

Dealing with the Refugee Crisis

Border Positioning of EU Member States in Relation to the Schengen Agreement
and the Dublin Regulation.

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Trondheim, March 2018

“We warmly commend those countries and leaders, as well as their citizens, which have shown a willingness to resettle refugees and to respond to the growing humanitarian and human rights crisis at Europe’s borders. At the moment, however, there is no unified approach to the problem, which is creating an unbalanced and polarizing response to the current situation”.

- Kofi Annan et al. (2015) –

- Former United Nations Secretary General and other dignitaries addressing the current refugee crisis in an open letter to European leaders.

Abstract

In early summer of 2015, the number of refugees arriving in Europe from war-torn Syria heightened immensely as it attracted a flow of refugees from other war-torn and politically unstable regions. The large unprecedented inflow led to intense pressure and disagreement among some EU Member States over how to uniformly deal with the situation. The lack of agreement prompted member states to deal with the refugees by establishing distinct border positioning from each other as individual national states and as transit and destination countries. The distinct positioning was noticeably a challenge to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation; two of EU's common immigration policies, meant for providing uniform ways for dealing with non-EU citizens entering Europe.

Using a qualitative research approach based on data collected from semi-structured interviews with migration experts, and various relevant reports and studies, this thesis aims at finding out how some EU Member States positioned themselves distinctively from each other in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation when dealing with the refugees at their borders. The study focuses on the periodic development of the refugee crisis from when the situation escalated in early summer of 2015, until the Western Balkan route (a significant fast refugee transit route) was officially closed in March 2016 (Lilyanova 2016: 2). The study considers this period relevant since the closure of this route triggered a chain of events that stipulated response from several other European countries. The thesis examines the distinct positioning of member states as individual national states and as transit and destination countries. The study further explores some of the motives of the distinct border positioning, and the influence of the distinct positioning on the flows of refugees. Greece, Croatia, Denmark, and Germany are selected as the primary study areas. However, the study strategically includes other countries within and outside the EU as illustrative examples. Alongside relevant previous studies, the analysis of the thesis is developed around the migration system theory, the theory of policy convergence and its mechanism of harmonization and regulatory competition, international relations theory of realism, and the push-pull theory. The findings in the study affirm that member states resolved to distinct positioning that included the implementation of border strategies as individual national states and as transit and destination countries. Evidently, the border positioning disharmonized with the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation. Moreover, the findings reveal that some member states resolved to distinct positioning to ease the large numbers of refugees arriving at their borders, and in addition, out of the concern over the economic impact that the large influx would have in their countries. The findings ultimately indicate that the kind of border measures adapted by member states may influence the flows of refugees arriving at the borders.

Preface

This thesis aims at investigating how some EU Member States positioned themselves distinctively from each other in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation when dealing with the refugees at their borders. Indeed as a master student in Globalization, Politics and Culture, along with my deep personal interest in the field of migration, I chose this topic out of great interest and anticipation in view of how the current refugee crisis in Europe denote the notion of globalization at its core. The deep political tensions and divisions among some EU Member States on how to deal with refugees at their borders created intense pressure and challenges on the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation, which are EU's common immigration policies meant to unite European countries by providing harmonized policies on how to deal with issues related to non-EU migrants.

All the chapters presented in the thesis are of my own execution. As much as it would have been desirable to investigate the topic of this thesis even deeper, I had to be cautious and take into account the limited resources at my disposal and scope of the thesis. Despite allocating sufficient time and effort in establishing an adequate plan for undertaking my research study, I still experienced some unanticipated limitations. My main limitation was already imminent at the early stages of planning, as I had to modify my research objective a number of times, and therefore losing a significant amount of valuable time, and faced with immense delay in data collection, data analysis, and eventually, the completion and submission of my thesis. Moreover, the decision to recruit experts in the field of migration to participate in my study was also a limitation on its own. Some of my informants could not avail themselves promptly due to their presumably busy work and travel schedule, while some confirmed that they could only avail themselves up to a month after they had been recruited. Nevertheless, I maintained patience and anticipation, keeping in mind that this group of informants was not easy to recruit. However, this deferral was a severe setback for my thesis, as it eventually led to additional loss of time and delays in transcribing and analyzing the interview data. All in all, and despite the limitations, I successfully obtained the significant and relevant information that was necessary for attaining a profound assessment of the objective of the thesis.

Trondheim, March 2018

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Acknowledgement

I have to admit that executing this thesis has been an invaluable learning and enlightening journey. However, the successful completion of the thesis is not something I would take for granted. I regard myself very fortunate to have attained the ability to stay focused, devoted, patient, and to sustain the mental strength that was necessary for the successful execution of the thesis. Moreover, and without a doubt, the completion of the thesis would not have been a success without the support, encouragement, motivation and patience of some significant people that I owe my gratitude.

