Policy in the Public Eye

Agenda-setting and framing dynamics
of traditional and social media in relation
to immigration and integration policies

Rianne Dekker

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introducing the study

In June 2011, the Dutch Council of State affirmed the decision that the young asylum seeker Mauro Manuel should leave the Netherlands and return to his biological mother in his country of origin, Angola. By that time Mauro had been living in the Netherlands for eight years, since the age of ten. He had built up a happy life with a Dutch foster family who supported his request to stay in the Netherlands and wanted to adopt him. After many years of asylum procedures, the final decision of the Council of State was a motivation for Mauro, his foster parents, his lawyer and the children's rights organization 'Defence for Children' to seek media attention for his case. In the autumn of 2011, Mauro's impending repatriation made headlines in the Dutch media for weeks. On social media there was a peak of attention for Mauro's case as well: an online petition raised over 60,000 signatures and the Twitter hashtag *#Mauromoetblijven* (English: *'#Mauroshouldstay'*) became trending.

While some media reports were critical toward his asylum request, support for Mauro dominated in traditional media as well as social media (Dekker & Scholten 2015). The media coverage in favor of Mauro's asylum request was indicative of the political climate at that time. Repatriation of young asylum seekers who had been residing in the Netherlands for many years was already a politically contested subject. Before Mauro's case became public, two members of parliament had been drafting a private member's bill to change the Dutch asylum act in order to grant these children asylum based on their length of stay.

After a political struggle in the government coalition, the responsible Minister Gerd Leers decided to grant Mauro a temporary study visa. This was not the outcome Mauro and his family had hoped for, but the decision of the Council of State was at least off the table. Stakeholders agree that without the media attention for his case, Mauro would not have been able to stay in the Netherlands (Argos TV Medialogica 2012). Media coverage of the case was a factor that Minister Leers and policymakers at his department had to reckon with. As the Minister commented on the case of Mauro in the opinion pages of a local newspaper:

'opportunities to consider various solutions and public support for these solutions are influenced by how media portray the issue and influence public opinion. It is very easy to 'frame' an image that disregards the sensitivities that are dealt with in our policy domain. [...] My discretionary power has been limited by the public attention that the media devoted to this case.'[1]

Public and political support for a general amnesty provision for asylum children (Dutch: 'Kinderpardon') grew after the media coverage of Mauro's case. A year later, the new government coalition agreed on such a 'pardon for children' regulation. Asylum children are now considered to be 'rooted' after five years of stay in the Netherlands and are granted a permanent residence permit on that basis. This regulation came into force in early 2013 and Mauro was among the first young asylum seekers to be granted a permit under this new policy.

The case of Mauro is a clear example of how media coverage of policy-related issues can feed back into policymaking and eventually result in policy change. The policy field of immigration and migrant integration is publicly and politically controversial in many Western democracies. Immigration concerns the admission of immigrants to a nation-state, while migrant integration concerns the subsequent incorporation of immigrants into the receiving society. There are many different views on related issues and appropriate courses of action, and these are often debated in the media. Historically, the Netherlands has witnessed multiple cases of media debate on immigration issues that influenced policies (Bonjour & Schrover 2015). Furthermore, cases similar to Mauro have occurred in many Western European countries, for example the Norwegian case of 'Maria Amelie' (Ihlen & Thorbjørnsrud 2014). Not only

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[1] Minister Leers on media attention for Mauro's case in 'Eindhovens Dagblad', 12 October 2011. Original quotation: *'de ruimte en het draagvlak voor oplossingen worden mede bepaald door de wijze waarop de media de beeldvorming voeden. Het is zo gemakkelijk een beeld te 'framen' dat voorbij gaat aan de fragiele balans die op dit terrein aan de orde is. [...] De mogelijkheid tot inzet van de discretionaire bevoegdheid is – door de openheid die de media daarover zelf hebben afgedwongen – stevig geconditioneerd.'*

media coverage of immigration and integration issues is characterized by a multiplicity of issue interpretations or 'frames'. Also the policy agenda of this domain regularly undergoes major and minor changes. That makes this particular policy domain a suitable case to study the role of media in policy-making.

In this introductory chapter I first provide theoretical background to the study introduced here. In this section, the theoretical and societal relevance of this research is outlined and the three central research themes that are addressed in this dissertation are introduced (Section 1.2). Next, the research aim and questions are introduced (Section 1.3), and in the following section (1.4) I offer a general introduction to the ontology and epistemology employed in this research. The final section of this chapter presents an outline of this dissertation that clarifies how the empirical chapters address the various research questions (Section 1.5).

1.2 Theoretical background and relevance

Media report on issues related to public policies on a daily basis. How extensively and in what ways they report on policy issues provides an important form of feedback to processes of public policymaking (Wolfe et al. 2013). Media reports can provide new information on the development of policy issues and the effects of policy measures. Regarding immigration and migrant integration, the media for example report on issues related to irregular migration or the results of local integration measures. As such, media coverage is a form of information by which policies are informed, in addition to for example official statistics, expert advice and stakeholder lobbying. In the policy process, policymakers weigh this information and act upon it by devoting attention to certain issues and issue frames over others (Cobb & Elder 1981; Kingdon 1984; Baumgartner & Jones 1993).

In addition to being an important source of information on policy issues themselves, media coverage informs policymakers on how issues are perceived by members of the public (Herbst 1998). By reporting on these issues,

media communicate a certain issue interpretation or 'frame'. Frames describe policy issues in terms of a specific problem definition, causal rationale, proposed solution and target group (Entman 1993: 52; Rein & Schön 1993: 146). They are social constructions of the issue at hand which resonate with broader cultural frames of reference in society. (Davis 2007; 2009). The media have become a major channel of communication linking the public to the institutions and individuals by which they are governed (Kennamer 1992: 2). By communicating public opinion to the government representatives, media act as bearers of the 'public sphere' (Habermas 1962; Cobb & Elder 1972). Media coverage is both formed by and formative of public opinion in society (Soroka 2002b). Media thus have a direct effect on the policy agenda as well as an indirect effect through processes of public agenda-setting (Dearing & Rogers 1996: 74). Studies indicate that media coverage does not represent the 'public agenda' in many respects. Media coverage is produced by professional organizations that operate according to a certain logic of selecting and framing issues (Altheide & Snow 1979; Harcup & O'Neill 2001), which leads them to represent certain issues and issue frames over others.

Policymakers have various motivations to be responsive to media coverage as a source of information on issue salience and framing. Firstly, there is the normative incentive of democratic legitimacy. Media inform government representatives about the priorities and preferences of the citizens on whose behalf they are acting. Secondly, policymakers are responsive to media attention from a more rational concern of preventing public reprisals in the form of protests and electoral loss (Brooks & Manza 2006). When citizens feel ill-represented, they may revolt and strive for better representation. The publicity of the issue and related government (in)action forces a response. According to Davis (2009), policymaking activities have become characterized by 'media-reflexivity'. Policymakers not only respond to media coverage once it emerges, but continuously anticipate how their decisions will be portrayed in the media. Policymakers adapt to how the media operate. This characteristic of policymakers' behavior has, on an institutional level, been linked to the 'mediatization' of governance (Hajer 2009; Schillemans 2012; Thorbjørnsrud et al. 2014).

To what extent and how media coverage of policy issues influences the policy agenda is a question that pertains to agenda-setting and framing theory. Agenda-setting or agenda building theory asserts that media can put issues on the policy agenda (Cobb & Elder 1972; Kingdon 1984; Baumgartner & Jones 1993; Dearing & Rogers 1996; Jones & Baumgartner 2005). This theory analyzes the quantity of media attention as a measure of issue salience. The effect of specific issue frames is explained by framing theory. While agenda-setting and framing are sometimes described as two distinct effects and theories (Scheufele & Tewksbury 2007), other scholars see them as integrated processes (McCombs & Ghanem 2001; Baumgartner & Jones 1993). This study departs from the latter interpretation. Media attention for policy issues is never neutral, but always inhabits a certain issue frame. The same is true for the representation of issues on the policy agenda.

The original agenda-setting hypothesis contends that when media report on a certain policy issue extensively, the policy agenda will consequently attribute more salience to that issue. Empirical studies generally agree that there is an effect of the media agenda on the policy agenda (Baumgartner & Jones 1993; Soroka 2002b; Yanovitzki 2002; Tan & Weaver 2009; Korthagen 2011; Melenhorst 2015). However, studies come to different conclusions regarding the strength of this effect as they study different versions of the policy agenda, different measures of media coverage and different types of media. Theories on policy agenda-setting and framing by the media attempt to explain these diverging responses. Related research has insufficiently brought together insights from different disciplines, including political communication and policy studies (Wolfe et al. 2013). Fairly independent research traditions have developed within each discipline. As a result, it is yet unclear how findings on media effects are generalizable to other types of agendas (the public agenda, the political agenda and the policy agenda) and how effects on different agendas may be steered by different mechanisms. In this dissertation, I will study policy agenda-setting and framing by combining theories from these various research traditions to contribute to a more interdisciplinary understanding of policy agenda-setting processes.

Recent studies suggest that it is not only the quantity of media attention that matters, but that other aspects of media coverage and the policy agenda play a role as well. Furthermore, it is argued that media are not 'almighty agenda setters', but that actors receiving media information respond differently to various sources and types of media coverage (Walgrave & Van Aelst 2006). This means that we should go beyond a model of agenda-setting in which media are conceptualized as agents pursuing agenda change and the policy agenda is portrayed as a passive recipient undergoing this influence. We can come to a better understanding of policy agenda-setting when we take into account multiple qualities of media coverage and when we conceptualize the reception of media information on the policy agenda an active process of sense-making and consideration by policymakers and institutions.

In this study, I therefore choose to apply a feedback model of policy agenda-setting (cf. Nowak 2013; Wolfe et al. 2013). While such a feedback model has been theoretically outlined in the literature, by my knowledge it has not been operationalized and applied in empirical studies so far. This feedback model goes beyond a quantitative measurement of agenda-setting effects and includes factors related to the media coverage that is sending the policy feedback, as well as factors related to the policy domain that is receiving this feedback. Furthermore, it assumes reciprocal exchanges between media and the policy agenda. I also pay attention to agenda-setting effects of social media which have expanded the media landscape by directly communicating 'user-generated content'. By conceptualizing policy agenda-setting as complex feedback processes and taking into account both aspects of sending and receiving feedback, I aim to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the role of media in policy agenda-setting processes. This dissertation addresses three research themes related to this feedback model which I will outline below.

Grasping the substantive policy agenda

The policy agenda is not a straightforward and tangible agenda that can be looked up in archives and studied as such. Instead, the term is used metaphorically. It is often defined very generally, for example by Kingdon (1984: 3) as: *'a list of problems to which government officials, and those associated with*

government, are paying serious attention'. Birkland also defined the policy agenda in very general terms, but his definition elaborates different elements of issues that appear on the policy agenda: *'a collection of problems, under-standings of causes, symbols, solutions, and other elements of public problems that come to the attention of members of the public and their governmental officials.'* (Birkland 2011: 106). This definition suggests that the policy agenda not only entails a prioritization of issues, but that it includes issue frames as well. Policy agendas exist on all levels of government and in different forms. The policy agenda can be as concrete as a list of bills in the legislative process, but it can also be an abstract set of ideas regarding the issues to be addressed by government institutions. Furthermore, the political agenda – for example the parliamentary agenda or agendas of political parties – can be considered a central part of the policymaking process, but it can also be seen as distinct from the policy agenda.

The broad definition of the policy agenda leaves room for different op-erationalizations in research. The influence of media coverage on the policy agenda depends on the type of policy agenda that is under scrutiny. Cobb and Elder (1972: 85-86) and Pritchard and Berkowitz (1993: 86) make a similar, important distinction between a 'systemic' or 'symbolic' agenda and a 'substantive', 'institutional', 'executive' or 'resource' agenda. The systemic or symbolic agenda consists of all issues that are commonly perceived by mem-bers of the political community as meriting public attention and as involving matters within the legitimate jurisdiction of existing governmental authority (Cobb & Elder 1972: 85). A subset of the symbolic agenda is the substantive agenda. Issues on the substantive agenda are explicitly under the active and serious consideration of authoritative decision-makers. They are addressed with substantive action on the part of policymakers, including the alloca-tion and re-allocation of government resources. In this study, I distinguish between the political agenda as a symbolic agenda and the policy agenda as substantive agenda.

Not all issues will reach the substantive agenda (Birkland 2011: 108). It is generally easier to establish an effect of media on the symbolic policy agenda than on the substantive policy agenda. This is the case because changes on the

symbolic agenda do not necessarily entail substantive personal or financial investment. The symbolic, political agenda indeed constitutes an important aspect of democratic representation and sometimes is a precursor of substantive policy change. However, rhetorical actions are not always substantialized on the executive agenda as for example policy amendments or budgetary changes (Walgrave & Van Aelst 2006). It is, therefore, important to understand how media coverage permeates into further stages of the policymaking process in which the policy agenda becomes substantive: an executive or resource agenda that directly affects policy implementation.

Changes to the substantive policy agenda require significant engagement and resources and are therefore relatively scarce in comparison to changes to the political agenda. Furthermore, effects of media on the substantive policy agenda are more difficult to observe as they are less direct and require a longer time period. The 'attention cycle' of the media is relatively short compared to the more incremental workings of the policy process (Downs 1972; Dearing & Rogers 1996; Walgrave & Van Aelst 2006). Media-effects are not always discernable, especially in cases where no policy change occurs. Yet even when changes to the policy agenda correspond with changes in media coverage, it is difficult to isolate a media effect from other sources influencing the policy agenda, or to establish the direction of causality.

Most studies analyzing the impact of media coverage on the policy agenda therefore address the impact on the symbolic political agenda, which is operationalized as the parliamentary or congressional agenda including questions and debates, or the agendas of members of parliament (MPs) or political parties (Van Aelst et al. 2014: 215). Further effects on the substantive policy agenda are important to study as it entails change in actual policy. This research therefore focuses on the substantive policy agenda and aims to get a grip on this agenda by concentrating on the issue agenda of one specific policy domain: immigration and integration. Section 1.4 will further elaborate the choice of this policy agenda as a case in this research. I analyze how the substantive policy agenda has evolved on a local and national level, how changes to this agenda take shape, and how various external factors play a role in this.

Qualitative aspects of policy agenda-setting by the media

The original agenda-setting hypothesis assumes a correspondence between the media and policy agenda in terms of issue salience. This means that the attention devoted to issues in the media influences the prioritization of issues on the policy agenda. However, studies come to different conclusions with regard to the strength of this policy agenda-setting effect (Nowak 2013). To explain such varying conclusions, scholars propose to take a more comprehensive approach to this media influence. We should not only focus on quantitative measures of media attention, but also on qualitative aspects of media coverage including issue frames (Eilders 2000: 182; Yanovitzki 2002: 445; Walgrave & Van Aelst 2006; Wolfe et al. 2013). Political agenda-setting studies indicate that agendas are selectively responsive to different types of information and that framing of media coverage is an important determinant of whether media coverage is taken into account (Green-Pedersen & Stubager 2010; Vliegenthart & Walgrave 2011; Van der Pas 2014).

Frames in media coverage are structured by 'media logic'. This entails certain common patterns in how media select and communicate their message (Altheide & Snow 1979: 10). Media logic results from different – sometimes opposing – values and standards. On the one hand, these include journalistic norms of covering issues that are relevant to the general public and balanced and adversarial coverage of issues. On the other hand, these include the commercial values of attracting a large (paying) audience and selling advertisement space. Media coverage thus not only communicates a measure of issue salience, but also of issue framing which makes for an important additional topic of study.

A central aspect of framing and explicit ways in which frames are communicated in media coverage are 'framing practices and devices'. These are rhetorical and visual practices that concisely communicate a larger frame by appealing to pre-existing interpretive schemata among audiences (Gamson & Modigliani 1989; Van Gorp 2006: 83). Common examples taken into account in this study include the use of metaphors, catchphrases, examples, visual images and statistics (Edelman 1964; Stone 1988). A well-known example of a framing device that was used in the case of Mauro was a close-up photograph

of Mauro's tears, taken during a public manifestation by press photographer Koen van Weel. This photo was published and abundantly shared in the media, and became an important expression of the frame supporting Mauro's case.

Framing is not a practice that is exclusive to media, but is also present in day to day communication and in policies. Media coverage is influenced by framing practices of various policy actors (Bennett 1990; Entman 2003a). Frames in media coverage should therefore not be situated outside and independent of the policy process (Cook 2006; Korthagen 2015a). Rather, media frames are supported by policy actors in society and in the government itself (D'Angelo & Kuypers 2010). In Schattschneider's terms (1960), media function as venues for the 'mobilization of bias' in favor of policy alternatives. This is often initiated after a 'focusing event'. Focusing events are sudden, relatively rare events that spark intense media attention and public attention (Birkland 2011:116; Birkland 1998). Actors use events as opportunities to start pushing for alternative issues and issue frames in the media. 'Going public' with issues and issue frames can be a strategy employed by policy entrepreneurs to influence the policymaking process beyond engaging in routine institutional procedures (Voltmer & Koch-Baumgartner 2010: 8). Some policy entrepreneurs will frame focusing events as evidence for the success of current policies and the need to sustain them (negative feedback). Others will frame focusing events to contest current policies and push for policy change (positive feedback) (Wolfe et al. 2013: 181; Baumgartner & Jones 2002). In the latter process, focusing events create 'windows of opportunity' for changes on the policy agenda (Kingdon 1984).

This second research theme leads me to focus on qualitative aspects of media coverage in policy agenda-setting processes. I study how issue attention in association with issue framing in media coverage corresponds with changes on the policy agenda. An additional topic of study is how media coverage is influenced by various policy entrepreneurs who aim to promote certain issues and issue frames, and aim to minimalize attention for others. I pay attention to framing practices that are used to fit media logic and to communicate a larger frame. I distinguish a number of policy entrepreneurs within the policy domain of immigration who regularly contribute to media coverage and ana-

lyze how various framing practices fit their aims of delivering positive and negative feedback toward the policy frame.

Responsiveness to social media

Studies on policy agenda-setting have almost exclusively focused on traditional media, also referred to as 'mass media' or 'broadcast media'. Traditional media coverage is produced by news organizations consisting of an editorial board and a team of journalists. They broadcast their coverage to relatively large publics of media consumers. Traditional media thus function on a 'one-to-many' basis and maintain a clear distinction between media producers and consumers (Lievrouw & Livingstone 2002). Examples of traditional media are television news broadcasts, national and local newspapers and opinion magazines. Also news websites and editorial blogs publishing news articles online can, by this definition, be considered part of traditional media. Scholars generally agree that the policy agenda is responsive to this type of media (Cook 1998; Hajer 2009; Thorbjørnsrud et al. 2014; Schillemans & Pierre 2016). Many government organizations have a public relations department that provides policymakers with a selection of relevant news reports on a daily basis. In some cases, but not in all, policy processes act upon this source of information.

Hand in hand with developments in information and communication technologies (ICTs), a second type of media has emerged more recently: social media. Sharing 'user-generated content' on a 'many-to-many' basis are the key characteristics of social media. In this type of media, the distinction between producers and consumers of information has become blurred. Social media applications allow users to be creators and users of information at the same time. This is notably different from traditional media and also from early years of consumer internet. The technological infrastructure of Web 2.0 and the commercial companies that are marketing social media platforms facilitate these new modes of news production and exchange (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). Examples of social media are social network sites, virtual communities and forums, blogs and microblogs, picture-sharing and video-sharing sites. Today, they have acquired a stable position in the Dutch media landscape (Bakker & Scholten 2014). Traditional and social media have also become

increasingly intertwined. Many traditional media now offer opportunities to leave an online review or have an additional Facebook page or Twitter account that allows users to share and respond to publications.

Fitting a broader trend from broadcasting to narrowcasting, social media are primarily organized according to shared interests (Haythornthwaite 2005: 140; Boyd & Ellison 2008: 219). For example, various online venues exist including individuals sharing certain hobbies, problems or preferences (cf. De Koster 2010). They provide opportunities to communicate with others beyond one's personal network of social ties. As such, social media constitute a hybrid form between interpersonal and mass communication. In the first instance, the audience that social media reach may be relatively small, but by the ample opportunities for sharing, information can quickly reach and potentially mobilize larger publics (Bekkers et al. 2011). This way, information that is shared on social media can create an 'inflammatory' situation for policymakers, as it is rather unpredictable what information will eventually pose a challenge for current policies (Ibid.). Policymakers' responsiveness to this type of media is less institutionalized and may differ from their responsiveness to traditional media. Policymakers' responsiveness to social media may be challenged by access to social media, but also by policymakers' understanding and interpretation of it.

Social media are able to play a distinct role in processes of policy agenda-setting. Traditional news organizations fulfil a gatekeeping role in determining the amount of attention and framing that traditional media devote to certain issues. Based on a set of news values and their media logic, these organizations determine what makes today's news from the huge flow of information available to them (Altheide & Snow 1979; Harcup & O'Neill 2001). Information coming from societal elites or 'strong public spheres' (Fraser 1992) is more likely to get published. Therefore, traditional media do not represent all groups in society on an equal basis (D'Angelo & Kuypers 2010; Ihlen et al. 2015). More specifically, they represent mainstream society while alternative voices and minority groups – including immigrants and ethnic minorities – are ill-represented in these mainstream media (cf. Studlar & Layton-Henry 1990; Fraser 1992; Dahlberg 2001; Mehra et al. 2004; Albrecht 2006). This is

problematic, especially when these minorities are the subject of media coverage, which is the case with coverage of immigration and integration issues.

Social media are seen as a promising venue for the creation of 'subaltern' public spheres (Fraser 1992). The networked infrastructure of many-to-many communication lowers the threshold for participating in and contributing to media debate. Even though Habermas never identified the web as an ideal platform for a public sphere, many other scholars have done so (cf. Dahlgren 2009: 158). Dahlgren (2005: 151) for example refers to the internet as the 'vanguard' of the public sphere. Several scholars have tempered such 'cyber optimism' (but also 'cyber pessimism') with empirical accounts of the role of social media in democratic processes (Mergel & Bretschneider 2013; Ellison & Hardey 2014). These studies indicate that social media bring new opportunities for as well as new challenges to democratic communication.

While social media content may not behave according to the same news values and media logic of media organizations, they are also subject to a certain media logic. Social media platforms are developed by commercial companies as well and the technological design of the medium and the networked infrastructure it creates, limits and structures the information that is shared on social media (Van Dijck 2013). Also within specific social media venues, a certain culture and identity is created that normatively delimits the types of issues that can be discussed and spectrum of opinions that is deemed acceptable (Wilson & Peterson 2002). We should therefore be wary of seeing social media as free and neutral platforms for discussion.

Two particular issues related to social media and agenda-setting will be addressed in this dissertation. Firstly, the issue of how ethnic minorities use social media. Are they creating online venues constituting subaltern 'intra-ethnic' public spheres which may function as a platform for micro-mobilization (cf. Bekkers et al. 2011)? And do they bring a different array of issues and issue frames to the attention of policymakers? Second, it is relevant to study whether policymakers are responsive to social media to the same degree as they are responsive to traditional media. There must be a structural link between online communicative spaces and the centers of decision-making to facilitate processes of agenda-setting and feedback (Dahlgren 2001). As Cook (2006)

argues, we should study the full range of news outlets instead of concentrating only on mainstream elite media. It is yet to be seen whether policymakers are responsive to information that is communicated via these platforms.

Relevance and contribution

The policy process has been mediatized since media have become a primary channel by which information is exchanged between citizens and government officials (Strömback 2008: 230). Media are not merely channels of communication – as the term would suggest. Media have an effect on the information that they mediate by selecting and framing the information according to media logic. According to McLuhan (1964: 90), the medium '*not only carries, but translates and transforms, the sender, the receiver, and the message*'. This finding leads him to the conclusion that information does not exist outside its mediated form: '*the medium is the message because it is the medium that shapes and controls the scale and form of human association and action*' (1964: 9). Even though this likely overstates policymaking reality, it remains important to study how media communicate information related to policy issues, what policy entrepreneurs take part in the process of constructing this message, and how this information is taken into account in the policy process.

The theoretical relevance of this research thus lies in addressing gaps in policy agenda-setting and framing research concerning the influence of media. I aim to offer a more comprehensive and contextualized understanding of when media are able to exercise influence on the policy agenda. I do this by combining theorization on agenda-setting and framing from various disciplines, and by applying a feedback model to study policy agenda-setting. Although several scholars have theoretically argued their preference for such a model over models assuming direct causality, by my knowledge such a model has not been applied in empirical research before. This dissertation addresses three specific research themes. I focus on capturing the substantive policy agenda of a specific policy domain, the role of framing in policy agenda-setting and social media as a new venue of the public sphere. As such, this dissertation contributes to policy agenda-setting theory, to theories on the framing of immigration and integration issues, and to theory on the democratic function of social media.

Findings of this study have societal relevance as well. At the core of democratic theory is the argument that citizens should be able to influence the policies that govern their lives (Held 1996; Dahl 2000). This requires that private citizens and societal organizations have an understanding of ways in which the policy agenda is formed and – if willing – can put this knowledge into practice for their own interests. As Fraser says (2014: 155), it is important *'that ordinary people are not just objects of the designs of the great, but political subjects; that they deserve a decisive say in the matters that concern them in common; that they have the capacity to mobilize communicative power both as a means to effect change and as an end in itself.'* A better understanding of policy agenda-setting processes can help private citizens and societal actors to critically examine the attention and the frames that media apply to public issues, and to mobilize this communicative power and thereby contribute to the policy agenda. Vice versa, it can help policymakers to reach a better understanding of media dynamics, and develop more considered practices of dealing with media influences in policymaking processes.

1.3 Research aims and questions

This research aims to gain a better understanding of policy agenda-setting processes, by focusing on three research themes: (1) the policy agenda of an intractable policy controversy; (2) media framing and policy agenda-setting; and (3) responsiveness to social media as a subaltern public sphere. In this way the research addresses the gaps in theoretical knowledge identified in the previous section.

The overall research question addressed in this dissertation is formulated as follows:

> *How are policy agendas in the domain of immigration and integration shaped and how do traditional and social media coverage of policy-related issues influence this type of agenda?*

The social constructivist epistemology of this dissertation – to be further elaborated in the next section – implies that this research question is explanatory in an interpretive sense (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow 2013). The case study design of this research also means that the statistical generalizability of the research findings is limited (Yin 2013). However, as outlined in the next section, the research findings on this case allow for theoretical generalization to similar policy domains that deal with intractable policy controversies, in similar political and media systems.

To answer the overall research question, the empirical chapters in this dissertation each address a specific sub-question (SQ) related to the three research themes that were outlined in this chapter. The first two chapters and sub-questions contribute to answering the first part of the overall research question of how policy agendas are shaped. They address whether and how national or local integration agendas interact (Chapter 1) and how complete and coherent frames on local integration policy agendas are (Chapter 2). The subsequent two chapters contribute to answering the second part of the overall research question. They address how traditional media coverage of immigration issues corresponds with changes on the policy agenda (Chapter 4) and how policy entrepreneurs influence media coverage (Chapter 5). The final two chapters specifically concern the role of social media in policy agenda-setting. Chapter six explores how minority youth are using social media and chapter seven addresses the responsiveness of policymakers to social media coverage (Table 1.1).

1.4 Ontology and epistemology

This research uses a number of different data sources and research designs to address the different sub-questions. Each empirical chapter specifies the data and methods used to address each research question specifically. This section offers a general introduction to the chosen case and methodology. It also addresses the ontological and epistemological basis of this dissertation.

Table 1.1: Research sub-questions

Research theme	Sub-question	Chapter
Theme 1: The policy agenda of an intractable policy controversy	SQ1: How is the policy agenda of migrant integration framed at national and local levels of governance?	Chapter 3: A Local Dimension of Integration Policies? A Comparative Study of Berlin, Malmö, and Rotterdam.
	SQ2: How complete and coherent are policy frames of migrant integration on local policy agendas?	Chapter 4: Frame Ambiguity in Policy Controversies: A Frame Analysis of Migrant Integration Policies in Antwerp and Rotterdam
Theme 2: Media framing and policy agenda-setting	SQ3: How do quantitative and qualitative aspects of traditional media coverage influence the immigration policy agenda?	Chapter 5: Framing the Immigration Policy Agenda: A qualitative comparative analysis of media coverage and policy responses of sixteen incidents related to Dutch immigration policies
	SQ4: How do policy entrepreneurs contribute to the framing of immigration issues in the media?	Chapter 6: The Framing of Media Coverage as Policy Feedback. Media Framing Practices of Policy Entrepreneurs related to Immigration Policy.
Theme 3: Responsiveness to social media as a subaltern public sphere	SQ5: To what extent and in what ways are social media used by migrant youth as an alternative public sphere?	Chapter 7: Interethnic Contact Online: Contextualizing the Implications of Social Media Use by Second-Generation Migrant Youth
	SQ6: Under what conditions are governments responsive to social media?	Chapter 8: The Contingency of Governments' Responsiveness to the Virtual Public Sphere: A Systematic Literature Review and Meta-Synthesis

A brief introduction to the case

The policy domain of immigration and integration in the context of the Netherlands was selected as a likely case of media-effects on the policy agenda. This has to do with characteristics of the policy domain as well as characteristics of the Dutch media and the political system of the Netherlands. This section will first introduce the main characteristics of the Dutch policy domain of immigration and integration. Thereafter it addresses characteristics of the Dutch media and the political system of the Netherlands.

Immigration concerns the admission of immigrants to the Netherlands, while integration concerns the subsequent incorporation of immigrants into society. This policy domain can be defined as an 'intractable policy controversy' (Scholten 2013). Characteristic of intractability is that a multiplicity of frames exists and that frame shifts in policy occur rather frequently (Schön & Rein 1994). This is indeed the case with the policy field of immigration and integration in the Netherlands. First, over the past decades, immigration and integration have become contested issues of which different frames exist. There is public and political disagreement on what issues should be considered immigration and integration issues, how they can be measured, and how they should be governed. Also, immigration and integration are no longer seen as only concerning immigrants and ethnic minority groups, but are perceived as obtrusive issues affecting basic social structures and identities. As controversy and obtrusiveness are important news values (Harcup & O'Neill 2001), the policy domain of immigration and integration regularly draws media attention. Media coverage of immigration and integration issues in turn influences the public debate (Soroka 2002b).

The second characteristic of intractable policy controversies that makes the policy domain of immigration and integration a suitable case to study policy agenda-setting, is the regular occurrence of policy change. The Netherlands - similar to other Western European countries - has witnessed many changes on the policy agenda in this domain over the past decades (De Haas et al. 2016). Such changes range from large-scale adoption of new legislation to minor changes in the implementation of specific policy decisions. Dutch government officials have discretionary power to change policy decisions

related to specific issues. The multicultural policy for which the Netherlands has long been known was abandoned during the late 1990s, and there has been a struggle over suitable policy alternatives ever since. This pattern is present on the national as well as on local policy agendas.

Over the past decades, immigration policies in the Netherlands have become gradually more selective. After the active recruitment of foreign 'guest workers' during the 1950s and 1960s, policy changes in the 1970s restricted the immigration of labor migrants and subsequent family migration. Policy changes during the late 1990s and early 2000s also restricted the access of asylum seekers to the Netherlands. Simultaneously, the list of requirements for naturalization became more extensive. Mascini and Doornbos (2004) signal two opposite trends in Dutch immigration policies in recent years: on the one hand, immigration policies have become more restrictive toward asylum seekers, low-skilled workers and family migrants. On the other hand, immigration policies have become more lenient toward high-skilled workers and specialists. A clear example is the 'highly skilled migrant scheme' (Dutch: 'Kennismigrantenregeling') of 2004. This twofold development indicates a multiplicity of frames regarding immigration.

The first migrant integration policies in the Netherlands were developed during the late 1970s. The 'Minority Policy' of 1983 recognized that labor migrants arriving in the Netherlands from the end of the Second World War onward were not temporary 'guest workers' but that most of them would stay permanently. Dutch integration policies were known for their multicultural policy frame for the subsequent decades. The revised integration policy of 2003 (Dutch: 'Integratiebeleid Nieuwe Stijl') has been marked as indicative of the multicultural backlash and an assimilationist turn in integration policies (Vertovec & Wessendorf 2010; Scholten 2011). This assimilationist turn in Dutch immigrant integration policies occurred hand in hand with the development of more restrictive immigration policies, and with an increasing interconnection of the two policy fields – for example in obligatory civic integration programs (Joppke 2007; Scholten 2011). From 2010 onward, migrant integration policies were decentralized to municipalities and a universalist policy frame became dominant at this policy level.

During the late 1990s and 2000s, lenient immigration policies and multi-
culturalist integration policies became publicly and politically contested.
The presence of immigrants, ethnic minorities and particularly Muslims in
many West-European societies – including the Netherlands – was met with
increasing suspicion in public discourse and in policy. Immigration and ethnic
diversity of society were no longer considered to only concern immigrants
and ethnic minority groups, but increasingly perceived as obtrusive issues
affecting basic social structures and identities. The presence of a multiplicity
of issue frames and frequent policy changes makes the policy domain of im-
migration and integration a suitable case to study how changes on the policy
agenda are associated with different quantities and types of media coverage.
Immigration and integration issues often gain media attention, and their
coverage of these issues is characterized by a multiplicity of frames. Soroka
(2002a) asserts that agenda-setting by the media is most likely for issue do-
mains that lend themselves to dramatic events. Therefore, this policy domain
is a likely case for media impact on the policy agenda (Koch-Baumgartner &
Voltmer 2010: 215-224).

I focus my analysis on specific focusing events within the policy domain of
immigration and integration as an embedded case study (Yin 2013). Focusing
events do not have inherent qualities but are social constructions of certain
occurrences which are deemed policy-relevant. As such, they are strongly in-
tertwined with both media and policy dynamics. Media and policy actors seize
certain opportunities to frame an event that is recognized as newsworthy
(Pan & Kosicki 1993). Focusing events thus provide a 'window of opportunity'
for issue advocates seeking policy change to get media-attention (Kingdon
1984; Wolfe et al. 2013: 181). In the media, focusing events initiate a period
of 'alarmed discovery' and set in motion the 'issue attention cycle' (Downs
1972). Different (groups of) stakeholders in the policy domain of immigration
and integration maintain a different issue frame and there are '*struggles over
the naming and framing of a policy situation […] (as well as) symbolic contests
over the social meaning of an issue domain, where meaning implies not only
what is at issue but what is to be done*' (Schön & Rein 1994: 29). Appeals to
evidence are insufficient to overcome this struggle for interpretation. Frames

also appeal to cultural values and beliefs that are shared by groups in society. Directly or via the media, focusing events may put new issues or new issue frames on the policy agenda. Immigration and integration issues therefore often gain media attention, and their coverage of these issues is characterized by a multiplicity of frames. Soroka (2002a) asserts that agenda-setting by the media is most likely for issue domains that lend themselves to dramatic events. Therefore, this policy domain is a likely case for media impact on the policy agenda (Koch-Baumgartner & Voltmer 2010: 215-224).

Furthermore, the Netherlands is characterized by a political model and media system in which critical media coverage is likely and in which governance processes are relatively open to external influences. According to Lijphart (1999), the Netherlands can be characterized as a consensus democracy with a coalition government, multiple political parties and a division of power between actors. It is generally assumed that in systems where power over the agenda is shared among various actors, the media have a more influence on the policy agenda (Van Dalen & Van Aelst 2014: 48). Moreover, while media generally have a stronger influence on opposition parties than on government parties in parliament, a recent study shows that in democracies with a multi-party government, media coverage has a relatively higher influence on government parties that are most closely linked to the policy agenda (Vliegenthart et al. 2016).

The media landscape in the Netherlands consists of a dual broadcasting system consisting of public and private media with relatively high levels of news circulation, press freedom and journalistic professionalism (Hallin & Mancini 2004). The Netherlands ranks second place in the most recent World Press Freedom Index (RSF 2016). Dutch media generally operate fairly autonomously without partisan alignment and with high internal diversity of issue framing (Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart 2007: 407). Furthermore, the Netherlands is one of the frontrunners in adopting internet in general and social media applications in particular. The Netherlands has a stable position in the top ten of countries with the highest levels of internet access (UN International Telecommunications Union 2014). Furthermore, the Dutch are

among the most active social media users worldwide (Jacobs & Spierings 2016: 14). Particularly Twitter, Facebook, forums and weblogs have become popular platforms for public discussion on policy issues and current affairs. All in all, this democratic and media system makes the Netherlands a likely case for policy agenda-setting. This case allows for the theoretical generalization of the findings to other, similarly controversial policy domains in similar political systems and media systems (Hallin & Mancini 2004).

Ontology and epistemology

In this dissertation, I take a constructivist approach to the policy agenda and its development in relation to media coverage. This means that, instead of departing from the notion of the inherent nature of policy problems, I acknowledge a socially constructed nature of policy issues (Edelman 1977: 13; Stone 1989: 299). The issues that constitute policy problems, and how these problems are defined, is not a given. Instead, competing interpretations of policy problems are present. As Edelman (1993: 232) put it: *'The social world is [...] a kaleidoscope of potential realities, any of which can be readily evoked by altering the way in which observations are framed and categorized.'* The cover illustration of this dissertation depicts such a kaleidoscopic image of social reality. Immigration and integration can be interpreted according to different frames which are interpretive packages consisting of multiple parts. Different policy actors promote different interpretations in the policy process itself but also in the media as an important channel of agenda-setting and venue of the public sphere (Hajer & Laws 2006: 252; Hajer 2009). The diversity of interpretations of an issue is limited by larger societal schemes of reference: they resonate with pre-existing cognitive schemata in society. From multiple possible interpretations of the issue at hand, one interpretation will become dominant on the policy agenda and guide policy action (Schön & Rein 1994).

Within a constructivist epistemology, I choose the method of frame analysis to study interpretations of policy issues in media coverage and in policies. Rein and Schön (1993: 146) define frames of policy issues as ways of '*selecting, organizing, interpreting and making sense of a complex reality to provide guideposts for knowing, analyzing, persuading and acting*'. In contrast to dis-

courses which can take any form and are more volatile (Hajer & Laws 2006), frames take the form of a causal story with a normative component (cf. Stone 1989: 300). Besides structuring our perception of a policy issue, frames also promote a certain course of action. They place responsibility with certain actors and call for a certain policy response including a specific objective, type of solution and the instruments considered most effective (Stone 1988; Gamson & Modigliani 1989). In order to resonate with socially shared cognitive frames of reference, frames are communicated via so-called 'framing practices and devices', which are concise ways of communicating a larger frame (Gamson & Modigliani 1989; Van Gorp 2006: 83). While frames as such are structured by larger social schemata of interpretation, framing devices and practices are more subject to agency and can, to a certain extent, be applied purposefully by policy actors.

With regard to immigration, I operationalize a number of frames that may be present in media and policy debate: immigration as an issue of human interest, immigration as a threat, immigration as a managerial issue and immigration as an economic issue. With regard to migrant integration – concerning the incorporation of immigrants into society after immigration – I operationalize a slightly different set of frames: multiculturalism, assimilationism, differentialism and universalism (cf. Castles & Miller 1993; Koopmans & Statham 2000; Scholten 2011). Different sets of frames are operationalized regarding the issues of immigration and migrant integration, as these issues are discursively constructed in policies and public debate as separate and distinctive issues. However, parallels can be drawn between the issue frames as they are used in certain combinations by policy actors. For example, an interest group defining immigration as a threat will not likely define migrant integration in terms of multiculturalism. Rather, they would propose an assimilationist policy toward immigrants once they have arrived. In short, there are elective affinities between frames of these connected policy domains.

1.5 Outline of this dissertation

This chapter offers a general introduction of the topic of study and has outlined the three research themes that are addressed. I also introduced the main concepts used in this research. Chapters 2 through 7 are empirical chapters, each addressing one of the research sub-questions. These chapters have already been published in academic journals or have been submitted to an academic journal and are currently in the review process. The empirical chapters of this dissertation are structured in three parts, each of which addresses one of the research themes. Table 1.2 visualizes the chapters addressing each of the research sub-questions.

Table 1.2: Outline of this dissertation

Chapter	Theme 1: The policy agenda of an intractable policy controversy	Theme 2: Media framing and policy agenda-setting	Theme 3: Responsiveness to social media as a subaltern public sphere
Chapter 1	Introduction		
Chapter 2	SQ1		
Chapter 3	SQ2		
Chapter 4		SQ3	
Chapter 5		SQ4	
Chapter 6			SQ5
Chapter 7			SQ6
Chapter 8	Conclusions		

Chapter 2 addresses how the intractable policy controversy of migrant integration is framed on the policy agenda in the Netherlands, Germany and Sweden and how these agendas are formed on the local and national level. This chapter has been published as an article co-authored by Henrik Emilsson, Bernhard Krieger and Peter Scholten in *International Migration Review.* Chapter 3 studies to what extent complete and coherent frames of migrant integration are present on the local policy agendas of Rotterdam and

Antwerp. This chapter has been published in *Critical Policy Studies.* Chapter 4 reports on a qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) of mass media coverage and policy responses in sixteen cases related to the Dutch immigration policy agenda. This chapter has been submitted to an international peer-reviewed journal. Chapter 5 analyzes framing practices of various policy entrepreneurs who have contributed to media coverage on immigration issues. This chapter has been submitted to an international peer-reviewed journal as well. Chapter 4 and 5 have both resulted from a research project commissioned by the Research and Documentation Centre of the Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice (WODC) and are co-authored by Peter Scholten (cf. Dekker & Scholten 2015).

Chapter 6 studies how social media are used by second-generation migrant youth in Rotterdam. It provides insight into the ways in which these media are used for intra-ethnic purposes. This chapter was co-authored by Warda Belabas and Peter Scholten and has been published in the *Journal of Intercultural Studies.* Chapter 7 studies the conditions under which governments are responsive to policy debate in social media. This chapter was co-authored by Victor Bekkers and has been published in *Government Information Quarterly.* The concluding chapter, Chapter 8, brings findings from the empirical chapters together and discusses them in relation to the research questions and research themes that were introduced in this chapter. This chapter also discusses limitations of this study and the broader contribution of this research to the literature. Lastly, the concluding chapter places the findings of this study in the light of recent events related to immigration and migrant integration.

2

A LOCAL DIMENSION OF INTEGRATION POLICIES? A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF BERLIN, MALMÖ, AND ROTTERDAM

Abstract

This study examines three theses on local integration policies by a qualitative comparative case study of integration policies in three cities in three different countries (Berlin, Malmö, and Rotterdam). We found little evidence of a congruent local dimension of integration policies. Local policies resemble their national policy frameworks fairly well in terms of policy approaches and domains. Our multi-level perspective shows that this is not the result of top-down hierarchical governance, but rather of a multi-level dynamic of two-way interaction. Local policy legacies and local politics matter and national policies are also influenced by local approaches of integration.

