rescue boats was stuck at sea for almost two weeks while waiting for the green light to disembark in Italy. This boat was carrying four British crew members and 47 migrants who had been saved from drowning in a storm at sea. A crew member of this rescue ship explained the situation as being 'held hostages' at sea while not being allowed to disembark. Italy's minister of interior Matteo Salvini disagreed completely and threatened to turn to legal action because the crew members of the ship had assisted in illegal immigration. The crew and migrants were allowed by Italy's prime minister Giuseppe Conte to disembark in Sicily after six other European countries agreed to take the migrants in (BBC News, 2019).

4.8.3 Human Rights Watch

Human Rights Watch has also criticized Italy, especially in response to the 'Salvini decree'. In an article by Sunderland (2018), the Italian government's new migration policies are characterized as being inhumane. She argues that the decree is preventing rescue at sea and punishing survivors on land. Sunderland further highlights that the decree is in conflict with Italy's international and regional rights obligations (Sunderland, 2018). This is problematic because according to maritime law: "*all ships are obligated to come to the aid of a vessel in distress and take those rescued to what is considered a place of safety,*" (Human Rights Watch, 2018). An article by Human Rights Watch further explains that: "*Effective coordination among coastal states and all ships at sea is at the heart of the global search and-rescue regime and is vital to preserving life at sea,*" (Human Rights Watch, 2018). In other word, Italy is neglecting their obligations to international and maritime law.

4.8.4 The United Nations

According to The UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR: "*Six people died every day last year trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea to Europe – "the world's deadliest sea crossing",*" (UN News, 2019). United Nations also bring focus to the new policies of denying rescued migrants disembarkation, or at the least making them be stranded at sea for several days before being

allowed to port. Their concern is the growing restrictions on non-governmental operations in the Mediterranean Sea and how this is affecting already vulnerable migrants (UN News, 2019).

In contrast to the perspectives of the NGOs above, Mr. Yaxley, a representative from UNHCR, is not pointing fingers at Italy regarding the migrant crisis. He rather requests a coordinated and multilateral European policy based on European solidarity and support. He highlights that it is a European responsibility and not only the responsibility of the member states located at the forefront of receiving new migrant arrivals (UN News, 2019). The United Nations stated in January 2019 that: *"A spate of migrant shipwrecks and rescues in the Mediterranean Sea in recent days is evidence that urgent action is required from European States to address the issue,"* (UN News, 2019). According to this statement, there is a need for a collective European approach to tackling the migration from the Mediterranean Sea.

5. Italy's Current Migration Politics, Part II

Analysis and Discussion

In this part of my case study, I have analysed and explored the development in Italy by focusing on the core concepts from the literature review. I have used the concepts to discuss how the tackling of migration in Italy affects its state sovereignty. I have structured this part of my case in a similar manner as the first part, by moving from the aspect of sub-question A to B and then to C. In other words, from the individual level, to the state level and then to the international level. This is to be able to apply the theories and concepts from the literature review to the different actor perspectives. After this, there is a separate section dedicated to analysing strictly how migration has become securitized in Italy.

5.1 The Political Landscape in Italy

with reference to sub-question A

Italy has a history with being shaped by populism and, in some cases, strict politics. This seems to have had a comeback in recent years with regards to the parliamentary election in 2018. As chapter 4 brought forth, the election resulted in the far right-wing and anti-establishment populist coalition that has now been in charge of tackling Italy's migration issues. It is highly interesting that Matteo Salvini became Italy's minister of Interior after having campaigned on such immigration sceptical politics. One of his most memorable slogans from the election campaign was 'send them home'. The fact that most Italians, as seen in the survey in chapter 4 from La Repubblica in early 2019, see Matteo Salvini as their prime minister, and not Giuseppe Conte, tells us that migration is an incredibly important issue for many people in Italy as this has been Salvini's main cause in recent politics. He has a very strict and loud voice, which seems to appeal to the public because of their issues surrounding the problematic situation in the Mediterranean Sea.

The increase in support to the current populist coalition from the Italian population since they came to power, shows how important the migration issue currently is in Italy. Since their support even increased after the 'Salvini decree' was implemented, it is likely that many electors see it to be a necessary measure to protect the Italian society and right to decide over

their own borders. It therefore seems that Italy's national interest might be increasing and changing, not only from the politicians' level in society but from the population and upwards in the political hierarchy. This change might have been stimulated by political rhetoric and media portrays, but there is undeniably an increasing public support for stricter immigration and asylum policies. There can be different reasons for this, it can for instance be economically based. The public opinion nevertheless tells us something about what shapes the political landscape in Italy and that migration is an issue of increasing importance.