First and foremost, my utmost acknowledgement and gratitude goes to the department of Geography at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), for the opportunity to acquire knowledge on the forms and effects of the processes of globalization through the Master program of Globalization, Politics and Culture. Additional thanks to the department for the internship program that helped me attain practical skills. Many thanks to the student advisor, Annete Knutsen for ensuring that we were well integrated into the program and for tirelessly and patiently availing time to meet with us for guidance. Sincerest appreciation goes to all the lecturers and the PhD candidates who dedicatedly took us through different courses in the globalization program. Thanks to Professor Ragnhild Lund, Professor Stig H. Jørgensen, and PhD candidates Steen Markus and Thomas Sætre Jakobsen. Special thanks to Professor Cathrine Brun for inspiration and the remarkable opportunity to pursue my internship at the Norwegian Researcher School of Geography. Thank you Professor Berit Berg for your open-door gesture, encouragement and for believing in me. Thanks for the unique opportunity for my supervision at the department of Social Work and Health Sciences.

I am immensely obliged to my supervisor Professor Marko Valenta, for the invaluable and extraordinary supervision that motivated, inspired, and guided me with great determination and ambition to successfully complete my thesis. Your prompt and constructive comments gave me the inspiration to keep on going. Not only were you an excellent supervisor and expert who encouraged and pointed me towards the right direction, but you were also one of the lecturers who expanded my knowledge through some of the migration courses that played a significant role in inspiring me to pursue the topic of this thesis. I finally express my gratitude to all my informants for agreeing to participate in the interviews. And not forgetting my fellow students for the inspiring teamwork and the memorable academic and social experiences we shared. Having been a part of a course with students from different nationalities was not only a unique experience, but also a representation of globalization at its best.

Dedications.

To my loving family: for the love, support, inspiration and patience during my studies.

Thank you for all your prayers!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	iii
Preface	iv
Acknowledgement	v
Dedications	vi
Table of contents.....	vii
List of Figures.....	ix
List of Tables	x
List of Abbreviations	x

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction	1
1.1 Selection of the Study Areas and Timeline of the Relevant Development.....	2
1.2 Actualization and Background of the Study.....	4
1.2.1 Escalating Influx and the Development of Distinct Border Positioning	5
<i>The Case of Greece</i>	5
<i>The Case of Croatia</i>	6
<i>The Case of Germany</i>	7
<i>The Case of Denmark</i>	7
<i>Development of Distinct Border Positioning among the Transit and the Destination Countries</i> ..	8
1.3 Schengen Agreements and Dublin Regulation Amid Distinct Border Positioning	8
1.4 Statement of the Problem, Research Objectives and Questions	10
1.5 Structure of the Thesis	11
1.6 Previous Research.....	13

CHAPTER TWO

Theoretical Perspectives and Conceptual Frameworks.....	17
2.1 Introduction.....	17
2.2 Migration System Theory	17
2.3 Policy Convergence and Mechanisms of Harmonization and Regulatory Competition	19
2.4 International Relations Theory on Realism	20
2.5 Push-Pull Theoretical Model of Migration.....	21

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology	23
3.1 Introduction	23
3.2 Qualitative Research Approach	23
3.3 Data Collection Methods	24
3.3.1 Primary Data	24
3.3.2 Secondary Data	25
3.4 Selecting and Sampling of Informants	26
3.5 Interview guide	27
3.6 Contacting the Informants	29
3.7 Implementation of the interviews	31
3.8 Ethical Consideration	33
3.9 Quality of the Research: Reliability and Validity	34
3.10 Analysis of Data	35
3.11 Coping with the Limitations of the Study	37

CHAPTER FOUR

Analyzing the Distinct Border Positioning in Relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation	39
4.1 Introduction	39
4.2 Distinct Border Positioning	39
4.2.1 Distinct border Positioning as Individual National States	40
4.2.2 Distinct Border Positioning as Transit and Destination Countries	45
4.3 Distinct Positioning Vis-à-vis the Schengen Agreement and Dublin Regulation	47

CHAPTER FIVE

Analyzing Motives of the Distinct Border Positioning, and the Influence on the Flows of Refugees	53
5.1 Introduction	53
5.2 Motives for the Distinct Border Positioning	53
5.3 Distinct Border Positioning and the Influence on the flows of Refugees	59

CHAPTER SIX

6.1 Concluding Discussion 65

6.2 Summary of the main findings..... 65

 6.2.1 Distinct border Positioning 65

 6.2.1.1 Distinct Border Positioning as Individual National States 66

 6.2.1.2 Distinct Border Positioning as Transit and Destination Countries..... 66

 6.2.2 Distinct Positioning Vis-à-vis the Schengen Agreement and Dublin Regulation 67

 6.2.3 Motives for the Distinct Border Positioning..... 67

 6.2.4 Distinct Border Positioning and the Influence on the Flows of Refugees..... 68

6.3 Theory discussion 69

6.4 Suggestion for further studies 70

REFERENCE LIST 71

APPENDICES..... 79

 Appendix 1: Interview Guide (Greece)..... 79

 Appendix 2: Interview Guide (Croatia) 83

 Appendix 3: Interview Guide (Germany) 87

 Appendix 4: Interview Guide (Denmark) 91

 Appendix 5: Introduction and Consent Declaration 95

 Appendix 6: Introduction E-Mail to potential informants 96

 Appendix 7: Data Coding and Categorizing 97

List of Figures

Figure 1: A Map showing the Refugee Route from the Middle East to Europe..... 5

Figure 2: A map found with immigrants showing the diversion route to Croatia 6

Figure 3: A Map showing Reintroduction of Border Controls within the Schengen Area..... 9