2.1 Introduction

Migrant integration policies have often been defined in terms of national models of integration (Brubaker 1992; Koopmans & Statham 2000; Castles & Miller 2009 [1993]). This idea of national models has been challenged by a growing interest in the local dimension of migrant integration policies. Studies indicate that local governments do not just implement national policies, but that they increasingly formulate policies as well (Alexander 2003, 2007; Penninx et al. 2004; Penninx 2009; Caponio & Borkert 2010; Scholten 2013). Hence, there is a need to attend to local integration frames and to question whether there is a specifically local dimension to integration policies.

Recent studies have provided a number of explanations for congruencies and incongruences between local and national policies as well as between local policies in different cities. Next to advocates of national models of integration policies, some scholars argue that there is a specific local dimension of integration policies characterized by either a greater tendency to accommodate ethnic diversity and solve integration problems in pragmatic ways (Poppelaars & Scholten 2008; Caponio & Borkert 2010; Jørgensen 2012) or a more exclusionist approach to migrants (Mahnig 2004; Ambrosini 2013). These studies argue that there is a distinct local model of integration that applies to cities even if in different countries. Horizontal modes of knowledge exchange and policy learning between cities would reinforce such congruencies between local integration policies.

Others have claimed that there are neither national nor local models of integration, arguing that local policies are uniquely shaped by the specific problem, political, and policy settings in the different cities (Alexander 2003; Scholten 2013). Focusing much more on how the local context shapes processes of policy framing, this would imply that the local dimension of integration policies involves incongruences between cities as well as between national and local governments.

The aim of this study is to contribute to existing literature on migrant integration policies operating at different levels of governance and in particular, the role of cities as sites of integration. We explore three theses that can be

analytically distinguished by different expectations for congruencies between local policies and between local policies and their respective national policy contexts in three European cities: Berlin, Malmö, and Rotterdam. Selecting three cities with relatively large migrant populations but from three countries with different national integration traditions allows us to capture differences on the national–local as well as the local–local dimension.

We will address the following research question: *To what extent is there a specific local dimension of migrant integration policies in Berlin Malmö and Rotterdam, and how can this be explained?* This question can be differentiated into two sub-questions. First, to what extent are there congruencies and incongruences between local policies in the various cities (horizontal dimension)? And second, to what extent are there congruencies or incongruences between national and local policies (vertical dimension)? For both dimensions, we take into account institutional ways of interaction between the different government entities as an understanding of (in)congruences.

2.2 A multi-level perspective on migrant integration: three theses

Scholars such as Alexander (2003, 2007), Penninx et al. (2004), and Jørgensen (2012) describe how local governments have increasingly been developing their own integration policies. This spurred academic debate on the characteristics of this local level of policies vis-à-vis national policies. In the literature, we can analytically distinguish three theses on how local integration policies relate to national policies and to each other. They encompass sometimes more than one strand of literature. We refer to them as the local dimension, the localist and the national models thesis.

The first thesis claims that as local governments are confronted with migrant integration issues more directly than national governments, they will respond in rather similar ways to migrant integration. One strand of literature contends that local governments are generally more accommodative to ethnic differences (Borkert & Bosswick 2007; Vermeulen & Stotijn 2010). As they

are often closely cooperating with immigrant organizations and representative boards, they are more inclined than national governments to respond to immigrants' needs (Bousetta 2001; Marques & Santos 2004; Moore 2004; Schrover & Vermeulen 2005; Poppelaars & Scholten 2008). This phenomenon of 'pragmatic problem-coping' has been described in other policy areas as well as an explanation for national–local differences (Breeman et al. 2015).

On the other hand, there are scholars who have identified congruence in local responses fueled by a paradigm of exclusion (Mahnig 2004; Ambrosini 2013). Mahnig (2004) described how integration policies in Paris, Berlin, and Zurich have been reactive and ad hoc, with exclusionary political interventions triggered by fears that the presence and concentration of migrant communities could threaten social peace and public order. This becomes particularly visible in conflicts around religious buildings (Maussen 2009; Fourot 2010). Integration is put on the agenda only when it starts to be perceived as a political issue, concerning the whole urban community and not just ethnic minority groups. Local migrant organizations are not sufficiently able to mobilize their followers and to put their claims on the table to influence the political agenda and force a decision in their favor (Studlar & Layton-Henry 1990; Caponio 2005).

Even though there is disagreement on the characteristics of local integration policies, these strands of literature are alike in the way that they distinguish a local dimension of integration policies that differs significantly from integration policies on the national level. In terms of national–local relations, this 'local dimension' thesis expects decentralized governance structures that allow local governments a large degree of policy discretion, while providing a national framework that promotes horizontal policy learning and provides only soft policy coordination. Cross-nationally, this thesis predicts congruencies between local-level migrant integration policies, in spite of potential national differences. Jørgensen (2012) argues that local congruencies can be reinforced by horizontal networks of knowledge exchange; these facilitate horizontal policy learning, also between local governments in different countries. Regardless of their national setting, the expectation is that the proximity of local governments to integration issues makes local policies similar in dealing with the presence of migrants.

A rival thesis claims that there will not only be differences between national and local integration policies but also between local policies because of differences in the local context. It assumes that local policies reflect the local problem situation, political setting, and specifically local policy legacies. For example, characteristics of a city's economy and migrant populations may matter to integration policies (Glick Schiller & Çağlar 2009). In terms of the policy setting, differences in local policy legacies but also in local politics matter (Mahnig & Wimmer 2000; Caponio & Borkert 2010). This contrasts with the local dimension thesis, which expects local governments to be congruent in their response to migrant populations in a specific direction.

Furthermore, in terms of the policy setting, Jørgensen (2012), and Glick Schiller and Çağlar (2009) have drawn attention to city branding and the role of local policy cultures in accounting for local integration policies. Take for example cities like Amsterdam or London, which have traditionally branded themselves as multicultural and cosmopolitan cities with significant tolerance to ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity. This contributes to the unique character of a city's integration policies. Thus, a second thesis expects there to be incongruences on the vertical dimension between national and local policies, as well as on the horizontal dimension between cities. In terms of governance structures, this thesis expects integration policies at different levels to be largely decoupled, possibly even involving policy contradictions or policy conflicts. Horizontal policy learning may apply in this model as well, but will be selective at best and will not be institutionalized.

A third thesis expects that local policies will simply reflect the national models of integration of the countries where the local governments are situated. Such 'national models of integration' can be defined as nationally and historically rooted models of integration that are codified centrally and implemented in local-level policies. As such, these national models assume coherence of integration policies within nation-states (Brubaker 1992; Ireland 1994). This thesis expects top-down hierarchical governance structures to be in place that provide institutionalized forms of national–level policy coordination. The role of local governments is primarily perceived in terms of the elaboration and implementation of national policies.

Thus, this thesis predicts that there will be congruencies on the vertical dimension between national and local policies within specific countries. It is assumed that national models of integration are driven by strong issue linkages between migrant integration and other national issues, such as national identity, national security, or the welfare state. Therefore, this thesis predicts incongruences on the horizontal level between national migrant integration policies in different countries and also between city-level policies in different countries (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Overview of theses

Thesis	National-local level	Cross country local level
1. **Local dimension thesis**	Incongruence	Congruence
2. **Localist thesis**	Incongruence	Incongruence
3. **National models thesis**	Congruence	Incongruence

2.3 Methodology

The empirical analysis involves an in-depth study of local and national policies in three cases: Malmö in Sweden, Rotterdam in the Netherlands, and Berlin in Germany. This involves a most different case study design based on three factors: First, the cities differ in size (roughly, Berlin 3,300,000, Rotterdam 600,000 and Malmö 300,000 inhabitants), governance structures (Sweden and the Netherlands as [decentralized] unitary states and Germany as a federal state), and presumed typical national integration philosophies (Swedish multiculturalism, Dutch assimilationism and German welfare-state integration – Castles & Miller 2009 [1993]). All cities have experienced a large influx of immigrants over the past decennia and have developed policies to deal with integration issues.

By comparing national and local integration policies and analyzing institutional relations, the validity, and generalizability of the different theses can be assessed. We did not take into account the regional level of the federal state in Germany and the provinces in the Netherlands and Sweden. In the

Netherlands, migrant integration is not dealt with on this level of government. In the case of Germany, Berlin is a city-state that has a direct relationship with the national government. In Sweden, the County Administrative Boards have gained responsibility in coordinating national and local integration policies. Their role in multilevel relations between Malmö and the national government will be addressed.

For each of the cases, national and local policy documents were analyzed, to reconstruct policy approaches and domains in the period 2005–2012. In addition, a review was made of secondary literature that focuses in particular on the policy process that led to these national and local policies. Finally, interviews were held with local policymakers (eight in Malmö, seven in Rotterdam and nine in Berlin)[2]. The interviews and consultation of secondary literature were conducted to reconstruct policy processes and multilevel interaction and to confirm whether our understanding of the local policies was correct and complete. Data collection took place under auspices of the UniteEurope project.

The three cases are strategically chosen for qualitatively evaluating the three theses by congruence analysis (Blatter & Haverland 2012). First of all, we analyzed (in)congruences in integration policies in the various national and local cases. Similar to Alexander (2007), we used a typology of different policy domains at which integration policies can be oriented (socio-cultural, socio-economic, legal-political) and normative premises about the inclusion of migrants. We distinguish multiculturalism, assimilationism, universalism, and differentialism as ideal typical approaches serving as a heuristic device to analyze our cases approaches to integration (Castles & Miller 2009 [1993];

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[2] In Berlin, nine interviews have been carried out with the integration commissioners of various districts, as well as with senior policy advisors from the integration commissioner's office of the Senate. In Malmö, eight interviews were carried out. Five with administrators working in the field of integration in the City of Malmö, two are working in leading positions for the state at the local level (employment service and the County Administrative Board) and one is a political secretary in the Commissioner's Unit at the City Office. In Rotterdam, seven interviews were conducted. The interviewees include administrators concerned with (civic) integration, current and former aldermen and their policy advisors.

Koopmans & Statham 2000). Domains and approaches often go together as the following paragraph will show.

Assimilationism can be defined as unidirectional integration of the immigrant in the host society while focusing primarily on the socio-cultural domain of migrant integration. Assimilationist policies encourage adaptation of migrants to dominant cultural norms, values, and behaviors. Multiculturalism also focuses primarily on the socio-cultural domain, but rather stresses cultural pluralism and encourages the emancipation of migrant groups while recognizing and institutionalizing specific group identities. Multiculturalist policies acknowledge the positive potential of immigrants for the city and are sensitive to the particular needs and problems of migrant groups. Universalist policies focus more on the socio-economic and legal–political domain of integration. Universalism is adverse to the institutionalization of majority or minority cultures. Universalist policies are 'colorblind' and address the individual citizens' rights and obligations. Policy measures are often described as 'mainstreaming'. Finally, differentialism (also described as segregationism) institutionalizes group boundaries in society to such an extent that group identities and structures are preserved and groups live alongside each other rather than with each other. This applied to some extent to the guest-laborer regimes that were established in various European countries in the 1960s and 1970s, where apart from economic participation migrant groups were largely kept separated from society (Castles & Miller 2009 [1993]; Koopmans & Statham 2000).

Secondly, when assessing the analytical leverage of these three theses, we also look at institutional inter-government relations. The theses assume very different types of governance structures, which can involve formal or more ad hoc and informal ways of coordinating vertical (national-local) or horizontal (local-local) relations between government entities. The local dimension thesis assumes governance structures that leave significant 'policy discretion' to the local policy practitioners and street-level bureaucrats. While little emphasis will be put on 'vertical' national–local government relations, more effort will be put into horizontal policy networks. This may entail intra- or cross-national city-to-city networks of policy learning and exchanging, 'best

practices' or even sometimes ad hoc or informal exchanges. The localist thesis puts less emphasis on horizontal exchange of policy lessons and does to some extent emphasize vertical relations, but stresses independent policy development. Finally, the national models thesis also stresses the vertical dimension in particular, but then with a focus on top-down and hierarchical forms of policy coordination.

In the next paragraph, we will first compare the local integration policies of the three city cases in their historical and political context, assessing the local dimension thesis. Descriptive analysis of each of the local policies and the policy settings is followed by comparative analysis in terms of congruencies and horizontal relations. Subsequently, we will describe the respective national policies and their policy settings, finished by a congruence analysis of each case and the multilevel relations. This enables us to assess the localist and national models thesis.

2.4 Local integration policies and horizontal relations between Berlin, Malmö, and Rotterdam

Berlin

Since 1981 Berlin has known a Commissioner for Integration and Migration whose office is part of the Ministry for Work, Integration, and Women. Since the mid-2000s, two major integration policies have been developed: In 2005, the first *Integrationskonzept*, entitled 'Encouraging diversity – Strengthening Cohesion,' was formulated by the Senate and updated in 2007 (Der Beauftragte für Integration und Migration 2005, 2007). This policy can be characterized by a multiculturalist approach with universalist traits. 'People with a migration background' are a specific policy target group. A State Advisory Board on Integration and Migration was initiated in 2003 including representatives from various immigrant groups. It participates in the city-state's agenda-setting and policy development. The *Integrationskonzept* specifies eight issues of migrant integration. Two of the latter can be attributed to the socio-economic

domain (labor market participation and education), one to the socio-cultural (international attractiveness and cultural diversity), three to the legal–political (interculturality of the public administration, participation in civil society, refugee integration), and one to the spatial domain of migrant integration (socio-spatial cohesion) (Der Beauftragte für Integration und Migration 2007: 8–90).

In 2010, the Senate enacted the 'Partizipations- und Integrationsgesetz' (PartIntG), a law mainly regulating the institutional setting in the policy field of migrant integration, as well as striving to remove obstacles for equal participation of migrants in all social areas such as institutional discrimination (Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin 2010). PartIntG clearly concerns the legal–political domain of migrant integration. It aims to increase what is called the 'interculturality of the city administration,' by means such as increased employment of applicants with a migration background and training of staff. Furthermore, PartIntG focuses on the political participation of migrants, for example, by the appointment of commissioners, advisory boards, and committees on the district level, thereby reinforcing the city's multiculturalist institutional setting.

Berlin's districts (*Bezirke*) each have their own administration and are led by district councils that differ in terms of political composition. In a similar manner as the city-state, most districts have advisory boards and commissioners for integration. As one of our interviewees indicated, this institutional setting provides a challenge to policy coordination and coherence in Berlin. Districts focus mostly on the socio-economic domain of integration, revealing a accommodative approach to integration (diverse policy documents and interviews). However, socio-economic measures are often mentioned by interviewees as a condition for socio-cultural integration: '*Education is most important. We do not have enough jobs for unskilled workers. [...] Migrants have to enter the regular job market. Where should they meet other people? The counter of the employment agency is not a good place for this. The workplace is an engine of integration.*' Policies on the district level are often the result of multi-stakeholder policymaking. Rather than including migrants fully into the democratic process by providing them with voting rights as many demand for

and as a more universalist approach would propose, policymaking in Berlin in the realm of migrant integration is rather multiculturalist in the sense that migrants are given a separate voice, that is listened to by policymakers (Borkert & Bosswick 2007).

In sum, the main integration policies in Berlin indicate an emphasis on the legal-political domain of migrant integration, but do not neglect other domains. On the district level the socio-economic and socio-cultural domains are most prominent. A multiculturalist approach is most apparent in the policies, but interviewees noted struggles with universalist principles, for example, in case of the city's affirmative action in hiring staff.

Malmö

The city of Malmö has a policy of integration mainstreaming. The 1999 action plan for integration understands integration as participation in society and mutual understanding between people with different backgrounds (City of Malmö 1999). Malmö envisions a city where all citizens are treated equally and where diversity is regarded as a benefit. Ethnic differences in labor market participation, spatial segregation, and school performance are considered to be current major integration issues. Malmö fears that the ethnic and socio-economic cleavages coincide and segregate the city. Most measures therefore target the social-economic domain of integration, for example, by labor market programs, language courses, and improving the quality of local schools.

The Commissioner for Employment and Adult Education is responsible for integration policies in Malmö. The Unit for Integration and Labour Market (INAR) develops and coordinates integration policies. Relevant municipal service providers are immigrant services (guidance and civic orientation for newly arrived humanitarian migrants); JobbMalmö (labor market measures); the Education Department (Swedish for Immigrants courses) and the ten city districts. Civil society organizations play just a marginal role (Scuzarello 2010). Sometimes they are a partner in specific projects or sometimes private companies are contracted for specific projects. For example, local

football club FC Rosengård is funded for organizing projects focusing on education and employment for youth and adults.

Malmö aims to increase economic growth and to reduce ethnic segregation by implementing comprehensive welfare programs (GEFAS 1997–2000, Welfare for all 2004–2008 and the Commission for a socially sustainable Malmö 2010). As a senior civil servant at INAR puts is '*What we used to call 'integration projects,' is no longer supported, unless there is a particular focus on work.*' Many measures also have a specific geographical focus. Neighborhood programs (City of Malmö 2011), health policies (City of Malmö 2010b), and infrastructure measures often target specific areas of the city where problems are the largest.

Few measures other than socio-economic integration measures get introduced and most are in theory aimed at the entire population and not specifically at migrant groups. An example is the action plan antidiscrimination (City of Malmö 2010a). Humanitarian migrants are the only group, that is targeted with specific measures. Legal–political and socio-economic issues are perceived to be most salient among this group as they are often struggling to enter the labor market. Therefore, specific policy measures aim to improve the introduction programs for humanitarian migrants. In general, Malmö has a universalist approach to migrant integration with a focus on the socio-economic domain of integration.

Rotterdam

Except for a short episode of assimilationist policies in the 1970s (interview with a senior policymaker), Rotterdam has long had an accommodative policy toward migrant integration that focused primarily on the socio-economic integration of migrants in the local housing- and labor market and in education (Rotterdam City Executive 1978; Governmental Board Rijnmond Area 1981; Rotterdam City Executive 1991). In the period 2002-2006, right wing party 'Livable Rotterdam' gained a majority in the city council and has remained a powerful presence in local politics ever since. The party drew attention to popular resentment with diversity, in particular with Muslim immigrants. This enforced a more assimilationist approach to migrant integration (interviews

with a policymaker and former politician). Rotterdam took new measures to promote dispersion of migrants across the city, to further inter-ethnic contact and to implement a local code of conduct (the so-called 'Rotterdam Code').

Since 2006, Rotterdam has been mainstreaming its integration policies to various policy sectors. In fact, apart from the name of the coordinating administrative unit, 'Immigration and Integration,' Rotterdam no longer speaks of integration policies. The focus is not on integration of ethnic minorities but on participation of all citizens in society (interview with policymaker). Political shifts in 2006 marked a turn to policies with a more universalist character. Some policies still have particular attention for immigrants or address issues that mostly concern immigrants.

Policy measures – except for the organization of civic integration courses – are executed by NGOs that are subsidized by the municipality. Immigrant self-organizations and support organizations used to play a major role in agenda-setting and execution of Rotterdam's integration policies. However, subsidies for migrant organizations have been cut over the past years. Currently, the subsidy infrastructure is limited to four areas of expertise: diversity, emancipation, non-formal education, and antidiscrimination (Rotterdam City Executive 2011a). Organizations had to reform in order to achieve more general participation goals and to yield measurable results (Rotterdam City Executive 2011a; interview with policymaker).

Rotterdam considers major integration issues to be minorities' labor market participation (primarily of women and youth), participation in non-paid voluntary work, language deficiencies, discrimination, delinquency (primarily of Antillean and Moroccan youth), acceptance of Dutch norms, and values such as tolerance toward homosexuality, ethnic segregation, and identification with Rotterdam's society (Rotterdam City Executive 2011a, 2011b). Policies are clearly shaped in their local political setting and focus on the socio-cultural and socio-economic domain of integration with a universalist approach.

Comparative analysis of local policies and relations

The local dimension thesis would expect congruencies between local integration policies despite the existence of diverse national policy traditions. Our

analysis has provided very little evidence for this thesis. There are significant differences in the target groups, domains, and approaches of local policies of the three cities, and they do not represent a singular accommodative or exclusionist policy frame. In Rotterdam, politicization at the local level triggered an episode of more assimilationist policies, followed by a current universalist approach. The policy now combines a socio-cultural and socio-economic focus. In Malmö, there is also a policy paradigm of universalism. However, the policies here are primarily addressing the socio-economic domain of integration. Berlin explicitly aims to streamline socio-economic and socio-cultural integration policies in the city districts by a legal–political policy frame on the city level. The policy can be characterized as multicultural with universalist traits.

In terms of horizontal exchange of knowledge and best practices, we did indeed found a number of international city networks, in which the three cities were involved. For instance, all three cities are part of the IntegratingCities network, although they did not always participate in projects from this network together. Malmö and Rotterdam are involved in the ImpleMentoring and Inti-cities project, while Berlin participated in the DIVE project. Only Malmö is involved in the CLIP project (Cities for Local Integration Policy 2014; IntegratingCities 2014). Our interviews show that this kind of knowledge exchange is appreciated, but current policies do not indicate significant policy learning. This suggests that the framing of local integration policies in these cities was driven primarily by specifically local circumstances and that horizontal policy learning was instrumental at best.

2.5 National integration policies and multilevel dynamics in Germany, Sweden, and the Netherlands

Germany

National integration policies in Germany evolved bottom-up from the local level, with a strong involvement of (local) civil society (Heckmann 2003; Bom-

mes 2010). Germany was for a long time reluctant to concede to the fact that it had become a country of immigration. A national policy that contained a clear recognition of Germany's status as an immigration country has evolved only recently. The Schröder government set up a multi-partisan committee of representatives of significant societal groups (churches, labor unions, employer associations, local public administrators, etc.), and researchers led by the opposition politician and former president of the Bundestag Rita Süßmuth to prepare a national immigration and integration policy in 2000. Thränhardt (2009: 165) interprets this consensus strategy in times of politicization of immigration and integration issues as a form of 'staged corporatism.' In the political context of the 9/11 attacks in the US and of national elections in Germany in 2002, an all-party agreement was reached on the first national law on immigration and migrant integration (Zuwanderungsgesetz) to come into effect in 2005 (Deutscher Bundestag 2005). This law for the first time regulates immigration to Germany, as well as obligatory civic integration of newly arrived migrants and therefore has a pivotal role in this policy field (Heckmann & Wiest 2013; Schneider & Scholten 2015).

The Merkel government continued this strategy of consensus to draft the Nationaler Aktionsplan Integration: The commissioner for migration, refugees, and integration organized a series of summits on migrant integration (Integrationsgipfel). In these summits, again stakeholders including employer associations, labor unions, migrant communities, scientists, religious communities, etc. and government representatives of all levels of government were involved. This current national executive program defines eleven policy areas: (1) primary education; (2) secondary education, vocational training, and professional development; (3) labor market and working life; (4) minority hiring in the public sector; (5) health and care; (6) local integration; (7) language training; (8) sports; (9) civic engagement and integration; (10) media and integration; and (11) culture (Bundesregierung 2012: 19-197). Multi-stakeholder groups, each dealing with one of the areas, formulated strategic policy goals as well as operational aims, measures, instruments, responsibilities, time frames, and indicators for measuring progress.

Based on the process leading to Germany's national integration policy and the characteristics of this policy, we can define Germany's integration policy as multiculturalist with universalist traits according to our heuristic ideal types. On the one hand, the policy presupposes distinct cultural groups who shape the everyday reality of society and address multiple domains of migrant integration (five policy areas are part of socio-economic, three socio-cultural, two legal–political, and one of the spatial domain). On the other hand, it does not stimulate the development of distinct groups, but rather pragmatically and stresses on welfare-state integration. Despite the assimilationist rhetoric in German politics, the policy itself is neither demanding migrants to undertake all integration efforts by themselves (as an assimilationist approach would require), nor does it refer to migrants as only one of many target groups of the policy (as a purely universalist approach would do).

Sweden

The Swedish government structure is a combination of a unitary state with strong local politico-administrative and fiscal capacities (Sellers & Lidström 2007). This relationship also characterizes Sweden's integration policies that evolved in a more centralized way. The national government decides on the general integration policy through laws and regulations, supervision, and fiscal incentives. At the same time, local government is given administrative and fiscal capacities to implement policies and also to decide on policies of their own. In Sweden's central government, the Ministry for Employment is responsible for integration, but the policy is supposed to permeate all government agencies.

On the national level, a new integration policy was introduced in December 1998 (Ministry of Interior 1997). It signaled a change away from a multiculturalist to a universalist policy focusing on individual rights and civic integration (Borevi 2012). The goal is equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for all regardless of ethnic or cultural background (Ministry of Finance 2008). This is to be achieved through general measures for the whole population supplemented by targeted support for migrants during their first years in Sweden. Despite the new policy direction, many multiculturalist policy pro-

grams were kept, such as the support for religious organizations and mother tongue language classes in schools (Dahlström 2004).

The introduction program for humanitarian migrants is the most important integration measure as it accounts for over 95 percent of the state integration budget (Ministry of Finance 2013). The goal is for participants to learn Swedish, find work, and support themselves financially, and learn about the rights and obligations of Swedish citizens. Since 1986, the responsibility to offer these services has been delegated to municipalities and financed by the state (Broomé et al. 2007). In December 2010, the responsibility and coordination of the introduction programs were shifted back to the national government – specifically the employment service. Reasons that were given for this are the poor results on labor market integration and too large differences between the programs of various municipalities (Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality 2010). However, the municipalities are still responsible for the implementation of services such as language courses and civic orientation for which they receive state funding. Most other integration measures on the national level have a focus on employment. One example is subsidized employment intended to strengthen migrants' competitiveness on the labor market.

The Netherlands

Migrant integration policies in the Netherlands were first developed in a centralized way, similar to the Swedish case. In the 1980s, the Ethnic Minorities Policy for which the Dutch case has become internationally (in)famous was developed and coordinated in a top-down way. This involved a unitary and centralized structure for policy coordination, with the Home Office at its center (Guiraudon 1997). In the 1990s, the integration policy gradually devolved to the local level. A direct connection was made between integration and other urban policies, and cities like Rotterdam and Amsterdam formulated their own policy perspectives on migrant integration. Since the early 2000s, policies on the national level have become more and more connected with migration and asylum policies and with abstract discussions on national values and how to protect these. This issue connection is also reflected in the development of (pre- and post-entry) civic integration programs for newcomers.

While the Netherlands has long been typified as multicultural, over the past decennium integration policies have taken an assimilationist turn (Scholten 2011). This was driven by a sharp politicization of migrant integration on the national level in the early 2000s. Past policies were denounced a failure and a new policy was installed ('Integration Policy New Style') that put more emphasis on the socio-cultural domain of integration and made a stronger connection between immigration and integration. The most recent policy memorandum was launched in 2011: 'Integration, Cohesion, Citizenship' (Ministry of Interior 2011). A sense of shared citizenship and community of all Dutch citizens is formulated as a policy goal. The policy document has an assimilationist as well as universalist tone as it encourages citizen's responsibilities and self-sufficiency.

The current national integration policy consists of three principles. The first is that integration is not the responsibility of the government but that of immigrants themselves. The second principle is that *'not one's background but one's potential is what counts'* (Ministry of Interior 2011: 7). This implies that there are no targeted integration measures for ethnic minorities, but that there is a generic policy. The last principle is that generic policy measures are to facilitate every citizen's participation on the labor market, housing market, and in education. When the policy is insufficient for some groups, no specific instruments will be developed, but the general policy will be changed. The latter reflects a mainstreaming of migrant integration policies throughout various government sectors that was also found in the Swedish case.

Comparative analysis of local and national policies and multilevel relations

We now turn to the localist thesis and the national models thesis that are more or less each other's opposites. The national models thesis claims that local integration policies will resemble the national policy frames because of top-down hierarchical governance structures. Cities will first and foremost have an executive role in integration policies. The localist thesis states that local policies will be shaped primarily by the specific local problem and policy context and are thus independent of national policies.

While comparing Berlin's integration policies on the city and district level with those on the national level, we found both congruencies and incongruences. On all levels of governance in Germany, we found a similar approach to integration that can best be described in terms of our ideal type of multi-culturalism, yet with important universalist traits. This becomes apparent in the process leading up to the policies, as well as in the content of the policies themselves. Integration policies are not only directed toward migrants, but also toward the majority society, which should be understood as a universalist trait. Nevertheless, migrants are perceived of as a diversity of groups who have different requirements and face various challenges. Migrant groups are identified as particular stakeholders who should not as regular citizens, but as representatives of a migrant population be included in the policy process. While we found a tendency to focus on socio-economic and socio-cultural areas of migrant integration on the national level, we found that the policies in Berlin – particularly in the districts – have a broader focus, with an emphasis on the legal–political and socio-economic domains of integration. The policy levels are thus not fully congruent.

Institutional factors contribute to congruencies between the different levels of government. BerlinsIntegrationskonzept was developed almost half a decade before the Nationaler Aktionsplan Integration and was certainly perceived as a model for the latter. They have a similar format in terms of defining goals, measures, responsibilities, and indicators for success. The institutional and communicative setting of the Integrationsgipfel encouraged frame alignment among senior public administrators on different levels of government. This facilitated consensus among the different stakeholders in the integration policy field. The Länder and the umbrella organization of the German municipalities had to and did commit to the goals of the Nationaler Aktionsplan Integration along with the national government. The document constitutes a rare example of vertical multi-level policymaking in Germany, or, as Heckmann and Wiest (2013: 8) put it *'a coordinated commitment by political and civil society actors at all levels of government and civil society to initiate certain integration policies in their field of responsibility.'* Thus, the German case supports the national models thesis in the sense the both policies follow

a similar approach ideologically as well as content wise. However, it is very clear that this is not due to top-down policy enforcement. Instead, we came across examples of bottom-up multilevel dynamics.

In the case of Malmö and Sweden, formal and informal institutional arrangements have led to congruencies between the two policy levels. Both levels of government share the ideology and the goals of the integration policy, that is, based on a universalist philosophy with some multicultural features (support of the frame alignment is evident in all interviews). There is general agreement of the main principles of the integration policy in Sweden rather than any specific national policy effort. National–local interaction regarding integration policies has been governed through soft policy measures. In the mid-80s a system of negotiation was created, based on agreements between central government and the municipalities (cf. Qvist 2012). These agreements have, together with other organized professional networks, created common professional norms and practices that influence the local organization and content of introduction programs.

In 2001, the Swedish Integration Board initiated a more institutionalized collaboration to improve coordination of the introduction programs. The strategy was based on different voluntary agreements of policy coordination between actors at different administrative levels. After the closure of the Integration Board in 2007, this collaborative strategy is coordinated by the county administrative boards. These represent the state and serve as a link between the central government and municipalities. In the field of integration, they have the responsibility to coordinate, monitor, and develop integration measures for newly arrived migrants from a regional perspective. Local policies are organized in the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions who safeguard the interests of Swedish local and regional authorities.

An example of national–local congruence is that when integration issues moved from the Ministry for Integration and Gender Equality to the Ministry of Employment at the government level in 2010, the city of Malmö decided to do the same and make integration issues a part of the policy area 'labor market and adult education.' Other domains of integration converge at the national and local level in their lack of policy measures. For example, there

are no formal consultation bodies representing migrants in neither Malmö nor the central government and both levels of governance have reduced the financial support to minority organizations. Their voices should, according to the logic, be channeled through the same democratic process as those of the rest of the population. The focus on general policies, mainstreaming, and an avoidance of any policies that emphasizes ethnic or cultural difference is evident in both levels of governance, which shows that the philosophy of integration is more universalist than multicultural.

A top-down approach does not fully explain national–local congruencies in Sweden, despite the more centralist government structure. The localist thesis is also partially supported. The precarious socioeconomic position of Malmö has led to an even stronger focus on socioeconomic issues than on the national level. The overall strategy has been to increase economic growth by city branding and large investments in infrastructure and to simultaneously counteract socio-ethnic segregation by general welfare measures. Incongruences are mostly found regarding the asylum regime. Malmö has repeatedly criticized the asylum reception policy that allows asylum seekers to live in own accommodations while their asylum application is processed. Overcrowding and ethnic segregation due to this policy have, according to the municipality, negative effects on integration.

In Rotterdam, many bottom-up multilevel dynamics have also been at play while the national models thesis is supported at first glance. During the last decade, national and local policies have converged toward a universalist approach to integration. Migrant integration is primarily framed in terms of socio-economic and socio-cultural participation and migrant groups are not addressed separately in policy measures. However, also incongruences exist between the national and local policies. In contrast to the issue connection with immigration and the focus on national identity in Dutch national integration policies, the local policies of Rotterdam have been much more concerned with concrete integration issues in spheres like education, housing, and labor.

Especially in earlier years, Rotterdam's political setting enforced divergent integration policies, giving support to the localist thesis as well. Our interviews and policy documents reveal many instances where the city of Rotter-

dam played an active role in national policy developments as well. Rotterdam did not simply fulfill a role as implementer of national policies, it has been a key policy entrepreneur in the multi-level governance setting of migrant integration, influencing national policies in a concerted effort to broaden the scope for local policies (see also Scholten 2013). Policies such as the Rotterdam Law were picked up nationally after an intensive policy lobby (Dutch Government 2005), later only to be implemented in Rotterdam. Also, over the past five years Rotterdam has become a key policy entrepreneur on the topic of inclusion of EU labor migrants, especially from Central and Eastern Europe. In this respect, it has exerted significant influence not just on national policies but on European policies as well. In 2008 arrangements of multi-level cooperation were formalized in a 'Collaborative Integration-Agenda' between several municipalities and the central government (Ministry VROM 2008; Twynstra Gudde 2012). In 2012, this was continued as the 'Collaborative Integral Approach' (Ministry of Interior 2012). This approach sets only the general contours of a policy to be implemented in different sectors and increasingly at the local level.

All in all, our analysis shows that the integration policies in Berlin, Malmö, and Rotterdam are to a large extent congruent with their respective national policy frames. However, an important finding from our analysis is that while the national models thesis seems to hold best, we also encountered many examples of bottom-up policy entrepreneurship. Multi-level governance interactions play a role in all cases and promote frame alignment between the national and local level.

2.6 Conclusions

Multi-level governance of integration issues and the question whether there is a distinctive local level of integration policies gained more attention over the past years. In this study, we have brought together three theses on the characteristics of local integration policies and we have qualitatively evaluated them with a comparative case–study of three city cases. We compared integration

policies of Berlin, Malmö, and Rotterdam on the local level and we compared the local policies with their respective national policy contexts.

By conducting a congruence analysis, we aimed to go beyond evaluating the theses with a simple yes or no. We conclude that the local dimension thesis does not hold for Berlin, Malmö, or Rotterdam. Neither are the policies structurally more accommodative or exclusionist toward migrants than the national policies, nor do they resemble each other in that way. Also, there are indeed horizontal networks for policy learning between cities throughout Europe, yet the impact of horizontal policy learning on policymaking appears to be limited.

Evidence supports both the national models thesis and localist thesis to a certain extent, but both explanations are not fully supported. Local integration policies resemble their national policies to a great extent, but not due to top-down hierarchical government structures. Rather, what we found are various forms of two-way multilevel interaction. Formal and informal institutional arrangements exist in which knowledge and practices are exchanged and frame alignment is fostered. We found many examples of bottom-up processes influencing national developments in accordance to the local policy philosophy. In line with the localist thesis, we found that local problem and political settings matter as well. However, political ideologies are not always followed up in concrete measures and local policies are not developed totally independent from the national policy frameworks. The congruency on the national-local axis is remarkable, and the multilevel interactions in all three cases reflect universalist traits.

Our analysis thus shows that there is not a single, distinct local dimension of integration policies, but that multilevel interactions promote mutual exchanges between local and national level policies. This speaks to the broader debate in the migration literature on national models of integration and the growing interest for city-level integration policies. Our study suggests that we should not treat these two levels, and perhaps also the European level, as too distinct from each other. Rather, we must focus attention much more to the complex forms of interaction that exist between different policy levels (vertical modes of interaction), as well as between different cities and coun-

tries (horizontal modes of interaction). This will help migration studies reach beyond reifying images of so-called national models of integration as well as beyond insulating the local dimension of integration policymaking too much from the broader institutional context in which these local policies evolve.

Expanding this line of research involves further research in how these vertical and horizontal relations are configured under different circumstances. Several national–local comparisons show different levels of congruence under different institutional circumstances. For example, we know that the integration policies in Amsterdam differ from Rotterdam by reflecting the national policies to a lesser extent (Scholten 2013). In the German city of Halle/Saale, Glick Schiller and Çağlar (2009) found no evidence of a multiculturalist approach to migrant integration as there were no resources for migrant-specific assistance and ethnic-based organizations. By this, Halle/Saale does not adhere to the national integration policy paradigm. There is a need for further research on to what extent frame alignment between national and local policies also holds for different cities in the same national context, for instance, cities with different socio-economic backgrounds, different migration histories, and different political leadership.

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3

FRAME AMBIGUITY IN POLICY CONTROVERSIES. A FRAME ANALYSIS OF MIGRANT INTEGRATION POLICIES IN ANTWERP AND ROTTERDAM

Abstract

Policy frames are understood as the outcome of a policy process in which multiple frames are contesting, but where one frame prevails and characterizes policies. Policy frames are therefore perceived and studied as coherent interpretations of a policy issue containing a problem definition and a matching strategy to solve it. This rather fixed understanding of policy frames contrasts with other interpretive approaches which recognize a more dynamic and sometimes ambiguous character of policy language. The aim of this article is to analyze whether policy frames may be ambiguous and if so, how this can be understood by the problem context and political context of the policy issue. This study conducts critical frame analysis of local migrant integration policies in Antwerp and Rotterdam over the past 15 years. The analysis demonstrates presence of frame ambiguity in this controversial policy domain in the form of incomplete frames, solely focusing on the policy strategy while leaving the problem definition open to interpretation, and inconsistent frames in which the problem definition and policy strategy do not match. Ambiguous frames indicate a 'strength of weak frames': in a context of problem complexity and political contestation ambiguous frames can serve to overcome a deadlock in policy-making.

3.1 Introduction

Frame analysis has become a popular methodology in policy sciences following the linguistic or constructivist turn in policy sciences that took place during the 1990s (Fischer & Forester 1993). Most constructivist approaches – such as discourse analysis – have a rather fluid conceptualization of policy as 'language in use'. They recognize ambiguity in policy language, for example, in the use of certain expressions or metaphors. Frame analysis, in contrast, assumes that policies communicate a rather coherent and singular frame the policy problem. Frames are considered to be interpretive packages providing a consistent causal story of how the problem came about and how it should be solved (Gamson & Modigliani 1987; 1989; Entman 1993). Policy frames are understood to resolve ambiguity in social reality rather than being ambiguous themselves. In a critical frame analysis of policies related to the policy domain of migrant integration, this study argues that policy frames can be much less coherent and unitary with regard to problem definition and proposed policy actions than what theory so far suggests. Furthermore, this study seeks an understanding of when frame ambiguity emerges.

The conceptualization of policy frames as internally coherent structures of which one at a time is present in policies is somewhat different from the notions of framing in other scientific disciplines such as social movement studies (cf. Benford & Snow 2000), public opinion and representation (cf. Chong & Druckman 2007) and media and communication (cf. Vliegenthart & Van Zoonen 2011). Frame analysis in these fields of study shares a more dynamic conceptualization of frames as it primarily focuses on the process of framing in which frames are jointly constructed and reconstructed by actors and their audiences (Polletta & Ho 2006: 189–192; Snow et al. 1986: 467). While it is understood that frames in interpersonal communication, politics or the media can be incomplete or ambiguous, this has been less described with regard to policy frames as they are considered to be the product of considerate political and bureaucratic processes.

This article aims to critically evaluate the assumptions of unicity and coherence with regard to policy frames in an in-depth case study of local migrant

integration policies. Frame ambiguity is understood as the state of policy frames consisting of incoherent problem definitions and policy strategies. Ambiguous frames are therefore open to multiple interpretations. Subsequently, it aims to contextualize under what conditions frame ambiguity is likely to emerge. Studies recognizing ambiguous qualities of policy language direct us to a theoretical understanding of when policy frame ambiguity emerges (Jones 1999; Stone 1988). To these aims, the following research question is addressed: *In what ways does frame ambiguity occur in local migrant integration policy frames and how can this be understood?*

The analysis focuses on migrant integration policies in two city cases: Antwerp in Belgium and Rotterdam in the Netherlands. The policy field of migrant integration provides a suitable case to study frame ambiguity as it is generally perceived to be an intractable policy controversy characterized by uncertainties in the problem definition and political controversy. These qualities have been pointed at by interpretive policy analysts as circumstances under which ambiguity emerges in policy. Earlier studies already pointed at ambiguous language in immigration and integration policy texts (Teitelbaum 1992; Chock 1995; Boswell et al. 2011). Based on a typology of frames that are commonly distinguished in migrant integration policies, I study whether and how frame ambiguity may exist. I specifically focus on the unicity and coherency of frames in terms of problem definition and policy strategy. Municipal policies are studied because at the local level, problem definitions are combined with specific policy strategies.

The theoretical section of this paper first discusses the literature on policy frames that generally assume coherency and unicity of policy frames. In order to theorize the existence of frame analysis, we subsequently discuss interpretive studies that recognized ambiguity in policy language. This literature review provides us with theoretical expectations on the context in which frame ambiguity may emerge. In the methodological section of this paper, the data and methodology are further introduced, including a typology of integration policy frames that is used for critical frame analysis. The findings of this study indicate that policy frames are much less coherent and unitary with regard to problem definition and proposed policy actions than what theory so far

suggests. Frame ambiguity was encountered in the form of incomplete and inconsistent policy frames. In both cities, similar complexities in the problem context and political context existed that according to interviews with key policy actors played a key role in the ambiguous framing of local integration policies. Frame ambiguity is a sensible policy outcome in a complex problem context and in a situation of political controversy.

3.2 Frame ambiguity in public policies

Policy frames

Frame analysis made its way into policy science during the 1980s and 1990s following the 'linguistic', 'interpretive', 'argumentative' or 'constructivist' turn in policy sciences (Fischer & Forester 1993). This turn entailed a focus on the linguistic and nonlinguistic symbols in politics and policy (White 1992; Fischer & Forester 1993). Instead of departing from the notion of an inherent nature of policy problems, many policy scientists today acknowledge a (partly) socially constructed nature of policy issues (Edelman 1988: 13; Stone 1989: 299). These socially constructed problem definitions guide the policy actions that are taken. Different practices of policy analysis spring from this turn in policy science – one of which is frame analysis.

Framing, in the interactionist tradition of Bateson (1955) and Goffman (1974), is about making a difference between what is important and what is not, regarding a particular issue or situation. Frames arise when people are encountered with a situation and ask themselves: 'What is going on here?' (Goffman 1974: 8). In policy sciences, this key characteristic of frames is applied in the collective setting of policy-making (Baumgartner & Mahoney 2008). Policy actors are making sense of a policy problem and hereby adhere to a certain perspective of reality. As Hajer and Laws (2006: 252) state, '*policy practitioners seek stability and act in a social world that is a kaleidoscope of potential realities'*. Frames are interpretive schemata and ordering devices that are needed by policy-makers to structure the reality of a policy issue. Frames allow people to make sense of a reality and attach a meaning to it, besides

possible alternative meanings: '*Whatever is said of a thing, denies something else of it*' (Rein & Schön 1977: 239).