An interesting observation by Ambrosini (2018) is that Italian immigration and asylum policies leave much of the tackling of migration to local communities/areas in Italy, and therefore to the Italian people. There is not a clear national strategy. This might make migration a highly personal issue for many voters, and perhaps too much to handle with the resources in that particular area. However, many Italian areas benefit highly from having migrants in their area because they contribute to the work force, and therefore to economic growth. It highly depends on the area and the situation.

In Italy, agriculture is one of the biggest industries and source of economic growth and, perhaps most importantly culture. Italy is proud of their locally grown and locally produced products. However, high numbers of Italian youth seem to be leaving Italy because of the economic situation in the country and the lack of employment opportunities (Blomfield, 2018; The Local, 2018). In this situation, migrants might contribute very positively by taking jobs in agriculture and such industries. This could also by turned around by saying that the increase in migrants in Italy might be contributing to the lack of jobs for Italian youth and might therefore be a contributor to the problematisation of migration.

There seems to be discontent regarding the EU among Italian voters because they are not doing as much to assist them with the migration from the Mediterranean Sea as they would like. Perhaps the willingness to have tension with the EU, which Italian voters should want a positive relationship with, is proof that migration is a core issue for many Italians at this time. It seems that Italy and several of its people are prepared to take drastic measures and make some changes in order to tackle the migration issue in a more beneficial way. This tactic can however be criticised for not being a long-term plan, and not facing the root causes or creating solutions that will work over a longer period of time as Lehne (2018) highlighted. However, many Italians seem to have had enough, it has perhaps 'tipped over' to a point where populist

approaches (with drastic rhetoric) and short-term drastic solutions are desired.

5.2 The Italian Government

with reference to sub-question B

The populist coalition in power in Italy has campaigned on promises to significantly reduce migration to Italy from the Mediterranean Sea. This is especially relevant for the right-wing party Lega Nord. As mentioned above, this is the party that currently has the highest public support. The government appointed Lega Nord leader Matteo Salvini as their minister of interior, which means that they approved the far-right oriented politician to have power to tackle migration issues in the country. As Colombo (2017) explained, Lega Nord is strongly sceptical of immigration and has mobilized for an ethnic view of citizenship while opposing residential citizenship (Colombo, 2017, p. 163).

It is evident that Italy's government is taking measures to 'protect' Italy and its borders. For the government, migration seems to be a threat to their power over their own borders. In other words, a threat to their state sovereignty. The previous situation (up until 2018) had Italy in a position where they mostly did not decide themselves which migrants to take in and not take in. They had the responsibility of processing many migrants who were not even looking to stay in Italy longer than necessary because they were aiming to reach other European countries. The development went so far that the new populist coalition decided to close their borders completely for disembarking, which indicates a need to take control.

Even though this anti-immigration tactic is shaping Italy's political landscape, it is essential to keep in mind that this does not include all political parties in Italy. There are debates domestically where there are different views as to how to tackle the migration issue. Migration is of interest to most parties because it includes such large numbers of people and affects the economy in different ways. There are, as mentioned in chapter 4, parties on the left side of Italian politics as well as catholic political parties that have a more humanitarian view of the situation and would like their policies to be more helpful and solution-oriented to migrants. These parties are more willing to cooperate with NGOs and would prefer a much different tackling of the situation than the parties currently at power.

5.3 Securitization of Migration in Italy

with reference to sub-question A and B

It is highly relevant to apply securitization theory when analysing Italy's tackling of migration. After having researched their tackling of, and their issues concerning, migration it is evident that migration has become securitized in Italy. This comes to show through many levels of their tackling of the issue: from the public opinion, to the political parties at power to the international level. In other words: the individual, the state and the international level. The way migration is viewed, is problematic. It is, by many, viewed to bring issues and to be of negative impact to the Italian society. It is also viewed to, in a way, be a challenge to their right to govern their own borders.

It is beneficial to keep in mind some of the critique securitization theory has received. As explained in the literature review of this thesis, Knudsen (2001) is sceptical to the securitization theory's focus on the subjective and that threat do not have an intrinsic value in themselves (Knudsen, 2001, pp. 359-360). However, since Italy's political landscape is highly shaped by populism and politicians with strong opinions, it is highly relevant to take this into consideration when analysing migration, which is seen as something highly problematic and complicated to tackle in Italy. Politicians and the media have very strong opinions on migration, as it has been revealed in the research process and presented in chapter 4. Here, domestic politics are highly important when it comes to migration, perhaps especially because of the obvious divide the issue is creating between Italy and the EU.