Figure 4: Arrival of refugees in Greece from April to October 2015 41

Figure 5: Arrival of refugees at the external EU borders in 2015 60

List of Tables

Table 1: A Timeline Summarizing the Key Events of the Refugee Crisis in Europe	3
Table 2: Original Sampling frame	27
Table 3: Sample Selection	30
Table 4: Asylum Applications in EU Member States in 2015.....	43
Table 5: Distinct Border Positioning in Relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation.....	51
Table 6: Total Asylum Application in Denmark, Sweden, and Germany, between April and September 2015	63

List of Abbreviations

BBC - British Broadcasting Corporation

CEAS - Common European Asylum System

CNN - Cable news Network

EU - European Union

EC - European Commission

EP - European Parliament

ECRE - The European Council on Refugees and Exiles

EUROSTAT - Statistical Office of the European Union

FRONTEX - European Border and Coast Guard Agency

IMES - The Institute of Middle East Studies

IR - International Relations

IOM - International organization for Migration

NSD - Norwegian Centre for Research Data

NTNU - Norwegian University of Science and Technology

NGO - Non-Governmental Organization

UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Source: ec.europa.eu/eurostat/ramon/cybernews/abbreviations.htm

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The large scale migration to Europe that took place between 2015 and 2016 is deeply rooted in the war in Syria that broke out in spring 2011. Bordering the Middle East, Europe's vulnerability and critical challenge in facilitating control over the flows of refugees was induced in early summer of 2015, when the situation intensified, as the number of Syrians entering the region heightened, and attracted mixed flow of migrants and refugees from other war-torn and politically unstable countries. The turmoil at the European borders created intense pressure and dispute over how best to deal with the inflow; that indeed, even some European Union (EU) Member States responded to the crisis by establishing solitary distinct positioning at their borders. Moreover, Lehne (2016) reports that the lack of agreement laid bare deep divisions among some member states, prompting the organization of transit and destination countries, with each group establishing distinct border positioning from each other. Furthermore, European Commission (2016a: 3) reports that the disparity over the border control measures disharmonized with some of EU's common immigration policies that are meant for safeguarding uniform ways of dealing with refugees and migrants entering Europe.

Corresponding to the above inception, *the main objective of this study is to investigate how some EU Member States positioned themselves distinctively from each other in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation when dealing with the refugees at their borders.*

To attain a thorough assessment of the distinct positioning, the study examines the positioning of the countries as individual national states and as transit and destination countries. Thereafter, the study reviews some of the motives of the distinct positioning, before ultimately assessing the influence of the positioning on the flows of refugees. The study draws in some relevant theories, which include, Bakewell's (2012) migration system theory, Holzinger & Knills' (2005) policy convergence and its mechanism of harmonization and regulatory competition, the international theory on realism, and ultimately, the push-pull theory, which explains how the flows of refugees may be influenced by the kind of border policies adapted in a country (Thielemann 2003). Some previous studies related to the objective of the study are also presented. This study is rooted in a qualitative approach, based on primary data collected from semi-structured interviews with different migration experts across the EU. The interviews are supplemented with secondary data retrieved from print and electronic media.

1.1 Selection of the study areas and timeline of the relevant development

Considering the limited resources and scope of my study, I selected and sampled four countries as my primary study areas. Consequently, these included Greece, Croatia, Germany and Denmark. Greece and Croatia were also sampled as transit countries, whereas Germany and Denmark were sampled as destination countries. This selection was made in view of the countries' EU membership and their position as among the countries that were notably affected by the escalation of the refugee crisis, both as individual national states and as transit and destination countries. In addition to the selection, and with an aim of clearly illustrating the distinct positioning among the sampled countries, I strategically included other countries within and outside the EU zone as illustrative examples in the thesis.

One of the major challenges in the analysis of this thesis is that the study under investigation focuses on a longstanding current crisis, with constant changes and rapid development. I therefore find it important to note at this point, that with the limited scope of the study, and with a goal of achieving a well-founded structure of the thesis, my study focuses primarily on the periodic development of the refugee crisis in Europe from when the situation escalated in early summer of 2015, until the Western Balkan route (a significant fast refugee transit route) was officially closed in March 2016 (Lilyanova 2016: 2). The study considers this period relevant since the closure of the borders in this significant transit route triggered a chain of events that stipulated a response from several other countries in Europe. Subsequently, a timeline of the key events that took place during the aforementioned period is summarized below.