Apart from structuring our perception of reality, frames promote a certain course of action as well. They have normative-prescriptive implications by outlining not only what *is* but also what *ought to be* (Rein & Schön 1977: 240; see also Schön 1983: 40). Only when interpretation enables actors to make sense of a situation, they can imagine what should happen next (Rein & Schön 1977). The well-known definition of frames by Rein and Schön (1993: 146) acknowledges the normative leap that is taken in frames: policy frames are ways of *'selecting, organizing, interpreting and making sense of a complex reality to provide guideposts for knowing, analyzing, persuading and acting'*. While discourses can take any form and are more dynamic, frames – as Rein and Schön (1977; 1996) have argued – take the form of a causal story with a normative component (Stone 1989: 300; 2006). They place responsibility with certain actors and call for a certain policy response, including a specific objective, type of solution and instruments that are considered most effective (Stone 1988; Gamson & Modigliani 1989; Weiss 1989).

A key assumption is thus that policy frames are coherent in terms of problem definition and proposed policy action or strategy (Hajer & Laws 2006: 257). This internal coherency contributes to the strength of a frame. 'Strong frames' are effective in communicating a set of beliefs to the public (Chong & Druckman 2007). Tewksbury and Scheufele (2009: 24) state that the most effective or powerful frames are the ones that communicate all four of the elements described by Entman (1993: 52): a problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and treatment recommendation. As the end result of lengthy political and bureaucratic processes, policy frames are expected to be well elaborated and less ambiguous than, for example, frames in day-to-day communication or media frames.

A second assumption about policy frames is that policies are shaped by one dominant frame at a time that directs policy action. This assumption is closely related to the assumed coherency of frames. In case of intractable policy controversies – when there is debate over the existence and nature of the policy issue – a multiplicity of frames exists in the policy process (Schön

& Rein 1994: 240). Different (groups of) stakeholders in the policy process maintain a different issue frame and there are '*struggles over the naming and framing of a policy situation [. . .] (as well as) symbolic contests over the social meaning of an issue domain, where meaning implies not only what is at issue but what is to be done*' (Schön & Rein 1994: 29). Actors involved in the policy process uphold certain frames and strive for their framing of the issue to become the dominant interpretation in policy. According to Baumgartner and Jones (1993), 'policy monopolies' act upon a unitary dominant frame. Dominant frames become vested in political and administrative institutions and the broader culture through both the instrumental effects of policies – such as new rules and new organizations – as well as the rhetorical or symbolic effects (Ingram et al. 1999). It is assumed that policy frames do not change incrementally and fluidly but they are only replaced in situations of policy change. This may be caused by political power shifts or to external events that provide new information on the policy issue at hand.

In contrast to political positions or interests, frames are not negotiable stands. Schön and Rein (1994) have outlined how frames are cognitive schemata that incorporate the worldviews of policy actors and become part of their identities. It is therefore hard to think outside frames and be reflexive of one's own frame. Van Hulst and Yanow (2016) claim that reframing a policy issue involves reconceptualising not only vested interests, but also personal identities that are interwoven with beliefs that the world is or ought to be as one perceives it. Policy frames are therefore not considered to be the outcome of political negotiation, but in policies one frame has prevailed and is comprehensively elaborated. Policy frames are thus assumed to be singular and coherent.

Ambiguity in policies

Recognizing ambiguous elements in policies is not a novelty in the interpretive tradition of policy analysis. In fact, the interpretive approach recognizes ambiguity of policy language as a rule, rather than an exception (Yanow 1996: 228). However, while it is often considered a property of linguistic expressions, it has not been connected to the construct of frames. Scholars among whom

Stone (1988), Yanow (1996) and Hajer and Wagenaar (2003), for example, pointed at ambiguity of policy narratives by use of certain expressions and metaphors. In order to gain a better understanding of why ambiguous frames emerge, literature on ambiguous elements in policy helps to theorize ambiguity of policy frames and to develop theoretical expectations on when frame ambiguity emerges. Two types of explanations for ambiguity are provided, related to the problem context and to the political context of the policy issue.

First, related to the problem context, scholars encountered ambiguity in policies as a result of 'bounded rationality' (Simon 1957; March 1978). Bounded rationality assumes that individual or collective decision-makers are intendedly rational but deal with limited information on complex policy issues and cognitive limitations in processing this information (Jones 1999). Ambiguity may be a satisfactory solution when available information about a policy issue is limited and uncertain. Ambiguous framing is thus sensible when it reflects uncertainties in the future consequences and preferences related to the problem (March 1978). According to Baumgartner and Jones (1993) bounded rationality is an inherent quality of the policy-making process. It is not only an attribute of the policy problem, but also of the policy-makers' acts of meaning making. Policy-makers engage in disproportionate information processing as they attend selectively to information dependent on whether it complies with the current policy frame. Ambiguity is thus more likely to exist in policies related to issues on which information is limited, uncertain or contradictory.

Second, interpretive policy analysts recognize partisan drivers of ambiguity in policies. Stone (1988: 157), for example, describes how in the decision-making process ambiguity allows policy-makers to placate multiple political actors in a policy controversy. Yanow (1996: 228) as well shows that ambiguity is purposively used to resolve conflict and to accommodate political differences. Newman and Clarke (2009) consider ambiguity – next to articulation and assemblages – to be a key concept in understanding how publics and public services are constituted. Ambiguity results from contesting political understandings of citizenship and exposes alignments of political power (2009). Newman (2013: 105) demonstrates how the language of politi-

cal contestation sometimes is reappropriated in policy texts with ambiguous meaning. This results in political opposition losing power. Ambiguity is thus likely to exist in policies related to politically contested issues. Based on this literature review, the analysis of understanding the emergence of frame ambiguity will be focused on the problem context, including complexity and bounded rationality, and the political context, specifically controversy over problem definition and policy solutions.

3.3 Methodology

Local migrant integration policies in Antwerp (Belgium) and Rotterdam (The Netherlands) were analyzed in order to study in what forms frame ambiguity may be present and how this can be understood. The policy field of migrant integration was chosen as a strategic case. Migrant integration has been described as an intractable policy controversy (Scholten 2013). How migrant integration is defined and what policy strategies are chosen varies and is often subject to frame shifts (Scholten 2011; Vertovec & Wessendorf 2010). It is a complex and politically contested issue characterized by discussion about the problem definition, how to measure it and the effectiveness of policy measures. The struggle over interpretation of the issue is not overcome by appeals to evidence or facts, and competing issue frames remain present in the policy process. The problem context and political context of this policy field thus makes a suitable case for studying frame ambiguity in policies. Indeed, scholars have already pointed at ambiguous language in immigration and integration policy texts (Teitelbaum 1992; Chock 1995; Boswell et al. 2011). This makes migrant integration a suitable policy field to study the ambiguity of frames as well.

The local level of policies is chosen because on that level policies often include concrete strategies. Antwerp and Rotterdam are cities with long histories of migrant integration policies. Both are large, industrial port cities that have attracted many immigrants over the past decades. The cities' integration policies often functioned as an example for other cities and their

respective regional and national contexts. The time period from 1998 to 2013 was chosen as the integration policy field became controversial due to a multicultural backlash (Vertovec & Wessendorf 2010). Both cities departed from their multiculturalist policies during the early 2000s and several frame shifts took place in the years after. This enables us to study frame ambiguity in relation to different policy frames within a relatively short time period. Critical events during this time period became clear from the interviews and are addressed in the empirical section of this article. Important critical events in Antwerp include a racist murder in 2006 and the election victory by the Flemish nationalist party 'N-VA' in 2012. In Rotterdam, the election victory by right-wing nationalist 'Leefbaar Rotterdam' in 2002 and shortly thereafter the political murder of their party leader Pim Fortuyn was mentioned frequently as a turning point in migrant integration policies.

I conducted critical frame analysis of integration policy documents from the past 15 years, focusing on problem definitions and policy strategies. For this purpose, I operationalized a typology of commonly distinguished migrant integration policy frames in the literature. This includes an assimilationist, multiculturalist, differentialist and universalist policy frame of migrant integration (Castles & Miller [1993] 2009; Koopmans & Statham 2000; Scholten 2011: 38–42). Table 3.1 provides a short overview of the problem definitions and policy strategies that are elaborated in these four policy frames.

Assimilationism problematizes various aspects of the presence of minorities in society and aims for unidirectional integration of the immigrant in the host society while focusing primarily on the sociocultural domain of migrant integration. Assimilationist policies encourage adaptation of immigrants to dominant cultural norms, values and behaviors. Differentialism (also described as segregationism) facilitates the presence of immigrants in society by organizing minority group identities and needs outside mainstream society. They are excluded from mainstream arrangements and different arrangements are created for them – with fewer citizenship rights than the dominant population. Ethnic groups live alongside each other rather than with each other. Multiculturalism promotes cultural pluralism and encourages emancipation

Table 3.1: Operationalization of integration policy frames

Policy frame	Problem definition	Policy strategy
Multiculturalism	Problematizing socio-economic deprivation of immigrants	Specific measures such as group arrangements and activities promoting cultural pluralism
Differentialism	Presence of immigrants is temporary and should be accommodated in separate arrangements	Specific measures such as limited legal-political arrangements preventing integration
Universalism	Ethnic equality should be promoted as a result of two-way cultural adaptation and individual participation	Generic / mainstreamed measures requiring all citizens to participate
Assimilationism	Deviant socio-cultural and socio-demographic characteristics of migrant groups	Immigrants should adapt to the socio-cultural values and behaviors of the host society

of immigrant groups while accommodating specific group identities. Finally, a 'universalist' frame concerns a more liberal egalitarian view on immigrant integration and aims for ethnic equality. It is closely related to the 'interculturalist' model of Wood (2009) and Cantle (2012). The policy strategy is not only targeting immigrants. Instead, it is 'mainstreamed' aimed at 'citizenship' or 'participation' of all citizens to overcome group thinking and engage in a two-way process of sociocultural adaptation. This goes along with mainstreaming of policies and policy institutions integration permeates all government's policies and activities as opposed to being a stand-alone policy field (Scholten et al. 2016). This means that governments adopt generic instead of targeted measures – a practice that has its roots in gender policies (Booth & Bennett 2002).

I evaluated the coherence and unicity of local integration policy frames by coding different frame elements (including problem definitions and policy strategies) in policy documents and evaluating their fit with the theory-based typology of integration frames. This concerned an iterative process in which empirical data was confronted with our theoretical expectations. In addition, interviews with municipal policy-makers and civil society partners were

conducted in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the context in which the policies were developed. Six interviews were held in Rotterdam, five interviews in Antwerp. The interviews in Antwerp were conducted by the author and were taped and transcribed ad verbatim. Four of the interviews in Rotterdam were conducted by research assistants who provided interview summaries. Two of the interviews were held by the author and were transcribed ad verbatim. After the main argument of this article was developed, some interviewees in both cities were recontacted to check the validity of the argument and to get an update on the latest policy developments.

The following section describes first the findings of this analysis per city case. These case analyses reflect policy language that was used in policy documents and interviews. This language is not neutral: terms used to refer to ethnic groups and processes of migrant integration differs over time and in relation to different policy frames. This is made explicit at several points in the discussion of our findings, for example, by the use of quotation marks. Subsequently, instances of frame ambiguity are discussed more in general and understood from the context in which they emerged.

3.4 Results

Integration policy frames Antwerp

Until the mid-2000s, Antwerp employed a multiculturalist migrant integration policy that was embedded in the Flemish integration decree of 1998. Migrant integration was framed as a lack of recognition and accommodation of 'diversity' (Flemish Parliament 1998). This issue definition was coupled with targeted measures to 'empower' minorities such as municipal interpretation services and adjustment of certain welfare provisions to fit the needs of ethnic minorities. The municipality actively safeguarded minorities' access to services – an arrangement called the 'interculturalization' of municipal services. A designated representative organ for immigrants was installed, the 'minority forum' that still exists today (minderhedenforum.be). Issue definitions and policy strategies in Flanders were unequivocally multicultural. In

this period, the city of Antwerp was under social democratic rule of the SP.a (Socialistische Partij Anders/Socialist Party Differently), a party that was a strong supporter of the multicultural policy frame.

Under the last social democratic city executive of mayor Janssens (2006–2012), the policy frame shifted remarkably. Instead of actively accommodating different minority groups, group provisions were revoked except for civic integration programs for recently arrived immigrants (cf. Van Puymbroeck 2011). The common denominator for integration policies from this period was 'equal opportunities' with regard to socioeconomic aspects of integration, and 'interculturalization' or a 'diversity policy' in terms of sociocultural integration (Antwerp City Executive 2007; Department of Social Cohesion 2009). The problem definition focused on unequal opportunities of citizens and intolerance toward minority groups, including the ethnic minorities. Policy goals were to create equal opportunities, encourage active citizenship, participation and shared responsibility among all citizens of Antwerp. Integration meant a mutual process of adaptation and development of cultural plurality (Department of Social Cohesion 2008). Diversity was not problematized, but promoted as beneficial (De8 Centre for Integration 2008). This fits a universalist issue definition.

The policy strategies of this period were framed generically – that is, targeting all members of the urban society. This means that the government does not want to differentiate and institutionalize differences between ethnic minorities and the majority population by targeting ethnic minorities specifically. However, some group provision remained, as characteristic for 'targeting within universalism' (Flemish Parliament 2009: 3; cf. Skocpol 1991). The goal of 'interculturalization' from the previous policy period was upheld with regard to the municipality's own organization and services. However, instead of accommodation, these services were now framed in terms of 'cultural sensitivity' toward diversity. The municipality aimed to make their own services and personnel sensitive to and competent in dealing with culturally diverse citizens. Executive integration organization 'De8' was issued to pursue this in other organizations such as schools, elderly care, police and health care.

A mainstreaming strategy that fits the universalist approach was implemented in the coordinative structures of the integration policy (Flemish Parliament 2009). Until 2007/2008, the municipality of Antwerp had a department of integration services (DIA – Dienst Integratie Antwerpen). This was split up and different tasks of this organization were redistributed over other governmental departments. Minority integration became a horizontal goal of the entire organization. Some targeted departments for minorities remained (Interview policy-maker Antwerp). For example, the hiring of minority personnel in the city's administration by the 'diversity management' bureau of the municipality.

The approach to minority integration as a generic goal became more 'quid pro quo' (Janssens 2011; Interview policy-maker Antwerp). It stressed citizens' obligations as well as rights. Saeys et al. (2014) define this policy approach in Flanders as 'new assimilationism'. The political discourse in Flanders and Antwerp in particular with the emergence of right-wing nationalist parties as 'Vlaams Blok' (Flemish Block) (1979–2004), 'Vlaams Belang' (Flemish Interest) (2004–current) and N-VA (Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie/New Flemish Alliance) (2001–current), indeed showed assimilationist traits. However, these were not (yet) present in policy framing. The policy strategies fit a universalist policy frame: no dominant culture is promoted, but cultural diversity is treated as a fact and approached neutrally by the government.

Only recently, the definition of integration problems in Antwerp's integration policy gained more assimilationist traits. The onset of this was the electoral win of N-VA during the 2012 local elections. While promoting respect for diversity, the policies strive for a unitary urban community in sociocultural terms (Antwerp City Executive 2013: 3). Most prominent is the emphasis on sociocultural aspects of integration such as Dutch language proficiency and adherence to Antwerp's or Flemish history and cultural norms and values. Exemplary of this is a paragraph about education: '*The city executive sees diversity as enriching. However, in schools we accentuate common basic values: mutual respect, freedom, democracy, universal human rights such as free choice, equality of men and women, freedom of religion, separation of church and state and independent scientific research*' (Antwerp City Executive 2013: 31). Dutch

language proficiency is no longer optional: '*Who refuses to learn to speak Dutch, will be sanctioned*' (Antwerp City Executive 2013: 12). Sociocultural integration is considered to be a necessary condition for integration in other domains of social life. The city executive specifies a common language and common values in which immigrants should integrate. The emphasis on sociocultural domain of integration is characteristic of an assimilationist policy frame.

The current policy strategy is not fully developed yet – and according to our interviewee at the municipality, it is not clear yet whether this will happen at all: *'We know that they absolutely want attention for civic integration and language, but the remainder is a big question mark. It is left to the administrative level'.* To date, many universalist strategies are maintained and are expected to remain present. For example, measures to promote equal labor market access and access to municipal services. Integration is a horizontal policy goal that is executed by generic measures. Even the city's diversity management bureau has been cancelled. Within the municipal department of 'social cohesion' (Dienst Samenleven) there is no specific team working on integration. This universalist policy strategy fits the institutional arrangements that were decided upon in the latest decree (Flemish Parliament 2013). The Flemish government now regularizes integration via an 'external government agency' (EVA – Extern Verzelfstandigd Agentschap) in most Flemish cities. As a large city, Antwerp remains excluded from this arrangement. Integration is now managed by a new centralized municipal association of integration partners (VZW Integratie en Inburgering).

In conclusion, we can see how Antwerp's local integration policies initiated as targeted, multiculturalist policies. From 2006 onward, this multicultural approach was replaced by a universalist approach under the label of 'interculturalization'. However, the policy strategy of mainstreaming was much more pronounced than the problem definition of unequal opportunities as problematic. Today, under N-VA rule, mainstreamed policy strategies are further developed, but the problem definition and goals can be characterized as assimilationist.

Integration policy frames Rotterdam

From 1998 to 2002, Rotterdam's integration policies had a multicultural out-look. Cultural diversity was promoted as a strength (Rotterdam City Executive 1998; Project Multicolored City 2000) and the municipality aimed to decrease socioeconomic deprivation of minorities in terms of education, labor market participation and housing conditions. Rotterdam navigated between a generic and targeted policy strategy. On the one hand, they urged immigrants to make better use of existing welfare arrangements, on the other hand specific measures were developed to prevent downward social mobility and promote self-sufficiency (City of Rotterdam 1998). Priorities of the policy program 'Multicolored City' were (1) to enhance the participation of 'allochthonous' citizens in subsidized organizations and initiatives, (2) for the administration of Rotterdam to hire more allochthonous personnel, particularly in higher positions, (3) to change the cultural policies of Rotterdam in order to fit the new cultural diversity of the population and (4) to promote and encourage ethnic entrepreneurship and labor market participation (Rotterdam City Executive 1998: 12–13). The term 'allochtones' is commonly used in Dutch migrant integration jargon to refer to ethnic minorities.

In 2002, the right-wing nationalist party 'Leefbaar Rotterdam' ('Liveable Rotterdam') won the local elections and for the first time in many years, the social democrats were not part of the city executive. The new city executive announced a radical break with previous integration policies. An assimi-lationist issue definition of migrant integration was outlined in integration policy documents (Rotterdam City Executive 2003). The executive program stated that newcomers are not yet at home, while at the same time native citizens feel less at home in Rotterdam. Social cohesion in Rotterdam was lost over the past decennia when new immigrants arrived in the city (Rotterdam City Executive 2002: 33). Priority of the city executive was to enhance the identification of citizens with (a preexisting definition of) Rotterdam and thereby to reinforce 'social integration'. This indicates a monistic view on society of integration into a majority culture. Integration problems were often connected to safety issues: it was expected that more social integration would contribute to public safety and vice versa.

However, policy measures were not always as assimilationist as would be expected based on the problem definition of the policy frame (cf. Uitermark & Duyvendak 2008). Instead, the policy measures can be characterized as universalist rather than assimilationist. Many of the local measures aimed to increase social cohesion and stimulate interethnic contact without assimilationist emphasis. The program 'Mensen Maken de Stad' (People Make the City), for example, aimed to enhance 'social cohesion' and 'active citizenship' in specific neighborhoods of Rotterdam. Integration goals were developed bottom-up and in coproduction with citizens of these neighborhoods. It often entailed addressing other issues in the neighborhood as well such as litter, nuisance, youth delinquency and health issues in order to pave the way for social cohesion and integration. Representation of diversity in neighborhood activities was deemed important in these measures.

From 2006 onward, the assimilationist issue definition was abandoned after the social democrats regained a majority in the city council. We can observe a turn from integration policy to 'participation policy' which was targeting all citizens of Rotterdam. Integration was hardly mentioned as such in policy documents. The participation policy stressed that citizenship not only comes with rights but also with obligations and responsibilities for each citizen. A dual notion of citizenship was maintained: Whilst the government will support people who are 'willing but unable' to participate, the ones who are unwilling will be approached with repressive measures. The participation policy targeted all citizens: '*The policy has an inclusive character. No distinction is made based on ethnicity. Mono-ethnic activities are not eligible for subsidies, unless there are strong arguments for doing this*' (Rotterdam City Executive 2011, 24). This indicates a mainstreaming of integration policies from a universalist paradigm.

The policy strategy of mainstreaming was however more pronounced than the problem definition to which it relates. The policy defined four focus areas in need of improvement – women's emancipation, gay emancipation, discrimination and diversity – but the policy did not specify what policy problems exist. Instead, the end goals of equal chances and participation of all citizens were emphasized. Four 'Kenniscentra' (centers of expertise) consisting of

key civil society stakeholders in these areas were subsidized to develop and implement measures. Even though these policy measures target all citizens of Rotterdam, there were still some programs that were specifically targeting ethnic minorities. There was, for example, the policy program 'Participation through Language' (Department of Youth, Education and Society 2007) and a program that particularly focusses on ethnic minorities with a Muslim identity: 'Building Bridges' (Department of Youth, Education and Society 2008).

Most notable is the continuation of a policy program particularly focusing on Moroccan and Antillean youth. Rotterdam as well as 21 other Dutch municipalities received funding from the national government to specifically target the overrepresentation of Antillean and Moroccan youth in welfare dependency, school dropout, unemployment and crime. Rotterdam had already started this policy before national funding was initiated from the viewpoint that ethnic background and cultural identity – next to age and socioeconomic position – were important factors in the overrepresentation of Antillean and Moroccan youth in these four areas (Rotterdam City Executive 2010). That is why targeted measures were chosen despite the dominant approach of universalism and a fear of stigmatization. In 2012, the effectiveness of the policy was evaluated and it was concluded that on most aspects, the targeted policy did not achieve its goals. The policy was neither continued in Rotterdam, nor elsewhere.

In sum, we can see how in Rotterdam the universalist frame (2006–2013) was ambiguous in the sense that the strategy was more pronounced than the accompanying problem definition. During the period when the assimilationist frame was dominant in integration policies (2002–2006), universalist strategies were combined with an assimilationist problem definition. These two instances of frame ambiguity are similar to the frame ambiguity that was encountered in Antwerp. In the following paragraph, I will further outline the characteristics of frame ambiguity and address the question how frame ambiguity can be understood from the political context and problem context in both cities.

Two forms of frame ambiguity and their context

Antwerp and Rotterdam were both characterized by a tradition of multiculturalist migrant integration policies. Coherent with the broader European backlash against multiculturalism (Vertovec & Wessendorf 2010), we observe that both cities departed from their multiculturalist policies during the early 2000s. Frame analysis of problem definitions and proposed strategies demonstrates that subsequent frames of migrant integration policies have been ambiguous in two ways (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Overview of frames

City	Timeframe	Problem definition	Policy strategy
Antwerp	1998-2006	Multiculturalism	Multiculturalism
	2006-2012	-	Universalism
	2012-2013	Assimilationism	Universalism
Rotterdam	1998-2002	Multiculturalism	Multiculturalism
	2002-2006	Assimilationism	Universalism
	2006-2013	-	Universalism

First, ambiguous framing of migrant integration was present in the period of 2002–2006 in Rotterdam and 2012–2013 in Antwerp when proponents of an assimilationist frame toward migrant integration were in power. Policy documents of these periods show an emphasis on an assimilationist problem definition. This problem definition marked a frame shift with previous policies. However, this problem definition was not combined with an assimilationist policy strategy. Instead, universalist policy strategies were proposed. In Rotterdam, the central policy program 'Mensen Maken de Stad' explicitly targeted all citizens of the city and their social cohesion while not promoting one culture over another. In Antwerp, targeted policies and organizations such as the new executive agency dealing with migrant integration increasingly focused on their core task of civic integration. Integration measures for ethnic minorities in general were explicitly mainstreamed and organized by other bodies of government. Policy strategies were not just a continuation of the previous

multiculturalist policy period, but concern newly initiated universalist policy strategies despite the assimilationist problem definition. Frame ambiguity is thus recognizable here in the form of frame inconsistency in terms of problem definition and policy strategy.

A second form of frame ambiguity was encountered in Antwerp from 2006 to 2012 and in Rotterdam from 2006 to 2013. During these periods, policy documents showed an overemphasis on a universalist policy strategy of mainstreaming, while leaving the problem definition open to interpretation. A universalist problem definition would entail defining diversity as an asset of the urban society, problematizing ethnic inequalities and encouraging mutual cultural adaptation to a new urban culture. Diversity is recognized in both cities as a fact, but it is not defined in policy documents in a positive or negative sense. The policies almost exclusively focused on what ought to be while not defining what is. Targeted measures were avoided and also the coordinative administrative structures in both cities were mainstreamed: departments particularly focusing on migrant integration were sized down or disappeared and the responsibility for migrant integration policies was distributed over other departments. Without defining a problem context, the policy strategy of mainstreaming became a goal in itself. This form of frame ambiguity can be seen as frame incompleteness.

How can these two forms of frame ambiguity be understood from the political context and problem context in both cities? Several similarities in both cities with regard to the problem context and political context were pointed out in the interviews with policymakers. In the period in which frame ambiguity first emerged (2002–2013 in Rotterdam; 2006–2013 in Antwerp), both cities were coping with an increasingly complex problem context. Both cities have a relatively large and diverse immigrant population: Antwerp is home to citizens of 174 different nationalities, together making up a share of 45.8% of the population (Antwerpen Buurtmonitor 2015). Rotterdam inhabits over 170 nationalities that constitute 49.5% of the population (Centre for Research and Statistics Rotterdam 2015). The population has internally become increasingly differentiated, including new immigrant groups, immigrant descendants

of the third or fourth generation and interethnic marriages (Thomson & Crul 2007). In terms of Vertovec (2007), Antwerp and Rotterdam cope with a situation of superdiversity in which targeted measures – as characteristic of multiculturalist or differentialist policy frames – are hard to implement. It became increasingly difficult to demarcate the target group of integration policies (cf. Chock 1995). Frame ambiguity emerged as a sensible option to cope with such issue complexities (cf. March 1978).

At the same time both cities were confronted with a need for significant budget cuts during the late 2000s. No longer funding targeted integration measures became a compelling choice. Since the late 2000s, in both cities many provisions and services for immigrants and immigrant organizations started to disappear, just as the administrative departments that governed them. A universalist policy strategy was practically and financially advantageous for both cities at that time. Ambiguous policy frames are suitable in such a situation of bounded rationality and limited resources to manage the complex problem context (March 1978; Baumgartner & Jones 1993).

The political context in both cities has had an evident influence on the emergence of frame ambiguity as well. Both cities knew a long tradition of multiculturalist integration policies under social democratic rule. This tradition was criticized and challenged in the late 1990s and early 2000s when there was a broadly shared opinion of failed multiculturalist policies (Vertovec & Wessendorf 2010). Even within the social democratic majorities that traditionally promoted a multiculturalist integration policy frame, this led to a shift toward a universalist policy frame. In Antwerp, this happened under the second term of Mayor Janssens and in Rotterdam early universalist policies can be recognized in the policy program 'Multicolored city'. However, the political struggle over the replacement of the multicultural frame was thereby not yet decided.

In both cities the support for right-wing nationalist parties grew in the early 2000s. They became a powerful political player in both city councils. In Antwerp, the radical right-wing party Vlaams Blok was forced to disband in 2004 after a trial ruled that the party was repeatedly encouraging discrimination. The party was reinstated under a new name 'Vlaams Belang' with a revised

statute. Vlaams Belang is a far right, Flemish nationalist party that advocates the independence of Flanders and strict limitations on immigration, while immigrants are obliged to adopt the Flemish culture and language. The party rejects multiculturalism and takes an openly assimilationist stance toward integration. Vlaams Belang gained a significant share of votes in the municipal and federal elections in the 2000s, but never had executive power. Like Vlaams Blok, Vlaams Belang was subjected to a cordon sanitaire when all other Flemish parties agreed to systematically exclude the party from participating in coalitions on the federal or municipal level. However, our interviewees note that the voice of Vlaams Belang was very strong in the city council and in the public debate of Antwerp (interviewees municipality and De8). A policy-maker states: *'Vlaams belang posed great pressure on integration policies until recently. Not a single piece of policy went unnoticed. Every week they asked questions in the city council about all kinds of subjects: How many mosques are there? Who are visiting them? You name it.'* The party was a latent but strong influence on integration policies. As a result of this, the 2006–2012 social democratic city executive already put a large emphasis on the obligations of minority citizens to participate (Interview De8; Janssens 2011).

In Rotterdam, the right-wing nationalist party 'Leefbaar Rotterdam' started in 2001 under political leadership of Pim Fortuyn. The party won the 2002 municipal elections and led the city executive in the period 2002–2006 while making migrant integration a priority issue. Even before and after this political reign, the quick rise and popularity of Pim Fortuyn and his political views pressured the political majority in the city council into taking a more assimilationist approach toward migrant integration. In the elections of 2006 and 2010, Leefbaar Rotterdam remained the largest opposition party in the city council, but the social democrats again won the elections and led the city executive. Nevertheless, Leefbaar Rotterdam remained a powerful presence in the city regarding integration issues; in 2014 it would again win the local elections and lead the city executive.

The use of ambiguous universalist framing of migrant integration was useful in the sociodemocratic executive periods in Antwerp from 2006 to 2012 and in Rotterdam from 2006 to 2013. A mainstreaming strategy enabled announcing

harsh measures related to participation, while focusing on all citizens and not immigrants specifically. This incomplete frame enabled policy-makers to accommodate a broad range of political opinions in the local city councils (cf. Stone 1988; Yanow 1996; Newman & Clarke 2009). This policy strategy appeased the right-wing nationalist opposition that pushed for assimilationist measures, as a multiculturalist or universalist policy definition was not elaborated. The problem definition was left ambiguous. A universalist policy strategy of 'mainstreaming' is a glove that fits a universalist as well as an assimilationist problem definition. Similar to what Stone (1988) and Yanow (1996) have argued, ambiguity allowed policy-makers to placate multiple political actors in a policy controversy. Frame ambiguity is a strategy to deal with and increasingly complex problem context and political controversy.

3.5 Conclusions

Frames in policy are the result of lengthy and thorough processes of political negotiation and bureaucratic labor. While in other disciplines studying, for example, social movement or media frames sometimes incomplete, fluent and ambiguous frames have been described, policy frames are generally perceived to be well elaborated and unambiguous: They consist of a compatible problem definition (what *is*) and policy solution (what *ought to be*), while one frame at a time guides policy action. Policy frames are assumed to be 'strong frames' in the sense that they consist of a uniform, explicit and coherent problem interpretation and policy strategy.

This frame analysis of policy frames related to the intractable policy controversy of local migrant integration problems demonstrates that this is not always the case. I encountered two distinctive forms of frame ambiguity. First, an incoherent problem definition and policy strategy exists. In both cities this entailed an assimilationist problem definition combined with a universalist policy strategy of mainstreaming at a time when the cities were under rule of right-wing nationalist parties. Second, an incomplete frame was encountered consisting of only a universalist policy strategy of mainstreaming while lack-

ing a problem definition. In Antwerp, this can be recognized from 2006–2012 and in Rotterdam between 2006 and 2013. Other forms of frame ambiguity that were not encountered, are thinkable. For example, merely symbolic policies could entail providing a problem definition without elaborating a policy strategy.

Analysis of the local problem and policy context demonstrates that the frame ambiguity is not a result of poor policy-making, but a way out of a deadlock caused by problem complexity (cf. March 1978) and political controversy (cf. Stone 1988). In both cities, the problem context became increasingly complex with a situation of superdiversity and the need for budget cuts. Targeted policies were no longer possible according to the main policy actors, forcing reframing to a generic policy strategy without many benefitting subsidies. Ambiguous policy frames are suitable in such a situation of bounded rationality and limited resources to manage the complex problem context (March 1978; Baumgartner & Jones 1993). Also, the political context became increasingly contested with the emergence and popularity of right-wing nationalist parties and a broadly shared belief that multiculturalist policies had failed. When the right-wing parties came in power, in both cities an assimilationist problem definition was strongly put forward. However, this was combined with a universalist policy strategy of mainstreaming. There is unexpected alignment between these two frame elements. This was a sensible outcome in a situation of political polarization of integration issues (Stone 1988; Yanow 1996).

Overall, a universalist policy strategy was present in all instances of frame ambiguity. As our analysis has shown, this policy strategy became a goal in itself and could be paired with and legitimized from different problem definitions. It proved a glove that fits multiple problem interpretations. This warrants integration researchers that when a mainstreaming policy strategy is encountered, this does not always indicate a coherent universalist policy framing, including the definition of diversity as a benefit. As mainstreaming practices are also popular in other policy fields – including gender policies – policy analysts should be sensitive to frame ambiguity in those fields as well.

Ambiguous frames should not necessarily be interpreted as weak frames, as some literature would presume (cf. Tewksbury & Scheufele 2009). Our analy-

sis shows that in complex policy realities and political controversy, we can speak of a 'strength of weak frames'. Similar to Granovetter's (1973) argument of the 'strength of weak ties', I find that strong and weak frames serve different purposes. Weak frames may not be the most efficient in steering policy action, but can be sensible in situations of uncertainty and successful in compromising between competing information and interests (cf. March 1978; Stone 1988; Yanow 1996). Weak frames enable policy-making in a deadlock. This conclusion with regard to frame ambiguity is similar to what scholars already described to ambiguity in policy language in general (March 1978; Stone 1988). This analysis shows that ambiguity may also exist in the construct of policy frames. These findings contribute to theorization about policy frames and methodologies of policy frame analysis. Sensitivity to frame ambiguity is needed, especially when studying intractable policy controversies.

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4

FRAMING THE IMMIGRATION POLICY AGENDA. A QUALITATIVE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MEDIA COVERAGE AND POLICY RESPONSES OF SIXTEEN INCIDENTS RELATED TO DUTCH IMMIGRATION POLICIES

Abstract

Policy agenda-setting studies usually focus on the correspondence of quantities of media attention with changes on the policy agenda. Recent studies suggest that also taking into account qualitative aspects of media coverage will provide for a more encompassing understanding of policy agenda-setting. This study analyzes media coverage of sixteen focusing events related to Dutch immigration policies – a controversial policy domain that is regularly under media scrutiny. With a qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) design we study what configurations of conditions related to media coverage are associated with changes on the policy agenda. Next to quantity of media attention, we take into account whether the majority of media coverage is contesting the current policy frame and whether the framing in the media is consonant. Our analysis indicates that frame contestation is a necessary condition for policy agenda-setting. Media attention and frame consonance are only relevant indicators of changes on the policy agenda when the majority of media coverage is contesting the current policy frame. Media coverage on focusing events is more likely to be associated with changes on the policy agenda when multiple conditions are present. However, frame consonance is unlikely to go hand in hand with high levels of media attention.

4.1 Introduction

Media attention for public policies is often initiated by focusing events that put policies up for debate. Focusing events are sudden, relatively rare events that spark intense public attention and media attention (Birkland 2011: 116). How media report of policy-related focusing events provides an important form of feedback to processes of public policymaking (Wolfe et al. 2013). Media reports can provide new information on the development of policy issues and the effects of policy measures. As such, media coverage is a form of information by which policies are informed, next to for example official statistics, expert advice and stakeholder lobby. Aside from being an important source of information on policy issues, media coverage informs policymakers on how policy issues are perceived by the public. Media coverage is both formed by and formative of public opinion. Policymakers tend to be responsive to media coverage as they presume its representativeness of public opinion (Walgrave & Van Aelst 2006).

Agenda-setting studies generally agree that the salience attributed to policy issues in the media influences prioritization of these issues on the policy agenda (Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Soroka 2002; Yanovitzki 2002; Tan & Weaver 2009; Melenhorst 2015). Studies however come to different conclusions with regard to the strength of this policy agenda-setting effect (Nowak 2013). Recent studies suggest that the quantity of media attention does not fully account for changes on the policy agenda and that qualitative aspects of the media coverage are contingent factors in policy agenda-setting (Walgrave & Van Aelst 2006; Wolfe et al. 2013). This entails taking into account the 'framing' of the issue in the media. Issue frames concern different interpretations of the issue at hand, leading to different implications with regard to policy consequences (Entman 1993: 52; Rein & Schön 1993: 146). Media frames can support current policies, but also be critical and push for policy change (Wolfe et al. 2013).

Studying such contingent processes of policy agenda-setting by media coverage requires a change in the traditional agenda-setting research designs in three ways. Firstly, we need to take into account the issues frames that are

communicated in media publications. We analyze what types of frames exist around certain issues, whether they agree or disagree with the policy frame and the extent to which media framing is consonant or dissonant. Secondly, we need a broader and more qualitative conceptualization of the agenda-setting effect on the policy agenda. Macro studies usually operationalize quantitative changes in government spending as an indicator of a change in prioritization of issues on the policy agenda (Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Jones and Baumgartner 2005). An agenda-setting effect, particularly concerning specific focusing events, can also take minor forms in terms of changes of the issue frame on the policy agenda. Thirdly, scholars assert that policy agenda-setting by the media is not a linear process but entails complex causal interactions with feedback effects and multiple contingencies (Boydstun 2013; Wolfe et al. 2013). Qualitative aspects of media coverage are likely to interact with quantitative measures of media attention. This should be taken into account in the choice of research design and the assumptions on which it is based.

We focus our study on a specific policy domain which often gains media coverage and around which a multiplicity of frames exists: the policy domain of immigration. Focusing events related to this policy domain are used by policy actors as windows of opportunity to put current policies up for public debate. For example, some policy actors argue in favor of generous policies while others propagate more restrictive immigration laws. We analyzed attention and framing related to sixteen recent immigration-related focusing events in the Netherlands (2011-2015) in the media and on the policy agenda. In order to study the role of framing in policy agenda-setting by the media, we formulated the following research question: *Under what conditions is media coverage for policy issues associated with changes on the policy agenda*? A qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) methodology allows us to study configurational explanations of changes on the policy agenda including qualitative aspects of media attention.

In the following paragraphs we first provide an overview of recent literature on policy agenda-setting that points at a contingency of media-characteristics in this process. Based on this literature we formulate configurational hypotheses on when media coverage will have policy impact. This type of hypotheses

includes multiple characteristics of media coverage. Qualitative comparative analysis demonstrates that media coverage on focusing events is more likely to be associated with policy change when multiple conditions are present. Frame contestation in particular proves to be a necessary condition for policy change. Furthermore, our analysis shows that large amounts of media attention are unlikely to go along with frame consonance. These research findings speak to two research traditions: firstly, research on policy agenda-setting by the media and secondly to literature on media and policy-framing dynamics related to immigration issues.

4.2 Theoretical framework

Policy agenda-setting

An effect of media on public policy is difficult to establish. Firstly, many different forces are at play in the policy process, making it difficult to isolate a media effect. Secondly, correspondence between the media agenda and policy agenda is not necessarily the result of agenda-setting. The policy agenda also influences the media agenda and in some cases external factors cause variation on both agendas independently. Media sometimes lead and sometimes lag policy (Baumgartner & Jones 1993: 125; Wolfe et al. 2013). Studies searching for linear causality have often failed to capture a policy agenda-setting effect by the media. Exchanges between the media agenda and policy agenda should be understood as reciprocal causal interactions with feedback effects and multiple contingencies (Soroka 2002; Wolfe et al. 2013).

Generally, research findings point at an agenda-setting effect of media coverage on the policy agenda. However, findings differ with regard to the strength of this effect and scholars assume that there are contingent factors at play (Eilders 2000: 182; Yanovitzki 2002:445; Soroka 2002; Walgrave & Van Aelst 2006; Wolfe et al. 2013). In policy agenda-setting not only the quantity of media attention is relevant, but also how the issues are interpreted: the issue framing. According to Schön and Rein (1994), divergent framing of the policy issue in the media can lead to frame reflection among policymakers.

The agenda-setting effect that is under scrutiny in this study is therefore not just prioritization of the issue on the policy agenda, but also continuity and change of the issue frame on the policy agenda. As Van Aelst et al. (2014: 204) argue, changes on the substantive policy agenda have a very direct impact on, or *are* policy. This study takes a micro-perspective on policy agenda-setting in which policy change is conceptualized as changes in the issue frame on the policy agenda. We do not take into account the prioritization of immigration policies in relation to other policy domains. Instead, we focus on agenda changes in relation to specific issues, for example changes in policy decisions or implementation that are reflected in changing issue frames on the policy agenda.

Frames are social constructions describing an issue in terms of a specific problem definition, casual rationale and proposed solution (Entman 1993: 52; Rein & Schön 1993: 146). We developed a typology of four 'master-frames' (Snow & Benford 1992) to guide our analysis of the media and policy agenda related to immigration. This analytic framework is issue-specific for immigration issues, but can be applied to various types of cases including frames related to individual immigrants, immigrant groups, the built of asylum centers or policy initiatives. Based on earlier research on framing related to immigration and immigrants, we distinguish a human interest frame, a threat frame, an economic frame, and a managerialist frame (D'Haenens & De Lange 2001; El Refaie 2001; Horsti 2003; Van Gorp 2006; Vliegenthart 2007; Benson 2013).

For each master-frame we operationalized four elements of frames (cf. Entman, 1993; Rein and Schön 1993; Scholten 2011). First, a problem-definition that gives a certain interpretation of the issue at hand. For example, immigration as a valuable addition to society or as an unwelcome threat. Second, a causal narrative of how to explain why the issue arose. For example, circumstances in immigrants' countries of origin, or profitable welfare regimes in the countries of destination. Third, a frame defines one or multiple target groups. These may entail individual immigrants or immigrant groups who are subject of discussion or for example citizens in a municipality hosting a new asylum center. This concerns an attribution of responsibility and blame

(Iyengar 1990; Schneider and Ingram 1993). Fourth and finally, frames include a strategy for solving the issue. For example, more restrictive or liberal immigration policies.

In order to resonate with socially shared cognitive frames of reference, frames include so-called 'framing devices' to communicate the message to the greater audience (Gamson and Modigliani 1989; Van Gorp 2006: 83). Metaphors, catchphrases, examples, visual images and statistics are used to communicate the frame (cf. Edelman 1964; Stone 1988). These framing devices refer to a certain frame of the issue and resonate with interpretive schemata among audiences. Our analysis took into account framing devices referring to our four master-frames. A well-known example is the metaphor of a 'tsunami' of immigrants, appealing to a threat-frame. In some cases only one or two of these elements of frames are outlined in media coverage or in policies. However, based on reasoning devices and framing devices that are present, a frame can be recognized.