The new migration and asylum policies in Italy are an indicator of securitization because they are much stricter than they were before. The fact that immigration is such an elaborate part of Italy's new *security* decree, implies that migration is seen as a security threat and thereby that migration has become securitized by politicians in Italy. Since immigration is a core part of the security decree, it is a strong indicator that the politicians view migration as a security issue, and therefore choose to treat it as such. This also implies that these politicians regard immigration restriction as a means to protect the state of Italy.

It seems that migration is viewed to be a threat to the Italian society and that it should be handled drastically and effectively. Because of the way that several Italian politicians,

especially those from Lega Nord such as Salvini, describe migration as a problem, it is viewed as a problem by many. The populist rhetoric regarding migration builds up thinking domestically that connects migration with issues. Many regard migration to be threating to the Italian economy, and that it demands too much of Italy's resources. Others might believe that migrants bring terrorism threats and an increase in crime rates. Suspicions related to the latter is especially what makes migration a securitized issue. This is because when such an issue is suspected to be a security threat, it becomes securitized and treated as such (Huysmans 2000, p. 760).

Huysmans' (2000) theory of securitization in Europe is especially relevant when analysing the case of Italy. He argued that negative political rhetoric in Europe regarding migration and the suspicion that migration and migrants go hand in hand with riots, domestic instability, transnational crime and welfare fraud deteriorates the issue and consequentially securitizes the issue (Huysmans, 2000, p. 770). This is relevant for understanding the current situation in Italy because not only are the political parties at power populist parties using populist rhetoric; the current government's main issue of concern seems to be migration. The party Lega Nord has spent much time describing how migration from the Mediterranean Sea is of concern to Italy's welfare and function. This became especially clear in Matteo Salvini's clearly negative rhetoric when campaigning on the slogan: 'send them home'.

Salvini's slogan was not a false promise, it actually became a central part of the policies of the current government. Even though the government has failed (at this time) in sending people home at the rate they desired, the fact that they closed their borders completely has reduced the number of migrants arriving in Italy drastically. Looking at figure 1 which shows the migrant arrivals in Italy, 2018 and 2019 has record low arrival numbers. There are incredibly few migrants being allowed access through Italy's sea borders because of the belief that these migrants are negatively affecting Italy. They are seen more as a burden and a threat that needs to be kept at a distance.

Based on the findings of this research, Italy's main concern regarding migration is the fear of being exploited. It seems, since the country is struggling, especially economically, that migrants and those that apply for asylum in Italy are taking the fault for these issues. As Ambrosini explains: "*It is necessary to recall that asylum seekers are a minority and often a small percentage of international migrants. However, their arrivals are very visible, dramatic*

and attractive to the media," (Ambrosini, 2018, p. 92). This portrayal in the media might be a contributor to there is a fear in Italy regarding whether their resources being used up by other people than their own citizens. Italians have issues as well and perhaps feel that they could have been in a better situation if it had not been for the migrants and asylum seekers in need of space, money and attention.

Another relevant aspect is that there has been an increase in instability and general fear in Europe, especially because of the threat of terrorism. This has, in the last few years, affected European cities more directly and more often than ever. Even though such acts are not always conducted by foreigners, they are more at risk of being accused of conducting such acts. Many European countries are affected by a real fear of aliens with other political and religious views, because of the risk of terrorism and related tragedies.

Since terrorism often is motivated by harming the west and western values, there is a fear of having too many people with contradicting values living in European countries. Italy has undeniably been scared of such incidents as well and is actively monitoring terrorist cells in the country (Counter Extremism Project, 2019). According to Italian authorities, the threat from an ISIS cell or ISIS inspired group attack is high in Italy, and several recent planned attacks have been averted (Counter Extremism Project, 2019, p. 1). Of course, Italians do not suspect all migrants to be terrorists or associated with terrorist groups but there might be a fear of such people slipping through the cracks because of the massive flow of migrants arriving at the same time.