Succeeding the timeline is the actualization and background of the study, which is followed by a more detailed recount of events that led to the development of the distinct positioning, with a focus on the study areas of Greece, Croatia, Germany and Denmark. This is followed by a discussion of the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation amid distinct border positioning. Thereafter, the thesis proceeds with a presentation of the problem statement, comprising of the main research objective and the specific research questions, before ultimately presenting a description of the structure of the rest of the thesis.

Table 1. A Timeline Summarizing the Key Events of the Refugee Crisis in Europe

The Periodic Development of the European Refugee Crisis	
2015:	
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The refugee crisis in Europe escalates as unprecedented numbers of refugees makes their way to the European borders.
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Germany proposes EU- wide burden sharing after having received record high numbers.
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hungary unveils its plans to build a fence at its 175km border with Serbia
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hungary begins to put up a fence at its borders with Serbia
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Macedonia cuts off the flow of refugees crossing from Greece and deploys riot police. Germany’s Federal Office for Migration and Refugees publicly announces not to return Syrian refugees under the Dublin Regulation.
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Around 20,000 refugees arrive in Vienna from Hungary with most of the boarding trains towards Germany. Germany introduces temporary border controls with Austria to cope with the influx. Construction of a 175 km fence along Hungary’s border with Serbia is completed. Hungary begins to construct a fence along its border to Croatia. Around 2,500 migrants cross from Croatia into Slovenia, despite Slovenia initially trying to block their passage
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In only 24 hours, 12,000 refugees enter Slovenia and the government announces to restrict its intake to 2,500 arrivals a day. Slovenia calls in army to help patrol its border to Croatia.
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slovenia begins erecting a fence along parts of its border with Croatia to control the flows. Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia announce that they will only allow people from

<p>Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan to pass through their borders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After this announcement, 1,500 migrants get stuck near the Greek-Macedonian border town of Idomeni, where some of the migrants withdraw back to inland Greece. • Macedonia starts constructing a fence on its southern border with Greece. • The refugee flow in Germany escalates immensely prompting the government to remove the Dublin rule exemption it had granted to the Syrian citizens.
<p>December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of asylum applications filed in Germany in 2015 reaches 1 million.
<p>2016:</p>
<p>January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary border controls are tightened in Denmark along its borders with Germany
<p>March</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Croatia announces that it will cease the entry of refugees through their border with Greece and will only allow passage to those with proper documents • Macedonia, Croatia, and Slovenia announce that they will no longer let migrants and refugees through their border with Greece. • This effectively shuts down an important Balkan route into the EU, leaving thousands of migrants and refugees stranded at the Macedonian-Greek borders

Source: <https://www.icmpd.org/news-centre/2015-in-review-timeline-of-major-incidences-and-policy-responses/>
& <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35763101>
Accessed: 28th May (2016) Modified by Oloo, L (2016)

1.2 Actualization and Background of the study

The current refugee crisis in Europe is not a new phenomenon. The European commission (2017) reports that throughout history, people have migrated from different places trying to reach Europe to escape from political oppression, war, and poverty. But the difference between the past migration and the current one is the unprecedented influx of refugees, and the overwhelming impact and built up tensions that led European governments to resort to individualized measures (European Parliament 2016: 7). With more than 487,000 people arriving only in the first nine months of 2015, frontline states like Greece faced enormous pressures at their borders while bearing the responsibility for receiving new arrivals, and with most newcomers quickly moving on to wealthier EU countries such as Germany (Bogdan & Fratzke 2015). Figure 1 below indicates the refugee route from the Middle East to Europe.

Figure 1. Refugee Route from the Middle East to Europe



Source: http://edmaps.com/html/syrian_refugee_crisis_in_maps.html

Accessed: 30th March 2016

As the figure shows, most of the refugees from war-torn Syria made their way into Turkey, before entering Europe through Greece. Bordering the Middle East, Greece became the main transit route as the crisis escalated. The refugee route extended from Greece, all the way to Germany, and even Denmark. The EU Member States presented in the figure include, Greece, Croatia, Hungary, Austria, Germany, and Denmark. And as part of member states, these countries are participants in the Dublin Rule. Each of the aforementioned countries; excluding Croatia; are members of the Schengen zone.

1.2.1 Escalating Influx and Development of the Distinct Border Positioning

The case of Greece

Greece served as a key transit point for refugees entering Europe because of its close proximity to Turkey, a common transitory stop for refugees from the Middle East (McHugh 2016a). When the crisis escalated, the Greek government encountered an unprecedented large numbers of refugees and rapidly increasing administrative and practical needs (Evangelinidis 2016: 32). Hassel & Wagner (in Vanhercke et. al 2016: 67) maintain that from the very beginning of the crisis, Greece demanded a

stop to transfers of refugees back to its territories, arguing that it was unable to manage the large numbers. The Greek authorities were ill-equipped and under-funded to manage the enormous flows (Zafiropoulos 2015). Consequently, the Greek officials resorted to documenting newly arrived refugees before quickly waving them through the Macedonian border (McHugh 2016a).