Configurational hypotheses

This paper qualitatively explores the contingent role of issue attention and issue framing in the media in policy agenda-setting processes. Based on agenda-setting literature we distinguish a number of factors related to media coverage of policy issues that may contribute to policy agenda-setting. Firstly, the quantity of media attention. This condition is central to most policy agenda-setting research and is expected be an important contribution to an agenda-setting effect. The more media attention and the longer it persists, the higher the likelihood of achieving a policy agenda-setting effect (Baumgartner & Jones 1993).

Secondly, we take into account the relation between the framing in media coverage and the issue frame on the policy agenda. When the majority of framing in media coverage is similar to the issue frame on the policy agenda, we consider there to be 'frame agreement'. When the majority of framing in media coverage is different from the issue frame on the policy agenda, we speak of a situation of 'frame contestation'. In this case, media coverage is predominantly critical toward the current policy frame. Frame contestation is

hypothesized to increase the likelihood of policy change (Boydstun et al. 2014: 178). Information that does not fit the existing policy frame is likely to be ignored at first when it concerns just a minority of coverage (cf. Baumgartner & Jones 1993; Schön & Rein 1994). When a contesting frame comes to dominate the media coverage, it becomes harder to ignore.

Thirdly, we will study whether the framing of the issue in the media is consonant or dissonant (cf. Eilders 2000; Walgrave & Van Aelst 2006). The prevalence of frames in media coverage ranges from domination of one frame (frame consonance) to the coexistence of several frames that are given roughly equal attention (frame dissonance) (Entman 2003b: 418). In case of frame consonance, a frame is dominant throughout a broad selection of media outlets. Van Aelst and Walgrave (2011: 303) hypothesize that while individual media outlets are not very influential as such, mass media are a tremendous force '*when the coverage is consonant across outlets and when the mass media are in 'stampede mode.'*' We thus expect that the media coverage for a case is more likely to be associated with policy change when media coverage is characterized by frame consonance. When a variety of media outlets report on the same issue according to a singular frame over a relatively long time, then media coverage is more likely to influence policy decisions (Eilders 2000; Walgrave & Van Aelst 2006).

In correspondence with our QCA methodology we formulate configurational hypotheses including multiple conditions. First, we expect the three individual conditions described above to correspond positively with policy change and to be mutually reinforcing. We hypothesize that the more conditions are present, the more likely that this is associated with policy change.

H1: The more conditions are present (quantity of media attention, frame contestation and frame consonance), the more likely it is that the case is associated with policy change.

A second hypothesis is that we expect frame contestation to be a necessary but not sufficient condition for policy change. Media attention alone, even

if it is very consonant, will not correspond with policy change when media attention is characterized by frame agreement with the policy frame. On the other hand, we hypothesize that frame contestation in media coverage is not a sufficient condition for policy change. Frame contestation should gain substantial amounts of attention and/or be consonant throughout media coverage in order to correspond with policy change.

H2: Frame contestation is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for policy change.

4.3 Methodology

Data

This study comparatively analyses mass media coverage and the policy agenda related to sixteen immigration cases in the Netherlands that took place between 2011 and 2015 (Table 4.1). These cases were purposefully selected to be heterogeneous in terms of quantity of media attention and type of case. Each case entails a focusing event that generated media coverage (Birkland 2011). Our sample for example includes individual immigrants facing deportation, specific immigrant groups in the Netherlands, the built of asylum centers and new policy initiatives. This heterogeneous selection of focusing events within one policy domain enables us to comparatively analyze cases with different amounts of media attention and generating different frame allocations in media coverage.

We chose the policy domain of immigration because it can be characterized as an 'intractable policy controversy' around which a multiplicity of frames exists (Schön & Rein 1994). This is the case in the Netherlands, similar to many other Western European countries. Focusing events related to immigration are used by policy actors as windows of opportunity to debate current immigration policies. Some policy actors will frame such events as evidence for the success and need of sustaining current policies. Others will frame such focusing events to contest current policies and push for policy change (Wolfe

Table 4.1: Selected cases

Case ID	Label
MAN	Mauro Manuel
DOL	Aleksandr Dolmatov
AHM	Abdul Ghafoor Ahmadzai
BUT	Dennis Butera
ERI	Eritrese asylum seekers
HUN	Hunger strike among asylum seekers in detention center Rotterdam
UGA	LHBT-asylum seekers Uganda
RET	Return of rejected asylum seekers to Rwanda/Burundi
AMS	Rejected asylum seekers residing in Amsterdam 'Vluchtkerk'
ORA	Asylum centre Oranje
IJS	Asylum centre IJsselhallen
CHI	Regulation of reunification asylum children
POL	Complaint website Eastern European immigrants 'Polenmeldpunt'
COD	Ministers' official warning about EU-mobility 'Code Oranje'
PAR	Amnesty for asylum children 'Kinderpardon'
AUP	A new policy for au pairs

et al. 2013: 181). Due to this controversy, immigration issues regularly gain media attention and the policy agenda of this domain has witnessed several major and minor changes (Scholten 2011). These characteristics make the policy domain of immigration a likely case for media impact on the policy agenda (Koch-Baumgartner & Voltmer 2010: 215-224).

For each case, we quantitatively mapped the media attention throughout a selection of Dutch national media outlets over a period of six months. In our sample of media outlets we included the four main national newspapers (Algemeen Dagblad, NRC Handelsblad, Telegraaf, De Volkskrant), three opinion magazines (Elsevier, De Groene Amsterdammer, Vrij Nederland) and six television news and current affairs reports of the public television channels (NOS 20:00 Journaal, Nieuwsuur, EenVandaag, Pauw (en Witteman)/Knevel

en Van den Brink, De Wereld Draait Door, Pownews). This selection includes a large proportion of the Dutch news media with a variety of political and ideological backgrounds (cf. Bakker & Scholten 2014). Dutch media generally operate rather autonomously without partisan alignment and with high internal pluriformity in terms of framing (Boomgaarden & Vliegenthart 2007: 407).

Relevant newspaper and opinion magazine articles were collected from the LexisNexis database including full-text publications. Video files of TV items were collected from the database of the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision. Queries for relevant TV items were made in a database with subtitles of Dutch public television programmes. Boolean search strings were developed for queries in the different databases in order to collect relevant media publications for each case. Different search strings were developed to ensure sensitivity and specificity of the queries for each type of media. For the sixteen cases in total, we collected 1455 media reports including newspaper articles, opinion magazine articles and TV items.

Furthermore, we studied the national Dutch policy agenda of immigration and asylum issues. We analyzed continuity and change in policy decisions and implementation by collecting letters from the government to parliament related to our cases. A focus on cases within a policy domain and operationalizing policy change as a change in policy framing of the issue makes for a feasible research design. Scholars have argued that analyzing full legislative change is difficult as the 'issue attention cycle' of the media is much shorter than the workings of bureaucracy (cf. Downs 1972; Walgrave & Van Aelst 2006; Koch-Baumgartner & Voltmer 2010). This makes it difficult to relate agenda changes back to media coverage that probably has long vanished. We overcome this by analyzing changes on a micro scale in issue frames on the policy agenda.

Relevant policy documents were collected via a designated website by the Dutch government ('zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl'). Based on similar Boolean queries, we collected data on developments on the policy agenda from the start of each case until one year after that date (N= 49). This extended time period in comparison to our collection of media coverage ensures taking into account later changes on the policy agenda due to a lag in time. A

minimum six months to maximum one-year lag time is sufficient to follow changes in issue framing (Nowak 2013).

Methods

Guided by our analytic framework of four master-frames we conducted frame analysis of the collected media content. We assume that a limited number of possible frames of immigration issues exists that can be promoted in media attention and policy communication addressing the issue. We furthermore assume that in most communication, one dominant frame will prevail, even though the issue can be portrayed from different viewpoints and by different actors in one message. As frames resonate with cognitive structures, one cannot approach an issue from multiple frames at once (Van Hulst & Yanow 2015).

In a first round of coding we specified for each case what frames were present in the media coverage and how they relate to our four master-frames. We coded all media content in ATLAS.ti based on reasoning devices (problem definition, causal reasoning, target group and proposed solution) and framing devices (Metaphors, catchphrases, visual images, statistics and comparisons/ examples). This way, we established a maximum of four most prevalent frames in media coverage per case and we defined them in relation to our typology of master-frames. In some cases, multiple case-specific frames relating to one master-frame exist. In a second round of coding, we annotated each piece of media content based on the dominant framing of the message according to the operationalization of the case-specific frames. Publications in which multiple frames were present without one being dominant and publications in which the framing was unclear, were coded as such. Likewise, the dominant issue framing in policy-letters to parliament was coded.

The validity of frame analysis of media content was safeguarded by inter-coder reliability tests of a sample of media publications. After an initial round of coding, this was 0.6 which is considered to be an acceptable rate in social sciences. This first inter coder reliability test was used to increase the convergent validity (Friese 2012:111) by establishing new coding rules after

discussion of coding differences. Inter coder reliability based on these new rules was 0.9.

In order to establish to what extent different aspects of media coverage were relevant conditions in explaining changes on the policy agenda, we used the method of Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) (Ragin 1987; Rihoux & Ragin 2009; Schneider & Wagemann 2012). This method allows us to systematically compare characteristics of cases and uncover patterns in this data. It is a suitable method to compare a relatively small number of cases, usually 5 to 50. The aspects on which the cases are compared are named 'conditions' and combinations of conditions are 'configurations'. Next to analyzing configurational explanations, an additional advantage is that the method goes beyond linear notions of causality by assuming equifinality and multifinality (Verweij & Gerrits 2012: 27). This entails taking into account that different conditions can produce similar outcomes, and that the same condition can produce different outcomes in different contexts (or configurations). This fits our theoretical assumption that policy agenda-setting by the media is not a linear causal process but entails complex causal interactions (Boydstun 2013; Wolfe et al. 2013).

The outcome that is studied in this research is change in the issue frame on the policy agenda. We study such policy change in relation to three conditions related to media coverage: the quantity of media attention, frame consonance and frame contestation (Table 4.2). We operationalized these conditions in

Table 4.2: Operationalization of conditions for analysis

Outcome: Policy change	Change in issue frame on the policy agenda within a period of maximum 1 year after initiation of media coverage of the case.
Media attention	Over 100 publications in our selection of newspapers, opinion magazines and TV programmes within 6 months after the onset of media coverage of the case.
Frame contestation	When the framing of over 50% of media coverage is different from the initial issue frame on the policy agenda.
Frame consonance	When one frame is dominant in over 50% of all media publication.

terms of presence or absence of each condition in the case and conduct 'crisp set' QCA (Table 4.2). We used specialized software package 'Tosmana' (<u>To</u>ol for <u>Sma</u>ll-<u>N</u> <u>A</u>nalysis) for the analysis (Cronqvist 2011).

The strength of QCA lies in not only simplifying the richness of cases in terms of conditions, but also re-interpreting the results of the QCA in terms of the specific case-characteristics. The process of QCA can be visualized as an hourglass. First, in-depth qualitative analysis of the cases collects a large and rich body of data on each case. Second, QCA entails a reduction of the complexity by summarizing the cases on relevant conditions and the outcomes and looking for patterns of co-occurrences (configurations) that are compared to configurational hypotheses. Other than quantitative methodologies, QCA does not strive for full explanation and significant correlation of certain conditions with the outcome. Instead residual complexity and exceptional 'black swan' cases are assumed to be present and used for more in-depth interpretation of the findings.

4.4 Results

Dynamics of interaction between immigration frames on the policy agenda and in media coverage

The Dutch policy agenda initially frames the majority of cases as managerialist (11 of 16 cases). This policy frame is often explicitly communicated in cases concerning individual immigrants (MAN, AHM, BUT), specific immigrant groups (HUN, AMS, CHI) or new asylum locations (ORA, IJS). This frame maintains a depoliticized and pragmatic approach toward immigration issues. It considers certain rules and regulations related to immigration as necessary and justified. The central argument is that to be able to accommodate immigrants, the government needs to be selective in who may enter and in the services that are provided. This frame furthermore argues that each rule creates cases that do not match the rules. This however does not mean that the rules should be bent in each case. '*A rule is a rule*', it is argued. Pragmatic

policy measures are proposed which are judged based on effectiveness instead of moral implications.

In the remaining five cases the policy agenda is initially characterized by a human interest (3 cases) or threat frame (2 cases). These cases mostly concern policy initiatives by the government. A human interest or threat frame is used to politically motivate the proposed policy change. This is for example the case with the influx of large numbers of EU workers to the Netherlands (COD), the new regulation for au pairs (AUP) or the proposal for more lenient treatment of asylum requests of Ugandan gay immigrants (UGA). Immigration and asylum are framed as a threat in relation to proposals for stricter regulations and framed as issues of human interest in relation to proposals for more lenient immigration policies.

Media coverage of each case included a multiplicity of frames of which the dominant frame was different over various types of cases. In nine of sixteen cases, mostly cases of individual immigrants or specific immigrant groups, a human interest frame dominates in media coverage. In most cases when a human interest frame was dominant in media coverage the government is faced with public attention and mobilization around issues that were not (high) on its agenda yet. The human interest frame is propagated in the media by the lawyers of the immigrants, politicians, NGO's, or others supporting immigrants and pushing for policy attention and change. This frame asserts that in these specific cases immigrants are treated unjustly as a result of restrictive immigration rules. The policies and government officials have no eye for unique circumstances in the case that require attention. This frame calls for a special – more lenient – treatment in these cases or for more generous policies towards immigrants in general.

For example in the case of the hunger strike in Rotterdam, asylum seekers in detention and organizations supporting them put current regulations up for debate by gathering media attention for the living situation of asylum seekers in detention. These actors promoted a human interest frame of the situation: 'placing rejected asylum seekers under custody is inhumane'. At the same time, the government met this critique with a managerialist response:

'the current regulation is necessary and the hunger strike is sabotaging the rules'.

When a managerialist policy frame is contested by media coverage dominated by a human interest frame, a 'David versus Goliath' dynamic emerges (cf. Ihlen & Thorbjørnsrud 2014). This co-occurrence of frames reinforces the image of a powerless individual fighting a ruthless 'system' and is in the disadvantage of the policy frame. In many cases, this led to changes on the policy agenda. For example in the case of Dennis Butera, the State Secretary initially decided that Dennis should leave the Netherlands for his family's country of origin Kenia. The case gained media attention when this decision was challenged by local support from his school, friends and neighbours. They framed the government's decision as having no eye for individual circumstances, while Dennis himself was portrayed as a boy who deserves to stay in the Netherlands. Eventually the policy decision changed and the State Secretary granted Dennis a residence permit.

When the cases were more abstract, entailing not specific individuals or groups but anonymous categories or (policy) initiatives, a managerialist frame generally dominated in media coverage of cases (5 of 16 cases). In some cases, the managerialist frame was introduced in the media by government actors and gained broader support in media coverage. In other cases, a managerialist policy frame was met with a managerialist counter-frame in the media by policy actors contesting the policy frame. In these latter cases, policy initiatives were not objected altogether based on moral reasons (e.g. by using a contesting human interest or threat frame), but policy actors negotiated the policy frame on its own terms. A dynamic of negotiation emerged. This was for example the case with the asylum center in Oranje and with the new regulations for international au pairs. The managerialist counter-frame put the feasibility of the initiatives up for discussion and proposed changes to the proposed regulation. An economic frame was an important side-discussion in media coverage of a number of cases, but was not dominant in media coverage of any of the cases, nor on the policy agenda.

In nine of the sixteen cases in total, the dominant frame in the media coverage was contesting the initial policy frame. This indicates that models

of agenda-setting maintaining that media coverage primarily follows the government agenda do not hold when it comes to framing of specific issues. Alternative frames overshadowed the policy frame in media coverage of these cases. The following section describes the results of our QCA of when media attention for immigration and asylum cases is associated with policy change.

Conditionality of policy agenda-setting by the media

In nine of sixteen cases, the policy frame remained the same over one year after the onset of media attention for the cases. We understand this as no agenda-setting effect having taken place. In seven of the sixteen cases, the framing of the issue on the policy agenda changed within a period of one year after the onset of the issue. This includes four cases of individual asylum seekers, one case of an asylum center and two cases concerning policy proposals. We understand this as the occurrence of an agenda-setting effect, however it is important to note that this cannot be directly ascribed to media coverage of the case. In some cases, a media influence was evident because it was explicitly recognized, but in most cases the causes of agenda change remained implicit.

Based on QCA we analyzed what configurations of media-conditions correspond with policy frame shifts. We used the QCA configurations as a first step toward more in-depth comparative analysis of the cases. Based on literature of agenda-setting by the media, we hypothesized that three characteristics of media coverage of policy-related focusing events will play a mutually reinforcing role in stipulating a policy agenda-setting effect. First, the quantitative scale of media attention, second whether or not the majority of media framing is contesting the current policy frame and third whether or not the framing of media attention is consonant. The data matrix below (table 4.3) shows how our cases scored on these conditions.

According to the QCA methodology, we organized these cases over the logically possible configurations in a so-called 'truth table'. Our truth table has 8 logically possible configurations (2^3). Each configuration is presented as a row (Table 4.4). We minimized the truth table by pairwise comparison of the configurations that agree on the outcome and differ in but one other condition (Ragin 1987). This entails logically summarizing the information

Table 4.3: Data matrix 'Policy change' and three conditions (crisp set)

Case ID	Media attention (1=Large)	Frame contestation (1=Yes)	Frame consonance (1=Yes)	Policy change (1=Yes)
MAN	1	1	0	1
DOL	1	1	0	1
AHM	0	1	1	1
BUT	0	1	1	1
ORA	0	1	0	1
PAR	0	1	0	1
AUP	0	1	1	1
ERI	1	0	0	0
UGA	0	0	0	0
RET	0	0	1	0
AMS	1	1	0	0
IJS	0	0	0	0
HUN	0	1	1	0
CHI	0	1	1	0
POL	1	1	0	0
COD	0	0	1	0

by restatement of information that is contained in the truth table in terms of a proposition or sets of propositions. The results are reported in Table 4.5. Contradictory configurations are not included in this minimization process but are described as such.

As assumed within QCA methodology, the configurations resulting from the analysis do not provide unanimous support for our hypotheses. Instead they reflect the complexity of empirical reality and provide a first step toward more in-depth comparative analysis of the cases, reconnecting with the rich empirical data.

Table 4.4: Truth table policy change according to conditions media attention, frame contestation and frame consonance (C=Contradictory row; R= Logical remainder)

Media attention (MA)	Frame contestation (FT)	Frame consonance (FS)	Policy change (PC)	Cases
0	1	0	1	ORA; PAR
1	0	0	0	ERI
0	0	0	0	UGA; IJS
0	0	1	0	RET; COD
1	1	0	C	MAN; DOL; AMS; POL
0	1	1	C	AHM; BUT; CHI; AUP; HUN
1	1	1	R	-
1	0	1	R	-

Table 4.5: QCA minimization results (lower case= absence of condition; *=AND; +=OR)

Outcome (PC)	Configuration	N
C	MA*FT*fs + ma*FT*FS	9
1	ma*FT*fs	2
0	ft*FS + ma*ft	5

The configurations indicate that cases characterized by more than one of our media-conditions are more likely to correspond with frame change on the policy agenda. This supports the first configurational hypothesis of our study. None of our cases scored 1 on all three conditions, but cases with two conditions present are more likely to correspond with policy change than cases in which zero or only one conditions were present. The hypothesis that the three conditions are mutually reinforcing is however not fully supported. The logical remaining configurations indicate an important exception: frame consonance is unlikely to correspond with large amounts of media attention. This finding

can be understood by literature on news values and media logic asserting that controversial issues are more likely to receive media attention as a focus on conflict is an important news value and media format (cf. Semetko & Valkenburg 2000). Controversy around the issue will be reflected in dissonant media framing and will usually gain large degrees of media attention.

The second hypothesis assumes frame contestation to be a necessary but not sufficient condition for policy change. This hypothesis is also partly confirmed by the analysis. In all cases corresponding with policy change, the condition of frame contestation was present. This coverage score indicates that frame contestation is a necessary condition in configurations associated with policy change. The cases of the asylum center in Oranje and the amnesty regulation for asylum children indicate that frame contestation alone is also associated with policy change. This suggests that frame contestation is a sufficient condition for policy change. However, unique to these cases is that the policy change which took place was motivated by related issues as well. For example, the amnesty regulation was already proposed in the earlier case of Mauro Manuel. In the case of the asylum center in Oranje, issue linkages were made with other small municipalities that were asked to host relatively large numbers of asylum seekers. This mobilized broader media coverage in support of policy change. Thus, an important contextualization of this finding is that issue linkage and broader media attention was necessary for these cases to have an impact. Therefore we would not conclude that frame contestation was a sufficient condition for policy in these cases. Due to issue linkages with related cases, the amounts of media attention are actually higher.

Reconnecting the QCA results to the findings of our in-depth case analyses, two types of cases can be distinguished that are usually associated with policy change and two types of cases that usually are not associated with policy change. First of all, there are cases with large quantities of media attention in combination with contestation of the policy frame (MAN, DOL). As explained in the previous paragraph, the cases of the asylum center in Oranje (ORA) and the amnesty for asylum children (PAR) can also be considered to be part of this group. The two cases concerning individual immigrants were in the

media for weeks with new developments in the case leading to new coverage and alternative issue frames. The framing of the cases was not consonant. For example in the case of Aleksandr Dolmatov, a research report was published that led to a shift in the prevalence of media frames. In the case of Mauro Manuel, political developments shed a new light on the case. Furthermore, the long duration of media attention for these cases also required media to invite alternative opinions to the debate. As pointed out before, frame consonance in combination with large amounts of media attention was not encountered in any of the cases and does not seem to uphold within the media logic of striving for adversary coverage and looking to report on new information on the case.

A second type of cases that can be distinguished gains less media attention, but frame contestation occurred in combination with a high degree of frame consonance (AHM, BUT, AUP). This configuration of conditions generally corresponds with policy change as well. In our research, there are two cases of individual immigrants and one case of a policy proposal characterized by this configuration. In these cases, powerful coalitions of stakeholders pushed for a change in policy decisions. This contestation not only existed within media but also other lobby channels were used. In case of the individual immigrants Abdul Ghafoor Ahmadzai and Dennis Butera, public support in combination with civil society actors and political actors made for a strong opposing coalition. In case of the proposal for a new regulation for international au pairs, families hosting au pairs next to an employers' organization and political parties from the opposition shared a frame contesting the frame by which the new regulation was proposed. This group of cases indicates that large amounts of media attention for a case are not a necessary condition for policy change to occur. A consonant counter-frame, brought forward by a strong coalition of stakeholders in the media can be effective – likely in combination with other lobby channels.

Third, we can distinguish a group of 'black swan' cases which are characterized by similar conditions as the cases in group 1 and 2, but are not associated with policy change. This first group includes the cases of Vluchtkerk and Polenmeldpunt (AMS, POL), which are characterized by high levels of media attention and frame contestation but are lacking consonance. Secondly, this

includes the cases 'hunger strike by asylum seekers in detention' and 'family reunification of children of asylum seekers' (HUN, CHI). What sets these four cases apart is that – even when a human interest frame was dominant – the subjects of discussion did not acquire a consistent image as victims in the debate. The absence of consonant media framing in combination with political support for current policies created a situation in which the policy frame became highly contested, but policy change eventually did not occur. The in-depth analysis of the cases suggests that the political playing field is an important intervening factor in policy agenda-setting by the media. Political controversy around issues can prevent media framing from becoming consonant and political actors need to be mobilized for policy change.

Fourth and lastly we can distinguish a group of cases in which frame contestation was absent and which are not associated with policy change (ERI, COD, RET, UGA, IJS). Even though some of the cases gained large quantities of media attention (for example the case of Eritrean asylum seekers), they did not lead up to policy change. All five cases concern policy proposals or public statements of Ministers. Some proposals were legitimized with a human interest or threat frame (Code oranje, Eritrean asylum seekers, Ugandese gay asylum seekers) while others were presented as managerialist (Asylum centre in IJsselhallen, Return migration to Rwanda and Burundi). The cases have in common that the policy frames by which they were introduced in the media did not become contested and remained dominant throughout media coverage. The actor that is able to first frame the focusing event, is often able to maintain the upper hand in the framing of the media coverage. This group of cases once more indicates that frame contestation is a necessary condition for policy change.

4.5 Conclusions

Scholars of political communication and policy sciences generally find that media coverage of policy-related focusing events is an important factor in policy agenda-setting. They however come to different conclusions with regard to the strength of this effect. Recent studies suggest that in addition to

quantitative measures of media attention, qualitative aspects of media coverage – related to framing of the issue – are relevant conditions in achieving a policy agenda-setting effect. In order to achieve a more encompassing understanding of policy agenda-setting dynamics by the media, this study applied a QCA design to examine how configurations of quantitative and qualitative aspects of media coverage associate with changes on the policy agenda. This study took into account whether media coverage predominantly promoted a frame that was different from the initial policy frame (frame contestation) and whether the media coverage was unitary in promoting a single issue frame (frame consonance).

We studied the policy agenda and media coverage on sixteen focusing events related to the policy domain of immigration. In the Netherlands, similar to many other Western European countries, immigration is a highly controversial policy domain. This implies that focusing events related to this domain regularly gain media coverage, that media coverage often is characterized by a multiplicity of issue frames and that frame shifts on the policy agenda occur frequently. Our frame analysis of media coverage and the policy agenda is based on a typology of four immigration related master-frames: a human interest frame, a threat frame, a managerialist frame and an economic frame.

In qualitative comparative analysis of the conditions under which media coverage is associated with changes on the policy agenda, we addressed two configurational hypotheses. Firstly, we hypothesized that media attention, frame contestation and frame consonance of media coverage are mutually reinforcing determinants of policy change: the more conditions present, the more likely policy change becomes. Secondly, we hypothesized that frame contestation is a necessary condition for policy change: without frame contestation, high levels of media attention and frame consonance will not correspond with policy change. Our findings support these hypotheses: in cases with two conditions present, changes of the issue frame on the policy agenda was more likely to occur and especially frame contestation proved a necessary condition for policy change. An important additional finding is that in none of the cases all three conditions of media coverage were present. This is the case because large amounts of media attention and frame consonance

are not likely to co-occur: issues with a variety of competing frames are more likely to keep media engaged as a focus on conflict is an important news value and media format.

The dominant frame in media coverage was contesting the initial policy frame in a majority of cases. Our frame analysis demonstrates that there are specific dynamics by which policy frames and counter-frames of immigration address each other. Related to cases of individual immigrants or specific immigrant groups, generally a human interest dominates in media coverage. When this frame opposes a managerialist policy frame, a 'David versus Goliath' dynamic emerges (cf. Ihlen & Thorbjørnsrud 2014). Related to more abstract cases, entailing not specific individuals or groups but abstract issues or (policy) initiatives, a managerialist frame generally dominates media coverage. When this is contested by a managerialist policy frame, this initiates a dynamic of 'negotiation'.

As usual in QCA, there were notable exceptions to the general patterns that were encountered. The configurations resulting from QCA were used as a starting point for the re-interpretation of the in-depth qualitative data of the cases. Furthermore, cases associated with a contradictory policy outcome shed light on additional factors that were relevant in explaining the relation between media and policy change. Firstly, frame promotion by a strong coalition of policy stakeholders in the media proved important. These stakeholders were using media besides other lobby channels to influence the policy agenda. Furthermore, the role of the political 'vestibule' to policy change should not be underestimated. Political actors were often present as sources in contesting media coverage. They made issues public via the media in order to gain support for their policy alternative. Also, parliamentary debate was often an intermediary step to policy change. Lastly, the stability of the government coalition behind the current policies was an important factor in policy agenda-setting.

The findings of this study speak to two literatures: firstly, research on policy agenda-setting by the media. It demonstrates that qualitative characteristics of media coverage are important to take into account in future policy agenda-setting studies, in particular whether the dominant framing of the issue in

the media is contesting the current policy frame. Secondly, the findings of this study speak to research on media and policy-framing dynamics related to immigration issues. It gives insight in the prevalence of dominant frames in media coverage related to various immigration cases and shows that certain patterns of interaction exist between frames in media coverage and frames on the policy agenda. This qualitative case study design allows for theoretical generalization to similar settings. We believe that the conclusions on media coverage and policy agenda-setting related to immigration issues can be generalized toward other controversial policy domains, for example environmental or health policies, within democratic systems with relatively autonomous media.

5

THE FRAMING OF MEDIA COVERAGE AS POLICY FEEDBACK. MEDIA FRAMING PRACTICES OF POLICY ENTREPRENEURS RELATED TO IMMIGRATION POLICY

Abstract

This article studies the practices that policy entrepreneurs develop to influence media-framing of policy issues as a form of policy feedback. We ask how and why policy entrepreneurs develop specific framing practices in the media to promote positive and negative feedback toward policy frames. Through a qualitative embedded case study of sixteen cases of media attention in relation to immigration policy in the Netherlands, we analyse media framing practices by various policy entrepreneurs. We conclude that besides their authoritative position, their feedback aims are an important explanation of their use of framing practices and eventually their media influence.

5.1 Introduction

Media coverage of policy issues plays an important role in policy processes (Baumgartner & Jones 1993; Wolfe et al. 2013). It can put new issues on the policy agenda and push for policy alternatives, but it can also ignore alternative issues and issue interpretations and be essential to the survival of a policy status quo. As such, media coverage is an important form of feedback on policies, particularly in policy domains dealing with intractable policy controversies (cf. Schön & Rein 1994). One such policy domain is that of immigration and asylum which in recent years was in the centre of public attention in Western Europe. Policy entrepreneurs are increasingly aware of the pressure that media put on the policy process and they have adapted their professional behaviour to this mediatized environment (Klijn et al. 2014; Schillemans & Pierre 2016). By having a voice in media coverage, policy entrepreneurs gain power in policy processes (Tresch 2009; Kunelius & Reunanen 2012; Korthagen 2015). Managing media coverage has become an integral part of the policy process. This research article connects literature on media logic and framing of media coverage to that of policy dynamics and studies how various actors in the policy process engage in different framing practices.

Policies and media publications alike inevitably approach policy issues from a certain issue frame (Van Hulst & Yanow 2015). This gives an interpretation to the issue and its causes and also promotes a course of action to resolve the issue (Entman 1993; Schön & Rein 1994). Usually, multiple frames of an issue will be present throughout media coverage. To influence media coverage in favour of a specific issue frame, policy entrepreneurs use a variety of '*framing practices'* to communicate their frame toward the media. Framing practices make one's issue frame fit media logic and news values of news media (cf. Altheide & Snow 1979; Gans 1979; Harcup & O'Neill 2001). This includes for example providing images and catchphrases that support one's frame or stressing the expertise of actors supporting this frame. Framing practices stress the validity of a certain issue frame while at the same time diverting attention from or actively discrediting alternative frames. Because media framing influences public attitudes on policy issues, media are a suitable plat-

form for mobilization of bias (Schattschneider 1960). If policy entrepreneurs are able to gain media attention for their frame of the issue, they can swing momentum to their side and exercise pressure on the policy process (Tresch 2009: 68). This is done via traditional mass media, but increasingly also via social media (McKenna 2007).

The framing of policy issues in media coverage can relate to policy frames in two ways (Baumgartner & Jones 2002). On the one hand, media framing can exercise positive feedback by challenging the current policy frame and creating momentum for policy change toward an alternative issue frame. On the other hand, media framing can publicly legitimize current policies and thereby support a policy status quo. In this case, media framing decreases public attention for political conflict and policy alternatives. Elaborating on this distinction, we differentiate in policy entrepreneurs' use of various framing practices in the media. Usually, media framing practices are connected to the authoritative position of the policy entrepreneur (Shehata 2010; Hopmann et al. 2011). It is assumed that less authoritative actors have to rely more on framing practices in order to gain media coverage for their message than authoritative actors.

This study aims to develop a more thorough insight in how and why the media framing practices of policy entrepreneurs differ by distinguishing the feedback that these actors wish to exercise toward a policy frame (positive or negative feedback). We will study this by addressing the following research question: *How and why do policy entrepreneurs develop specific framing practices in the media to promote positive and negative feedback to policy frames*? We study this in a qualitative embedded case study of sixteen cases of media coverage for policy issues within one policy domain: immigration. This policy domain makes a suitable case because it can be characterized as an intractable policy controversy. This entails that the current policy frame is highly contested and that policy change occurs relatively frequently (Schön & Rein 1994; Scholten 2011). Each case constitutes a 'focusing event' that policy entrepreneurs used as a window of opportunity mobilize attention for a certain issue frame (Birkland 1998).

The following section of this article introduces relevant literature on the influence of policy entrepreneurs on media coverage. We develop a typology

of five framing practices that was used in as an analytic framework in qualitative content analysis of media coverage. These framing practices were operationalised to capture coalitions of entrepreneurs pushing both positive and negative feedback toward the current policy frame. In the results section of the article we describe how the use of certain framing practices corresponds with these two types of feedback. Finally, we conclude that the feedback aims of policy entrepreneurs (positive of negative feedback) is an important explanatory factor in policy entrepreneurs' use of framing practices and eventually their media influence. Next to the authoritative position of policy entrepreneurs, this factor should be taken into account in future studies of media influence.

5.2 Media framing as policy feedback

Whenever an incident or event takes place, policy entrepreneurs aim to spark or suppress media attention for this event and attribute a specific meaning to the event in accordance with their issue frame (Gans 1979; Birkland 1998). Kingdon (1984) describes policy entrepreneurs as actors that hold specific 'solutions' and lie waiting for the problems to connect them to. Policy entrepreneurs can thus be conceptualized as idea- and interest-driven actors that seek to influence policy in a specific direction (Mintrom & Vergari 1996). As John (1999) states, this does not necessarily always mean rational action. Sometimes policy entrepreneurship involves trial-and-error learning, networking and ideas brokerage that often make the outcome of entrepreneurship difficult to predict.

Policy entrepreneurs can contribute to the framing of policy issues in the media by acting as sources of information or by writing contributions themselves. According to Cook (2006: 162) policy actors are 'co-authors of the news', while the media are important gatekeepers in deciding who gets coverage (Cook 1998; Patterson 2000). As such, media have an important role structuring policy debate (Callaghan & Schnell 2001). Social media have also become important venues of policy discussion. They do not involve gate-

keeping practices of journalists and editors, but come with other challenges for effectively communicating one's frame and reaching a large public (Van Dijck 2013; McKenna 2007). Studies indicate that there are many intermedia exchanges between mass media and social media (Vliegenthart & Walgrave 2008).

Thus far, the influence of policy entrepreneurs on the framing of media coverage has been mainly explained by their authoritative position. It is argued that actors with a more authoritative position have more influence over media coverage, assuming that they less require the use of framing practices. This is also referred to as the 'incumbency bonus' (Hopmann et al. 2011) or the 'official dominance thesis' (Shehata 2010). The bias toward the views and acts of authoritative officials is rooted in journalistic norms of democratic accountability (Bennett 1996; Shoemaker & Reese 1996; Shehata 2010; Hopmann et al. 2011). What more authoritative actors say and do is inherently more relevant to media (Berkowitz 1992; Tresch 2009). Furthermore, government organizations are very effective in 'selling' their message to the media and managing their public relations (PR) (Cook 1998; Ihlen et al. 2015). PR officials make information easily accessible and attractive to media, for example by publishing press releases, organizing press conferences or press events (Gandy 1982).

Elite models of media influencing therefore assert that political and administrative elites face few constraints to influence media coverage according their frame (Druckman 2001; Callaghan & Schnell 2001; Tresch 2009). The extent to which less authoritative actors are able to influence media coverage is disputed. The indexing hypothesis developed by Bennett (1996) asserts that under regular circumstances, the diversity of media frames is limited to those of governmental and political elites. Alternative frames can only emerge in media coverage once they are already circulating in the institutional policy process. This hypothesis does not expect non-authoritative policy entrepreneurs to have a direct influence on media coverage.

For our analysis we build on a model in which also policy entrepreneurs outside the institutional policy process can influence media coverage. The cascade model (Entman 2003a; 2003b) depicts the ability of a variety of policy

actors to influence media frames as a cascade. The cascade model maintains that framing of media coverage is primarily influenced by authoritative actors from government or politics. However – analogue to cascades - on lower levels of authority, frames can create 'splashback' in the form of alternative frames. These frames that are alternative to the official frame of the administration can move up in the cascade and influence media coverage, even though this is a more arduous process. '*Frames moving downward in a cascade is relatively easy, but spreading ideas higher, from lower levels to upper, requires extra energy, - a pumping mechanism, so to speak.*' (2003b: 420). One such pumping mechanism would be the use of framing practices to promote one's frame by adhering to news values and media logic.

Prior studies of immigration coverage outline several policy entrepreneurs who influence media coverage. Benson & Wood (2015) found that related to irregular immigration in the US, Norway and France , indeed government sources are quoted the most. Ihlen et al. (2015) come to the same finding and explain this by the professionalized PR-organizations of the government department dealing with immigration. Hänggli & Kriesi (2010) found in their study of the Swiss context that societal interest groups and organizations are often cited in the media as well. Studies indicate that pro-immigration organisations are cited more often than those who promote more restrictive immigration policies (Benson 2013; Figenschou & Beyer 2014). Furthermore, immigrants themselves are sometimes able to frame immigration issues in the media, especially in coverage emphasizing a human interest frame of immigration (Figenschou & Thorbjørnsrud 2015). Lastly, private citizens are known to contribute to media framing of immigration issues, for example in letters to the editor or when they are asked about their opinion as 'voxpop'.

The use of framing practices can explain instances in which also less authoritative policy entrepreneurs gain media coverage for their issue frames – which are sometimes contesting the issue framing of government elites. We connect literature on media framing to that of policy feedback in order to develop a typology of framing practices that serves as an analytic framework in our analysis. Framing practices function as a double edged sword: they help to promote one's own frame while at the same time containing media attention

to other frames (Baumgartner & Jones 1993; Rochefort & Cobb 1994). From a social constructivist perspective, we assume frames not to be interchangeable opinions, but interpretations which are structured by larger social schemata of interpretation (Yanow & Van Hulst 2015). Therefore, frames are relatively stable to actors as frame reflection is difficult and relatively rare (Schön & Rein 1994). Framing practices of communicating one's frame in the media are more subject to agency of policy entrepreneurs. Policy entrepreneurs are able to selectively use examples or engage in practices to gain in support of their frame.

First there is the **use of framing devices** for framing or reframing. Framing devices are rhetorical structures which communicate a frame by calling upon certain general beliefs and cultural stereotypes. Because they resonate with public knowledge, they adhere to media logic as well. We conceptualize framing devices as signifying elements which are based on more fixed cognitive structures of the frame and make a frame communicable through the media. Various framing devices can be distinguished of which the most prominent are metaphors, catchphrases, examples/hyperboles, statistics and visualizations (Gamson & Modigliani 1989: 3-4; Pan & Kosicki 1993: 59-64; Van Gorp 2006: 83). Critical discussion and debunking of framing devices connected to other frames is used as a practice of reframing. This involves attempts to rebut or undermine alternative frames by addressing the information and underlying assumptions contained within these frames (Boscarino 2015: 6).

Second, we distinguish practices of **emphasizing obtrusiveness or unobtrusiveness** of the issue in alignment with one's issue frame. Obtrusiveness entails the likeliness of citizens to directly experience the policy issue (Soroka 2002). Personalizing and dramatizing rather abstract issues or events are practices of emphasizing issue obtrusiveness (Patterson 2000). Emphasizing unobtrusiveness on the other hand, involves making issues seem distant, abstract or incidental. It frames the issue to be unassuming for the daily lives of citizens. These practices of emphasizing obtrusiveness or unobtrusiveness can enhance one's own frame, while discrediting rival frames by implying that alternative frames are exaggerating or underestimating the issue at hand.

Thirdly, there are practices of **calling upon actor expertise**. This practice emphasizes the expertise of certain actors in order to legitimize one's frame. This can be done by pointing at professional qualifications, but also stressing knowledge from personal experience. Toward a rival frame, this framing practice entails discrediting actor's expertise: questioning the reputation and legitimacy of opponents in the debate (Boscarino 2015; Hänggli & Kriesi 2010). This involves 'ad hominem' argumentation and revealing underlying interests of opposing actors in the debate.

Fourth, we distinguish acts of **mobilization and suppression of public attention and support.** The organization of events to mobilize the attention and support of others is considered an important practice of promoting one's frame (Shoemaker & Reese 1996; Terkildsen et al. 1998). Mobilization may include petitioning, demonstrations, social media campaigns and advertising celebrity endorsements. The opposing act is to suppress public attention and support for alternative frames. This can be done by non-response or externalization. The first practice entails ignoring certain alternative issue frames. The second practice entails externalization of attention toward other issues. When policy entrepreneurs ignore the claims of others and try to direct the media attention toward their own frame, they engage in 'non-contradictory argumentation' (Baumgartner & Jones 1993). When this practice is employed by all sides in the debate, this behaviour results in 'dual framing' (Chong & Druckman 2013: 2) or a 'dialogue of the deaf' (Jenkins-Smith & Sabatier 1993: 48).

Fifth and lastly, we distinguish **venue-shopping** as a media framing practice (Baumgartner & Jones 1993). This involves defining certain institutional arenas (for example national governments, local governments, certain government agencies, parliament or court) that should be responsible for dealing with the issue. 'Vertical venue shopping' takes place when issues are brought to higher or lower levels of government. Creating issue connection with other issues and affected groups in order to address other policy domains as venues can be considered as an act of 'horizontal venue shopping'(Princen 2009; Jones & Jenkins-Smith 2009: 42). What institutional venues fit expansion of attention for one's own issue frame, depends on the institutional structure

of a country. For example, 'upscaling' an issue to the supranational level does for example not necessarily mean an act of attributing more salience to the issue and exercising positive feedback. It can also be a way to divert national attention for the issue because accountability is placed with an external government body.

5.3 Methodology

This article describes an embedded case study of sixteen focusing events related to immigration policy in the Netherlands that gained media attention in the period between 2011 and 2015 (Table 1). These cases were purposefully selected to be heterogeneous in terms of quantity of media attention and type of focusing event. Our sample includes cases of individual immigrants, specific

Table 5.1: Selected cases

Repatriation of Mauro Manuel
Suicide rejected asylum seeker Aleksandr Dolmatov in detention
Asylum request of military interpreter Abdul Ghafoor Ahmadzai
Repatriation of Dennis Butera
Increase in numbers of Eritrean asylum seekers
Hunger strike among asylum seekers in detention center Rotterdam
Acceptance LHBT-asylum seekers from Uganda
Return of rejected asylum seekers to Rwanda/Burundi
Rejected asylum seekers residing in Amsterdam 'Vluchtkerk'
Initiation of asylum centre in Oranje
Initiation of asylum centre in the IJsselhallen
Regulation for reunification of asylum children
Complaint website Eastern European immigrants 'Polenmeldpunt'
Ministers' official warning about EU-mobility 'Code Oranje'
Amnesty for asylum children 'Kinderpardon'
A new policy for international au pairs

immigrant groups, the initiation of new asylum centres and policy initiatives related to immigration. This heterogeneous selection of focusing events within one policy domain enables us to comparatively analyse media framing practices related to a variety of cases, but all within one policy domain.