According to Lehne (2018, p. 2), the concern that migration brought terrorism threats with them is not something that affects Italy alone. He highlights that even though most terrorist acts were conducted by European citizens and that overall crime rates kept being low, the mass influx of migrants arriving in such a dramatic way began being associated with Islamic terrorism and increase in crime around Europe. He explains that: "*the media's relentless focus on incidents involving asylum seekers increased Europeans' sense of insecurity,*" (Lehne, 2018, p. 2). This shows that the media plays an important role in the securitization of migration in Italy.

The far-right populist politicians in Italy are highly concerned with preserving Italian culture and values, and there has been an increase in such fears in several European countries. This

has the negativity towards migrants as they might be feared to change Italian culture and traditions. Italy is famous around the world for several things, foods and customs that are known to be typically Italian. Italy is known for its cuisine, arts and way of life. The typical Italian way of life brings a sense of pride to the Italian people, and the fear of this being changed or shaped by migrants is, undeniably, present among several Italians. It is perhaps one of the reasons why populism has risen so drastically. This incredible sense of pride becomes contested and might contribute to the securitization of migration, as it is seen as something that might harm the culture. Culture is highly important for a sovereign state because it connects the people.

Huysmans (2000) argues that some discourses related to cultural identity and migration tend to present migration as a cultural challenge. He stresses that such discourses have "*become an important source for mobilizing security rhetoric and institutions,*" (Huysmans, 2000, p. 762). Therefore, migration and those supporting a liberal multicultural society are the enemies of nationalist and far-right politics' supporters. He highlights that the media also plays an important role in painting migrants as a cultural danger when they focus on portraying extensive media coverages of: "*...immigrant involvement in riots in urban ghettos, the political rendering of these riots as manifestations of incivility, and the political revival of the notion of a dangerous class..,*" (Huysmans, 2000, p. 763).

Lehne (2018) stresses that populist political parties and populist politicians keep the public worried about the possible negative effects of migration. He explains that such political parties have gained ground in many EU countries, and that views that once were seen as being xenophobic are now common views. Lehne explains that populist political forces: "*are benefiting from anxieties about migration and are doing everything they can to keep them alive,*" (Lehne, 2018, p. 2). This is highly relevant for Italy because not only did the populist political parties win the election in 2018, but the far-right party Lega Nord has increased its support drastically while being in government. Perhaps this is related to their scare tactic and relentless migration policies, which make the people worry about the dangers that migrants might bring to their country. If they are taking all these drastic measures to 'protect' Italy, while using a highly negative rhetoric in the public sphere, people will be influenced.

Italy is a country that has struggled in the last years, especially financially. It is therefore easier for politicians in that country to adopt such populist strategies when the country is

receiving a massive number of migrants. According to Huysmans (2018), many politicians that are contributing to the securitization of migration, use migrants and migration as a 'scapegoat' for issues in their welfare states that perhaps have nothing to do with the migration in the first place (Huysmans, 2000, p. 770). This could be a tactic used by the populist coalition to strengthen their power in the country, while contributing to problematizing the migration issue.

5.4 The European Union and Italy

with reference to sub-question B and C

Italy is a sovereign state, but it has given up some of its sovereignty to be a member state of the EU. The EU is a supranational actor that actively enforces power over its member states, however it is important to keep in mind that it is the EU's member states that collectively come to decisions and that their members have willingly given up some of their sovereignty and therefore accept the EU's policies. The EU as a supranational actor is however able to 'force' its policies on its members even though they might not agree with that particular policy. This is one of the consequences of being part of such a union, there are some negative aspects, and some are positive. Being part of the EU can also increase a state's power because it is favourable to be a part of a union that is an important actor in the international arena.

However, an important aspect is that a sovereign state protects its borders while Italy is currently operating one of the key borders into the entire EU. Consequentially for Italy, the EU can force laws and policies on Italy which it does not necessarily agree with. Italy is a part of the supranational organization and therefore a part of its ongoing processes and decision-making, but since the organization is so vast, the country does not have sufficient power over its own borders. This makes Italy and the EU intertwined when it comes to current migration from the Mediterranean Sea and provides consequences for Italy's sovereign exercise of power. It seems that Italy is fed up with the situation and is therefore implementing new much stricter laws that have negative implications for the EU. This is a means adapted by Italy, probably, to get the EU to take action and find new solutions to the migration issue. With the humanitarian aspect and NGO's in mind, the EU cannot simply look the other way. Action must be taken because the migrants at sea are living people who deserve to be rescued and deserve a life in safety.