The case of Croatia

Gyori (2016: 41-42) states that when the effects of the crisis caught up with Croatia, the initial response from the Croatian government was that of optimism, even as the Hungarian authorities were busy constructing the fence along the Serbian border, which clearly meant a diversion of the course of the migrant streams towards Croatia, as it was the quickest route towards Germany and the West. However, once Hungary sealed their border towards Serbia, the tone of the Croatian government changed after becoming the target of the pressure that Hungary had been subject to. Between September 16, and November 5, 2015, 330,000 refugees entered Croatia, resulting to numerous challenges connected with matters of reception and management of the crisis (Zuparic et al. 2015:1), amid the tough economic situation in the country.

Figure 2. The diversion route to Croatia



Source: http://www.mup.hr/UserDocsImages/topvijesti/2015/listopad/MIGRATION_CRISIS_CRO_OVERVIEW.pdf
Accessed: 5th April 2016

Consequently, just a day after opening its borders, Croatia changed its approach by closing seven border crossings with Serbia, following an overwhelming 11,000 migrants who streamed into its border and exceeding the authorities expectation of handling only an influx of 500 migrants and refugees a day (Mullen et al. 2015).

The case of Germany

Among all the EU host countries, Germany has been the most popular destination country for most of the refugees. When the crisis escalated in early summer of 2015, the government maintained an open-border policy, with the German chancellor responding with the declaration: “Wir schaffen es”, which means, “We can do it” (Connolly 2015). Consequently, the country received an astounding 1.1 million refugees entering its borders in 2015; this was four times the number recorded in 2014 (Cermak 2016). At this point, the government felt that the inflow was beyond control and needed to be monitored (Kiefer 2015: 24). The authorities announced that all refugees from the Balkan states would be sent back immediately, as they were not in need of protection (Akrap 2015). However, the Syrian refugees were to be allowed to stay and apply for asylum rather than be deported to the European countries where they first arrived (Berenson 2015), and thus exempting them from the rules of the Dublin Regulation (European Parliament 2016: 7). But as the influx intensified, the German authorities reinstated border controls with Austria and dramatically halting all train traffic to stem the flows of refugees (Middle East Monitor 2016). Moreover, it removed the exemption it had granted to the Syrian citizens by November (European Parliament 2016: 7).

The case of Denmark

Denmark received an astounding 21,000 asylum seekers in 2015, compared to 7,557 in 2013. These were numbers that the Danish welfare state would struggle to handle (Delman 2016). When the crisis escalated, Denmark resolved into establishing strict immigration policies to discourage further entry of refugees into the country. The Danish parliament passed several policies that effectively heightened its existing border control laws (MCHugh 2016b). The country’s major highways with Germany were blocked, and as a result, the majority of the hundreds of people who arrived in Denmark wanted to pass through to neighboring Sweden instead of applying for asylum in Denmark (ibid.). In addition, the Danish authorities went to an extent of publishing advertisements in Lebanese newspapers to discourage Middle Eastern refugees from fleeing to Denmark (ibid.).

Development of Distinct Border Positioning among the Transit and Destination countries

Following the escalation of the crisis, both the transit and the destination countries were determined to ease the flows of refugees making their way into the borders. However, Lehne (2016) explains that the lack of agreement laid bare deep divisions among the member states, prompting each group to use different policy and tools in governing the refugee flows directed to them (Toktas et al. 2006: 21). The transit countries, including Greece and Croatia, were tempted to divert the flows to other nations by selectively closing their borders, or by passing the refugees along to the next country as rapidly as possible, while the destination countries, such as Germany and Denmark, wished to slow down the inflow and yet kept their borders opened (Lehne 2016). Dullien (2016: 1-2) clarifies that most of the economically disadvantaged member states (mostly transit countries) were concerned that the high refugee inflows could further overwhelm their countries' weak economy, and consequently increase unemployment, strain infrastructure, and burden already fragile public budgets (ibid: 2).

1.3 Schengen Agreement and Dublin Regulation amid distinct border positioning

Contrary to the uncoordinated response among some EU Member States, the European Commission (2016b) reports that EU and its 28 member countries have developed common immigration policies for Europe with a unanimous consent concerning the entry, residence, and return of non-EU citizens (Jonjic & Mavrodi 2012: 9). In principal, immigration policies are uniform statements agreed upon by member states on what to do or not do in terms of laws, regulations, decisions or orders, relating to the selection, admission, settlement and deportation of non-EU citizens (Helbling et al. 2013: 4). According to the European Commission (2016c), one of EU's greatest achievements for a common immigration policy was the signing of the Schengen Agreement, a treaty that founded the Schengen Area¹ and resulted to the abolishment of border controls between EU countries. Among the common measures adapted by the Schengen Member States as part of the cooperation under the Schengen Agreement, is a common set of rules applying to people crossing the external borders of the EU states, and the harmonization of the conditions of entry among the members (EU-Lex: 2009). Even though Kiefer (2015: 27-28) emphasizes that the Schengen Agreement does not completely prohibit internal border controls, but provides for their temporary reintroduction where there is a serious threat to public policy or internal security, she is quick to point out that the reintroduction of border controls because of an influx of refugees does not fall under the above exception due to article 26 of