The policy domain of immigration was chosen because this is a policy domain that is controversial and issues related to immigration policies often gain media attention. In the Netherlands, similar to many other Western European countries, immigration can be characterized as an 'intractable policy controversy' around which a multiplicity of frames exists (Schön & Rein 1994; Scholten 2011). Focusing events related to immigration are framed by policy entrepreneurs to debate current immigration policies. In this policy domain, various policy entrepreneurs are likely engaging in media framing practices (Koch-Baumgartner & Voltmer 2010: 224). Some policy entrepreneurs will frame such events as evidence for the success and importance of sustaining current policies. Others will frame such focusing events to contest current policies and push for policy change (Wolfe et al. 2013: 181; Baumgartner & Jones 2002).

For each case, we collected media coverage over a period of six months after the moment the focusing event took place from various media outlets: the four major newspapers, three major opinion magazines, television news and current affairs reports of the public television channels and social media content. This selection includes a large proportion of the Dutch news media with a variety of political and ideological backgrounds (Bakker & Scholten 2014). Dutch media generally operate rather autonomously without partisan alignment and with high internal pluriformity in terms of issue framing (Hallin & Mancini 2004).

Based on Boolean queries specific to each cases, relevant media coverage on the sixteen cases was collected. Newspaper and opinion magazine articles were collected through the LexisNexis database covering full-text publications. Video files of TV items were collected from the database of the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision. Boolean queries for relevant TV items were made in a database with subtitles of Dutch public television programs.

Social media data was collected via a commercial social media monitoring tool that crawls over 430 000 of the most popular Dutch websites and stores the content and metadata in a database. This database was searched for relevant content and this content was exported for further analysis. For each media type, slightly different search strings were developed to ensure sensitivity and specificity of the queries. For the sixteen cases in total, we collected 1455 traditional media reports including newspaper articles, opinion magazine articles and TV items. In addition, we collected 70246 pieces of publicly available social media content, mainly originating from Twitter, Facebook news websites, forums and weblogs. All media reports from traditional media and a random sample of social media content were imported in ATLAS.ti for qualitative content analysis of policy entrepreneurs as news sources and their framing practices.

In order to differentiate between framing practices of positive and negative feedback we studied the issue framing of the national Dutch policy agenda of immigration and asylum issues. We collected letters from the government to parliament related to our cases. Relevant policy documents were collected via a designated website by the Dutch government ('zoek.officielebekendmakin-gen.nl'). Based on similar Boolean queries, we collected data on developments on the policy agenda from the start of each case until one year after that date (N= 49).

Our content analysis included several steps. Guided by an analytic framework of four 'master-frames' (a human interest frame, a threat frame, an economic frame, and a managerialist frame) we conducted frame analysis of the media content. In a *human interest frame* in favour of immigration, immigrants and refugees are portrayed as victims who require compassion and help (D'Haenens & De Lange 2001; Van Gorp 2006). Second, the *threat-frame* frames immigration as an inherently negative phenomenon in which immigrants are perceived as a threat to receiving countries (Horsti 2003) and immigration is framed as irreconcilable with the host society (Baker & McEnery 2005). Third, the *economic frame* discusses immigration and asylum in terms of economic losses or gains for receiving countries of immigration (D'Haenens

& De Lange 2001). There is attention for immigration putting welfare state arrangements under pressure but also for economic gains of immigration (often distinguishing between 'wanted' and 'unwanted' forms of migration). Lastly, the *managerialist frame* approaches to immigration as a depoliticized governance challenge, focusing how to best cope with the consequences of immigration beyond discussing whether this is a wanted phenomenon or not (D'Haenens & De Lange 2001).

In a first round of coding we specified for each case what frames were present in the media coverage and which actors were referenced in relation to these frames. We coded all actors that were named in the publications, including the journalists authoring the pieces. For our analysis of the most relevant actors related to media coverage on immigration in the Netherlands we combined counting which actors were referenced most frequently with qualitative methods of analysing the extent that they were able to elaborate their frame in media coverage. The authority of the policy entrepreneur was established by considering whether they were internal or external to the institutional policy process. Via frame analysis of the policy letters, we established what the initial policy frame of each case was. By this we were able to evaluate whether the frames in the media were providing positive or negative feedback toward the policy frame. In subsequent rounds of coding we further focused on correspondence between various frames and policy entrepreneurs in media coverage and we coded framing practices that they.

Studying framing practices by means of content analysis of media coverage comes with limitations. Most importantly, only overt framing practices in media coverage can be analysed, which are only the tip of the iceberg. We should assume that a large proportion of framing practices occurs prior to the media publication and is remains implicit in media content. Framing practices that remain invisible will in particular include acts of diverting attention for certain issues or issue frames. Our embedded case study design therefore does not allow for statistical generalization of findings on the prevalence of framing practices. It does however provide insight in explicit ways in which frames are communicated and responded to by policy entrepreneurs in the media coverage.

5.4 Findings: Framing practices of policy entrepreneurs

Qualitative analysis of the cases demonstrates that media attention for immigration issues is initiated by policy entrepreneurs who frame the cases as focusing events to provide positive feedback and put current policies up for discussion. In most cases, these policy entrepreneurs were external to the institutional policy process, for example societal interest groups, individuals such as citizens or immigrants, or politicians of opposition parties. These policy entrepreneurs have relatively little influence over media coverage based on their authoritative position. In other cases, these were actors internal to the institutional policy process who proposed policy change. Furthermore, in some cases these policy entrepreneurs were framing a focusing event in order to push for more lenient immigration policies, while in other cases, they framed the focusing event arguing for stricter immigration policies. In this section we present our analysis of the framing practices of the former and the latter type of policy entrepreneurs, their frames and framing practices.

The most common coalition of policy entrepreneurs initiating media attention for immigration issues were actors who were external to the institutional policy process. This usually entailed a coalition of immigrants, their legal representatives, local support groups and societal organizations. This coalition was for example present in the cases of Mauro Manuel and Dennis Butera whose impending repatriation was brought to the attention of the media, but also in cases where the rights of larger groups of immigrants were put up for discussion such as the case of the hunger strike of asylum seekers in detention in Rotterdam, the 'Vluchtkerk' group of asylum seekers, family reunification of asylum children and the amnesty regulation for asylum children. This coalition of policy entrepreneurs was often a very local networks of actors including family members, neighbourhood associations, sports clubs and schools who push for more lenient immigration policies or exceptions in these cases. Regularly, also local government representatives participated aligned with this positive feedback, thereby opposing their national counterparts. Individual mayors or partnerships of municipalities such as the Vereniging

Nederlandse Gemeenten (VNG) or the Landelijk Overleg Gemeentebesturen inzake Opvang- en Terugkeerbeleid (LOGO) brought forward a human interest frame. Lastly, national policy entrepreneurs contributed to this framing of the focusing events in the media. This includes immigrant organizations and human rights organizations and political parties from left-wing opposition parties. They aligned with the local actors to push for more structural policy change. In the Netherlands, this often included organizations such as 'VluchtelingenWerk Nederland', 'Defence for Children', 'INLIA' and 'Actiegroep Deportatie Verzet' and left-wing political parties including SP, GroenLinks and ChristenUnie.

Furthermore, in cases in which positive feedback was mobilized by actors external to the institutional policy process, authoritative experts including includes scientists, independent advisory boards and ombudsmen also engaged in generating positive feedback in the media. They mostly used framing practices to discredit the frame that was used for negative feedback instead of actively promoting their positive feedback frame. They wrote opinion pieces in newspapers, appeared as guests in television shows or contributed to the debate on social media. In these contributions they for example revealed underlying interests or bad track records of other actors – thereby discrediting their expertise. Furthermore, they often engaged in venue-shopping by pointing at certain (government) actors who should take responsibility in the situation. Who is an authoritative expert in immigration coverage was not a given, but became clear of how the media presented them and their opinions. In many cases, they were given the position of a 'referee' deciding over the outcome of a debate.

Lastly, there is a specific role for journalists and the media themselves. In some cases also specific journalists actively contributed to putting an issue and a certain issue frame on the media agenda. An example of this is the case of Ahmadzai which was first introduced in multiple articles in one newspaper resulting from investigative journalism. Very concrete and personalized cases – of immigrants or citizens - were generally popular topics for the media due to media logic. Framing devices including images, emotional quotes and popular sayings calling upon emotions were used to frame the issues. Even

newspapers or television broadcasters who were generally reporting from a right-wing or anti-immigrant stance, were reporting on individual cases from a human interest frame in support of the immigrant and the local community supporting them.

These coalitions of policy entrepreneurs provided positive feedback by bringing forward a human interest frame and arguing for more lenient immigration policies. Framing practices that were commonly used by this coalition are the use of framing devices, emphasizing obtrusiveness and mobilization of attention and support. Common framing devices that are used are images, examples and catchphrases. An example is the catchphrase 'No one is illegal' in the case of the hunger strike of rejected asylum migrants in detention and the picture of Mauro Manuel's tears that became iconic in Dutch news media. Obtrusiveness of these issues was emphasized by interviews with and pictures of a local community of schools, sports clubs and neighbourhoods who were confronted with and opposing the policy decision. Mobilization of attention and support was reached in various ways, for example with regular public demonstrations of the 'Vluchtkerk' group of asylum seekers, or the online petition for Dennis Butera to receive a residence status. With these framing practices, the coalitions of policy entrepreneurs were actively framing the focusing event in media coverage.

In other cases, policy entrepreneurs providing positive feedback pushed for stricter immigration policies arguing from a threat frame or a managerialist frame. This was for example the case with the asylum centre in Oranje and the 'Polenmeldpunt' website. Interestingly, besides political actors promoting this frame, not many societal organizations were actively framing this toward the media. Besides anti-immigrant parties, there are not many established societal organizations in the Netherlands explicitly labouring for stricter immigration policies. In most of the cases, these were formed on an ad hoc basis and related to specific issues. For example, related to the case the asylum centre in Oranje there was the local opposition group 'Actiegroep Leefbaarheid Oranje en Omstreken' and the national platform 'AZC Alert'. Instead of a threat-frame, these organizations formulated a managerialist frame to negotiate the terms under which immigrants would arrive and be housed. They relied on framing

practices of emphasizing obtrusiveness and the use of framing devices to concretize the local situation and concerns. For example in the case of Oranje, the immigrant-to-resident ratio was frequently stressed as a statistical framing device to emphasize the urgency of local concerns. Lastly, mobilization in local settings and on social media supported coverage of the frame in the media.

In before mentioned cases - regardless of whether positive feedback was expressed in favour of more lenient or strict immigration policies - authoritative actors internal to the institutional policy process formed a coalition exercising negative feedback in the media. This included the responsible Minister or State Secretary, politicians from the government parties and representatives from executive agencies related to immigration such as Immigration Services (IND) or the Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA). In most of the cases, the negative feedback entailed a managerialist frame. The government actors promoting this frame often pointed at the value of current practices and regulations and the competencies of government organizations handling the situation. The necessity of current regulations was stressed and it was repeatedly confirmed that each case had been evaluated very thoroughly. Giving in to the attention for very individual cases would lead to random implementation of policy.

These actors promoted frames of negative feedback in the media with framing practices of emphasizing unobtrusiveness, calling upon government expertise, venue-shopping and diverting of media attention for the positive feedback frame(s). Horizontal and vertical venue shopping was an important practice of government actors providing negative feedback. We encountered several cases where the national government shifted responsibilities to local or supra-national governments, to other governmental departments or to the judicial system. For example in the case of Ahmadzai, the government refused a debate with the State Secretary of Immigration about asylum regulations, but allowed a debate with the Minister of Defence about military interpreters. In the case of the Vluchtkerk, the national government repeatedly framed the case as an issue of the local government of Amsterdam. By these media framing practices, the policy entrepreneurs from government discursively transferred responsibility and prevented having to act according to the positive feedback.

Notable is that these framing practices of negative feedback by government actors are often not directly addressing the positive feedback frame. There are no direct acts of re-framing the case by critical commenting on framing devices or responses emphasizing (un)obtrusiveness of the case. Instead, the negative feedback is framed relatively independently and there is not a true dialogue with the counter frame. In cases of individual asylum seekers, governments have a general rule not to comment on individual circumstances. This created a situation of non-response and the formulation of negative feedback on a more abstract level.

Not in all cases media attention for immigration issues was generated by policy entrepreneurs external to the institutional policy process pushing for policy change. Our sample included also several cases in which positive feedback was exercised by authoritative actors from government in order to mobilize support for a new policy initiative. Positive feedback was promoted in the media by government actors such as the Minister or State Secretary, senior government officials or representatives of government agencies dealing with immigration – all relatively authoritative actors. In these cases, policy proposals were framed as focusing events to initiate media coverage. This was for example the case with the 'Code Oranje' warning about labour immigration from Eastern Europe. A Minister published an op-ed article in a popular newspaper to warn citizens about the labour market consequences of EU mobility. Another example is the case of the new au pair regulation in which the conclusions of a research report were framed as a motivation for a new policy benefitting the needs of au pair's. In these cases, the government and government actors were framing their policy initiatives in the media as a form of positive feedback toward prior policies.

Notable is that in these cases, government actors often chose a human interest or threat-frame. They did so to publicly explain and legitimize their intended policy changes. The use of framing practices by government actors providing positive feedback in the media was surprisingly similar to those of actors external to the government, particularly the use of framing devices and practices of emphasizing obtrusiveness. For example, in the case of the more

lenient policies for gay asylum seekers from Uganda, the humanitarian situation in the country was outlined with examples. In the cases of 'Code Oranje' and Eritrean asylum migrants coming to the Netherlands, the Minister and State Secretary chose metaphors as framing devices and they emphasized obtrusiveness.

In this type of cases, negative feedback was formulated in the media by policy entrepreneurs external to the institutional policy process who strived to prevent or reverse policy change. In these cases, we encountered framing practices of active re-framing. For example of this is the case of the return of rejected asylum seekers to Rwanda and Burundi. This case was introduced in the media by the State Secretary who claimed the success of new agreements with the governments of Rwanda and Burundi. These agreements would mean that rejected asylum seekers from Rwanda and Burundi could return to their countries of origin. A negative feedback frame however actively re-framed this story of managerial success by stating that these asylum seekers would return to a corrupt and dangerous regime. In contrast to authoritative actors providing negative feedback, these framing practices were actively discrediting the rival frame, next to promotion on one's own frame, creating a true dialogue between different frames in the media.

5.5 Analysis: Framing practices of positive and negative feedback

Our analysis shows how policy entrepreneurs employ various framing practices in making their issue frames more attractive to media in order to mobilize bias. Furthermore, it specifies how different framing practices are used by policy entrepreneurs with various authority in the policy process and how they match policy aims of positive and negative feedback. Focusing events do not exist outside of the framing that policy entrepreneurs attribute to them. They are constructed by certain policy entrepreneurs in media coverage to provide positive feedback toward current policies. Most cases in our sample were introduced in the media by (coalitions of) policy entrepreneurs

external to the institutional policy process. In other cases authoritative elites consisting of elected and non-elected actors from government were the actors initiating media coverage and providing positive feedback in the media.

External policy entrepreneurs exercising positive feedback used framing practices to mobilize attention for their alternative frame, either promoting more lenient or strict immigration policies. They used framing devices to frame the focusing event, emphasized obtrusiveness, and organized public mobilization. This makes their frame attractive to media logic in traditional media as well as social media. Social media prove to be important catalysts of positive feedback framing. The framing practices of policy entrepreneurs pushing for positive feedback match the media logic of social media very well. Particularly, framing devices are a very good fit with the media logic of social media, which stimulates the sharing of concise and visual information such as slogans, infographics and images. At the same time, social media do not offer many opportunities for critically questioning the validity of the framing devices and hence the frame itself. As a result, we found that the use of framing devices thrived on social media. Also, social media offer a new platform for mobilization of public support by enabling online petitions, sharing of information and by the use of hashtags. We encountered multiple instances in which framing practices on social media were an important reason for traditional media to report from a positive feedback frame. This was most relevant in cases where this frame was not (openly) supported by authoritative actors who could be referenced as a source in traditional media attention. This was often the case with the threat-frame. In these cases, broad public attention for a frame on social media was a legitimation for traditional media to report from this frame as a form of 'voxpop'.

Government actors framing negative feedback in relation to these focusing events were not very active in reframing, but framing practices were primarily focused on promoting a counter frame. These authoritative policy entrepreneurs responded to the positive feedback frame by emphasizing issue unobtrusiveness, calling upon expertise and deflecting attention by non-response and venue-shopping. Actively responding to counter frames was sometimes not possible, for example because government actors were

not allowed to respond to individual cases. In scarce instances in which they employed practices of re-framing and actively responded to the alternative frame, this was not very successful in discrediting the rival frame. The policy entrepreneurs who were pushing for positive feedback had already set the initial frame the issue in media coverage.

When authoritative actors from government introduced issues in the media and pushed for positive feedback, they choose a different set of framing practices which is similar to that of non-authoritative policy entrepreneurs framing positive feedback. Primarily, they made use of framing devices and emphasized issue obtrusiveness. In these cases, the authoritative actors were sometimes able to achieve frame alignment with a larger group of policy entrepreneurs who mutually strived for the proposed policy changes. This often included politicians from opposition parties and societal organizations. This indicates that the aims of promoting positive or negative feedback toward the current policy frame is an additional and sometimes more important explanation of framing practices of authoritative policy entrepreneurs. In contrast to authoritative actors framing negative feedback, policy entrepreneurs external to the institutional policy process were more actively re-framing the frame of authoritative actors. In these cases the authoritative position of the policy entrepreneur formed a more prominent explanation of their framing practices than their feedback aims. For policy entrepreneurs who are external to the institutional policy process, their authoritative position is a more prominent explanation of their use of framing practices than their feedback aims.

5.6 Conclusions

The ways in which policy entrepreneurs contribute to media coverage is an important topic of study because struggle for media attention is part of more general contest for control over the policy agenda. Policy entrepreneurs are increasingly aware of the powerful role of media and are devoting substantial resources to media monitoring and management (Schillemans & Pierre 2016). We studied framing practices as a form of media influencing in a case study of

the policy domain of immigration. This policy domain can be characterized as an intractable policy controversy which is politically contested and regularly gains media attention. Framing of immigration issues in the media was studied as the mutual construction of issue interpretation by the logic of media and policy entrepreneurs. By using framing practices, policy entrepreneurs make their frame a better fit to media logic, while diverting attention for other frames.

Speaking to literature on the influence of policy entrepreneurs on media coverage, this study finds that the next to 'official dominance' based on authoritative position, another factor explains differential use of framing practices: whether policy entrepreneurs are providing positive or negative feedback toward the current policy frame. Our qualitative case study finds that particularly for authoritative actors, this factor is a more important explanation for the use of framing practices than official dominance. Future studies into the role of political and policy actors influencing media coverage should take into account this 'policy feedback thesis' as an explanation of what framing practices are used and how much influence policy entrepreneurs have on media coverage.

While this study entails an embedded case study of sixteen cases within one policy domain, we believe that our findings are generalizable to other similar media and political systems including Western European countries and other intractable policy issue domains such as environmental policies and law and order (cf. Hallin & Mancini 2004; Soroka 2002). Future research should test our 'policy feedback thesis' on media influencing by policy entrepreneurs in other settings. Furthermore, while our research was limited to studying framing practices in media coverage itself, future studies should broaden this scope with framing practices behind the scenes in communication between policy actors and media actors, for example by in-depth interviews or observation of processes taking place in advance of media publications.

6

INTERETHNIC CONTACT ONLINE: CONTEXTUALISING THE IMPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE BY SECOND-GENERATION MIGRANT YOUTH

Abstract

Some studies suggest that social media encourage interethnic contact by removing social and spatial boundaries between ethnic communities while offering new spaces for communication and redefinition of ethnic identities. Others contend that social media add an online dimension to intra-ethnic bonding, either within the ethnic community or transnationally. This paper aims to understand such mixed findings by contextualizing under what circumstances social media facilitate bridging and bonding behaviors. We conducted 52 semi-structured interviews with second-generation migrant youth in Rotterdam to inquire about their motivations and considerations concerning social media use. Results show that social media offer a new space for different orientations of interethnic contact. Interethnic contact as such is rarely deliberately pursued online but it is often constituted in venues organized around common interests. Engagement in intra-ethnic online communities is motivated by struggles with identity and lifestyle. Migrant youth's online and offline lives are very much integrated and online communication deals with very similar complexities as offline interactions.

6.1 Introduction

The debate on migrant integration tends to focus primarily on the social and spatial dimensions of inter- and intra-ethnic contact, such as spatial dispersion, mixed schools and interculturalization. Yet, in contemporary society, social contacts are increasingly established and maintained online. Social media, characterized by user-generated content and interaction (Boyd & Ellison 2007), provide new opportunities for contact with various communities. They provide ethnic minorities with new ways to relate to their ethnic communities, to people in their country of origin and to other groups in their country of residence (Elias & Lemish 2009). Some scholars have argued that online communication has the potential to overcome spatial and social boundaries that are inherent to offline social contact (Ellison et al. 2007, Hampton et al. 2011).

Empirical studies have found mixed results regarding the implications of social media for interethnic contact. Social media may foster interethnic contact by providing new social network infrastructures that give access to bridging social capital that was previously unattainable. This would empower ethnic minorities through exchange of information and resources on life in the country of residence and by providing a sphere in which they can negotiate their position in the multi-ethnic society (Amichai-Hamburger & McKenna 2006). As such, social media would facilitate integration of ethnic minorities in their host societies.

Others contend that social media strengthen intra-ethnic contact and impede interethnic contact by connecting ethnic minorities to their countries of origin within so-called 'transnational communities' or facilitating virtual parallel lives in the host country. Komito and Bates (2009) even describe the latter as 'virtual ghetto's' or 'enclaves'. Instead of bridging social capital, social media would only be used for bonding social capital – solidifying migrants' marginalized position.

Such varying and sometimes contradicting findings concerning the implications of social media use by ethnic minorities create a need to contextualize interethnic contact theory in today's digital age. In this paper, we explore the

implications of the widespread use of social media among minorities for inter-ethnic contact. While not engaging in the discussion about the consequences of interethnic contact for migrant integration, this study aims to gain a better understanding of the varying and sometimes contradicting research findings with regard to the uses of social media use for interethnic contact. We focus on the circumstances under which social media foster interethnic, intra-ethnic or transnational contact, by asking second-generation migrant youth to motivate their choices in social media use. To this aim, we have formulated the following research question: *How can we understand the varying uses of social media for interethnic contact by second-generation migrant youth's motivations of social media use?*

In order to contextualize online interethnic contact, we conducted semi-structured interviews with second-generation migrant youth in the Dutch city of Rotterdam about their social media use. We explicate how social media use relates to their ethnic identity. In what follows, we first elaborate on the interethnic contact hypothesis and existing findings with regard to social media use by ethnic minorities. As will be shown, studies have raised very general conclusions that need contextualization and theoretical interpretation. We use the sensitizing concepts of social media affordances (Gibson 1979, Hutchby 2001) and inter- and intra-ethnic contact in order to evaluate under what circumstances migrant youth engage with different ethnic identities.

6.2 Interethnic contact theory in the context of social media

Interethnic contact is generally considered to be an important prerequisite for migrant integration. In the literature on contact theory that originates from social psychology (Allport 1954, Pettigrew 1998), two arguments can be distinguished that entail, respectively, socio-cultural and socioeconomic integration: the contact hypothesis and the isolation hypothesis. The contact hypothesis asserts that a lack of interethnic contact will enlarge socio-cultural differences between groups and will lead to ethnic polarization or even con-

flicts. At the same time, it claims that acquaintance lessens prejudice and stereotypes of the other. Thus, it supports socio-cultural integration. A competing hypothesis in this regard is the conflict hypothesis that states that interethnic encounter leads to competition and conflict between different groups over resources or values (Coser 1956, Dovidio et al. 2005, Esses et al. 2011).

The isolation hypothesis holds that ethnically segregated neighborhoods are an obstacle for the socioeconomic integration of migrants in society (Park 1926, Lewis 1969, Wilson 1987). Ethnic minorities have a marginalized position in society because their social networks are primarily ethnic and their access to resources is limited (Massey & Denton 1993, Musterd 2005). Ethnic segregation hinders the existence of ethnic bridges – the informal ties between ethnic minorities and the majority population or other minority groups (Van der Laan Bouma-Doff 2007). It is argued that this leaves minorities in a disadvantaged position. Interethnic contact is therefore also a condition for socioeconomic integration.

Social media reduce the importance of spatiality for interethnic communication by making 'communities without propinquity' possible (Van Doorn 1955, Webber 1963, Castells 1996, Wellman 2001). The internet has afforded this well before the emergence of social media during the 2000s, so this debate is not new. Yet social media have made online social networking more popular and for a majority of people it is now an integral part of everyday life. Social media can be conceptualized as internet applications in which user-participation, content-sharing and social networking in (semi-open) network infrastructures is central. This adheres to a necessary condition for interethnic contact according to Allport (1954): an equal status of participants. Therefore, social media seem particularly suited to facilitate contact between people who would otherwise not have had the opportunity or inclination to meet. Social media users organize themselves in a plurality of networks that are shaped non-hierarchically and are not bounded by geographical borders (Haythornthwaite 2005).

Social media are not limited to social networking sites such as Facebook. Weblogs, forums and many other web spaces can also be considered as social media in the sense that they allow users to contribute and interact with each

other. Social network sites are organized around personal networks and other social media such as forums, weblogs and YouTube channels are organized around interest groups (Boyd & Ellison 2007: 219). Social media applications are commercial products and their design partly determines their use. A social constructivist approach, however, allows us to see a variety of appropriations within these technological boundaries: such as the affordances of social media that emerge in relation to their social context (Gibson 1979, Hutchby 2001).

Characteristic for social media is that they lay down an infrastructure of latent ties – ones that exist technically but have not yet been activated – and make weak ties more easily approachable (Hiller & Franz 2004, Ellison et al. 2007). Social media activity creates a continuous virtual co-presence of others and their social capital (Vitak & Ellison 2013). Users can selectively create communities based on interest or acquaintance rather than geography or social status (Haythornthwaite 2005: 140). These affordances are relevant with regard to interethnic contact theory. Social media may enable bonding as well as bridging social capital; either locally rooted or spanning geographical distances. In the next section, we outline the divergent views found in scholarly discussions on the implications of social media use for interethnic contact.

6.3 Hypothesised roles of social media for ethnic identification

As social networking and the allocation of resources in the network society increasingly take place in online networks, it is important to consider the online dimension of ethnic identification. The implications of social media for interethnic contact have been subject of scholarly debate in the field of migration and integration studies (Peeters & D'Haenens 2005, Van den Broek & De Haan 2006, D'Haenens et al. 2007, Elias & Lemish 2009, Lin et al. 2011). Before we turn to the hypothesised roles of social media for ethnic identification, it is important to first offer a more elaborate theorisation of the main concepts of this research: ethnicity and interethnic contact.

In this paper, ethnicity is conceptualized as a dimension of identification. Identity is constituted along multiple dimensions of identification, such as gender or class. For second-generation migrant youth, having parents who were born for example in Morocco, this does not automatically mean that one's ethnicity is 'Moroccan'. Sometimes it is predominantly Berber, Arabic, African, Dutch or European. Also hybrid identification occurs: Moroccan-Dutch, Dutch-Moroccan or Moroccan-Rotterdam. Ethnic identification is socially constructed in daily interactions (see Parker & Song 2006, Mainsah 2011, Marotta 2011). For ethnic minorities – who are often confronted with questions about their ethnicity – this dimension of their identity can become more prominent than it is for members of the majority population. Sameness or Otherness in case of minorities is often framed along ethnic lines. For some, ethnic identification proves more prominent than for others. For example, some identify more strongly along religious lines.

We should be wary of essentialist ethnic categories operating in notions of inter-and intra-ethnic contact; as ethnicity is a part of one's identity that is constructed in daily interactions. What entails interethnic and intra-ethnic contacts is therefore dependent on someone's ethnic identification and should not be presupposed based on, for example, nationality. In some cases, nationality and ethnic identification correspond, in other cases, one's construction of ethnicity differs from their nationality. Inter- and interethnic contact is however a useful heuristic distinction that is often used in the literature on social media, social networking and social empowerment (Amichai-Hamburger & McKenna 2006, Franz & Götzenbrucker 2012). We therefore chose to use the categories of interethnic and intra-ethnic contact as heuristic devices in this study as well to point at different modes of ethnic identification that are supported by social media use. Interethnic communication denotes communication of migrants with other ethnic groups in the country of residence – including the native population. Intra-ethnic communication is communication within the ethnic community.

A first strain of literature claims that social media remove spatial boundaries and thereby facilitate interethnic contact. Amichai-Hamburger and McKenna (2006: 838) conclude that the internet has great advantages for intergroup

contact over traditional face-to-face communication. Hampton et al. (2011) conclude that the use of new media contributes to personal network diversity and access to social capital that is available through those networks. Lin et al. (2011) found that Facebook use is positively related to international students' online bridging capital and social adjustments. It is argued that ethnic minorities will establish online interethnic contact in their attempt to organize and facilitate their transition into society. Kahne et al. (2012) found that most youth visit online venues that expose them both to opinions that align to their own and to views that diverge from their own. Interethnic contacts and information helps ethnic minorities to make life choices and contribute to improving their position in the society of residence. Social media provide a secure environment for gradual social learning (Nedelcu 2012: 1348-1349).

Although ethnicity does not have to be disclosed in online interactions, studies have shown that ethnicity remains a relevant factor (Nakamura 2002, Leung 2005, Marotta 2011). Some studies point out that youth use the social media to negotiate their identities (Valkenburg et al. 2005, De Leeuw & Rydin 2007, Elias & Lemish 2009). As migrant youth are embedded in multiple social contexts, they often struggle with discorded and sometimes contesting identities. Via social media use, ethnic minorities are looking for compromises between different dimensions of their identity. They do this, for example by creating personal profiles on social network sites or keeping a diary on a blog, or by exploring alternative identities in virtual gaming worlds or on online forums (Mainsah 2011, Franz & Götzenbrucker 2012). In online communities, migrant youth can reflect on their own opinions by comparing them to those of their peers. Parker and Song (2006) refer to the process of negotiating ethnic identities as 'reflexive racialization'. Ethnic identities still matter but they are redefined rather than erased or strengthened by social media use.

Other scholars hypothesize that social media are primarily used by ethnic minorities to relate to their country of origin and their own ethnic group instead of for interethnic contact. For example, Komito and Bates (2009: 243) reach a remarkable conclusion with regard to social media use by labor migrants in Ireland: 'while these migrants may no longer live in physical ghettos, since they reside in dispersed locations in cities, they now live in 'virtual'

ghettos or enclaves, as they use new technologies to create separate lives within the wider society in which they work and live'. Social media are places where ethnic minorities can create their own communicative spaces and withdraw from society. Here, immigrants preserve their cultural heritage and strengthen the sense of intra-group solidarity within the ethnic community and broader diaspora. Rydin and Sjøberg (2010) argue that the internet has become a virtual substitute for migrants' homelands.

Establishing intra-ethnic contact via social media adheres to the 'homophilia thesis' – also referred to as 'cyberbalkanization' or 'echo chambers' – arguing that people will avoid being exposed to alternative opinions and meeting Others online (Sunstein, 2001, 2007, Pariser 2011). With regard to interethnic contact theory, this would mean that minorities do not use virtual spaces to expand their networks over ethnic bridges, but rather to reinforce their ethnic identity among like-minded peers. When the social context of the country of residence is estranging, social media provide possibilities for minorities to explore their ethnic belonging.

The claim that intra-ethnic social media use by ethnic minorities would be problematic for integration is disputed. Some scholars point out that inter-ethnic social media use can function as a source for social empowerment of minority groups (Elias & Lemish 2009). Ethnic homogeneous online venues can have empowering and emancipating consequences (Mehra et al. 2004). Parker and Song (2006) describe how online interaction has had offline consequences in the form of social gatherings, charitable donations and campaigns against adverse media representations. Intra-ethnic social media interactions can give a voice to ethnic minority groups, thus performing a central integrative function (Kissau 2012, Spaiser 2012). Social media that are intra-ethnic online, can thus lead to more interethnic interactions offline.

These mixed findings and conclusions regarding the implications of social media use for interethnic contact indicate that social media might serve different constructions of different ethnic identities and that inter- and intra-ethnic contact is not mutually exclusive. This creates a need to contextualize under what circumstances social media support interethnic contact, under

what circumstances they facilitate intra-ethnic contact and the theoretical mechanisms that account for these differing outcomes.

6.4 Methodology

To study the implications of social media use for interethnic contact, this research focuses on (second-generation) migrant youth. We focus our study on this group because they generally are avid social media users – like comparable non-migrant age cohorts. The internet is, next to television and telephone, the most favorite technology for Dutch migrant youth, who are spending an increasing number of hours per day online and have access to internet via their PCs, laptops, tablets and/or smartphones (Van Summeren 2007). Next to this, it is particularly the youth who are exploring and establishing their position in society. It is asserted that this second-generation of immigrants is navigating between two ethnic identities: that of their country of origin and of their country of residence (Parker & Song 2006: 198, D'Haenens et al. 2007). Migrant youth need to find their way in the host society based on resources beyond the traditional authorities of parents and family as the latter did not grow up in the host society (Van Summeren 2007).

A total of 52 qualitative interviews were held with second-generation migrants in the city of Rotterdam. We count as second-generation migrants those respondents that indicated to have at least one parent born outside The Netherlands. Recognizing the socially constructed nature of ethnicity in everyday life and in cyberspace in particular, we had respondents define themselves in ethnic terms. The interviews did not depart from an essentialist notion of ethnicity but allowed respondents to outline different aspects of their (ethnic) identity online. Conclusions on second-generation migrant youth engaging in interethnic or intra-ethnic contact online, are based on respondents' own definitions of their ethnic identity that they brought forward in the interviews.

This focus on second-generation migrants, sampled in the city of Rotterdam, does have implications for analytical generalization based on this research. First, we can only draw inferences about second-generation migrant youth as

this was our research population. The choice of this group is a consequence of social media use that is primarily popular amongst youth. Yet, we believe that findings regarding this population may have a broader meaning that, in the future, may apply to more age cohorts. The focus on the second-generation also speaks to the importance of this category in current integration debates, where especially in The Netherlands much attention has been attributed on the 'failure' of the second-generation to establish interethnic contacts.

We sampled interviewees from Rotterdam because this city is one of the most ethnically diverse in The Netherlands and it has a relatively young population. Research does not pinpoint significant differences in socio-cultural orientation or socioeconomic position between second-generation migrant youth in Rotterdam when compared to another city like Amsterdam (Crul & Heering 2009). Yet there is no comparable research from smaller or less diverse cities – which may involve factors that could not be controlled in this research – available with which to compare. Additional research would be need to identify the impact of variables such as size of communities and 'density' of diversity on our inferences on the relation between social media use and interethnic contact.

Within these restrictions, we pursued a diverse sample in terms of gender, age and ethnicity (Table 6.1). The interviews took place in the period from May to October 2012. Instead of recruiting respondents via social media, we chose to approach them in an offline setting. As a result, we were able to speak to a large variety of social media users as well as non-users, in order to be able to analyze differences in access to and use of social media (only one respondent reported to be a non-user). For this sampling, we visited different types and levels of local educational institutes and approached potential respondents for an interview. The interviews took place in appropriate places in the school where the interview could be conducted without anyone overhearing. Sometimes we interviewed two or three friends at once, whenever the respondents would prefer this. As the respondents who wanted to be interviewed together were friends, they were generally open in responding to our questions. The presence of friends however may have prevented some from disclosing socially undesirable information.

Table 6.1: Overview of basic characteristics of our sample.

Respondent №	Gender	Age	Parents' country/countries of origin
1	v	21	Morocco
2	v	21	Suriname/Morocco
3	v	21	Suriname/Colombia
4	v	25	Suriname
5	v	24	Morocco
6	v	18	Morocco
7	v	21	Morocco
8	v	21	Morocco
9	v	27	Morocco
10	v	18	Morocco
11	m	23	Morocco
12	v	23	Morocco
13	v	25	Cape Verde
14	v	17	Morocco
15	v	17	Morocco
16	v	18	Pakistan
17	v	25	Antilles
18	v	24	Antilles
19	v	26	Antilles
20	v	17	Turkey
21	v	17	Morocco
22	m	23	Turkey
23	m	26	Suriname
24	m	25	Turkey
25	v	26	China
26	m	23	Afghanistan
27	m	21	Guinea
28	v	23	Morocco
29	v	23	Suriname
30	m	21	Suriname/Ghana

Table 6.1: (Continued)

Respondent №	Gender	Age	Parents' country/countries of origin
31	v	35	Colombia/Aruba
32	m	21	Morocco
33	v	23	China
34	m	29	Cape Verde
35	m	23	Cape Verde
36	m	27	Antilles
37	v	22	Morocco
38	m	26	Morocco
39	v	21	Morocco
40	m	22	Morocco
41	m	24	Suriname
42	m	18	Suriname
43	v	17	Morocco
44	v	18	Morocco
45	v	20	Morocco
46	v	16	Morocco
47	m	20	Cape Verde
48	v	26	Morocco
49	v	25	Morocco
50	m	24	Turkey
51	m	23	Iran
52	v	19	Suriname

Because we interviewed second-generation students, all respondents were proficient in Dutch and the interviews took place in Dutch. Before each interview, we ensured the respondents' anonymity. With permission of the respondents, the interviews were recorded and transcribed ad verbatim. Other interviews were transcribed based on notes of the interviewers directly after the interview. All interview transcripts were anonymized and stored separately from personal information. References in this paper cannot be traced back to individual respondents.

The semi-structured interviews allowed the interviewees to elaborate on the interview topics and any other relevant experiences. Our interview topics and codebook are informed by expectations from the literature on social media use and interethnic contact. We asked all respondents about the intensity of their internet use, the online sites and applications that they are using, what activities and topics they are exploring there and what purposes and effects this had according to them. We purposely asked our respondents about their internet use in general and not about social media use specifically because it cannot be assumed that our respondents have a similar understanding of what social media are. It proved difficult to ask respondents about something as habitual as internet use. Respondents sometimes had difficulties remembering what activities they employ online and what online venues they visit. We solved this by asking about their daily life in general (school, work, hobby's, social contacts and interests) and then prompting whether the internet plays a role in this. We did not presuppose a certain ethnicity while asking respondents about inter- and intra-ethnic communication. The respondents' own definition of their ethnic identity was coded during the analysis.

We conducted thematic content analysis of the interview transcripts using ATLAS.ti software. The main code-groups were entitled: (1) Intensity of social media use; (2) Type of media used; (3) Reasons/purposes of social media use; (4) Reasons for restricted use; (5) Strength of social ties; (6) Topics discussed online; and (7) Modes of communication (Interethnic/intra-ethnic). Via sub codes and further interpretation and discussion of the data, we found several patterns in the data with regard to interethnic contact that will be described in the next section.

6.5 Results

In this section, we describe under what circumstances second-generation migrant youth are appropriating social media for inter- or intra-ethnic contact. Before we address social media use with regard to different modes of inter-

ethnic contact in subsequent subsection, we first provide some basic insights on the extent and ways in which our respondents are using social media.

Social media use by second-generation migrant youth

All second-generation migrants that we interviewed are internet users. The majority of our respondents uses internet in multiple settings (home, school, work, etc.) and on different technologies (PC, smartphone, tablet, etc.). Only one respondent indicated that he had no internet access at home but used it at school and friends or families house: *'I used internet quite a lot in the past but not anymore. At home we have no internet and now I am not in school any more I have to go to the library to go online'* (Hindustan Surinamese male, 24). We did not find evidence for a digital divide based on internet access. On the contrary: most of our respondents are avid internet users. Due to the ease and frequency with which our respondents are using internet, they do not really distinguish between their online and offline activities. For many, going online to contact friends or look up information has become a habit and it plays a central role for all kinds of needs and purposes. Many prefer internet sources over traditional sources such as books, newspaper or television.

All of our respondents are familiar with social media but they display different patterns of use. Most respondents named Facebook and Twitter as social media they were – or were not – using. Next to this, respondents mentioned using LinkedIn, Hyves (a Dutch social network site similar to Facebook) and online forums. These proved to be the most popular social media among our respondents. Our respondents vary in the types of social media they are using, their frequency of use and the way they are using social media (actively or passively). In correspondence with the 90–9–1 principle of participation inequality in online communities (Nielsen 2006, Brandtzæg & Heim 2011), the active users constitute the smallest group. This group of users is involved in (multiple) social networking sites and/or posts content on weblogs, forums or news sites. The group of passive users is what Nielsen (2006) in the typology defines as 'lurkers'. They regularly visit social media and read content but hardly ever contribute to it. This group constitutes the largest group in our sample. Within this group of passive users, we can distinguish respondents

who know about social media but actively choose to use it as little as possible. They are for example not a member of social networking sites and rarely visit forums or weblogs. Their choice is based on either privacy concerns, disliking the banal characteristics of social media communication or a lack of time. The following statement of a Turkish respondent illustrates the concerns of passive users very well:

I don't like Facebook and other social media. No-one calls each other anymore. Everyone is using Ping and Whatsapp. I think it diminishes mutual respect. You don't hear each other's voice and I find it very important to have real contact with my friends. Facebook messages are very superficial, pictures of people's lunch and such. Social media are for people who are alone and who are only focused on themselves. (Turkish male, 24)

Interethnic contact

We found that social media use under certain circumstances indeed entails interethnic contact. When we asked our respondents whether they had used social media to meet new people (of their own ethnic group or other ethnicities) online, the answer was most of the times 'no'. In cases where new contacts were established, they were rarely continued offline. However, bridging (interethnic) contacts were established for instrumental reasons such as finding a job or seeking information. In these cases, some respondents did report using social media:

I am not looking for friends online. I don't visit sites where you can meet new people or something. No, that's not for me. For job applications I do establish contacts with people I didn't know before of course. But that is a different thing. (Turkish male, 23)

With regard to interethnic contacts specifically, most of our respondents remarked that in case they would want to, social media provide opportunities to meet peers from other ethnic groups. They say it is up to themselves to decide whether to establish interethnic contacts online or not.

I think it is one of the purposes of social media to be able to meet new people, also Dutch people or Moroccan people. But if you do this or if you don't, depends on what you want. If you think, I want to stick to my Hindustan group of friends, you can. Many of my Hindustan friends do this on Facebook or Twitter – they only follow fellow-Hindustanis. It all depends on what you want to do with social media. (Hindustan Surinamese female, 23)

Such citations show that migrant youth are appropriating social media according to different needs that they may have. While interethnic contacts are hardly purposefully established, we encountered that interethnic contacts via social media often arise from common goals or interests. Respondents for example told us that they have discussions on forums about gaming or cooking.