As Mr. Yaxley from the UNHCR stressed, the migration issue is not Italy's alone. In his view, a collective and coordinated European policy is required. The EU therefore needs to step up and not leave the responsibility on the shoulders of the member states that are located at the EU's outer borders. Therefore, Italy's drastic policy change can be justified based on the fact that they are entitled to more support than they are and have been receiving. It is not Italy's responsibility alone, and even though they have given up some of their state sovereignty to the EU, this could be a possibility for the country to show that they still have and want the power over their own borders, especially when the EU is disappointing Italy with their lack of valuable contributions.

Although state sovereignty is complex; as Ambrosini (2018) argues, migration control is one of the strongest and most symbolic ways to enforce sovereign power. Italy's action towards regaining power over the question of who crosses their borders from the Mediterranean Sea, can therefore be seen as a strategy towards strengthening and regaining their own state sovereignty. The migration issue might have been the last straw for Italy in what to accept when it comes to sacrifices made for the EU. It appears that Italy is dissatisfied with what the EU is providing on the migration front, and the country might therefore like more power to decide on their own. The policies they have implemented in the last months, makes it more difficult for the EU in figuring out who can take in the migrants. This is an issue that Italy has more power over now than they used to. If the migrants do not first arrive in Italy, the Dublin Regulation does not provide any issues for the country.

As Sassen (1996) argued, immigration renationalizes national politics (Sassen, 1996, p. 38). She argued that there is a connection between migration and a state's wish to have a sovereign right to control its own borders. This theory is highly applicable to Italy's latest change in strategies and the development towards stricter and more nationalistic and far-right policies. It seems that Italy's tackling of migration might be a strategy towards increasing their own sovereign control of their borders.

As the literature review of this thesis indicated, migration brings out a two-folded issue. This two-fold is based on the balance between respecting human rights and the humanitarian aspect of migration, while to other aspect involves the protection of borders and state sovereignty. Both aspects, however, affect state sovereignty as too much focus on the first aspect gives up

much of a state's control over its own borders. While simply focusing on the second aspect neglects many of the key factors in protecting and 'being humanitarian to' all humans. States in our time and age have many international obligations regarding such transnational issues, and navigating policies and practices that are of a perfect balance between these two aspects is challenging.

It appears that Italy has tried to combine these two aspects by both being involved with search and rescue operations at sea, and by respecting maritime law, as well as international human rights. Up until recently, Italy had a high number of migrant arrivals. This is something Italy has had to tackle, and the recent approach in the country's politics turned out to focus mainly on the aspect of protection of state. This could be because the migration issue got out of control and was difficult to tackle. It could also be because Italy's needs where not met when it came to assistance from international organizations and the EU.

Judging by Italy's populist coalition government from 2018's recent changes to policy and priority, with migration being one of the top priorities of the government, it seems the country is taking measures to increase their state sovereignty while attempting to create distance between themselves and the EU's uneven policies. The tactic seems to favour the protection of state-aspect of the tackling of migration. This is evident when looking at humanitarian NGOs criticism of Italy current policies and practices in the Mediterranean Sea. Italy has shut their borders and is not opening them up easily. It is taking control of its own borders and its own policies, which is strengthening their state sovereignty.

While Italy is taking measures to strengthen their state sovereignty, the country is still a member state of the EU. Italy therefore has obligations to the organization and is most likely active and thriving in other areas of the organization. The EU must be of some benefit for Italy because the country has been willing to sacrifice some of their state sovereignty. An important observation is that Rome has been reluctant to contribute financially to the EU recently. This could mean that Italy is unsatisfied with the EU, not only when it comes to migration but also regarding other areas. It could also be that migration is simply such an incredibly important issue for Italy at this time that it is worth a dispute with the EU.

5.4.1 The Dublin Regulation's Impact on Italy

It is evident that the Dublin Regulation puts Italy in an unfair and difficult position. Since the regulation forces the country a migrant first enters to process his or her asylum application before the migrant is granted asylum and is allowed to move to a different EU country, Italy is having to do much of the EU's dirty work. This has been the case in the last years, which has created many asylum applications to process and follow up on in Italy. The situation is highly problematic and creates unnecessary work for Italy because many of the migrants have other goal destinations in mind when crossing the Mediterranean Sea. Italy is a key entry point, not only into Italy, but to the EU. Many migrants have families or friends in other EU countries that they would like to live close to. Some have specific countries in their dreams for different reasons, while others are happy just being granted asylum anywhere safe.