¹. The Schengen area consists of 26 countries, with 22 of them; including Greece, Croatia, Germany, and

the Agreement.² Nonetheless, the escalation of the crisis subjected the Schengen Agreement's free movement to immense challenges, with the return of national border controls chipping away EU's borderless-Schengen zone and pitting governments against each other (Rankin 2016).

Figure 3. Reintroduction of Border Controls within the Schengen Area



Source: http://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Annula_Risk_Analysis_2016.pdf
 Accessed: 30th March 2016

The Dublin Regulation is yet another significant immigration policy established by the EU and its member states. This Regulation clarifies that in general, the country where an asylum seeker first enters the union is responsible for registering the asylum application. The policy maintains that asylum-seekers who move on to other countries after being registered, can be sent back to the responsible nation to be processed in what are called Dublin transfers (Lyons: 2015). The Regulation ensures that one Member State is responsible for the examination of an asylum application, to deter multiple asylum claims (ecre 2015:2). Nevertheless, the Dublin Regulation similarly faced substantial challenges from the refugee crisis (Lyons: 2015), as unprecedented inflows compelled some member

² Article 26 of the Schengen Agreement underlines that states cannot unilaterally and at their own discretion reintroduce border controls

states to waive the Dublin law as they made conflicting deliberate decisions to allow through migrants who should have been registered as soon as they entered the countries (BBC 2016). Cierco & Silva (2016: 9) reports that when the crisis escalated, countries like Greece stopped enforcing the Dublin rules, whereas Germany suspended the regulation for Syrian asylum seekers, which effectively stopped deportations of Syrians back to their European country of entry.

1.4 Statement of the problem, Research Objectives and Questions

As clearly illustrated above, the focus of this thesis is directed towards the current refugee crisis in Europe, with a main objective of investigating how some EU Member States positioned themselves distinctively from each other in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation when dealing with the refugees at their borders. This objective highlights the significance and relevancy of the thesis as it gives an insight in the programme of Master of Globalization, Politics and Culture, whose fundamentals calls attention to among others, the complex political interactions that are having profound effects on our contemporary globalized world.³ The thesis examines the distinct border positioning of the Member States as individual national states and as transit and destination countries, and reviews the positioning in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation. Moreover, this thesis is also devoted to finding out the motives of the distinct border positioning among the member states, and the influence of the border positioning on the flows of refugees. Subsequently, I have formulated the following questions based on the main research objective:

Main Research Question:

- ❖ How do some EU Member States position themselves distinctively from each other when dealing with the refugees at their borders?

The following will be analyzed:

1. Distinct border positioning of the member states as individual national states.
2. Distinct border positioning of the member states as transit and destination countries.

In addition to the main research question, the following specific research questions have been formulated, and will be addressed to initiate a well-defined framework for the research findings:

³ <https://www.ntnu.edu/studies/msglopol/about>

Specific Research Questions:

1. How do the distinct border positioning among some EU Member States relate to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation?
2. What are some of the motives for the distinct border positioning among some individual EU Member States?
3. How do the distinct border positioning influence the flows of refugees arriving at the borders of the member states?

1.5 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is structured around 6 chapters that address the key objective of the study and the research questions. Chapter one constitutes a general introduction of the study, with a presentation of the main research objective, an outline of the relevant theories used, and the research methodology applied in the study. Also presented are the selected study areas and a timeline of the relevant development of the distinct border positioning. The chapter proceeds with a presentation of the actualization and background of the study, with a recount of the events leading to the distinct positioning within the individual national states and between the transit and the destination countries. Also discussed in the chapter are the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation amid the distinct border positioning. This is superseded with a presentation of the problem statement, comprising of the main research objective, the specific research questions and a description of the structure of the remaining part of the thesis. Ultimately, chapter one concludes with a presentation of some of the previous research studies undertaken in connection with the objective of the thesis. The main studies presented include Gyori's (2016) "Political communication of the Refugee Crisis in Central and Eastern Europe", Kiefer's (2015) "Thirtieth Anniversary of the Schengen Agreement: Retrospective and Perspective in Light of the Migrant Crisis", Hassel & Wagner (in Vanhercke et. al 2016: 67) "EU's 'migration crisis': challenge, threat or opportunity?", Rasten's et al. (2015) study on "The 'refugee crises' in a Danish and European union perspective", and Dullien's (2016) "the cost of Europe's refugee crisis".