I visit general news forums and forums about gaming. I play an online soccer game. There is a lot of different people on this forum, an international public even. (Iranian male, 23)

In such online venues, organized around interests rather than personal networks, interethnic contacts are established unintentionally (Wellman 2001, Haythornthwaite 2005: 140, Boyd & Ellison 2008:219). In these cases, ethnicity is not a relevant factor and often remains implicit.

Even though online interethnic encounters are not actively sought, often remain implicit and are rarely continued offline, we found that online interethnic encounters can strengthen interethnic understanding and solidarity. Many respondents indicated that they like to read and discuss other people's opinion in social media venues where news and public opinions are discussed. For example, this respondent explains that she sees opinions of people with different (ethnic) backgrounds as enriching:

I like that on the forum you find people with different backgrounds. When you ask a question, you will get different answers. I think that it is interesting to know different viewpoints. (Moroccan female, 22)

Many of the respondents were interested in other people's opinions and ways of life and mentioned that it changed their image of the other.

[…] a big plus of such a forum is that you can find experiences and life stories from a variety of people. Young, old, male, female, Moroccan, Turkish or Dutch, religious. What attracts me is the variety of opinions and experiences that you find on the forum. You can learn from others and their experiences. I try to do so, I take into consideration and I hope to learn from what I read there. (Moroccan female, 24)

In such cases, social media support interethnic understanding. Even if interethnic contact is not purposefully sought for, it is sometimes established when actors from different groups seek similar information or interest online.

It is not always the case that interethnic contact leads to more understanding and solidarity between groups. We encountered some evidence of online contact that involved interethnic tensions. This respondent for example describes how Dutch people sometimes visit a Moroccan-Dutch forum to express negative views of the Moroccan minority and provoke a fight ('flaming'):

On Morocco.nl there are often Dutch people expressing themselves negatively about Moroccans. They visit Morocco.nl just to provoke. Sometimes I am inclined to think that all autochthonous Dutch people think this way, but that is not true. Then I need to put it in perspective that they are just these five people or so. (Moroccan-Surinamese female, 21)

In such cases, interethnic encounters online may reiterate interethnic tensions that also exist in other settings. The online setting and intentions of the visitors thus explain whether and how interethnic contact is established.

Intra-ethnic contact

Our interviews show that migrant youth are also reinforcing intra-ethnic bonding contacts online. Ethnic, cultural and religious background is sometimes one of the purposes or goals of social media activities of migrant youth.

The following quote exemplifies how migrant youth purposefully search for one another in the online world:

I like to talk to fellow Moroccans online. I understand them. It is nice to read their opinions and experiences. Stories on Marokko.nl are recognizable. I think: oh, I experienced the same thing! You meet each other there. Even though you do not know the others, you have the same culture, the same norms and values. (Moroccan female, 17)

Via the interviews, we encountered a number of different intra-ethnic forums, Facebook communities and other online venues. About half of our respondents indicate that they use social media to establish or maintain intra-ethnic contact. As the Moroccan girl describes, many youth find recognizable stories from ethnic peers online. They learn how to deal with daily issues by comparing others' experiences and advice. This is particularly relevant in case of taboo subjects. For example, two respondents told us that they like to read forbidden love stories of others.

On Turkishplace.nl people write their love stories. It makes you very curious whether it will all end well. They are personal stories of what happened to people in real life. (Turkish female, 17)

Another respondent mentioned a story entitled 'Yassin and I' and she described how boys would place calls on the forum Morocco.nl about girls they met and would like to get in contact with. Furthermore, ethnic use of social media keeps our respondents up to date with the latest news about the country of origin and the ethnic community in the Netherlands. For example, Antillean parties are announced, Ramadan experiences are exchanged and information and events regarding Surinamese 'keti-koti' are shared through social media. One respondent described how vacancies for jobs are published on Moroccan forums. As such, advantages of the ethnic labour market are maintained (Portes & Rumbaut 1990).

There were also respondents that mentioned the added value of ethnic social media when living in a multi-ethnic society such as Rotterdam. As a Moroccan-Dutch girl explains:

We are already integrating, aren't we? We meet Dutch people everywhere. We live here in Rotterdam with nothing but other cultures. That is why it is good that Moroccans have their own spot on Marokko.nl. A place for ourselves. As Moroccans, you just understand each other. It is this we-feeling, a feeling of community. (Moroccan female, 17)

Such statements of respondents would suggest that intra-ethnic bonding online is more relevant for people living in a multi-ethnic context. Other respondents however indicated that their ethnicity is more important for them in a less multi-ethnic setting. This respondent for example indicated that ethnic social media use became less important when she moved to Rotterdam:

At the time when I lived in Brabant I was discussing my Chinese background on the internet much more than now when living in Rotterdam. Rotterdam is very multicultural and therefore I do not feel the need to do so. In Brabant, I was the only Asian girl. I was surrounded by nothing but Dutch society. But now I live here I do not feel the need to go online for this because you meet other Asian people anyway. (Chinese female, 26)

Underlying both citations is however the ability to discuss and inform themselves about their ethnic background offline. This is in accordance with Chen and Choi's (2011) finding that migrants with a high availability of offline (ethnic) social support, are less likely to seek online social support of co-ethnics.

Another group of respondents mentioned that they avoid intra-ethnic social media use because they fear that it will hinder interethnic contact. For example, this Turkish respondent thinks that instead of retreating to intra-ethnic social media communities, it is important to learn how to engage with people from different backgrounds:

I am really against forums such as Hababam.nl or Marokko.nl where people will only meet people with a Turkish-Dutch or Moroccan-Dutch background. I think you need to learn to engage with different people. You need to be able to talk to people with different backgrounds. (Turkish male, 24)

All in all, we found that ethnicity is only one amongst many topics that migrant youth discuss on social media, next to, for example, religion, sports or school. In some situations or life phases, when a respondent's ethnic identity becomes prominent, they engage in intra-ethnic online communities; and they can relate to co-ethnics in their country of residence. At the same time, many respondents still invest in transnational intra-ethnic contact, with friends and family in the origin country. Social media facilitate these kinds of contact, as the next citation shows:

It is very convenient to keep in contact with my family abroad through Facebook. When my aunt in Thailand posts something at four o'clock at night, we can read it the next morning. My brother just had a baby so everyone is curious to see what he looks like. Because of time differences Facebook is more convenient than telephone. Everyone answers when they can. Sometimes we use Skype as well. (Surinamese/Colombian female, 21)

Our respondents thus used social media to connect with family and friends in the country of origin, but they did not establish new transnational contacts through social media nor were they very interested in news and information about life in their (parents') countries of origin. They were primarily interested in general culture, traditions and religion. They indicated that in this, their transnational contacts and engagement is different than that of their parents who often read newspapers from the country of origin.

I don't often look for information about Morocco online. Only very general information about the region where my family originates from because we travel there regularly. I am not interested in what's happening in other parts of Morocco. (Moroccan male, 26)

Intra-ethnic social media use of migrant youth does not often concern the homeland but rather their home culture. They are interested in cultural and religious traditions from their country of origin but not so much in the daily news. The second-generation shows a more cosmopolitan outlook on their ethnic identity that goes beyond national categories (see, for example, Nedelcu 2012). Agglomerate identities such as 'Asian' or 'Islamic' were referred to. When using social media to read or discuss this, respondents preferred to interact with others from their ethnic community in the country of residence than with people from their country of origin. For our respondents, intra-ethnic contact on social media is not a retreat to a virtual representation of the homeland of their parents. Instead, they are engaging with other migrant youth in exploring their ethnic identity as one of many topics they are exploring on social media.

6.6 Conclusions

Prior studies have reached varying conclusions regarding the implications of social media use for interethnic contact. This is remarkable and urged us to contextualize these findings in an empirical study into the conditions under which social media contribute to different orientations of interethnic contact. We asked how varying uses of social media for interethnic contact can be understood. Our results show that interethnic and intra-ethnic contact in social media use results from the needs and motivations of the users. The type and purpose of social media use differs for youth and intra- and interethnic social media use is not mutually exclusive. While ethnicity remains a relevant factor online, not all social media use of migrant youth is ethnically oriented. Online communities of interest can result in unintended interethnic encounters. As Pettigrew (1998) posits, common goals are an important prerequisite for interethnic contact. Users selectively visit social media based on interests rather than prior acquaintance or (ethnic) background (Wellman 2001, Haythornthwaite 2005: 140, Boyd & Ellison 2007: 219). In some instances, ethnicity is the common interest that motivates and determines social media use.

Many of our respondents valued intra-ethnic social media activities such as discussing cultural traditions on forums or hearing about upcoming ethnic events via social networking sites. Yet, in contrast to the intra-ethnic bonding thesis, the fear that ethnic minorities would retreat in virtual ethnic enclaves seems unfounded. Our research shows that migrant youth are using various types of social media and visit them for various purposes. Migrant youth visit certain social media venues when they have questions about their school or work, others when they want to discuss the latest soccer results and again others when they want to explore their own ethnic background.

Speaking to the broader literature on interethnic contact and migrant integration, our study shows that social media has indeed become a relevant sphere for the study of interethnic contact, supporting different ethnic orientations. Our analysis rejects the thesis that social media would only support intra-ethnic bonding (cf. Putnam 2000). By contacting respondents offline, and studying the broader range of their social media activities, we found that social media support both inter- and intra-ethnic contact. Interethnic contact was mostly established in interest-based online venues. Intra-ethnic online contact was established when the interest guiding migrant youth's online behavior was their ethnic ethnicity. Studies sampling respondents through ethnic online communities (for example ethnic forums or Facebook groups) or looking at content of such media, risk overemphasizing the scale and effects of intra-ethnic social media use. Furthermore, we found that bonding with migrant communities by second-generation migrant youth via social media is less oriented at the home-country than the home culture; the transnational dimension of social media activities appears very limited.

These findings add an important dimension to the current academic (and policy) debate on interethnic contact that often stresses the spatial (dispersal, gentrification) dimension rather than the virtual dimension. We should however avoid talking about online and offline life in binary terms. These lives are very much integrated and they co-construct notions of ethnicity and belonging (see, for example, Marotta 2011). Thus, it becomes clear that online communication deals with very similar complexities as offline interactions.

7

THE CONTINGENCY OF GOVERNMENTS' RESPONSIVENESS TO THE VIRTUAL PUBLIC SPHERE: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW AND META-SYNTHESIS

Abstract

The influence of the virtual public sphere in the policy process is not only dependent on the power of online media and the stakeholders who are using them. The responsiveness of governments to online policy debate is important as well. While some studies show examples of governments' responsiveness to the virtual public sphere, others find that online participation is largely ignored. Such contrasting findings point at a contingency of governments' responsiveness to online public debate. This article offers a systematic literature review and meta-synthesis of empirical articles that provide insight in the factors accounting for governments' responsiveness to the virtual public sphere. A theory-based analytical framework served as guideline for qualitative analysis of the findings of 39 studies. We found that institutional characteristics, characteristics of the policymaker, characteristics of online participation and characteristics of the policy domain are relevant conditions for governments' responsiveness to the virtual public sphere.

7.1 Introduction

Online media have recently become popular platforms of civic engagement. Citizens are using online media to inform themselves about policy issues and government actions, form political opinions, mobilize support from others and voice their needs and preferences to policymakers (Bohman 2004; Coleman & Blumler 2009; Dahlgren 2013). While some examples of online activism were successful in influencing the policy process, many others have quietly vanished and did not spur policy change (Howard & Parks 2012). Policymakers thus are responsive to public opinion that is voiced online in some cases, but not in others. This raises the question under what circumstances online civic engagement is able to influence policies by communicating public opinion to policymakers, being politicians or administrators.

This question is at the core of public sphere theory. Structural characteristics of the internet have spurred optimistic expectations for the emergence of a virtual public sphere as they provide a contemporary version of Habermas' (1991) historical blueprint of the public sphere (Bohman 2004; Coleman 2005; Dahlgren 2005). This democratic potential has been present during earlier years of the internet (often referred to as Web 1.0) in the form of online discussion forums and bulletin boards. In recent years, the user-friendly design and popularity of social media or Web 2.0 has revived scholarly debate concerning a virtual public sphere (Dahlgren 2009; Loader & Mercea 2012). Even though Habermas' concept of the public sphere has been criticized for its feasibility and Habermas himself never pointed at the web as the ideal platform for the public sphere, many other scholars did (cf. Dahlgren 2009: 158). Dahlgren (2005: 151) for example refers to the net as the 'vanguard' of the public sphere.

From the 1990s onwards, when democratic legitimacy was perceived to be under pressure, the idea of a virtual public sphere emerged as a promising alternative. At that time, voter turnout and political participation via formal channels of representation in representative democracy was in decline. Some scholars have argued that the creation of a virtual public sphere would overcome this 'democratic deficit' or 'crisis in citizenship' (Dahlgren 2005; Cole-

man & Blumler 2009). Although the technological basis of the internet and online applications may allow for open and egalitarian debate among citizens and more direct exchanges with policymakers (Bohman 2004), the creation of a virtual public sphere could not be taken for granted. Many scholars questioned the quality of the online debates within this sphere, due to the fragmentation of online publics, inequalities in access and participation and levels of interaction (Dahlberg 2001; Papacharissi 2004; Albrecht 2006; Hindman 2009; Goldberg 2011).

Next to studying aspects of this 'digital divide' (cf. Norris 2001; DiMaggio et al. 2004) related to online civic engagement such as access to and quality of online public debate, it is important to study the links between this arena of the public sphere and the policy process. Dahlgren (2001: 37) stated that: '*the relationship of political structures and the decision-making processes to the public sphere is of central concern. [...] A blooming public sphere does not guarantee a democracy; it is a necessary but not sufficient ingredient.*' There must be a structural link between online communicative spaces and the centers of decision-making in the form of processes of agenda-setting and feedback (Kingdon 1984; Baumgartner & Jones 2009). The virtual public sphere is not functional unless policymakers are responsive to needs, opinions and preferences that are voiced online.

The influence of the virtual public sphere on policymaking processes has been less explored and does not yet form a coherent research tradition. Scholars have approached this question with diverse methodologies and have come to different results. Some studies demonstrate examples of governments' responsiveness to the virtual public sphere while others find that online debate is largely ignored. Such contrasting findings point at a contingency of governments' responsiveness to online public debate (cf. Manza & Cook 2002). This calls for further research into the factors that account for governments' responsiveness to the virtual public sphere. Based on a meta-synthesis of empirical findings in the literature thus far, this paper aims to study under what conditions governments are responsive to online political participation by citizens.

The following research question is used as a guideline for systematic literature review and meta-synthesis: What factors account for the responsiveness of governments towards policy debate in the virtual public sphere? Meta-synthesis of earlier research findings allows us to construct a state-of-the-art of empirical knowledge and explicate theorization on this subject. In the following section, we develop an analytical framework to support our analysis of empirical findings with regard to three categories of factors. In section three we discuss our research design, being a meta-synthesis of a systematically collected sample of earlier studies. In section four the results of our analysis are presented. In section five conclusions are drawn and an outlook for further research is given.

7.2 Government's responsiveness to the virtual public sphere

At the core of democratic theory is the argument that citizens should be able to influence the policies that govern their lives (Held 1996; Dahl 2000). This requires that policymakers are responsive to public opinion. Responsiveness is defined as '*the congruence of collective public attitudes towards political issues with the policy preferences and actions of elected representatives*' (Hobolt & Klemmensen 2005: 380). This entails an outcome-oriented definition of responsiveness that is dominant in political representation and agenda-setting literature. It operationalizes responsiveness as the extent to which policymakers change their policy positions or spending based on shifts in public opinion (Stimson et al. 1995; Manza & Cook 2002; Burstein 2003; Wlezien 2004; Baumgartner & Jones 2009). However, next to being an outcome in terms of policy change, responsiveness can also be defined as a policy practice which relates to a community of policymakers who share specific policy beliefs, routines and other practices, or to the attitude of individual policymakers (Aberbach & Rockman 1994). Responsiveness is then defined as the practice of taking into account the (variety of) changing needs, wishes and claims of citizens and societal groups, which is very often expressed through

issue saliences (Burstein 2003). Responsiveness as a policy practice can be recognized in processes of policymaking regardless of whether this eventually results in policy change. In our meta-synthesis of studies on governments' responsiveness to the virtual public sphere, we will also take this forms of responsiveness into account.

Based on e-democracy and political representation literature we have formulated an analytical model that can help us to analyze the relevant literature. This model is based on three types of characteristics that seem to be relevant in order to assess the government's responsiveness to (online) public opinion, which are: policymaker, institutional and online participation characteristics (Figure 7.1).

Figure 7.1: Analytical framework
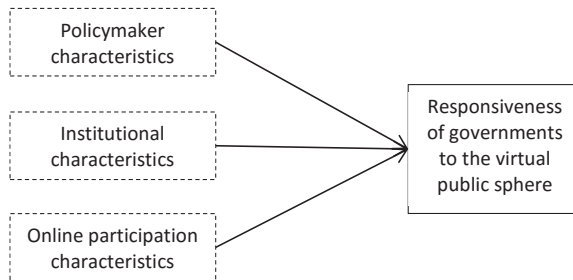
In the literature, three types of characteristics are deemed relevant determinants of governments' responsiveness to the virtual public sphere. Firstly, it is expected that individual policymakers in politics and administration differ in their responsiveness to the public sphere. They are generally dealing with a 'bottleneck of attention' (Baumgartner & Jones 2009). They cannot attend to all information that reaches them, so they need to select and prioritize. Based on personal experience, skills and preferences they will attend differently to online participation. For elected representatives, responsiveness is relevant with regard to their political position. Politicians have the incentive to take into account the policy preferences of voters to reduce the risk of electoral

loss and the risk of public reprisals in the form of civic disobedience or protests (Brooks & Manza 2006; Hobolt & Klemmensen 2005).

Secondly, institutional characteristics of the policy domain also influence responsiveness to the virtual public sphere. By this we mean organizational practices as well as the structure of the policy domain. Government organizations have different formal and informal rules and knowledge infrastructures in dealing with online information (Mergel & Bretschneider 2013). Also, the availability of budget and technological tools in organizations is a factor that may explain responsiveness to the virtual public sphere. Political and administrative power relations, norms and values influence whether policymakers are responsive to online publics or not. Some policy domains are dominated by vested interests and interest groups who have created a certain policy tradition, while other domains are more open to external voices (Manza & Cook 2002: 653). Recent studies have also shown the relevance of differences of representative systems, level of decentralization, proportionality of electoral systems, the level of political contestation and government popularity (Hobolt & Klemmensen 2005; 2008; Soroka & Wlezien, 2012). They prove that institutional characteristics are important mediators of the connection between public opinion and policy.

Thirdly, characteristics of online participation are relevant as well. It can be expected that online media and uses of these media differ in agenda-setting power. Dahlgren (2005) argues that online media vary in the degree in which they comply with the structural, representational and interactional dimension of the public sphere. They have different designs and features (structural dimension), reach different publics and differ in popularity/participation (representational dimension) and differ in quality of argumentation and power to mobilize others (interactional dimension). Therefore, they will garner different degrees of government attention. With regard to the representational dimension of the public sphere, Fraser (1992) makes a distinction between strong and weak publics. This can be linked to the three tier distinction that Miège (2010) makes when discussing a layered public sphere. At the top is the elite sphere, with the organs of the state together with legislatures and the upper echelons of the corporate sector. Political discussion is linked to

decision-making powers; it is a 'strong' public sphere or a strong public. The middle tier is the mainstream public sphere, mostly played out in the mass media; vested interests, parties, and other actors with varying power dominate here. The lowest tier is the societal sphere, where private, unorganized citizens can participate in opinion-formation, but they are largely remote from the major centers or decision-making, and thus constitute a 'weak' public or public sphere. Fraser (1992) and Dahlgren (2013) state that most public spheres are 'weak' in the sense that their links to decision-making are remote. Online participation may vary in this respect.

In a meta-synthesis of relevant literature, we will look whether and how specific policymaker, institutional and online participation characteristics influence the governments' responsiveness to the virtual public sphere. We also consider the possibility of other factors being relevant. In the next paragraph, we outline our method of data-collection and -analysis.

7.3 Methodology

We conducted a meta-synthesis of a systematically retrieved sample of empirical academic literature concerning governments' responsiveness to the virtual public sphere. A systematic literature review is a 'systematic, explicit, and reproducible method for identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing the existing body of completed and recorded work produced by researchers, scholars and practitioners.' (Fink 2010: 3). In contrast to a traditional or narrative literature review, a systematic review adheres to a set of principles that aim to limit biases in the sample of studies (Petticrew & Roberts 2006; Moher et al. 2009 & Booth et al. 2012). We followed the widely used PRISMA statement, ensuring transparent and complete reporting of the systematic literature review (Moher et al. 2009; Liberati et al. 2009).

We collected academic articles from seven different academic databases. Web of Knowledge, Scopus, ABI/Inform Complete and IBSS were chosen because they are four large scientific bibliographic databases in social sciences, including articles from a large number of sub disciplines. In addition,

we selected three discipline-specific databases of disciplines relevant to the research question: Sociological Abstracts, Communication Abstracts and IPSA. The online databases cover the search period of our review from 1993 onwards, entailing a 20-year period in which internet was available to private citizens. A well-defined search string based on the research question was used to ensure sensitivity and specificity of the literature searches (Petticrew & Roberts 2006: 81–2). The search query combines two types of search terms: The first relates to online participation, the second relates to policymakers, the political and policy process and responsiveness. During a number of initial rounds of searching the selected databases, we increased the sensitivity of the query by adding a number of keywords that appeared relevant. The final search string[3] was used consistently in all seven databases.

To ensure scientific rigor, we only included peer-reviewed publications in academic journals. This excludes gray literature such as conference proceedings and popular publications. Books and book chapters were omitted as they generally offer a less systematic description of methodology or are not empirical at all. We include only international literature that was published
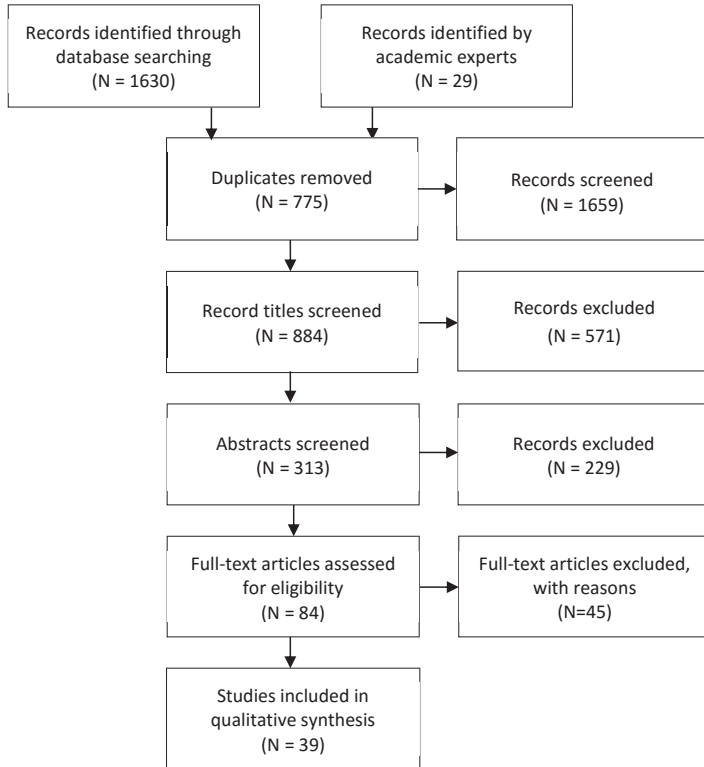
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[3] "internet" OR "world wide web" OR "on$line" OR "the web" OR "web 1.0" OR "web 2.0" OR "web 3.0" OR "cyberspace" OR "digital" OR "user generated content" OR "social medi*" OR "new media" OR "social network* site*" OR "blogosphere" OR "blog*" OR "web$log*" OR "online discussion for*" OR "Twitter" OR "Facebook" OR "Usenet" OR "online communit*" OR "virtual communit*" OR "media monitoring" OR "opinion mining" OR "media surveillance" OR "crowdsourcing" OR "electronic petition*" OR "e$voting" OR "e$petition" OR "netizen*" OR "clicktivism" OR "digital" AND "municipal*" OR "public administrat*" OR "public organi$ation*" OR "bureaucracy" OR "agenda setting" OR "agenda building" OR "public agenda" OR "policy process" OR "policy formulation" OR "policymaking" OR "policy design" OR "policy formation" OR "policy evaluation" OR "policy co$creation" OR "policy co$production" OR "policy legitimacy" OR "political process*" OR "political decision$making" OR "political legitimacy" OR "legislative process*" OR "government process*" OR "government legitimacy" OR "e-govern*" OR "government responsive*" OR "responsive governance" OR "interactive governance" OR " interactive polic*" OR "governance" OR "democratic process*" OR "democratic legitimacy" OR "e-democracy" OR "teledemocracy" OR "cyberdemocracy" OR "digital town hall" OR "electronic town hall" OR "democracy" OR "public sphere" OR "citizen participation" OR "citizen engagement" OR "civic engagement" OR "citizen co$creation" OR "citizen activism" OR "public participation" OR "public engagement" OR "public activism" OR "e-participation"

in English as these publications have contributed to international scholarly debate. Database searches on March 31th, 2014 yielded a total of 1630 publications. This total included 775 duplicates that were deleted from the sample. We conducted three subsequent rounds of screening in order to exclude non-relevant articles (Figure 7.2; Table 7.1). In the first round, we screened the titles of the records based on relevance to our research question. In a subsequent round of screening, the abstracts of 313 articles were evaluated with particular attention to whether or not the records concerned empirical research.

Finally, 56 full-text articles were assessed for eligibility in the final round of screening. We removed 18 articles because they did not provide any explanations for governments' responsiveness to social media. We sent this reference list of 38 articles to fifteen academic experts in the field to inquire whether some important articles were missing. Based on review of their suggestions, one article was added (Evans-Cowley 2010). The final sample of 39 articles that was used for qualitative meta-synthesis is listed in Table 7.2.

We analyzed the findings of the systematically retrieved sample of articles via meta-synthesis which entails a qualitative comparison and translation of original findings from which new interpretations are generated (Walsh & Downe 2005). We did this by way of manually coding the findings of the individual articles and comparing the studies based on the central concepts in our analytical model: governments' responsiveness to online information and the factors that are named explaining presence or absence of this. We operationalized three categories of responsiveness: No mentioning of responsiveness, responsiveness as policy change (present/absent) and responsiveness as practice (present/absent). The latter type of responsiveness was operationalized as examples of policymakers answering to or taking into account online participation in their practices, while no changes in policy outcomes occurred. For example, Andersen et al. (2011) measured responsiveness as the timeliness of governments' responses to citizen complaints.

A limitation of meta-synthesis is combining and interpreting findings from studies with different epistemological perspectives. Zimmer (2006:

Figure 7.2: PRISMA flow diagram

```
┌────────────────────────┐   ┌────────────────────────┐
│ Records identified     │   │ Records identified by  │
│ through database       │   │ academic experts       │
│ searching (N = 1630)   │   │ (N = 29)               │
└───────────┬────────────┘   └───────────┬────────────┘
            │                            │
            ▼                            ▼
┌────────────────────────┐   ┌────────────────────────┐
│ Duplicates removed     │──▶│ Records screened        │
│ (N = 775)              │   │ (N = 1659)             │
└───────────┬────────────┘   └────────────────────────┘
            │
            ▼
┌────────────────────────┐   ┌────────────────────────┐
│ Record titles screened │──▶│ Records excluded        │
│ (N = 884)              │   │ (N = 571)              │
└───────────┬────────────┘   └────────────────────────┘
            │
            ▼
┌────────────────────────┐   ┌────────────────────────┐
│ Abstracts screened     │──▶│ Records excluded        │
│ (N = 313)              │   │ (N = 229)              │
└───────────┬────────────┘   └────────────────────────┘
            │
            ▼
┌────────────────────────┐   ┌────────────────────────┐
│ Full-text articles     │──▶│ Full-text articles      │
│ assessed for           │   │ excluded, with reasons  │
│ eligibility (N = 84)   │   │ (N=45)                 │
└───────────┬────────────┘   └────────────────────────┘
            │
            ▼
┌────────────────────────┐
│ Studies included in    │
│ qualitative synthesis  │
│ (N = 39)               │
└────────────────────────┘
```

Table 7.1: Eligibility criteria for including articles in systematic literature review

Published in English, peer-reviewed journal
Published from 1993-2014
Empirical research based on original data
Relevance to the research question, excluded are articles: · about internet governance · about corporate governance · about internet influencing offline political participation · about e-government for public service delivery · not reporting explanations for governments responsiveness to online public opinion

Table 7.2: List of reviewed articles

Alfano, G. (2011). Adapting Bureaucracy to the Internet. The Case of Venice Local Government. *Information Polity, 16*(1), 5-22.

Andersen, K., Medaglia, R., Vatrapu, R., Henriksen, H., & Gauld, R. (2011). The Forgotten Promise of E-Government Maturity: Assessing Responsiveness in the Digital Public Sector. *Government Information Quarterly, 28*(4), 439-445.

Bekkers, V. (2004). Virtual Policy Communities and Responsive Governance: Redesigning On-line Debates. *Information Polity, 9*(3-4), 193-203.

Bekkers, V., Beunders, H., Edwards, A., & Moody, R. (2011). New Media, Micromobilization, and Political Agenda-setting: Crossover Effects in Political Mobilization and Media Usage. *Information Society, 27*(4), 209-219.

Bekkers, V., Edwards, A., & de Kool, D. (2013). Social Media Monitoring: Responsive Governance in the Shadow of Surveillance? *Government Information Quarterly, 30*(4), 335-342.

Bonsón, E., Torres, L., Royo, S., & Flores, F. (2012). Local E-Government 2.0: Social Media and Corporate Transparency in Municipalities. *Government Information Quarterly, 29*(2), 123-132.

Borge, R., Colombo, C., & Welp, Y. (2009). Online and Offline Participation at the Local Level. A Quantitative Analysis of the Catalan Municipalities. *Information Communication & Society, 12*(6), 1-30.

Brainard, L. (2003). Citizen Organizing in Cyberspace: Illustrations from Health Care and Implications for Public Administration. *American Review of Public Administration, 33*(4), 384-406.

Carlitz, R., & Gunn, R. (2002). Online Rulemaking: A Step toward E-Governance. *Government Information Quarterly, 19*(4), 389-405.

Chadwick, A., & May, C. (2003). Interaction between States and Citizens in the Age of the Internet: "E-Government" in the United States, Britain, and the European Union. *Governance-an International Journal of Policy and Administration, 16*(2), 271-300.

Chadwick, A. (2011). Explaining the Failure of an Online Citizen Engagement Initiative: The Role of Internal Institutional Variables. *Journal of Information Technology and Politics, 8*(1), 21-40.

Charalabidis, Y. & Loukis, E. (2012). Participative Public Policymaking through Multiple Social Media Platforms Utilization. *International Journal of Electronic Government Research, 8*(3), 78-97.

Table 7.2: (Continued)

Davis, A. (2010). New Media and Fat Democracy: The Paradox of Online Participation. *New Media and Society, 12*(5), 745-761.

Deibert, R. (2000). International Plug 'n Play? Citizen Activism, the Internet, and Global Public Policy. *International Studies Perspectives, 1*(3), 255-272.

Deligiaouri, A. (2013). Open Governance and E-Rulemaking: Online Deliberation and Policy-Making in Contemporary Greek Politics. *Journal of Information Technology and Politics, 10*(1), 104-124.

Dutton, W., & Lin, W. (2001). Using the Web in the Democratic Process. The Web-Orchestrated 'Stop the Overlay' Cyber-Campaign. *European Review, 9*(2), 185-196.

Ellison, N., & Hardey, M. (2014). Social Media and Local Government: Citizenship, Consumption and Democracy. *Local Government Studies, 40*(1), 21-40.

Evans-Cowley, J., & Hollander, J. (2010). The New Generation of Public Participation: Internet-Based Participation Tools. *Planning Practice and Research, 25*(3), 397-408.

Evans-Cowley, J. (2010). Planning in the Age of Facebook: The Use of Social Networking in Planning Processes. *Geojournal, 75*(3): 407-420.

Ferber, P., Foltz, F., & Pugliese, R. (2005). The Internet and Public Participation: State Legislature Web Sites and the Many Definitions of Interactivity. *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society, 25*(1), 85-93.

Fredericks, J., & Foth, M. (2013). Augmenting Public Participation: Enhancing Planning Outcomes through the Use of Social Media and Web 2.0. *Australian Planner, 50*(3), 244-256.

Garrett, R., & Jensen, M. (2011). E-Democracy Writ Small: The Impact of the Internet on Citizen Access to Local Elected Officials. *Information, Communication & Society, 14*(2), 177-197.

Goodman, N. (2010). The Experiences of Canadian Municipalities with Internet Voting. *CEU Political Science Journal, 5*(4), 492-520.

Haug, A. (2007). Local Democracy Online [in Norway]: Driven by Crisis, Legitimacy, Resources, or Communication Gaps? *Journal of Information Technology and Politics, 4*(2), 79-100.

Hepburn, P. (2014). Local Democracy in a Digital Age: Lessons for Local Government from the Manchester Congestion Charge Referendum. *Local Government Studies, 40*(1), 82-101.

Kangas, J., & Store, R. (2003). Internet and Teledemocracy in Participatory Planning of Natural Resources Management. *Landscape and Urban Planning, 62*(2), 89-101.

Table 7.2: (Continued)

Klang, M., & Nolin, J. (2011). Disciplining Social Media: An Analysis of Social Media Policies in 26 Swedish Municipalities. *First Monday, 16*(8).

Larsson, A. (2013). Bringing it all Back Home? Social Media Practices by Swedish Municipalities. *European Journal of Communication, 28*(6), 681-695.

Mergel, I., & Bretschneider, S. (2013). A Three-Stage Adoption Process for Social Media Use in Government. *Public Administration Review, 73*(3), 390-400.

Ohlin, T., & Becker, T. (2006). The Improbable Dream: Measuring the Power of Internet Deliberations in Setting Public Agendas and Influencing Public Planning and Policies. *Journal of Public Deliberation, 2*(1).

Polat, R. (2005). The Internet and Democratic Local Governance: The Context of Britain. *International Information and Library Review, 37*(2), 87-97.

Rethemeyer, R. (2007). Policymaking in the Age of Internet: Is the Internet Tending to Make Policy Networks More or Less Inclusive? *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 17*(2), 259-284.

Saebo, O., & Nilsen, H. (2004). The Support for Different Democracy Models by the Use of a Web-Based Discussion Board. *Electronic Government, Proceedings, 3183*, 23-26.

Seltzer, E., & Mahmoudi, D. (2013). Citizen Participation, Open Innovation, and Crowdsourcing: Challenges and Opportunities for Planning. *Journal of Planning Literature, 28*(1), 3-18.

Small, T. (2012). E-Government in the Age of Social Media: An Analysis of the Canadian Government's use of Twitter. *Policy and Internet, 4*(3-4), 91-111.

Soon, C., & Soh, Y. (2014). Engagement@web 2.0 between the Government and Citizens in Singapore: Dialogic Communication on Facebook? *Asian Journal of Communication, 24*(1), 42-59.

Sutton, J. (2009). Social Media Monitoring and the Democratic National Convention: New Tasks and Emergent Processes. *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, 6*(1), 67.

Valtysson, B. (2014). Democracy in Disguise: The Use of Social Media in Reviewing the Icelandic Constitution. *Media, Culture and Society, 36*(1), 52-68.

Van der Merwe, R., & Meehan, A. (2012). Direct Deliberative Governance Online [in South Africa]: Consensual Problem Solving or Accommodated Pluralism? *Journal of Information Technology and Politics, 9*(1), 46-63.

315) argues that it is possible to synthesize across methodologies as long as careful attention is provided to the contextuality and methodological assumptions underpinning the primary studies. Therefore, we also coded and took into account what context (government organization, level of government, geographical context/social context, research methodologies and designs) the studies entailed. We discuss our aggregated findings in the context of our research question in order to explicate existing theories on governments' responsiveness to the virtual public sphere (Walsh & Downe 2005). Contradictory findings are also highlighted in the discussion of synthesized results.

7.4 Results

Diversity of research designs

Studies into governments' use of online participation in the process of policy-making show a great variety of research approaches and designs. Exemplary of this is the use different terms to capture the online public sphere, such as: 'virtual policy communities' (Bekkers 2004), 'cyber-organization' (Brainard 2003) or 'cyber civil society' (Chadwick & May 2003). A distinction between studies into the government-initiated (N = 24; 61.5%) and citizen-initiated online participation (N = 11; 28.2%) is notable in the sample of studies. The former refers to online participation venues or tools that are initiated by the government itself, while the latter concerns activities from weak and intermediate public spheres based in existing online media venues. Four articles (10.3%) study both.

Studies into government-initiated participation demonstrate responsiveness in terms of policy change or practice more often than studies of citizen-initiated online participation. Examples of studies into government-initiated online participation are Valtysson's (2014) analysis of the online collaborative rewriting of Iceland's constitution and Small's (2012) analysis of Twitter use by the Canadian government. Examples of studies into citizen-initiated online participation are Brainard's (2003) study into online HIV and DES-communities and Dutton & Lin's (2001) study of the 'Stop the Overlay' online campaign.

We do not distinguish studies of government-initiated online participation and citizen-initiated online participation in discussing our findings related to specific categories of determinants. As online government initiatives are pre-organized, they better adhere to the determinants of our analytic model overall.

We cannot conclude that government-initiated online participation initiatives are more prevalent, only that the existing literature has a bias towards this type of online citizen participation. Two reasons can be given. First, government-initiated online participation is often subjected to an evaluation study. Second, it is generally organized in a designated online venue and concerns a strictly defined policy issue. This makes the object of study fairly well demarcated as citizen-initiated online participation is often more dispersed over different online venues. That is why studies that focus on citizen-initiated online participation mostly choose a certain medium — for example Twitter — to delimit their data sample. Collecting data on policy discussions from a large diversity of social media requires specialized tools and expertise.

Furthermore, it can be noticed that studies of government-initiated and citizen-initiated online participation have different designs. Government-initiated participation is studied through analysis of the online venues or government responsiveness measured through policy documents (e.g. Klang & Nolin 2011). Sometimes this is combined with interviews with policymakers involved in the initiative. Articles studying citizen-initiated participation often study a specific online campaign that may be present in different online media (e.g. Bekkers et al. 2011; Dutton & Lin 2001), or conduct interviews or a survey among policymakers about their responsiveness to online participation in general (e.g. Davis 2010; Ellison & Hardy 2014).

The selection of relevant articles is of relatively recent date. The first relevant article was published in 2000 and the last are from 2014 and most articles stem from the mid-2000s onward (Mean: 2009; SD: 4.2). The articles are published in a large variety of academic journals. The two journals with most publications (4 each) are 'Government Information Quarterly' and the 'Journal of Information Technology and Politics'. Articles are cited on average 32 times according to Google Scholar Citations (measured early May 2014).

Most articles (N = 17; 43.6%) focus on responsiveness of local governments, while a smaller number of articles (N = 9; 23.1%) focuses on the national level of governance. Other articles (N = 13; 33.3%) focus on regional governments, specific government agencies or supra-national governments. Most studies were situated in the US: a total of fifteen articles (38.5%) have a US government as (one of their) cases. Twenty-two articles focus on cases in Western European countries (56.4%). Six articles (15.4%) focus on other countries. The numbers do not add up as some articles include multiple cases.

These first descriptive results thus show that the empirical study of government's responsiveness to the virtual public sphere is still a rather new field of study that still has to develop into a coherent empirical tradition. There is no agreement yet on central concepts and their operationalization or preferable research designs. This may account for varying findings. In the following sections, we describe what explanations for government's responsiveness to the virtual public sphere are provided.

Responsiveness explained

In our analytical model we identified three categories of factors that may explain the responsiveness of government towards online participation. However, we also considered the possibility of other factors being relevant. Our analysis shows that the majority of articles (30 articles, 76.3%) focus on relevant institutional factors, while 7 articles (18.4%) focus on characteristics of the involved policymaker and another 13 articles (34.2%) focus on characteristics of online participation. Issue complexity proved to be another explanation offered by the literature that did not fit one of the three categories of our analytical framework. It entails the complexity of the issue according to policymakers. They state that some policy issues require professional expertise and should not be steered by public opinion of ordinary citizens. Issue complexity was mentioned in four articles (10.3%) as an explanation for the degree of responsiveness. The percentages exceed 100% as some articles name multiple explanations. From these descriptive results we cannot conclude that some explanations have more explanatory value than others. The relative popularity of different types of explanations was mainly a result

of research design. Institutional explanations constitute the main focus of research into responsiveness to the virtual public sphere as responsiveness was mostly operationalized on a systems level. The meta-synthesis however enables us to specify what explanations and mechanisms can be found in explaining governments' responsiveness to online participation.

Policymaker characteristics

Skills and competences of individual policymakers are named as explanations for the responsiveness of governments to online participation (Table 7.3). Carlitz & Gunn (2002) and Soon & Soh (2014) mention that responsiveness to online media requires an active role of policymakers. Instead of waiting until the news reaches them, they need to actively search for online citizen participation and encourage it. Their ability and willingness to provide feedback to the contributions of citizens will motivate citizens to continue (Valtysson 2014). This is an example of practice-based responsiveness. Responsiveness to online participation also requires the availability of different techniques and the abilities to work with them. 'Media literacy' (Seltzer & Mahmoudi 2013; Soon & Soh 2014) is sometimes mentioned as a relevant factor. Policymakers need to be ICT-savvy in working with new media and high-tech tools (Evans-Cowley & Hollander 2010).

Table 7.3: Policymaker explanations of governments' responsiveness to the virtual public sphere

Explanations	Articles	N (%)
Competencies and skills	Carlitz & Gunn 2002 Soon & Soh 2014 Seltzer & Mahmoudi 2013 Valtysson 2014 Evans-Cowley & Hollander 2010	5 (13.6%)
Tensions professional role	Klang & Nolin 2011 Soon & Soh 2014	2 (5.3%)
Position of policymaker in policy networks	Klang & Nolin 2011 Soon & Soh 2014 Bekkers et al. 2011	4 (10.5%)

Secondly, responsiveness to online participation is dependent on how policymakers perceive their professional roles. Two articles found that policymakers perceive tensions between their private and professional roles and boundaries in dealing with online citizen participation (Klang & Nolin 2011; Soon & Soh 2014). Communication via online media creates a closer and more egalitarian relationship between citizens and policymakers. As Soon and Soh (2014: 53) write with regard to Facebook use by Singaporean ministers: 'Members of the public are included in ministers' social networks based on the supposition of friendship.' Communication via online media is generally less formal. On the one hand the unscripted and spontaneous character makes policymakers more accessible, but on the other hand policymakers feel that the communication needs to comply with their professional role. Due to these perceived public-professional tensions, guidelines for responsiveness to online participation are developed (Mergel & Bretschneider 2013).