The Dublin Regulation creates a problem for Italy that is unnecessary for them to tackle, because they are carrying the burden for the entire EU at the same time. Migrants who have applied for asylum are forced to stay in Italy until they have been granted residency. In this case, migrants who otherwise would have moved on to different countries, are taking up space and resources in Italy for a long period of time. This should in some way be solved in a more collective manner in the EU.

An important observation is that the EU has tried to contribute to this situation by establishing burden-sharing between the member states. The problem here is that member states of the EU have different cultures and history, which makes it difficult to find a solution that suits all. Even though the EU's member states have given up some state sovereignty to be part of the union, they still retain some state sovereignty. The question then surrounds where the line goes regarding what states get to decide when it comes to issues such as what high numbers of migrants and migration might bring. The EU's policies at this time, especially the Dublin Regulation, creates an uneven balance between the EU's member states where some are tackling the burden for others while others get to watch from the 'safe' zone in the middle.

As Ambrosini (2018) argues, Italy has become a 'borderland' for the EU. They are, in practice, bordering for the entire union because their outer border is at the outskirts of EU. Their location, added together with the EU's policies, makes them a borderland in the way it has to tackle migration and asylum issues for several countries and are therefore swamped

with work related to it. This is highly problematic, and undeniably creates a feeling of unjustness with the Italian population and its politicians. The feeling of unjustness makes it even easier for the issue to be securitized. Their role as border-operators also creates a feeling of being separated from the EU's core, since their needs as a state are not being met by the union. Instead, they are protecting the EU's outer borders while not being assisted sufficiently.

However, the EU is trying to develop new strategies in assisting Italy. The process has been rocky, and some suggestions have failed, but this is inevitable when a supranational organization consisting of 28 members states is developing new policies. It takes time, and many representatives from many countries have to be on board for the policies to be implemented. The EU was, as Lehne (2018) argued, unprepared for the migration crisis. This means that the EU needs to come up with new strategies and new policies in order to be able to tackle such a crisis better next time. The EU has been present in the Mediterranean Sea, especially through FRONTEX and is working on the ground in Libya and other countries of migrant departure to tackle the root causes of migration. Of course, one can criticize the work being done in these places and whether it is beneficial or not for the migrants on a humanitarian and human rights level, but regardless, the EU is attempting to better the migration issue for its member states.

Because the EU was unprepared for the migration crisis, various sources, including Lehne (2018), are claiming that the EU is weak. Italy was one of the first member states of the EU and is an important part of the organization. Therefore, the tension between the EU and Italy can be of negative consequence to both actors. The EU is supposed to be beneficial for states to be a member of, because there is no point in being a member of a union which requires a state to give up some of its sovereignty if it will not be rewarding.

5.5 International organizations and Italy
with reference to sub-question B and C

There has recently been quite a complicated tension between NGOs and Italy regarding the situation in the Mediterranean Sea. Both sides have shown to have quite hostile and sceptical attitudes towards the other. In Italy, there has been made negative claims towards NGOs and their real intentions, in an effort to weaken NGOs' power and influence in the Mediterranean

Sea. According to Ambrosini (2018), this effort by Italy can be seen as a form of bordering, and in a way strengthening Italy's power over its own borders and ports and therefore its state sovereignty. This is because actors such as NGOs assist migrants in crossing Italy's national borders and in that way weaken Italy's power over its own borders. In Ambrosini's words, actors such as NGOs are "*making boundaries porous and weakening state authority,*" (Ambrosini, 2018, p. 114). This indicates that NGOs operating in the Mediterranean Sea are weakening Italy's state sovereignty.

Ambrosini (2018) points out that Italian politicians seem to be looking for arguments against NGOs and the work they are doing to be able to implement stricter rules and policies regarding what happens in their coastal areas, which they would like to be supervised by national authorities (Ambrosini, 2018, p. 115). This has proven to be a correct point to make considering the implementation of the new populist coalition's new migration policies, especially the 'Salvini Decree'. As Sea Watch-3 described to BBC news in 2019 in the aftermath of Sea Watch-3's rescue boat being stuck at sea for almost two weeks while waiting for permission to disembark at an Italian port, there was tension between the boat's crew members and Italy's minister of interior, Matteo Salvini. Salvini even threatened to turn to legal action because the members of this NGO had assisted in illegal immigration. This reluctance to assist NGOs is, in a way, a measure to take back sovereign control over who get to arrive in Italy.