Chapter 2 presents an evaluation of some of the theoretical approaches and conceptual frameworks considered relevant for the study. These theories include, Bakewell's (2012) migration system theory, Holzinger & Knills' (2005) theory on policy convergence and its mechanism of harmonization and regulatory competition. Also included is the international theory on realism, which explains how distinct border positioning may be established as a result of nation-states' own decisions and interests to avoid large refugee influx, and ultimately, the push-pull theory, which explains how the flows of

refugees may be influenced by the kind of border policies adapted in a country (Thielemann 2003). The research methodology is discussed in chapter three, consisting of a detailed description of the data collection process and the application of the qualitative research approach, with a justification of why this approach has been applied. The chapter also presents the methods and the sources used for collecting the primary and the secondary data, and how these data was generated. In addition, chapter three presents the methods and the techniques applied in the selection and sampling of the informants, how the interview guide was formulated, the means by which the informants were contacted and recruited, the implementation of the interviews, and not to mention, the ethical issues and the verification of the research quality through highlighting the reliability and validity of the study. The chapter finally presents a description of how the data produced was analysed, before concluding with a highlight of the limitations encountered amid the study.

Chapter four and five presents the analysis of the primary data collected from interviews on views and opinions of some migration experts. The data is analysed on the basis of four different categories, with themes related to the main research objective and the specific research questions. The themes are consequently used to represent the main titles in the categories. The analysis of the data is subsequently linked to the relevant theories, and previous studies presented in the thesis. The first and the second categories are analysed in chapter four, with the first category themed as; distinct border positioning; and analysed on the basis of (i) individual national states and, (ii) transit and destination countries. The second category is themed as; distinct border positioning vis-à-vis the Schengen Agreement and Dublin Regulation. Further on, chapter five presents the analysis of the third and the fourth categories, with the third category themed as; motives for the distinct border positioning, and the fourth category themed as; distinct border positioning and the influence on the flows of refugees.

Chapter six provides an inclusive conclusion of the thesis. The chapter presents a concluding discussion with a recap of the main objective of the thesis and the problem statement. In addition, the chapter highlights a summary of the main findings in the study, revealing how some EU Member States positioned themselves distinctively from each other when dealing with the refugees at their borders. The findings affirm that member states positioned themselves distinctively as individual national states and as transit and destination countries, with each group establishing distinct border measures to deal with the refugee inflows. Chapter six also reveals that the escalation of the crisis created difficulty for some member states to agree on harmonized border strategies and thereby establishing distinct measures that disharmonize with the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin

Regulation. In addition, the findings indicate that some member states resolved to distinct positioning to ease the large numbers of refugees arriving at their borders, and also, out of their concern over the impact that the large influx would have on their weak economies. Also revealed is the influence of the distinct border positioning on the flows of refugees, with a conclusion that the kind of border positioning adapted in a country may have a push or pull effect on the flows of refugees into the borders. Chapter six concludes with a summary of the theoretical perspectives applied in the thesis, followed by a suggestion for further studies. Included at the end of the thesis is the literature list, along with an attached copy of the interview guide used for the interviews conducted in the study.

1.6 Previous Research

Crang & Cook (2007: 15) emphasizes that in order for researchers to have confidence that their study has been rigorous enough, it is vital for them to search for other researchers' interpretations of similar situations. Researchers must sought out and explore the tensions and commonalities between multiple perspectives on their own research problem and that of other researchers (*ibid.*). Consequently, this section of the thesis presents some of the previous studies that have been undertaken in connection to how some EU Member States positioned themselves distinctively from each other in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation when dealing with the refugees at their borders.

One of the researchers who have investigated the evident lack of cooperation and the distinct border positioning among some member states is Gyori (2016). In his noteworthy work on "The Political communication of the Refugee Crisis in Central and Eastern Europe", Gyori (2016: 9-10) concurs that when the crisis escalated in early summer of 2015, the number of refugees entering Europe became staggering, and it emerged quickly that the cooperation between some EU Member states on how to deal with the increasing inflow would not be forthcoming. He states that the unilateral response led to a basic division among the individual member states and between the transit and the destination countries. He exemplifies how the initial response by Germany and other destination countries, which included opening their borders for the vast numbers of refugees, was not similar to that of most transit countries. According to Gyori (2016: 21), the German authorities initially decided to let everyone in, contrary to the Hungarian government, which was among the first transit countries to announce that it was going to combat the entry of refugees by building border fence; a declaration that was later adapted by most other transit countries who followed suit by reinforcing individualized measures such as re-imposing border controls along their frontiers (Lehne 2016). Gyori (2016: 41-42) states that even though Croatia initially responded on an optimistic assumption that it would

handle the refugee inflow, the optimism did not prevail after the Hungarian authorities constructed a fence along the Serbian border and thereby diverting the course of the migrant streams towards Croatia, for that was the quickest route towards Germany and the West. As a result, Croatia quickly closed all but one of its border crossings to Serbia. As the crisis escalated and the number of refugees increased immensely, even Germany, the most prominent destination country and supporter of collective action, eventually changed its positioning by introducing highway controls. The German government felt that the inflow was beyond control and needed to be monitored (Kiefer 2015: 24-27).