Finally, some articles offer explanations based on the position of policymakers in policy networks. Rethemeyer (2007) argues that online media can work as exogenous shocks or strategic surprises (cf. Bekkers et al. 2011) to actors in policy networks that may shift the power relations within these networks. As a result, policymakers may be reluctant to take online debate seriously as it might challenge in their position in networks where the policy is negotiated (Bekkers 2004; Ohlin & Becker 2006; Rethemeyer 2007).

Institutional characteristics

A majority of the reviewed articles name institutional characteristics as determinants of governments' responsiveness to the virtual public sphere (Table 7.4). In the first place, several studies mention the availability of institutional resources or provisions. Policymakers sometimes do not have access to social media in their workspace. Monitoring and responding to online citizen participation requires more time than traditional media monitoring. Some studies have described a lack of resources to buy or develop a tool for (monitoring) online participation. Charalabidis and Loukis (2012) find that the creation of a new organizational unit is required to organize and manage multiple e-participation channels and to analyze the large quantities of both

Table 7.4: Institutional explanations of governments' responsiveness to the virtual public sphere

Explanations	Articles	N (%)
Institutional values and practices	Alfano, 2011 Charalabidis & Loukis 2012 Deligiaouri 2013 Fredericks & Foth 2013 Sutton 2009 Klang & Nolin 2011 Ellison & Hardy 2014 Brainard 2003 Hepburn 2014 Chadwick & May 2003 Saebo and Nilsen 2004 Deibert 2000 Bekkers 2004 Mergel & Bretschneider 2013 Evans-Cowley 2010	15 (36.8%)
Political motivations	Larsson 2007 Borge et al. 2009 Davis 2010 Chadwick 2011 Hepburn 2014	5 (13.6%)
Institutional resources	Charalabidis & Loukis 2012 Chadwick 2011 Evans-Cowley & Hollander 2010 Haug 2007 Hepburn 2014 Sutton 2009 Ellison & Hardy 2014 Garrett & Jensen 2011 Soon & Soh 2014 Polat 2005 Evans-Cowley 2010	11 (26.3)
Path dependency and isomorphism	Andersen et al. 2011 Bonson et al. 2012 Ellison & Hardy 2014 Hepburn 2014 Polat 2005 Bekkers et al. 2013 Goodman 2010	7 (18.4%)

structured data (e.g. citizens' ratings) and unstructured data (e.g. citizens' postings in textual form). Time, money and access to tools need to be available for successfully taking into account online citizen participation.

Secondly, many studies conclude that a change in institutional values and practices is required for governments to be responsive to online participation. Public organizations are used to dealing with citizens in a 'technocratic' (Brainard 2003), 'law enforcing' (Charalabidis & Loukis 2012) or 'managerial' way (Chadwick & May 2003), which does not comply with the reality of online citizen participation. This translates in a risk averse, hierarchical oriented government culture or — in terms of Hepburn (2014: 96) a 'sclerotic institutional anxiety associated with new ICTs' — that does not fit with the rather open, egalitarian culture that is associated with new technologies. There is a mismatch between what online publics require of participation and the channels of participation offered by governments.

Some studies argue that this due to the fact that online publics and government organizations adhere to different democratic models: the participatory model versus the representative model (Bekkers 2004; Saebo & Nilsen 2004). Government organizations have difficulties to get accustomed to the style and language of interaction in online media and the culture that characterizes them, that is quite different compared to traditional channels of participation and representation (Charalabidis & Loukis 2012). Deibert (2000: 271) concludes that: 'such a profound transformation in the world political landscape raises fundamental questions about the basic structures of political participation and representation' Bekkers (2004) agrees with this analysis. He states that online participation challenges the primacy of elected representatives in political decision-making. Responsiveness to online media requires reconsideration of established practices, roles and power relations to enhance the viability of a virtual public sphere.

Thirdly, some articles conclude that responsiveness to online media is dependent on political motivations. Responsiveness to online media is advantageous to smaller parties and back bench MPs (Davis, 2010). This might be explained by indications that the majority of online citizen participation is

opposing government plans (Evans-Cowley, 2010). Also, political color of parties influences their preferences to the adoption of e-participation (Chadwick, 2011). Larsson (2007) shows that leftist parties are more likely to use Facebook. Borge et al. (2009) found that leftist councils are more responsive to participation in general, but this effect does not exist for online participation.

Fourth and finally, path dependency and isomorphism are named as determinants of the responsiveness to online participation. By path dependency we mean the tendency of government actions and policies to reflect earlier actions and policies (cf. Pierson 2000). Bonson et al. (2012) state that marginal use of online media can be explained by prior negative experiences with e-government tools. This influence of prior practices is also recognized by Ellison & Hardy (2014) and Hepburn (2014). Polat (2005) concludes that governments that are already open to (online) participation, are more likely to continue doing so. When government organizations consider it to be an external pressure, they have difficulty to digest this change. They perceive of online participation as being 'no part of the job'.

Polat (2005) mentions normative homogenization and isomorphism as explanations. These concern copying actions of other governmental organization either by normative pressure or mimicking positive examples (cf. DiMaggio & Powell 1991). The external demand of adopting online participation practices accounts for differences between local and national governments (Andersen et al. 2011; Goodman 2010) and between departments dealing with policy development and implementation (Bekkers et al. 2013). Local governments are usually considered first-tier organizations for citizen-government contact. Also departments dealing with policy development will have a higher need for participation of citizens than department solely dealing with implementation.

Online debate characteristics

Characteristics of online debate – or at least how they are perceived by policymakers – constitute a third group of explanations for the governments' responsiveness to online media (Table 7.5). Governments mention several concerns in dealing with online participation. Early studies of e-participation projects name internet access and skills of citizens as an issue of concern

Table 7.5: Online participation explanations of governments' responsiveness to the virtual public sphere

Explanations	Articles	N (%)
Representational dimension: participation of (new) publics	Kangas & Store 2003 Seltzer & Mahmoudi 2013 Evans-Cowley & Hollander 2010 Dutton & Lin 2001 Bekkers et al. 2011	5 (13.6%)
Representational dimension: perceived demand	Haug 2007 Small 2012 Borge et al. 2009 Fredericks & Foth 2013 Kangas & Store 2003 Polat 2005	6 (15.8%)
Interactional dimension: Quality of online participation	Ferber et al. 2005 Hepburn 2014 Seltzer & Mahmoudi 2013 Goodman 2010	4 (10.5%)

(Kangas & Store 2003). Also later studies mention that participation of a broad group of citizens – in terms of representativeness (cf. Dahlgren 2005) – is not ensured and therefore online media are not seen as a suitable channel of participation (Seltzer & Mahmoudi 2013; Evans-Cowley & Hollander 2010).

With regard to this representational dimension of online participation as well, studies highlight the importance of a (perceived) demand for responsiveness by the population (Haug 2007; Small 2012). Borge et al. (2009) found in a comparison of Catalonian municipalities that population size and average age are significant determinants of the start of online participation initiatives. A greater number of citizens and a younger population are perceived to have a higher demand for online participation opportunities. Also Fredericks and Foth (2013) found differences between urban population sizes in governments' responsiveness to online participation. Larsson (2013) found that higher educated populations and larger administrations are significant predictors of the uptake of social media by Swedish municipalities, but popu-

lation size however is not. Larsson's study shows that administration size probably moderates the relationship between population size and governments' responsiveness to online participation. The lack of demand by citizens is named as a reason for not implementing online participation initiatives or governments' lack of responsiveness (Polat 2005). When socio-demographic characteristics of the population indicate that there is little internet access and familiarity, governments will be less responsive to online participation (Kangas & Store 2003).

On the interactional dimension of online media, some studies detect reluctance of governments to be responsive to online participation due to the quality of debate (Goodman 2010; Seltzer & Mahmoudi 2013; Hepburn 2014). The status of online discussion in the policy process is controversial due to anonymity and unconstructive contributions (cf. Papacharissi 2004). Governments are afraid that venues of online participation 'will be dominated by a few crackpots or manipulated by special interests' (Ferber et al. 2005: 92). Hepburn (2014) states that online participation is perceived to be vulnerable to political manipulation. Participation tools can be hijacked by certain stakeholders, compromising the representativeness of outcomes. Governments find the authenticity of online contributions hard to judge and therefore are hesitant to let online contributions influence policy outcomes.

Other factors

Next to specifying explanations within the categories of our analytical framework, our review also revealed that the type of policy issue matters (Table 7.6).

**Table 7.6:** Other explanations of governments' responsiveness to the virtual public sphere

Explanations	Articles	N (%)
Issue complexity	Kangas & Store 2003 Van der Merwe & Meehan 2013 Hepburn 2014 Deligiaouri 2013	4 (10.5%)

Complex (Kangas & Store 2003), 'wicked' (Van der Merwe & Meehan 2013) or 'politically divisive' (Hepburn 2014) issues are perceived to be less suited for citizen opinion-formation, deliberation and mobilization online. Studies show that with regard to such technical issues, expert knowledge is preferred over the 'wisdom of the crowds' (cf. Surowiecki 2004). As Deligiaouri (2013: 119) states: 'Specialized and technical draft laws are less applicable for public commenting as they require from participants good and sometimes specialized knowledge of the topic.'. This might be valid for citizen participation in general, but seems even more so for online participation online, in which the identity and expertise of participants often remains hidden.

7.5 Conclusions

This literature review studied what factors account for the responsiveness of governments towards policy discussion in the virtual public sphere. Our findings show that the role of the virtual public sphere in the policy process is not only dependent on the power of the media and the stakeholders who are using them. The practices of governments are very important as well. We were able to uncover this side of the agenda-setting process by taking responsiveness as a central concept. This literature review resulted in a specified explanatory model of governments' responsiveness to the virtual public sphere with four categories of explanations (Figure 7.3). The influence of the virtual public sphere in the policy process is contingent with regard to individual policy-maker characteristics, institutional characteristics, perceived characteristics of online participation and characteristics of the policy issue at hand.

Institutional characteristics as explanations for governments' responsiveness to the virtual public sphere have been most prominent in empirical research thus far. This may be due to the fact that responsiveness to the public sphere is mostly defined as an institutional characteristic: the responsiveness of certain policy domains or governance systems. Studies focusing on individual policymakers and their perceptions of online media and issue complexity

Figure 7.3: Explanatory model
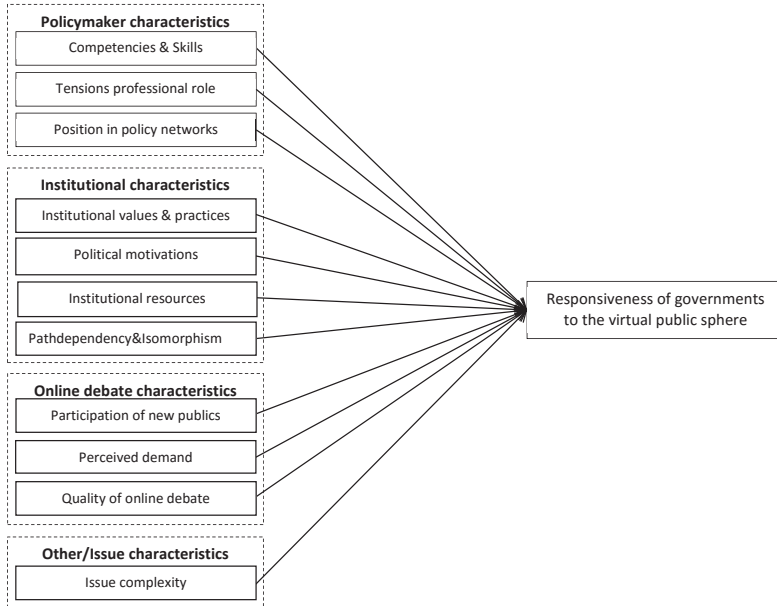
show that the agency of individual policymakers is relevant as well. They have certain levels of experience and preferences in dealing with (online) media. Their responsiveness to online debate is diminished by anonymity and concerns with authenticity of online content. This lack of trust in citizen participation will negatively influence the involvement of their contributions in the policy process (cf. Yang 2005). Complex policy issues are considered to be less suitable for citizen participation in general and online participation in particular. Moyonner-Smith (2006) however shows that online laymen's knowledge can contribute even in a complex decision-making process as the built of a Parisian airport. It can even empower the participation of citizens. Policymaker perceptions and scientific evidence thus disagrees on whether layman's knowledge can be useful in complex and highly technical policy problems.

Studies focused on government-initiated online participation generally encountered higher levels of government responsiveness than studies focusing on citizen-initiated online participation. Representativeness of participation and quality of debate are however weak factors in such top-down designs of a virtual public sphere. They delimit citizens' choice in topic of discussion, tone of debate and ways of expressing themselves. As a result, many studies conclude that the government-initiated participation was not really successful in terms of numbers of participants or degree of online interaction between citizens and policymakers. Citizen-initiated practices of online participation have the potential to attract larger numbers and greater diversity of citizens. There are examples of vivid public spheres with mobilization, critical argumentation and voicing opinions to policymakers. Responsiveness to citizen-initiated online participation is however restricted by three critical factors on the institutional, issue and policymaker dimension: governments are lacking awareness, access and acquaintance in being responsive to - let alone to participate in - citizen-initiated discussions.

Responsiveness to the virtual public sphere is a merit in terms of democratic legitimacy and relevant from a more strategic concern of public reprisals in the form of civic disobedience or protests and risking electoral loss (cf. Brooks & Manza 2006). Too much government responsiveness is however undesirable as a volatile environment will undermine the stability and functioning of the policy field. A tendency of populism is risked when a system is only responding to its external context of public preferences without formulating long-term policy objectives. Policies and policymakers need to be responsive to external claims while continuously pursuing more long-term goals.

The method of systematic literature review and meta-synthesis of the findings has a number of limitations. We cannot make any statements about the importance and prevalence of certain explanations as they may be more representative of research choices than of the empirical reality. The literature is still too much in a state of development and the sample is too small and diverse to assume that the findings represent all instances of government's responsiveness to the virtual public sphere. Furthermore, as outlined in the methodology section, we only included peer-reviewed scholarly articles in

our sample. This omits possibly relevant conference proceedings, working papers, dissertations, books and book chapters. However, we choose the quality assurance of peer review over gaining a larger sample of publications.

While communicative aspects of the virtual public sphere have been a popular object of study over the past years, research into its links with the centers of decision-making is still in its early stages. This is characterized by many (single) case-studies, conceptual and methodological diversity and publications in a great variety of journals. A coherent research tradition has not yet been established. We propose three directions for future research. Firstly, future research should focus its efforts on citizen-initiated online participation as this is underrepresented in current research. This type of online participation seems to be more promising as a virtual public sphere than government-initiated participation projects which often have problems with motivating citizens to participate and still are very similar to offline channels of participation. This type of research requires sophisticated tools and methods as citizen contributions will not be centered in one online venue, but dispersed over the Web.

Secondly, the agency of individual policymakers is often overlooked in studies into the responsiveness. Our review shows that their resources and competencies as well as their perceptions of the quality of online debate and the complexity of the policy issue constitute an important explanation for governments' responsiveness to the virtual public sphere. Politicians and administrators are often the subject of research into the utilization of social media for distributing information to the public, but less when it comes to being responsive to online debate. Research should focus on the competencies and skills of policymakers in dealing with online civic engagement, tensions with regard to their professional role and varying responsiveness related to policymakers' positions in policy networks. Also their perceptions of online participation and the complexity of the policy issue at hand influence their responsiveness to online participation and should be taken into account.

Lastly, and related to the previous point, our research shows that a broader conceptualization of responsiveness will result in a more comprehensive understanding of governments' responsiveness to the virtual sphere. There

is a tendency to conceptualize responsiveness as a system characteristic that can be measured by policy change as a result of the policy process. This is an outcome-oriented definition of responsiveness implying that without any changes in policy, there has been no responsiveness. With regard to the virtual public sphere that includes a great variety of opinion, such an outcome-oriented definition of responsiveness is not sufficient. Adding a practice-based conceptualization of responsiveness as an attitude of individual policymakers provides a more comprehensive outlook on responsiveness when it comes to the virtual public sphere. These directions for further research will contribute to gaining a better understanding of the impact of the virtual public sphere in the policy process.

8

CONCLUSIONS AND
DISCUSSION

8.1 Policy in the public eye

There is extensive interaction between the media and various policy agendas. Policy actors from inside and outside government are often referenced as sources in traditional media coverage or actively contribute to social media debate. Vice versa, media coverage is an important factor in policy processes. It not only influences the structure of policy networks and processes (Klijn et al. 2014; Korthagen 2015a; Schillemans & Pierre 2016), but can also put issues on the policy agenda (Wolfe et al. 2013). This latter influence is referred to as agenda-setting. Only in a minority of cases – such as the case of Mauro Manuel described in Chapter 1 – a media effect was explicitly acknowledged. In many cases, media effects on the substantive policy agenda remain implicit, and it is unclear whether and how they occurred. This study has sought to further our knowledge on policy agenda-setting effects by applying a feedback model of policy agenda-setting. We studied policy agendas within the policy domain of immigration and integration policies and analyzed agenda-setting and framing dynamics when policy-related issues were in the 'public eye' of the media.

The term 'agenda' is a metaphor for *'a collection of problems, understandings of causes, symbols, solutions, and other elements of public problems'* that come to the attention of a certain group of people or organizations (Birkland 2011: 106). Different types of agendas have been subject of agenda-setting studies. This includes the public agenda, the media agenda, the political or symbolic policy agenda and the substantive policy agenda. Most relevant to this study is the distinction between the symbolic and substantive policy agenda. Agenda-setting studies in political communication have primarily focused on the symbolic policy agenda, which is operationalized by studying the congressional agenda, parliamentary questions, or agendas of MPs or political parties (Van Aelst et al. 2014: 215). Changes on this symbolic agenda do not necessarily have policy consequences. Responsiveness and reference to media is often a political strategy rather than an act of actually pursuing policy change.

This study focused on agenda-setting effects on the substantive policy agenda. This policy agenda includes issues that are explicitly subject to the active and serious consideration of authoritative decision-makers (Cobb & Elder

1972). They require substantive action on the part of policymakers including the allocation and re-allocation of government resources. As issues often pass the symbolic policy agenda before arriving on the substantive policy agenda, the latter is seen as a subset of the symbolic policy agenda. Changes on the substantive policy agenda are generally believed to be rarer as bureaucratic processes take time and investment (Walgrave & Van Aelst 2006). Eventual changes on the policy agenda such as legislative or budgetary change are difficult to relate back to the far shorter issue attention cycles of media coverage or other sources of information. Furthermore, agenda-setting effects of media on this agenda are more difficult to pin down in empirical studies. The substantive policy agenda is often implicitly defined in policy processes that take place behind closed doors.

Recent studies suggest that a more comprehensive understanding of policy agenda-setting can be reached by interpreting agenda-setting as an exchange of feedback between media and policymaking processes (Wolfe et al. 2013; Nowak 2013). This model offers three key advantages when studying the substantive policy agenda. First, it acknowledges that information not only flows from media to the policy agenda but also vice versa. This is similar to Pierson's (1994) notion of policy feedback that argues that policies also produce politics. Today, there is general consensus that agenda-setting is a mutual rather than unidirectional process of exchange in which the media and policy agenda are interdependent (Van Aelst et al. 2014; Vliegenthart et al. 2016). This entails taking into account reciprocal relations on an individual and institutional level between the media and the policy agenda. Scholars generally agree that media coverage influences the policy agenda more than the other way around, indicating processes of policy agenda-setting (cf. Vliegenthart et al. 2016).

Second, this model acknowledges multiple qualities of feedback sent by the media. Media coverage is produced by a diverse range of media outlets and involves not only a quantitative distribution of issue salience, but also includes qualitative features of issue framing. This study takes into account social media as well as traditional media coverage. Furthermore, it takes into account not only the quantity of media attention for issues, but also the framing of media coverage. Frames communicate an interpretation of the issue

at hand, including a problem definition, causal explanation and a proposed (policy) solution (Entman 1993; Rein & Schön 1993). Media coverage can exercise 'negative feedback' toward the policy agenda when it agrees with the dominant frame on the policy agenda and argues for a policy status quo. It can also provide 'positive feedback' when frames in media coverage are contrasting the policy frame and argue for policy alternatives (Baumgartner & Jones 2002). Because it is assumed that media coverage does not operate in a vacuum, I study how media coverage is influenced by various policy actors, including government officials themselves.

Third, a feedback model of agenda-setting assumes that agenda-setting not only depends on characteristics of media as the agenda setter, but also of the policy agenda as the receiving 'agent' in the process. The feedback model of agenda-setting draws our attention to how the media provide information, but also to how the information is received on the policy agenda. I study the agenda-setting influence of the policy agenda by focusing on its 'responsiveness'. Responsiveness concerns the extent to which and ways in which the policy agenda takes media coverage into account (Hobolt & Klemmensen 2005). This can entail changes in issue salience or issue framing on the policy agenda, but also a broader sensitivity to media coverage in policy processes, even including anticipation of media coverage. I study the forms this responsiveness toward media coverage takes and how this varies according to different types of media outlets and issue frames.

By elaborating a feedback model in this study, I build further on common applications of agenda-setting and framing theory in political communication and policy science. Both agenda-setting research traditions can benefit from borrowing from each other and combining different aspects of their theoretical applications. The tradition of agenda-setting research in political communication has developed as a positivist tradition specifying multiple aspects of media effects, often distinguishing agenda-setting and framing effects. It has been criticized for focusing too much on linear (Van Aelst et al. 2014; Vliegenthart et al. 2016) and quantitative (Walgrave & Van Aelst 2006; Wolfe et al. 2013) effects. It has been argued that the research tradition should go

beyond a model of media as the 'almighty agenda setter' (Walgrave 2008; Van Aelst et al. 2008). Due to its strong focus on media, it often overlooks the larger complex political and policy arena in which media coverage takes shape.

Agenda-setting models in policy science allow for more complexity than agenda-setting studies in political communication. The multiple streams approach (Kingdon 1984) and advocacy coalition model (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith 1993) acknowledge the complexity of policy information, the role of focusing events or external shocks, and that of (coalitions of) actors in connecting information, beliefs and interpretations in motivating policy continuation or change. Agenda-setting studies in policy science include notions of reciprocal exchanges between the policy agenda and external influence and of the relevance of framing of information as an intrinsic part of policy agenda-setting. It also criticizes static models of policymaking processes in which agenda-setting is a distinct phase. Furthermore, the barrier model (Bachrach & Baratz 1970) has its value in conceptualizing barriers in the reception of information in the policy process. This aspect relates to the reception of feedback on the policy agenda and is also acknowledged in the idea of a bottleneck of attention in the punctuated equilibrium framework (Baumgartner & Jones 1993). However, agenda-setting models in policy science are fairly general approaches rather than middle-range theories. They are best suited to ex post interpretation of agenda-setting effects and often do not focus on the role of media specifically – let alone the contemporary media landscape of the 24-hour news cycle, including social media. The feedback model of policy agenda-setting combines the empirical specificity of agenda-setting research in political communication with more multifaceted notions of media information and policy processes, and interdependencies between the two from policy science.

I applied a constructivist approach focusing on media effects related to focusing events within a specific policy domain. I empirically applied a feedback model of agenda-setting on a likely case for policy agenda-setting by the media: the policy domain of immigration and migrant integration in the context of the Netherlands. Characteristics of the policy issue, and the media

and political system of the Netherlands make this policy domain a likely case for policy agenda-setting. Immigration and integration are contested issues for which a multiplicity of frames exists and agenda changes occur frequently. As such it can be considered an 'intractable policy controversy' (Scholten 2013). Immigration and integration issues regularly gain media-attention. Furthermore, media scholars tend to agree that the Netherlands is a political and media system in which exchanges between the media and policy agenda are likely (Hallin & Mancini 2004). Dutch media demonstrate high internal plurality in terms of issue framing, and they operate fairly autonomously from government. In addition, the Netherlands is one of the leading countries in internet access and social media use. This makes the policy domain of immigration and migrant integration in the Netherlands a suitable case to study instances when policy-related issues are in the public eye.

This concluding chapter first returns to the central research question that guided this research: '*How are policy agendas in the domain of immigration and integration shaped and how do traditional and social media coverage of policy-related issues influence this type of agenda?*' This question is answered based on a synthesis of findings from the various empirical chapters and their interpretation in the context of policy agenda-setting as a feedback process. A feedback model of policy agenda-setting draws our attention to characteristics of the media that are sending policy feedback, but also to characteristics of the policy agendas that are receiving the feedback, and how this in turn influences the media coverage. In section 8.2 I first address conclusions related to media overage sending policy feedback. In section 8.3 I present conclusions related to the reception of media feedback on the policy agenda. These sections provide a synthesis of findings from the six empirical chapters structured according to the three research themes. Together they provide an answer to the overall research question.

Section 8.4 discusses the limitations of this research. Section 8.5 outlines avenues for future research. The final section of this dissertation, section 8.6, addresses the generalizability of the conclusions and discusses the broader relevance of the findings for agenda-setting theory and theory on the mediatization of governance. It also touches upon the societal relevance of the conclu-

sions in the light of media coverage and policy responses concerning current developments in immigration and migrant integration in Western Europe.

8.2 Media coverage sending policy feedback

Media framing matters

Chapter 4 of this study took into account the framing of media coverage as a quality of media feedback in addition to a quantitative measure of media attention in order to come to a more comprehensive understanding of media effects on the policy agenda. The quantity of media attention does not fully explain changes to the policy agenda and qualitative aspects of media coverage related to the framing of the issue provide an important explanation as well. When the predominant framing of the issue in media coverage does not contest the current policy frame but is supportive of current policies and legitimizes them, media coverage will not bring about a change to the policy agenda. This was for example the case with media coverage of the increased inflow of Eritrean asylum seekers in 2014. Media coverage was largely in agreement with the frame of State Secretary Teeven's policy approach. Large quantities of media attention for this case were not associated with changes in the policy agenda. We conclude that large quantities of media attention do not always imply that media coverage is providing 'positive feedback' for the policy frame. This makes 'frame contestation' a necessary condition for agenda-setting.

Furthermore, this chapter demonstrates that large quantities of media attention are not a necessary condition for agenda change when media coverage is very 'consonant' in communicating a contesting issue frame. This means that media coverage is very consistent in communicating a frame that is contesting the current policy frame. Notable examples are the cases of individual asylum seekers Ahmed Ghafoor Ahmadzai and Dennis Butera, the cases of the hunger strike of rejected asylum seekers in detention and a new policy for au pairs. In these cases, relatively small amounts of media attention were very consonant in contesting the current policy frame and the initial policy frame

related to these issue was quickly revised. It can be concluded that including qualitative measures of media coverage in agenda-setting studies provides for a more comprehensive understanding of when media coverage of policy-related focusing events are associated with changes in policy agenda.

Furthermore, I conclude that there are common patterns in which the media provide positive feedback to the policy agenda of immigration. This conclusion is relevant in the light of theorization on media framing of immigration and integration issues specifically (D'Haenens & De Lange 2001; Van Gorp 2006; Vliegenthart & Roggeband 2007). Media frames of immigration issues and their interaction with issue frames on the policy agenda differ according to the type of focusing event that gains media attention. In media coverage of focusing events related to concrete persons or groups, a human interest frame tends to dominate. On the policy agenda, these cases are initially often approached from a managerialist frame. We described this as a 'David vs. Goliath' dynamic between dominant framing in the media and the policy agenda (cf. Ihlen & Thorbjørnsrud 2014). The media effect in these cases often entailed a frame change toward a human interest frame. In focusing events concerning more abstract phenomena or policy initiatives, generally a threat frame or managerialist frame dominated the media coverage. When a managerialist frame on the policy agenda was met with a dominant managerialist counter-frame in media coverage, this led to negotiation dynamic. The media effect often entailed an adaptation of the managerialist frame on the policy agenda.

Policy entrepreneurs use various practices to influence media framing

Media not only influence the policy agenda, but actors involved in the policy process also influence media coverage (Cook 1998; Korthagen 2015b). Issue frames in media coverage do not emerge in a vacuum but they strongly reflect frames that exist in society, especially frames of authoritative actors or actor coalitions (Bennett 1990; Entman 2003a). The selection of issues and issue frames from policy actors that gain media coverage is determined by news values and media logic. Chapter 5 describes how policy entrepreneurs use certain practices to make their frames of immigration issues more attractive

to media. These framing practices of policy entrepreneurs selectively steer media attention toward certain frames and legitimize them, while discrediting and steering attention away from alternative frames. Framing practices that are often used include the use of framing devices (such as visual images, metaphors, catchphrases, examples or statistics), acts of mobilization of attention and support, emphasizing obtrusiveness, calling upon expertise and authority and venue-shopping. Via media coverage, policy entrepreneurs can attribute responsibility to other levels of government (vertical venue-shopping) or other government branches (horizontal venue-shopping). As Chapter 2 demonstrates, there are vertical and horizontal exchanges between the local and national policy agendas, making venue-shopping efforts in media coverage worthwhile.

Chapter 5 demonstrates that the use of framing practices does not only vary according to the authoritative position of policy entrepreneurs but also according to their feedback aims. Some policy entrepreneurs use framing practices to promote frames in the media that provide negative feedback toward the current policy frame. This is often supported by framing practices of calling upon expertise, and deflecting attention for alternative frames by non-response or venue-shopping. By pointing to another (policy) venue, policy entrepreneurs divert pressure from other policy entrepreneurs toward policy change. Frames that provide positive feedback toward the current policy frames are often brought to the attention of media via practices of mobilization, emphasizing obtrusiveness and the use of framing devices. As a result of the use of such framing practices, policy actors are important 'co-authors of the news' (Cook 2006: 162) in traditional as well as social media. By 'going public' they use the media for the 'mobilization of bias' (Schattschneider 1960) in favor of their policy frame and take part in agenda-setting and framing of the policy agenda.

Media effects interplay with other non-mediatized influences on the policy agenda. Media coverage is therefore not a factor independent of or external to institutional policymaking routines (cf. Cook 2006; Korthagen 2015a). In some cases this can be problematic. When media coverage is strongly influenced by actors from authoritative elites, it can create feedback loops in which

'*public relations activity [of the government] results in press coverage, which is then interpreted as significant public opinion.*' (Cohen 1973: 179). In this case, media coverage is in fact an echo of the voices of governmental and political elites (Tresch 2009), instead of being a bearer of the public sphere and a critical 'watchdog' of democratic processes. This risk is especially present in countries with low levels of press freedom.

Social media are not an autonomous factor in policy agenda-setting

Social media are a relatively new source of media coverage of policy issues. It is argued that social media are more inclusive to alternative voices in public debate that may be excluded from the mainstream media (cf. Studlar & Layton-Henry 1990; Fraser 1992; Dahlberg 2001; Mehra et al. 2004; Albrecht 2006). Furthermore, it is argued that social media facilitate more continuous and direct exchanges with the policy agenda (Dahlgren 2005; Loader & Mercea 2012).

Chapter 6 reports on 52 in-depth interviews with migrant youth of various ethnic backgrounds in Rotterdam. Based on their accounts of inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic uses of social media, we arrive at a better insight into whether and how social media are used as a subaltern public sphere. This chapter shows that social media were used for different purposes based on different motivations. There is no intra-ethnic online public sphere in which migrant youth exclusively engage. Their minority background plays a role in only some of their social media activity for which they access designated online venues. For example, 'Marokko.nl' proved a popular forum for Moroccan-Dutch youth when they wanted to explore aspects of their ethnic identity and background. This could for example involve the exchange of recipes for cooking or the reading of love stories. However, the majority of our respondents' online behavior takes place in social media communities of interest on a different basis than a shared ethnic background. For example, our respondents mentioned engaging in social media venues related to a shared study, interest in sports or discussion of news and current affairs. These often involved inter-ethnic

exchanges in which ethnicity was not a relevant factor motivating their choice of social media venues.

Furthermore, Chapter 6 indicates that engaging in political debate or discussion of policy issues was not a popular activity of migrant youth on social media. Many of our respondents mention consulting multiple online news platforms to gain various perspectives on news, for example, when events in their country of origin and issues concerning their ethnic group are in the news. Social media informed our respondents on these types of policy issues from a different perspective. However, our respondents were rarely motivated to engage in policy discussion or political action on social media themselves. In this phase of their lives, they were pre-occupied with issues of personal development, ambitions and identities. Only in a minority of cases they actively contributed to a subaltern public sphere with the potential to bring forward different issues or issue frames.

A separate research project indeed indicates that social media do not portray a substantially different way of thinking about immigration issues but rather mirror the attention and framing present in traditional media (Dekker & Scholten 2015). The quantity of media attention for immigration cases largely follows the same pattern in social media as in traditional media. Also, the prevalence of various frames in social media coverage is highly similar to the distribution of frames in traditional media coverage We explain this congruence between traditional and social media coverage by intermedia exchanges (cf. Vliegenthart & Walgrave 2008). Social media content often refers to and is based on earlier publications in traditional media. In most cases, the writer shares a link or copies a statement from elsewhere and adds one's own opinion - either agreeing or disagreeing with the frame that is expressed in traditional media content. Only in a minority of cases did the user not share existing content but fully developed the content himself.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that social media do not constitute a 'subaltern' public sphere of discussion of immigration and integration issues. While social media coverage on immigration issues is very similar to traditional media coverage, our findings also show that social media bring about a new media logic of ad hoc commenting on focusing events and policy

responses (cf. Van Dijck 2013). Social media are a suitable platform for several framing practices (Chapter 5). Framing devices such as the use of metaphors, catchphrases and visualization thrived on social media. In comparison to traditional media, social media communication very concise and media-rich. Short texts are combined with visual images or references to other content. Therefore, these framing devices fit the media logic of social media very well. Social media also enable new forms of mobilization and online activism (Howard & Parks 2012). Examples of this presented in this research were among many others the online petition and Twitter hashtag in the Mauro Manuel case. Lastly, social media offer policy actors a channel to communicate their message in a very ad hoc way without being filtered by traditional media. One example was the case of Abdul Ghafoor Ahmadzai. His lawyer tweeted to mobilize attention for Ahmadzai's case immediately as soon as the Ministry faxed the notice with flight details for Ahmadzai's return flight.

While popular discourse and research sometimes tend to have a bias toward successful examples of online activism that generated policy change, this study indicates that such a direct influence is rare. Communication on social media does not immediately reach a very large and diverse audience. Social media are primarily organized around communities of interest (Haythornthwaite 2005; Boyd & Ellison 2007). Therefore, messages shared within these communities will reach a public of like-minded people first. Only when the message is shared by many or by certain opinion leaders who bridge different online communities is the message able to mobilize broader support. Traditional media in turn report on social media debate and mobilization as a form of 'voxpop', particularly when social media content is shared abundantly and becomes 'trending'. Through these processes of intermedia agenda-setting, social media can function as a catalyst for coverage on traditional media from a certain frame. Small sparks of online activism can fuse a larger fire of contestation (Bekkers et al. 2011). Therefore, government officials consider social media to be an uncertain factor in policymaking processes. However, social media do not constitute an autonomous factor in policy agenda-setting of immigration issues.

8.3 Reception of media feedback on the policy agenda

Responsiveness of the policy agenda to media coverage can take different forms

Not all government organizations and individual policymakers are equally influenced by the media (Kunelius & Reunanen 2012; Schillemans 2012). This research focused on the 'responsiveness' of the policy agenda as an integral part of agenda-setting processes. This concerns how policy agendas of immigration and integration issues take shape and the extent and ways in which media coverage is taken into account. This proves an important additional determinant of media effects on the policy agenda.

Based on the findings of Chapter 7, this study distinguishes between responsiveness as an outcome and responsiveness as an attitude or practice. Responsiveness as an outcome entails the extent to which issue salience and issue frames on the policy agenda change, following shifts in attention and framing in media coverage. This is how we studied media effects in Chapter 4. We operationalized the effect as a frame change on the policy agenda occurring in a time frame of one year after the onset of the media attention. In most cases, this frame change on the policy agenda did not imply structural or legislative change that would also impact other cases (a notable exception is the 'Kinderpardon'). Our operationalization also took into account adjustments in the policy frame related to individual cases that did not entail structural policy change.

A valuable finding in Chapter 3 that helped to gain a more complete image of media effects on the policy agenda is that changes on the policy agenda do not necessarily entail a full frame shift. For example, sometimes the policy strategy is changed while the problem definition remains the same. In other cases, the policy intentions are kept broad and vague. 'Frame ambiguity' tends to emerge in a context of bounded rationality and political controversy over an issue. This is the case with the policy domain of immigration and integration. In such contexts, ambiguous or 'weak' frames are a sensible solution and have particular strengths. They are able to placate multiple and sometimes conflicting political views. Also, they leave opportunity for policy continuation

in a situation of uncertainty about the issue and when new information on the issue may come up. Frame analyses should be sensitive to frame ambiguity on the substantive policy agenda, particularly in policy domains related to intractable policy controversies. Media effects on the policy agenda resulting in partial or very minor changes may be overlooked.

Chapter 7 indicates that responsiveness to media coverage can also take the form of an attitude or practice. Responsiveness as an attitude or practice relates to policy institutions sharing specific policy beliefs, routines and other practices, or to individual policymakers. Responsiveness to media coverage is the practice of taking into consideration issues and issue frames that are expressed in the media in policymaking processes. As an example, responsiveness as an attitude is expressed by Minister Leers in the quote in Chapter 1. When deciding whether he will use his discretionary power to grant Mauro a residence permit, he is taking media coverage into account. This form of responsiveness can be present in processes of policymaking regardless of whether this eventually results in policy change.

Based on mediatization literature, we can elaborate on this form of responsiveness with the notion of media-reflexivity (cf. Davis 2009). Media-reflexivity does not only entail taking media coverage into account as soon as it emerges, but continuously anticipating how decisions would be portrayed in the media. This logic has expanded from influencing only communication and public relations departments to the practices and routines of policymakers in administration (Schillemans 2012; Thorbjørnsrud et al. 2014). Exchanges between policymakers and journalists in advance of media coverage may already influence changes on the policy agenda (cf. Protess et al. 1987; Korthagen 2015b). Responsiveness as an attitude or practice has been described in the context of the mediatization of politics and governance entailing a structural change in which government organizations have adapted to the media and their logic (cf. Strömbäck 2008; Esser & Strömbäck 2014). The empirical chapters of this dissertation indicate that a broader operationalization of responsiveness is a valuable addition to operationalizing responsiveness only in terms of changes in the outcome on the policy agenda.

Perceived representativeness of public opinion drives responsiveness to media coverage

The extent to which media coverage is perceived to be representative of public opinion in society is an important mechanism underlying media effects on the policy agenda. This entails the perception of the extent to which public agenda has been affecting the media agenda. Chapter 7 indicates that when media coverage is believed to be representative of public opinion in society, policy agendas tend to be more responsive to this coverage. When media coverage is believed to be an extreme opinion which does not represent a 'silent majority', or is something that will 'blow over', then it is ignored in policymaking processes. Whether media coverage (on traditional media or social media) is truly representative of public opinion becomes irrelevant because it concerns the *perception* that media coverage is influenced by public opinion (Schudson 1995; Walgrave & Van Aelst 2006: 100). Regardless of whether or not media coverage is a complete or valid representation of public opinion in society, policymakers tend to act upon this premise (Linsky 1986: 87). Hence, the 'public eye' is socially constructed as a reality which the policy agenda tends to act upon.

This mechanism steering the reception of media coverage as feedback on the substantive policy agenda is different from mechanisms that have been described in relation to the public and political agenda. Studies of public agenda-setting by the media generally assume a cognitive mechanism of responsiveness of audiences to media content: one of stimulus-response. It assumes that exposure to media attention for an issue will make this issue more salient to the public (McCombs & Shaw 1972; Capella & Hall Jamieson 1997; Scheufele 2000). In contrast, political agenda-setting studies generally describe a mechanism of political strategy (Yanovitzky 2002: 425; Walgrave & Van Aelst 2006; Davis 2007; Walgrave 2008). Vliegenthart et al. (2016:14) conclude that: *'Political actors do adapt to the media logic, but only to the extent that it is to their own advantage. Politicians' political logic serves as guidance for their selective adaptation to the media logic'*. Studies indicate that issue ownership and being an opposition party increase responsiveness to media coverage (Green-Pedersen & Stubager 2010; Vliegenthart & Walgrave 2011;

Van der Pas 2014; Vliegenthart et al. 2016). Political parties wish to show their electorate that they are 'on top of things' (Walgrave & Van Aelst 2006).

Regarding the policy agenda, the 'bottleneck of attention' of policy processes has been understood from a rationalist perspective of 'bounded rationality' and how well new information fits the current policy image or frame (Baumgartner & Jones 1993). This is an institutional as well as individual process (Pritchard 1992; Berkowitz 1992). Responsiveness is a form of frame reflection in which the current policy frame is confronted with policy alternatives which are framed in media coverage (cf. Schön & Rein 1994). Baumgartner and Jones' model of punctuated equilibria asserts that for long periods of time, policy subsystems only respond to information that fits the current policy frame and only brings about incremental changes. Only in exceptional occasions – when contesting information becomes so prominent that it can no longer be ignored – policy agendas become responsive to alternative frames and more radical changes in policy occur.

This study adds to this interpretation that perceived representativeness of public opinion is an important factor in reaching this tipping point. This mechanism of responsiveness to the policy agenda elaborates upon the 'third person effect' by which political responsiveness to media coverage is sometimes explained. This entails that actors respond to media because they believe the mass media *affect* the public – presumably more than it influences themselves (Davison 1983; Van Dalen & Van Aelst, 2014: 59). The mechanism underlying media-effects on the policy agenda is differs by entailing the perception of how the public or other interest groups *have affected* media coverage. Studies have demonstrated that policymakers tend to adjust policies in response to public opinion changes, comparable to the workings of a thermostat (Stimson et al. 1995; Wlezien 1995; Burstein 2003). They constantly measure public opinion and adjust their policy accordingly.

This is an important contribution as Van Aelst et al. (2014: 200) conclude with regard to political agenda-setting that '*agenda-setting work has, until recently, remained somewhat undertheorized. In particular, insights on why and how politicians adapt to the agenda of the media are still in need of elaboration.*' This is even more the case for the policy agenda and policymakers in

government. Policymakers' perceptions of media coverage are usually studied as trust in media, while this is operationalized as whether actors perceive media to be unbiased, truthful in their reporting, giving a multisided and complete picture of issues and are thus trustworthy. These studies often indicate that this conceptualization of perceptions of media is not relevant to agenda-setting (Vesa et al. 2015). For future research, this study suggests that this focus be diverted from trust in media to perceived representativeness of media coverage.