Additionally, Ambrosini (2018) highlights that Italy's desire for more power over its own borders, has significantly negative implications for refugees and migrants wanting to cross the Mediterranean Sea. Ambrosini (2018) suspects the ultimate results of this tension between Italy, the EU and NGOs to have: "*a reduced number of landings on Italian shores, increased risks for those crossing the Mediterranean Sea, and the conveyance of more people to Libyan detention centres,*" (Ambrosini, 2018, p. 115). This has been proven to be correct, based on the significant decrease in migrant arrivals at Italian shores as illustrated in figure 1.

An important thing to keep in mind is that although this critique in many ways is justified, Italy has been highly involved with search and rescue operations at sea for several years. These have been of purely humanitarian intentions. Italy was shaken by the tragedies occurring close to Italian shores where people were drowning in high numbers. The Italian government in 2013, initiated the aero-naval search and rescue operation Mare Nostrum. This

operation, as explained in chapter 4, managed to rescue more than 150,000 migrants at sea and inspired the EU to launch the even more resourceful initiative FRONTEX.

However, the practice surrounding the humanitarian aspect of migration from the Mediterranean Sea is highly confusing in Italy's case. The country assists out at sea, but their borders remain closed to the migrants. The new migration policies are making it highly difficult for ships and boats with migrants on board to port and disembark in Italy. This in practice plays out by either making the boats and ships wait for a long time at sea (while hoping that other countries commit to taking the migrants in), or by simply declining their request to port. This has both resulted in boats and ships staying for several days at sea while waiting for an answer and even in other countries having to let these boats and ships come to port (such as Spain). This strategy can be viewed as disrespecting to international obligations, and violations of maritime law (Human Rights Watch, 2018). Such measures are more in favour of the country's national interests which again indicate that Italy is increasing its state sovereignty.

Ambrosini (2018) highlights that: *"politicians appear to be searching for arguments that support the imposition of control over the search and rescue activities managed by NGOs, implementing stricter rules and direct supervision by the national authorities,"* (Ambrosini, 2018, p. 115). He goes on to conclude on this by stating that: *"The ultimate results have included a reduced number of landing on Italian shores, increased risks for those crossing the Mediterranean Sea, and the conveyance of more people to Libyan detention centres,"* (Ambrosini, 2018, p. 115). These observations explain that Italy's actions have been of highly negative consequence for migrants in a humanitarian aspect, and that Italy is taking measures to protect themselves while downgrading human rights. Italy is as this time prioritizing the protection of their own state over humanitarian needs.

The Salvini Decree involves an important policy change. This change is in conflict with the humanitarian right to asylum. The removal of the humanitarian right to asylum in Italy, can be seen as a statement in itself. The humanitarian aspect is not a priority for Italy at this time, as migrants are suspected to be a burden to Italy. Salvini, as presented in chapter 4, stated that he would take women and children fleeing war into the country, but not anyone else. One can draw parallels between such exclusions and selection of who gets to belong in Italy to securitization of the issue.

Italy's populist coalition government's new migration policies seem to seem to be ignoring international obligations as well as their obligations to the EU in operating their outer borders. These new policies are, as Amnesty International (2018) highlighted, resulting in denying migrants who have been rescued at sea to disembark anywhere in Italy. Amnesty International (2018) suspect these new policies at worst to be a tactical move by Italy's politicians. This suspicion can be linked to how securitization of migration is a beneficial tactic for populist political parties. Populist political parties are suspected to benefit by people's anxiety, and by invoking such strict laws, the government is showing the Italian people that migrants can be of danger and should be kept at a distance.

5.6 Connecting the Sub-Questions

Focusing especially on the sub-questions from chapter 2: the political landscape in Italy, the way Italy acts outwards and the international community's responses to the migration issue in Italy are all connected. It is evident that the way Italy acts outwards is highly affected by the international community's responses to the crisis. Italy's governing politicians have realized that the EU and the international community are struggling with providing adequate assistance. This makes the Italian politicians that view migration as a core issue strive for stricter policies because other actors are not assisting sufficiently. The international community's response also influences the public in Italy, and their opinion. This is perhaps especially an issue because of the heated tension between Italy's governing politicians and NGO's. Most importantly, all these levels are highly connected and influence each other in how the tackling of migration plays out. The international community criticises Italy, and Italy criticises the international community. The public in Italy are the voters that have elected the populist coalition to govern the country. The public therefore also plays an important role in the country's tackling of migration.

Lastly, I find it is important to highlight that the sub-questions explained in chapter 2 provided valuable directions when analysing the different actor perspectives in this case study. It was critical and beneficial to explore the different levels connected to the issue for a better understanding of the complexity of migration. There are many actors to consider while also considering how they influence each other. Since migration is a transnational issue that crosses borders and affects people, through both the media and politics, it was essential to

explore how it affects the individual, the state and the international level.

6. Conclusion

After having conducted this research and analysis, I can conclude that the situation surrounding the issue of migration to Italy is highly complex. There is a delicate balance to uphold when it comes to respecting human rights and international humanitarian obligations, and the protection of state and its borders in a sovereign aspect. Interestingly, the hypothesis for this case was proven to be wrong in this particular thesis. The hypothesis expected Italy's state sovereignty to be weakened by the country's current tackling of migration because of all the issues it has caused for Italy, especially in relation to actors such as the EU. Although the EU's member states have given up some of their sovereignty, Italy's new stricter migration policies, such as the Salvini Decree, seem to be strengthening Italy's power over its own borders. This tactic is helping Italy to be heard while forcing the EU and other EU member states to contribute to tackling the migration issue in the Mediterranean Sea in a more collective manner.

An important observation is that this has been an issue in Italy in the recent years, and that the country has been forced to operate national borders as well as borders for the entire EU. Italy's election of its current government, and the fact that Matteo Salvini was pointed out as minister of interior, might be a result of frustration regarding Italy's migration problem. Italy has requested assistance in the tackling of the migration influx that hit Europe from 2011 and peaked in 2015-2016. The recent changes in policy and regaining of sovereign border control is most likely a result of the lack of assistance from other actors, as this situation proved to be challenging for Italy to tackle alone.

I would also like to highlight that even though Italy's current strategy for tackling migration is increasing the country's state sovereignty, the strategy can be criticized for not being sustainable. This is especially evident in the fact that there is a lack of a successful collective European response to the issue. Only time will show whether Italy's strategy is beneficial for the country in a long-term perspective. Additionally, it is essential to be aware of the consequences this strategy and its policies is having for migrants that are attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea in search of a better life. It is clear that the handling of the migration issue in Italy is currently tipping more towards the protection of state aspect instead of the aspect of human rights and international humanitarian obligations.

The analysis showed that several actors in Italy have been and are contributing to the securitization of migration. This is a part of the protection of state aspect and can be seen as a reaction to the difficult situation Italy has been in when it comes to the tackling of migration. An essential observation is that this seems to be the case in many European countries. Although migration might not be the root cause for problems that Italy struggles with domestically, it seems like the politicians currently in power thrive by portraying migration as the country's primary problem. The media is also a key actor in this problematization as they portray migrant arrivals as highly dramatic. In addition, some media sources focus on crime and terrorist acts conducted by foreign citizens, even though most such acts are conducted by Europeans.

Importantly, the Italian politicians that currently hold government positions seem to be benefiting and thriving because of their securitization of migration. The far-right populist party Lega Nord has even experienced a significant increase in support from the Italian population while being in government. This shows that the party's portrayal of migration as a burden is working in Italy. However, it is also essential to keep in mind that Italy has a history of populist politics and politicians, and that the core reasons for this are left unexplored in this thesis.

Mainly, The EU's policies have recently been putting Italy in a difficult position. The Dublin Regulation has been an essential contribution to this. However, Italy's current strategy of implementing policies such as the Salvini Decree erases the power that the Dublin Regulation has over the country. When hardly any migrants are crossing the border into Italy when they first enter Europe, Italy is not forced to process as many asylum applications. Since many of the migrants arriving by sea routes to Italy are aiming for other countries in Europe, and Italy is simply a key entry point, Italy's current policies are claiming sovereignty on such issues and saves the country much time and many resources.

Although Italy's state sovereignty seems to be strengthened by the recent developments in its migration policies, a core aspect of the migration issue is being underprioritized. Sea-Watch 3's recent experience with being stuck at sea for almost two weeks is an example of this. The migrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea would not be attempting the journey if they were happy in their home countries/countries of citizenship. These migrants are aiming to reside in other countries for many different reasons, as this case study has focused on both refugees and

other types of migrants. Regardless, the dangerous journey across the Mediterranean Sea is perhaps their only option for gaining better living conditions. Human rights are universal, and all humans deserve to live their lives in safety. This is an aspect that is currently being neglected by the current Italian government, and there should perhaps be a discussion regarding what is more important: sovereignty and protection of state or human rights and humanitarianism.

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