Responsiveness toward social media is less institutionalized

The mechanism of perceived representativeness of public opinion that is driving the responsiveness to media coverage becomes particularly apparent when studying responsiveness to social media. While public organizations are known to devote substantial time and resources to traditional media coverage (Cook 1998; Thorbjørnsrud et al. 2014; Schillemans & Pierre 2016), social media are rather new to the media landscape and require a different media literacy and sensitivity. They bring about new norms and practices of communication on public issues. According to Brants and Van Praag (2006: 38), technological and commercial developments have changed the media landscape from a stable supply to a volatile market. Responsiveness to social media coverage is less established in institutional routines than traditional media (cf. Djerf-Pierre & Pierre 2016). Therefore, it often comes down to the practices of individual policymakers. Many of them struggle with access to and interpretation of social media coverage. Earlier studies point to different stages of social media adoption and institutionalization (Mergel & Bretsch-neider 2013; Mergel 2016). This brings along legal and ethical issues. For example, to what extent can online content and metadata referring to individual citizens be stored and used by government authorities for various purposes? And, to what extent and how should governments inform citizens about their practices of monitoring social media content?

Chapter 7 of this study demonstrates that determinants of responsiveness to social media include personal experience and competences and institutional

resources and incentives such as the implementation of a social media analysis tool. Policy actors' position in policy networks and political motivations also play a role. Furthermore, we find important differences related to the policy domain and perceived quality of social media participation. Policy issues and domains which are rather technical and complex are generally perceived to be less suitable for online participation. Expert knowledge is preferred over 'wisdom of the crowds' (Surowiecki 2004) in these policy domains.

In addition, perceptions of the representativeness of online discussion strongly steer responsiveness to social media. On the one hand, policymakers feel an incentive to be responsive to social media coverage as it is directly produced by citizens and it is assumed that no intermediary organizations select and frame the information that is communicated. It is often regarded as the online equivalent of citizens writing to their government representatives. On the other hand, uncertainty about groups of people that social media represent inhibits responsiveness. Policymakers are afraid that social media '*will be dominated by a few crackpots or manipulated by special interests*' (Ferber et al. 2005: 92). Policymakers are often unclear about which part of the public social media are representing and whether their social media opinions can be generalized to broader society. When social media seem to represent only a minority group and when the quality of online contributions is perceived to be low, governments are less responsive to this type of mediated information.

In the context of social media, the mechanism of perceived representativeness of public opinion steering the reception of media feedback on the policy agenda creates a paradoxical outcome. On the one hand, social media are valued for their potential to include minorities whose voices are generally unheard in traditional media and to facilitate direct exchanges with citizens. But on the other hand, social media coverage is dismissed when it is perceived to only represent a small, minority group in society. This is problematic when, in the context of debate on policy issues, many users of social media consider their online behavior to be acts of political activism and policy feedback. When their message is ignored, they will feel misrepresented.

8.4 Limitations of this study

This section discusses three main limitations of this study that resulted from methodological choices in the research design. An important question is whether alternative choices were available and whether this would have led to different conclusions.

Selection of media outlets

This study took into account media coverage of immigration issues based on a diverse range of Dutch national newspapers, opinion magazines and television news and current affairs programs by public broadcasters. Furthermore, publically available social media content was collected via a social media monitoring tool (cf. Dekker & Scholten 2015) was collected. By doing so, a broad overview of coverage that is part of the media consumption by many Dutch citizens and policymakers alike could be captured. However, there are media outlets that we did not take into account in this study which might have led to different conclusions concerning media effects on the policy agenda. Most prominent types of media that were excluded are (semi-)private social media venues and local media.

Firstly, social media content in this study was only collected from public sources, mainly Twitter, public weblogs and public Facebook groups. Discussions in (semi-)private communities were not taken into account. Furthermore, we collected our data based on queries collecting content that explicitly refers to specific cases in our research. By using this method of data collection, we did not collect online content referring to immigration more in general or referring to cases without being very specific. While these queries enabled the collection of content including a variety of issue frames, this way of selecting social media coverage excludes more generic statements on immigration and integration. By only studying public social media content and this method of data collection, we might exclude subaltern public spheres in which the distribution of attention for issues and issue frames is possibly more different from traditional media coverage. While including this content would possibly have led to different conclusions on the attention for issues and prevalence

of issue frames in online media coverage on immigration, it is not likely that this would have led to different findings concerning media effects on policy. Chapter 7 of this dissertation indicates that due to the limited accessibility of these online venues and uncertainties of representativeness, (semi-)private social media content is likely to be ignored by policymakers. This type of content is not very likely to have an independent effect on policy. Only when the message is shared by many or by certain opinion leaders in other more public online venues and is picked up by other media, will it be able to have an effect. Our analysis of public social media content and traditional media publications covered this. Furthermore, including (semi-)private social media would require further ethical reflection on permission to use these data for scientific research.

Another type of media that was excluded in this research were local media which operate in specific localities such as cities or provinces. Local media in the Netherlands include newspapers, radio and television channels, and today also social media channels and communities. While local news media in the Netherlands are in decline (Landman & Kik 2015), they still have an important democratic function on the local level of governance. For example, long before the case of Mauro Manuel became a national news topic, his case had already been reported on in the local media in the province of Limburg where Mauro lived at the time. When his case became national news, local media continued their coverage and this was an important source of information for national media. This was also the case in news about the asylum center in the village of Oranje in the province of Drenthe. Local media coverage opposing the establishment of this asylum center enabled issue linkages with critical media reports on asylum centers in other locations such as Rijs in Friesland, Budel in Noord Brabant and Rekken in Gelderland. Through these issue linkages, the establishment of asylum centers in small villages in the Netherlands became a topic of national news coverage and policy debate.

Next to agenda-setting effects on the substantive policy agenda of the local government, coverage of local media also has an important function in agenda-setting of the national policy agenda. By excluding local media from the study, an integrated outlook on processes of intermedia agenda-setting

between local and national media was omitted. However, many relevant local publications were shared in social media content, which in turn was taken into account in this study. This enabled us to nevertheless obtain an overview of issue-attention and -frames introduced by local media. When these media outlets contributed new information to the debate, this often transferred to the national media being studied. Local media still play an important role which should be studied more systematically in future research.

Causal inference

The feedback model of agenda-setting and the social constructivist approach applied in this case study does not allow for causal inferences as is common in positivist statistical research designs. The Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) method that was applied in Chapter 4 replaces linear notions of causality by assuming equifinality and multifinality (Verweij & Gerrits 2012: 27). This entails taking into account that different conditions can produce similar outcomes, and that the same condition can produce different outcomes in different contexts. This fits the theoretical assumption that media effects on the policy agenda are not linear causal effects but entail complex causal interactions between media and the policy agenda (Boydstun 2013; Wolfe et al. 2013). This study highlighted this different notion of causal inference by using qualitative language of 'association' and 'understanding' factors 'contributing' to an outcome.

A consequence of this approach is that statistically generalizable statements on media effects were not obtained. However, this qualitative methodology is believed to better reflect the complex reality of policy agenda-setting and framing. An added value of this methodology is the insight gained into the mechanisms underlying policy agenda-setting by the media.

The policy agenda-setting effect

When studying media effects on the substantive policy agenda, this study focused on changes in the issue framing in policy. This is notably different from the agenda-setting effect that is studied in political agenda-setting studies. These studies focus on quantitative shifts in issue salience instead of qualita-

tive shifts in framing. Distinguishing between the two is easier concerning the symbolic political agenda than the substantive policy agenda. While political communication scholars often consider agenda-setting and framing to be distinct processes that should be analytically distinguished as 'accessibility' (agenda-setting) and 'applicability' (framing) effects (Scheufele & Tewksbury 2007), in policy sciences they are generally considered to be closely intertwined. As Van Aelst et al. (2014: 204) argue, the substantive policy agenda has a direct impact on, or *is* policy (cf. Walgrave & Van Aelst 2006; Pritchard 1992: 108). Changes in issue salience and issue framing are strongly intertwined. This is the case when agenda-setting effects are operationalized as legislative or budgetary change, but also when it is operationalized as changes in the issue framing on the policy agenda of a specific policy domain – as was done in this study.

By studying agenda-setting effects on the substantive policy agenda, we inevitably go beyond the original agenda-setting hypothesis of allocation of attention and the agenda-setting phase of the policy process. Conclusions on agenda-setting effects by the media on this agenda cannot be generalized to agenda-setting effects on the political agenda or the public agenda, while the concept of agenda-setting suggests a similar process. As concluded in section 8.3, agenda-setting on these various agendas is also steered by different underlying mechanisms. This way, this study elaborates on the broader theory of mediatization of governance. While mediatization is a useful concept to place the agenda-setting impact of the media in perspective of other types of media influence, mediatization literature has been less successful in bringing forward a middle-range theory and testable hypotheses (cf. Altheide & Snow 1979; Mazzoleni & Schulz 1999; Strömbäck 2008; Esser & Strömbäck 2014).

It is not necessarily problematic that agenda-setting and framing were studied conjointly. It is usually assumed that an agenda-setting effect is established more easily than a framing effect, as reflected by the famous quote by Bernhard Cohen: *'[the press] may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about.'* (1963:13). Also, several more recent agenda-setting studies argue that a media effect is deemed most likely in the agenda-setting phase,

in comparison to subsequent phases of the policy process – including policy formulation (Linsky 1986: 94; Baumgartner & Jones 1993; Voltmer 2007: 5; Van Dalen & Van Aelst 2014: 42). Therefore, the media effect that was encountered in this study includes both an agenda-setting effect and framing effect. A limitation of this study is that the two were only distinctively operationalized in Chapter 4.

8.5 Directions for future research

Reflection on the findings and limitations of this study points to avenues for future research. The feedback model of agenda-setting that was applied in this study proved fruitful and more closely approaches the empirical reality of policy agenda-setting. The feedback model of agenda-setting highlighted processes of reception of media feedback on the policy agenda that remained underexposed in common positivist research designs. It is therefore recommended to elaborate on this qualitative research design in future research. A number of features of this feedback model of policy agenda-setting studies should be developed further. Firstly, our knowledge on media effects on the policy agenda could be specified further by focusing on differences between various media outlets and intermedia agenda-setting effects between them. As suggested in section 8.4, including types of media that were not taken into account here such as local media would be relevant.

Secondly, an important topic of study for future research is responsiveness of the policy agenda as an attitude or practice of policymakers. Our knowledge on this can be advanced by studying policymakers' own media consumption. Policymakers are known to be true news addicts who closely follow the coverage of multiple media outlets (Pritchard 1992). These practices have become institutionalized in devoting substantial time and resources to media monitoring and management (Cook 1998; Thorbjørnsrud et al. 2014; Schillemans & Pierre 2016). Today, many government organizations are also piloting social media monitoring. However, it is still relatively unclear how institutional processes structure policymakers' media consumption and how

policymakers take media feedback into further consideration in policymaking processes. This research suggests that several factors are likely at play. Factors on an institutional level such as access and resources are relevant, next to more personal characteristics of policymakers such as competencies and previous experience.

This research suggests that in studying policymakers' interpretations of media coverage, a focus on perceptions of the representativeness of public opinion would be a fruitful direction. Unravelling these factors requires an ethnographic research design of participant observation and qualitative interviews in government organizations. This can also reveal the sense-making processes by which media coverage is interpreted and taken into consideration in policymaking processes. A specific form of responsiveness as an attitude or practice that future research should take into account is anticipatory behavior of policymakers related to the media (cf. Van Aelst et al. 2014: 207). This includes practices by which government officials aim to avert critical media coverage or to arrange supportive coverage for the current policy frame. Future studies should consider agenda-setting dynamics between media and policy as mutual exchanges of feedback.

Lastly, future studies should look beyond a media effect in isolation. The media interact with other forces influencing the policy agenda, for example politics, stakeholder lobby or forms of citizen participation. Chapter 2 demonstrates that consultation and cooperation take place between different stakeholders in the policy domain on different levels of governance. Taking this into account generates insight into the role of media within the broader framework of democratic exchanges between the state and public sphere.

8.6 Broader relevance of findings

Theoretical and societal relevance

The theoretical relevance of this research lies in addressing gaps in policy agenda-setting research related to the influence of media, in order to come to a more comprehensive understanding of when media coverage has an effect

on the policy agenda. A direct effect of media coverage on the policy agenda is only encountered in a minority of cases. Not only the quantity of media attention, but also qualitative characteristics related to framing are relevant in explaining when media coverage has an agenda-setting effect. Social media do not have an independent effect on the policy agenda but are able to influence traditional media coverage to some extent. Furthermore, not only factors related to media coverage which is sending policy feedback, but also factors related to policy agendas which are receiving this feedback play a role. The underlying mechanism of responsiveness of policy agendas toward media coverage is the extent to which media coverage is perceived to represent public opinion. When media coverage is perceived to be highly representative of public opinion in society, the policy agenda will be more responsive. By applying a feedback model of policy agenda-setting, this study embeds agenda-setting and framing theory in broader theorization on mediatization of governance and comes to a more comprehensive understanding of media effects.

The findings of this study have societal relevance as well. At the core of democratic theory is the argument that citizens should be able to influence the policies that govern their lives (Held 1996; Dahl 2000). This requires that private citizens and societal organizations should have an understanding of ways in which the policy agenda is influenced and – if willing – put this knowledge into practice for their own interests. A better insight into media effects on policy can help private citizens and societal actors to take a critical stance toward attention and frames that media attribute to policy issues and to mobilize this communicative power and contribute to media coverage. This is particularly relevant at times when traditional channels of exchanges between the public and policymakers such as political party membership, civil society organizations and election turnout are in decline (Pritchard 1992).

On the other hand, this study has relevance for policymakers in government as well. As this research shows, policy agendas are selectively responsive to media coverage. Insight into mechanisms driving responsiveness to media coverage helps policymakers reflect on their practices in relation to media influence and how this aligns with democratic and institutional values. Too

much responsiveness to the media may be undesirable. A volatile environment will undermine the stability and professional functioning of the policy domain. The risk of a tendency toward populism could occur when a system only responds to an erratic context of public preferences mixed with media logic without formulating long-term policy objectives. Policies and policymakers need to be responsive to external claims while continuously pursuing more long-term goals.

Generalizability of findings

This study was based on a constructivist epistemology and qualitative research methodology. Agenda-setting by the media was studied in relation to one specific case: the policy domain of immigration and migrant integration policies in the Netherlands. This policy domain and political and media system setting was chosen as a likely case of media effects. In correspondence with earlier studies in this context, we found that media-attention and framing for immigration varied and that media effects are limited (Vliegenthart & Roggeveen 2007; Bonjour & Schrover 2015). Although findings of this study have limited statistical generalizability, they can nevertheless be theoretically generalized to similar likely cases.

First of all, findings are generalizable to policy domains governing a similarly intractable policy controversy as immigration and integration. Soroka (2002a) contends that media influence on the policy agenda is most plausible for policy issues and domains that lend themselves to dramatic events. Walgrave et al. (2008: 832) assert that '*the joint consideration of issue obtrusiveness, dramatism, and concreteness offers some reasonable purchase on the question of which issues should be most open to media effects*'. The domains of environmental policies and 'law and order' are examples of such similar policy domains in which similar agenda-setting effects by the media can be expected. The findings would not be generalizable to more abstract and less obtrusive policy domains in which a media effect on the policy agenda is less likely. Examples of such policy domains are foreign policy and administrative policy.

Secondly, generalizability of these findings is limited to similar political systems and media systems. Hallin & Mancini (2004: 47) have developed a typology of media- and political systems – which usually develop in co-evolution. The Netherlands belongs to the North/Central European or Democratic Corporatist model which includes countries that are sharing are a relatively open parliamentary system of governance in which media influences are likely. Furthermore, the media system is characterized by a large degree of press freedom and journalistic professionalism, high circulation and large internal plurality in terms of issue framing. Other countries in this model where these findings could be generalized are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland (cf. Hallin & Mancini 2004). Van Dalen & Van Aelst (2014) further specify Hallin and Mancini's typology by indicating that there are differences within Western European political and media systems as well. They contend that in political systems that lack strong centralized power, such as Sweden and Norway, politicians are more responsive to the media. In this respect, the Netherlands is comparable to the Scandinavian countries, while being less comparable to federal states such as Germany or Belgium.

Lastly, our study focused on policy agenda-setting on the national level of government. The question is whether these findings are generalizable to substantive policy agendas on other levels of government as well. Studies suggest that findings would be generalizable to the local level of government (Tan & Weaver 2009). However, in the Netherlands as well as other contexts, local media are in decline (Bakker & Scholten 2014; Raad voor Maatschappelijke Ontwikkeling 2014; Landman & Kik 2015). This situation jeopardizes the role of the media as providers of policy feedback related to local developments. Also on a supra-national level such as the European Union, researchers often speak of a 'democratic deficit' of media reporting on EU policymaking (cf. Bijsmans & Altides 2007). Because of a lack of transnational media and an under-representation of EU policy issues in national media, policy agenda-setting by the media may be less prominent at this level of governance as well. Chapter 2 of this study however indicates that there are multi-level exhange between policy agendas in this domain, possibly facilitating further media effects.

Relevance to current developments in immigration and integration

In addition to the theoretical generalizability of the findings to comparable policy domains and media systems, the findings of this study have a broader relevance in the light of current theoretical and societal debates on the media coverage of immigration and migrant integration issues. After the completion of this empirical study, asylum migration to Europe remained a major news topic in 2015 and 2016. To what extent can these findings on media framing of these issues and agenda-setting dynamics be generalized to current affairs? As large numbers of asylum migrants come to Europe, media coverage is often structured by relatively abstract themes: Can European welfare states deal with large numbers of refugees? Are the motives of asylum seekers genuine? Will refugees be able to integrate into European societies? In relation to these types of issues, managerialist frames are expected to be found on the policy agenda. When media coverage is contesting these policy frames, this likely happens from an alternative managerialist frame. When media cover more concrete cases, for example the situation of individual migrants, specific groups of migrants or local initiatives for asylum migrants, it is more likely that a human interest frame will be dominant in media coverage. Accordingly, they can put these issues on the policy agenda and contest the managerialist policy frame.

In addition, certain actors and framing practices encountered in this study (Chapter 5) have become institutionalized in communication about asylum migration and are commonly used in the current media coverage. For example, water metaphors, and catchy terms to depict 'bogus' asylum seekers are still often used. Again, statistics are used and interpreted in multiple ways to fit a certain issue frame. Images of either large groups of immigrants at the borders of 'Fortress Europe' or individual asylum seekers such as the iconic picture of Aylan Kurdi, the three-year-old Syrian boy who was found on the shores of Bodrum (Argos TV Medialogica 2016), influence media coverage to a substantial degree. Certain events are framed as focusing events fitting existing frames, such as the sexual assaults during New Year's Eve in Cologne (Germany) that supported the framing of immigrants as a threat.

Interestingly, the media themselves have become an important subject of debate on a meta-level concerning coverage of issues related to asylum migration to Europe. The media are criticized for over representing certain issues while ignoring others, and for using the 'wrong' issue frame. This criticism is heard frequently and is interesting for three reasons. Firstly, because it indicates that media are deemed an important factor influencing public opinion and policy agendas. Media are attributed a democratic responsibility in fueling public debate with 'objective' and balanced coverage.

Secondly, it shows how the concept of 'framing' has made its way into our daily language. It is, however, attributed a different meaning from its scholarly application in a constructivist approach. 'Framing' is often used as an accusation of distorting the truth. It is hence seen as a purposeful act while assuming that there is an objective and singular truth of the issue. This is an understanding of the concept that is different from most scholarly conceptualizations – including the one in this study.

Thirdly, it is interesting to note that the criticism of selecting and framing by the media is expressed by various actors and that this criticism concerns various issues and issue frames. The media are criticized by some actors for paying too much attention to human interest frames and events supporting this frame, while at the same time other actors criticize the media for over representing immigration as a threat. In many cases, the exact opposite criticism is voiced at the same time. This indicates that 'blaming the media' (Deuze 2006) has become an important framing practice. Often, actors in the debate refer to a 'silent majority' which does not voice its opinion or is insufficiently represented in the media. The actor voicing this concern implies that this silent majority will have a nuanced opinion of the issue, most likely the issue frame of the actor making the statement. This makes accusations of selectivity and framing, and references to an unheard truth and 'silent majority' a generic framing device by which the validity of one's own frame is stressed.

How the media cover focusing events related to Dutch immigration and integration policies does not only reach audiences in the Netherlands. A previous study which I conducted in the framework of the THEMIS project indicates

that social media coverage from the Netherlands travels through migrant networks and informs decision-making processes of prospective migrants in origin countries of migration (Dekker & Engbersen 2014; Dekker et al. 2015). Social media information makes prospective migrants more 'streetwise' in choosing a destination and organizing their journey. In some cases, information that is communicated via social media encourages prospective migrants to undertake the journey of migrating to the Netherlands. In other cases, social media distribute information that discourages future migration (Dekker et al. 2016). Information that circulates in migrant networks via social media does not inherently encourage or discourage future migration. How information about potential destination countries is perceived is dependent on the situation the prospective migrant is in. In addition, information obtained from social media is usually taken into consideration supplementary to information from other channels such as personal contacts with social ties who have already migrated or information from government organizations (Dekker et al. 2015).

Government officials are increasingly aware of this global reach of social media information and they make use of this potential when new policy changes in immigration and integration policies are published. Examples of this are open letters from the Dutch Minister of Immigration to asylum seekers in the Netherlands tempering their expectations by stating that the asylum procedure will take a long time (20-10-2015; 11-2-2016). Another notable example is the Danish law regulating that asylum seekers have to hand in money and valuables that are larger than 10,000 Danish Krone in value upon arrival in Denmark (26-01-2016). The announcement of this law and media coverage of it reached beyond Denmark. Besides a direct effect on asylum seekers who are already in Western Europe, such measures will have an indirect effect once this information travels via social media and reaches prospective migrants outside of Europe.

Various European governments are now also using traditional and social media to directly inform potential migrants about migration to their country– mostly to discourage them from migrating to their country. For example, on September 7th 2015, Denmark published an advertisement in four Lebanese

newspapers in ten different languages. It informed prospective migrants (in transit) in Lebanon about changing conditions of Denmark's asylum procedure. While the Danish government, through Minister of Integration Inger Støjberg, stressed that the campaign was meant to inform and not to dissuade migrants, the campaign was highly criticized by human rights organizations for doing exactly this. Another example are the recent Facebook campaigns started by Norway, Finland and Belgium to inform potential asylum migrants in Arabic about the asylum procedures in their countries. These campaigns specifically target potential asylum migrants from Iraq and Afghanistan whose asylum applications will not be granted in all cases (Schans & Optekamp, 2016).

Studies of how traditional and social media cover immigration and integration issues do not only provide insight into possible effects on the public and policy agenda in the Netherlands. Media - and particularly social media - constitute a transnational public sphere (Nash 2014). As such, media coverage also influence the reality of the immigration and integration issues that the policies are dealing with.

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Summary in Dutch
Nederlandstalige samenvatting

Introductie

Kwesties die gerelateerd zijn aan overheidsbeleid komen regelmatig in de aandacht van de media te staan. De aandacht die media aan verschillende beleidskwesties schenken en de framing waarvanuit zij belicht worden varieert. In de framing van deze kwesties geven media een definitie aan het probleem, de oorzaken en de benodigde (beleids)oplossingen. Mediaberichtgeving over degelijke kwesties is een daarmee vorm van feedback op het beleid. In sommige gevallen wordt de mediaberichtgeving opgepikt door beleidsmakers en wordt deze feedback meegewogen in beleidsprocessen. Bij de bekende casus van Mauro Manuel in 2011 speelde mediaberichtgeving uiteindelijk een doorslaggevende rol en leidde het tot veranderingen op de beleidsagenda. Echter, zijn veel meer gevallen te noemen waarin media geen invloed hadden, of waarin de invloed van media onduidelijk bleef.

De invloed van media op de beleidsagenda kan worden verklaard door agendavormings- en framing-theorie. Deze theorie wordt toegepast op verschillende agenda's (waaronder de publieke agenda, politieke agenda en beleidsagenda) en heeft zich daarom ook binnen verschillende wetenschappelijke disciplines ontwikkeld. Dit proefschrift brengt wetenschappelijke inzichten rond agendavorming en framing vanuit de media- en communicatiewetenschappen, sociologie, politicologie en bestuurskunde samen om te komen tot een betere verklaring van media-effecten op beleid.

Deze studie past inzichten vanuit verschillende wetenschappelijke disciplines toe in een feedback-model van agendavorming. Dit model veronderstelt ten eerste dat uitwisselingen tussen media en de beleidsagenda wederzijds zijn en dat er een afhankelijkheidsrelatie tussen beiden bestaat. Ten tweede veronderstelt dit model dat media-aandacht pluriformer is dan alleen kwantiteit van aandacht voor kwesties. Ook de framing van media-aandacht speelt

mee en mogelijke verschillen daarin in verschillende traditionele en social media. Ten derde veronderstelt dit model dat institutionele en individuele vormen van responsiviteit van de beleidsagenda de invloed van media op de beleidsagenda mede bepalen.

Casus

Ik onderzoek effecten van mediaberichtgeving op de beleidsagenda binnen het beleidsdomein van immigratie en integratie in Nederland. Dit vormt de casus van deze studie. Het beleidsdomein van immigratie en integratie reguleert de toegang van migranten tot Nederland en de daaropvolgende processen van integratie. Dit beleidsdomein is zeer complex en controversieel en kan gekarakteriseerd worden als een 'weerbarstige beleidscontroverse'. Er bestaat geen eenduidige definitie van het beleidsprobleem en de benodigde beleidsinterventies. Rond immigratie- en integratiekwesties bestaan meerdere 'frames' die een verschillende interpretatie aan de kwesties geven in termen van probleemdefinitie, causale verklaring en beleidsoplossingen. Gedurende de afgelopen decennia zijn verschillende frames leidend geweest in het beleid. Daarnaast is de context van Nederland als politiek systeem en medialandschap een belangrijke factor in de keuze voor deze casus. Beleidsagenda's in Nederland zijn relatief ontvankelijk voor externe invloeden. Bovendien kent Nederland een grote mate van persvrijheid en diversiteit van media dat diverse en kritische mediaberichtgeving over beleidskwesties waarborgt.

Mijn onderzoek richt zich op specifieke kwesties binnen het beleidsdomein die door beleidsactoren zijn aangegrepen om publiciteit te zoeken en aan de basis hebben gestaan van een cyclus van mediaberichtgeving. Ik heb gekeken naar kwesties die veel media-aandacht hebben ontvangen zoals de casus van Mauro en de Vluchtkerk. Ook heb ik kwesties onderzocht die relatief weinig media-aandacht hebben ontvangen zoals de casus van Dennis Butera of de afspraken rond terugkeer van asielzoekers naar Rwanda en Burundi. Tevens is variëteit aangebracht door heel concrete kwesties van individuele migran-

ten of de vestiging van asielzoekerscentra te selecteren naast meer abstracte (beleids)voorstellen of initiatieven.

Onderzoeksvraag en focus

De onderzoeksvraag die dit onderzoek richting geeft, luidt:

Hoe worden beleidsagenda's in het beleidsdomein van immigratie en immigratie vormgegeven en hoe is mediaberichtgeving van traditionele en social media over kwesties gerelateerd aan immigratie en integratiebeleid van invloed op deze agenda?

Mijn onderzoek bestaat uit zes empirische hoofdstukken waarin verschillende aspecten van deze onderzoeksvraag worden belicht. Deze hoofdstukken passen binnen drie onderzoeksthema's: de beleidsagenda van een weerbarstige beleidscontroverse, de rol van media-framing bij agendavorming van beleid en de responsiviteit van de beleidsagenda naar social media als een nieuwe publieke sfeer.

Bevindingen

Het eerste thema van dit onderzoek raakt aan de vraag hoe je de beleidsagenda van immigratie en integratie als weerbarstige beleidscontroverse onderzoekt. Hoe komt deze tot stand en hoe kun je een mogelijke invloed van media waarnemen? Onderzoek naar beleidsagenda's van integratie in Duitsland, Nederland en Zweden laat zien dat lokale en nationale beleidsagenda's sterk met elkaar in verband staan. Nationale regulering bepaalt de lokale beleidskaders, maar ook lokale overheden kunnen kwesties agenderen op de nationale beleidsagenda. Hun ervaring met en analyse van integratieproblematiek op lokaal niveau wordt dan op de nationale agenda overgenomen. Een

bekend voorbeeld hiervan is de 'Rotterdamwet' betreft stedelijke segregatie die uiteindelijk landelijk aangenomen werd.

De beleidsagenda van een specifiek beleidsdomein laat zich lastig meten in termen van prioritering van kwesties. Media-effecten worden vaak duidelijk in veranderingen van 'frames' waarmee kwesties op de agenda benaderd worden die veranderingen in de prioritering en interpretatie van kwesties weerspiegelen. Bij frame-analyse van de beleidsagenda troffen we regelmatig ambigue frames aan, die op merkwaardige wijze een bepaalde probleemdefinitie en beleidsstrategie combineerden of bepaalde elementen van het beleidsframe te raden overlieten. Frame-ambiguïteit is geen teken van zwakke beleidsvorming, maar bleek in het kader van weerbarstige beleids-controverses vaak een voordeel wanneer informatie over de kwesties onzeker is of wanneer er politieke onenigheid bestaat.

Het tweede thema onderzoekt hoe kwantiteit van media-aandacht en frames van mediaberichtgeving de invloed van de media op de beleidsagenda bepalen. Het onderzoek richtte zich op de eenduidigheid van frames in mediabericht-geving en het criterium of het dominante frame in de media het beleidsframe ondersteunde of bekritiseerde. De bevindingen laten zien dat de kwantiteit van media-aandacht geen voldoende voorwaarde is voor de totstandkoming van een effect op de beleidsagenda. Er bestaan verschillende kwesties waarin de hoeveelheid media-aandacht relatief bescheiden was, maar waarbij er toch veranderingen op de beleidsagenda plaatsvonden. In deze kwesties was de media-framing heel eenduidig in het bekritiseren van het bestaande beleids-frame. Met name contestatie van het beleidsframe bleek een noodzakelijke voorwaarde te zijn voor agendavorming van de beleidsagenda.

Het feedbackmodel van agendavorming neemt aan dat de framing van kwesties in de media mede het resultaat is van invloeden van beleidsactoren op mediaberichtgeving. Als bron of als auteur voeden zij de media met infor-matie die gekleurd is vanuit hun frame van de kwestie. Beleidsactoren kunnen hun informatie op verschillende manieren meer toegankelijk en aantrekkelijk maken voor media. Dit betreft het gebruik van 'framingmiddelen' zoals slo-gans, voorbeelden of visuele beelden, het organiseren van mobilisatie zoals

demonstraties of een (online) petitie, of het benadrukken van de expertise van degenen die de informatie naar voren brengt. Middels framingmiddelen kunnen zij ook rivaliserende frames in de media bekritiseren. Het onderzoek laat zien dat de framing van informatie door beleidsactoren in de media niet alleen afhankelijk is van de autoriteit van de beleidsactor, maar ook het beleidsdoel dat hij voor ogen heeft. Wie het bestaande beleidsframe wil bekritiseren past andere middelen toe dan wie het beleidsframe wil verdedigen.

Het derde en laatste thema van dit onderzoek richt zich specifiek op social media. Dit relatief nieuwe type media wordt vaak gebruikt voor discussie over beleidskwesties. Ook zijn beleidsmakers en politici zelf vaak actief op deze platforms. Er wordt verondersteld dat dit type media meer continue en directe uitwisseling tussen burgers en beleidsmakers kan faciliteren en dat social media de stem van minderheden in het debat kan laten horen, waar deze soms wordt buitengesloten door de mainstream media. Deze kwaliteiten maken social media tot een relevant kanaal voor agendavorming, met name als het gaat om kwesties van immigratie en integratie die etnische minderheden aangaan. Onderzoek onder Rotterdamse jongeren laat zien dat hun etnische achtergrond slechts in beperkte mate hun social mediakeuzes bepaalt. Meerdere aspecten van hun identiteit vormen drijfveren die ten grondslag liggen aan hun social mediagebruik waardoor zij zich vaak in interetnische online netwerken begeven. Voor onze respondenten was dat niet vaak een intra-etnische publieke sfeer die nieuwe issues of frames wilde agenderen.

   Bovendien is een structurele connectie tussen social mediadiscussie en de beleidsagenda nog onvoldoende gewaarborgd. Een meta-analyse van eerdere studies laat zien dat social media nog weinig geïnstitutionaliseerd zijn in beleidsprocessen. De responsiviteit naar social mediaberichten wordt daarom in belangrijke mate gestuurd door individuele competenties en voorkeuren van beleidsmakers. Zij laten de invloed van social media afhangen van hun beoordeling van de relevantie van dit type informatie voor het beleidsdomein waarin zij werkzaam zijn en van hun perceptie van de representativiteit van social media voor publieke opinie. In sommige beleidsdomeinen wordt interne expertise verkozen boven de 'wisdom of the crowds'. Daarnaast wordt

social media informatie eerder genegeerd wanneer beleidsmakers moeilijk kunnen inschatten van wie het afkomstig is en als ze veronderstellen dat het slechts een kleine minderheid in de samenleving vertegenwoordigt.

Conclusies

De toepassing van een feedbackmodel van agendavorming en framing in dit onderzoek maakt het mogelijk om tot een meer omvattende verklaring van effecten van media op de beleidsagenda te komen. Het maakt inzichtelijk welke kenmerken van mediaberichtgeving en de beleidsagenda bepalend zijn en op wat voor manier er wederzijdse uitwisseling bestaat. Hoewel het beleidsdomein van immigratie en integratie een waarschijnlijke casus vormde voor media-effecten op beleid, blijkt deze invloed relatief beperkt.

Ook social media spelen geen autonome rol spelen in agendavormingsprocessen. Social media zenden geen andere boodschap dan traditionele media waar het gaat om kwantiteit van aandacht of specifieke frames. Echter, social media leveren wel een belangrijke bijdrage aan agendavorming van de beleidsagenda via een indirecte route van traditionele media. Social media zijn zeer geschikte kanalen voor de verspreiding van framingmiddelen en nieuwe vormen van mobilisatie. Hiermee kunnen ze bepaalde kwesties of frames onder de aandacht van traditionele media brengen. Als frames niet door gezaghebbende actoren naar voren worden gebracht die de media als bron kunnen noemen, vormt de 'voxpop' van social media soms alsnog een legitimatie voor traditionele media om erover te berichten.

Het beperkte effect is ook deels het resultaat van de focus op responsiviteit als daadwerkelijke veranderingen op de beleidsagenda, bijvoorbeeld in prioritering van kwesties of verandering van issue frames. Wanneer hier geen verandering in plaatsvindt, betekent dit niet vanzelfsprekend dat media geen effect hebben. . Responsiviteit kan ook een attitude of handelingspraktijk zijn die uiteindelijk niet leidt tot beleidsconsequenties. Responsiviteit kan tot uitdrukking komen in de vorm van media-reflexiviteit als gevolg van mediatisering van beleidsprocessen. Hierbij zijn beleidsprocessen doordron-

gen geraakt van medialogica en wordt in besluitvorming geanticipeerd op mogelijke media-aandacht. De beleidsagenda reageert in dat geval niet als gevolg van, maar parallel aan of zelfs voorafgaand aan mediaberichtgeving. Dit noopt tot uitbreiding van de agendavormingstheorie met inzichten vanuit de mediatiseringsliteratuur.

De gepercipieerde representativiteit van publieke opinie een belangrijk onderliggend mechanisme is dat de responsiviteit van de beleidsagenda naar mediaberichtgeving stuurt. Wanneer aangenomen wordt dat media in belangrijke mate representatief zijn voor publieke opinie, is een effect van media op de beleidsagenda waarschijnlijker. Wanneer gedacht wordt dat mediaberichtgeving slechts een extreme opinie vertegenwoordigt en de 'stille meerderheid' negeert, of dat mediaberichtgeving snel over zal waaien, is een effect op de beleidsagenda minder waarschijnlijk. Waar de politieke agenda reageert op de media vanuit strategische overwegingen en de gedachte dat media de publieke opinie zal beïnvloeden, is dat bij de beleidsagenda anders. De beleidsagenda reageert als gedacht wordt dat mediaberichtgeving sterk beïnvloed *is* door publieke opinie.

Dit onderliggend mechanisme van agendavorming van de beleidsagenda stuurt agendavormingsprocessen richting de mainstream. Dit tempert verwachtingen voor social media als publieke sfeer van alternatieve geluiden in het debat. Omdat zij georganiseerd zijn op basis van kleinere gemeenschappen van mensen met gedeelde interesses of opinies worden zij gemakkelijker genegeerd. Hoewel er online vruchtbare discussie plaats kan vinden waarin nieuwe kwesties en frames naar vormen worden gebracht, blijft de uitwisseling met de beleidsagenda beperkt.

Bredere relevantie

De bevindingen van dit onderzoek dragen bij aan theorie over de invloed van media op de beleidsagenda. Daarnaast dragen de resultaten van dit onderzoek bij aan theorie over de framing van immigratie- en integratiekwesties in media en beleid. De agendavormingsdynamieken die beschreven worden

in dit onderzoek zijn te generaliseren naar vergelijkbare beleidsdomeinen binnen vergelijkbare politieke en media-contexten. Hierbij valt te denken aan milieubeleid of openbare orde en veiligheidsbeleid die ook gekenmerkt kunnen worden als weerbarstige beleidscontroverses.

De conclusies hebben ook maatschappelijke relevantie. Ten eerste voor burgers en maatschappelijke organisaties. De bevindingen van deze studie geven inzicht in hoe traditionele en social media kunnen helpen om invloed op de beleidsagenda uit te oefenen. Juist in tijden van afbrokkeling van andere democratische kanalen - af te lezen aan een afname in partijlidmaatschap, verkiezingsopkomst en deelname in maatschappelijk middenveld - is het belangrijk dat er andere kanalen bestaan die democratische legitimiteit bewaken. Ook voor beleidsmakers zijn deze conclusies relevant om responsiviteit naar media te bewaren zonder zich teveel te laten leiden door de waan van de dag.

De huidige context van de 'vluchtelingencrisis' maakt de bevindingen opnieuw relevant. Ook nu worden we geconfronteerd met een diversiteit aan aandacht en frames in mediaberichtgeving over gerelateerde kwesties en verandering van beleid. Ook de media zelf zijn vaak onderwerp van discussie en worden vaak bekritiseerd van overrepresentatie van sommige onderwerpen en frames. Ongeacht of dit terecht of onterecht is, laat mijn onderzoek zien dat ook deze beschuldiging een belangrijk framingmiddel is om het eigen frame onder de aandacht van de media te brengen.

Op basis van mijn eerdere onderzoek weten we dat berichten rond immigratie en integratie in Europa via social media potentiële migranten buiten Europa kunnen bereiken. Deze informatie wegen zij mee in hun migratiebeslissingen. Wanneer immigratie- en integratiekwesties in Europa aandacht krijgen in de media, kan dat niet alleen gevolgen hebben voor het beleid, maar ook voor de kwestie die daarin centraal staat: immigratie.

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Promotieonderzoek kan niet zonder nuttige afleiding en was lang niet zo leuk geweest zonder de PhD collega's. De afgelopen jaren heb ik veel leuke momenten beleefd met oude en nieuwe 'blokgenoten' en anderen. In het bijzonder Mariska, Iris, Warda, Mark, William, Stephan, Babette, Alette, Natalya, Ilona, Noor, Lieselot, Ewald, Anne, Nadine, Weys en Sanne. Bedankt voor gezellige lunches, het uitgebreid vieren van verjaardagen, en het nodige geklaag, geroddel en plezier.

Met de andere PhD studenten van Peter vormden we de PRIMUS-club waarbinnen we elkaars werk bespraken en daarbij het nuttige met het aangename van een etentje verenigden. Waarde 'Primaten' Ilona, Warda, Mark en Peter: bedankt voor alle constructieve feedback en interessante gesprekken. Warda, inmiddels gaan jij en ik 'way back': we kwamen elkaar al tegen bij het THEMIS onderzoek en bij bestuurskunde werd je mijn collega en blokgenoot. Samen hebben we het onderzoek gedaan dat één van de artikelen van mijn proefschrift is gaan uitmaken. Ontelbare keren hebben we overlegd hoe we dingen aan zouden pakken en hebben we elkaar aangemoedigd in het werk. Ik gun iedereen een collega (en paranimf!) zoals jij.

Sinds juni heb ik de overstap gemaakt naar de Universiteit Utrecht. Ik ben mijn nieuwe collega's en in het bijzonder Albert dankbaar voor een warm welkom en ik kijk uit naar goede samenwerking en veel gezellige momenten. Ik

About the author

Rianne Dekker (1986) studied Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam (BSc. 2009, cum laude) and specialized in Urban Studies (MSc. 2011, cum laude). Her master thesis focused on the potential of social media for creating an online public sphere. During her time as a student, Rianne worked at the department of sociology as a student assistant. After graduation she worked as a tutor in the sociology bachelor programme and as a junior researcher. She was team member of the international THEMIS project which studied international migration processes. Her interests and publications focused on the role of social media in migrant networks.

In 2012, Rianne started her PhD research at the department of Public Administration of Erasmus University Rotterdam. She took part in the FP7 project 'UniteEurope' that dealt with researching and developing a social media analysis tool for local governments to analyze online discussion about ethnic minorities in their city. Additionally, she acquired funding and participated in two research projects for the Research and Documentation Centre of the Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice (WODC). During her time as a PhD student, Rianne completed the doctorate training programme of the Netherlands Institute of Government (NIG), including a two-week summer school of the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA). She was chair of the Public Administration PhD platform at Erasmus University Rotterdam from 2014 to 2015. Rianne attended and organized panels and seminars at various national and international academic conferences and published several articles based on her PhD research. She acted as a reviewer of several academic journals and served as a member of advisory boards of research projects. Rianne has been invited as a speaker at academic and public events and her research appeared in several news media.

Next to teaching several courses in the sociology and public administration bachelor programmes at Erasmus University Rotterdam, Rianne coordinated the development of a new joint master track 'Governance of Migration and Diversity' which will be offered at Leiden University, TU Delft and Erasmus University Rotterdam from September 2016 onward.

As of June 2016, Rianne works as assistant professor at the Utrecht School of Governance of Utrecht University. Next to teaching several courses at this institute, her research activities focus on the use of social media for public security purposes. More information on her past and current activities can be found at www.riannedekker.nl.

Policy in the Public Eye

The policy field of immigration and migrant integration is publicly and politically controversial. Consequently, issues related to immigration and migrant integration are regularly in the public eye of the media. This doctoral thesis analyzes how policy agendas in the domain of immigration and integration are shaped and how traditional and social media coverage of policy-related issues influence this. Based on six empirical studies, this thesis concludes that while direct effects of media on the policy agenda are relatively scarce and not always discernable, other forms of responsiveness to media coverage can be recognized.

Rianne Dekker conducted this doctoral study at the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. Currently, she is working as assistent professor at the Utrecht School of Governance at Utrecht University.