In reality, the difficulty of negotiating a coordinated response among the member states, created the possibility of the implementation of border measures that disharmonized with the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation, which promotes and safeguards uniform ways of dealing with refugees and migrants entering Europe (European Commission 2016a: 3). In his work on “The Thirtieth Anniversary of the Schengen Agreement: Retrospective and Perspective in Light of the Migrant Crisis”, Kiefer (2015) argues that the future of the Schengen Agreement, in view of the refugee crisis in Europe became uncertain, as member states established measures that retaliated with the primary objective of the Agreement. She maintains that member states withdrew into themselves and reinstated their sovereignty with their border controls. Even though she points out that the Schengen Agreement does not completely prohibit internal border controls, but provides for their temporary reintroduction where there is serious threat to public policy or internal security, she notably maintains that the reintroduction of border controls because of a refugee influx does not fall under such exceptions, highlighting that states cannot unilaterally and at their own discretion reintroduce border controls without the recommendation of the European Council, and on a proposal from the European Commission (Kiefer 2015: 27-28).

Correspondingly, Hassel & Wagner (in Vanhercke et. al 2016: 67) study on “EU’s ‘migration crisis’: challenge, threat or opportunity?” reviews the Dublin Regulation in light of the current refugee crisis. The study affirms that summer 2015 marked a turning point in the EU countries, as rising numbers of refugees arriving daily on the Greek islands, and subsequently travelling on the so-called “Balkan route” towards Central Europe, led to significant differed reactions among some member states, with some countries increasing border controls and implementing border restrictions, while others temporarily suspending existing EU regulations by openly welcoming refugees (ibid.: 61). According to Hassel & Wagner (in Vanhercke et. al 2016: 67), the 1990 Dublin Convention saw the EU Member States agree that every asylum seeker’s claim would be assessed solely in the first

country of entry. However, the study reveals that the already existing burden in countries like Greece made it intensely challenging to enforce the Dublin Regulation. From the very beginning of the crisis, Greece demanded a stop to transfers of refugees back to its territories, arguing that it was unable to manage the large numbers (ibid.). Hassel & Wagner (in Vanhercke et. al 2016: 67) continue to state that another heavy challenge that was faced by the Dublin Regulation was Germany's unilateral decision to suspend the rules for Syrian refugees and to offer them registration once they reached German soil. This decision meant that all Syrian citizens could be transferred directly from their first country of arrival to Germany without proper registration, as Germany would not send them back to those countries. The study conclusively points out that in the aftermath of the German decision to accept all Syrian refugees unchecked, a large movement of refugees was set off from Turkey through Greece and the Balkan countries to Western Europe (ibid.).

It is also evident that the escalation of the crisis notably motivated some member states to give precedence to their individual concerns and interests as national states, and to deal with the refugees at their borders by developing solitary distinct positioning. Rasten's et al. (2015: 31) study on "The "refugee crisis" in a Danish and European union perspective" confirms that in early summer of 2015, there was a heightened level of activity all over Europe with member states taking action in order to protect themselves from large refugee influx, by increasing the presence of patrol, restricting entry, and erecting barbed wire fences. Some member states conceivably adapted a realistic perception of protecting their borders from the immense inflows (Cierco & Silva 2016). Transit countries such as Greece and Croatia could no longer keep up with the number of people arriving in their countries, and therefore allowed the refugees to proceed with their journeys in order to reach other destinations in Europe. Hungary on its part responded by building a border fence in attempt to keep the refugees out from using its territory as a transit route (Rasten et al. 21-22). To respond to the Hungarian action, Mullen et al. (2015) states that Croatia closed seven border crossings with Serbia, following an overwhelming stream of refugees into its border. Subsequently, Dullien's (2016: 5) study on "the cost of Europe's refugee crisis"; identifies the economic capacity of some member states as another reason for the distinct border positioning. The crisis in Europe came at a time when some of the European economies had still not yet recovered from the 2008-2009 global recession and the Eurozone debt crisis (Archick 2006: 5). According to Dullien (2016: 1), the measures established by some of the economically disadvantaged member states can be explained by their central fear that the refugee inflows could further overwhelm their countries' weak economy. He states that the recurrent concern in national debates in some of these countries is that the large inflows would increase

unemployment, strain infrastructure, and burden already fragile public budgets beyond the point of sustainability and pushing these countries back into the debt crisis they have only just escaped.

Dullien's (2016: 5) study further highlights how the distinct border strategies may have influenced the flows of refugees arriving at the borders of some EU Member States. The study evaluates the influence of the distinct border measures on the refugee influx by exemplifying Germany's decision to suspend the Dublin rules, under which refugees must apply for asylum in the first European country they arrive in, and how the decision attracted an estimated more than a million refugees into the country. Consequently, the study maintains that other member states claimed that the perception of Germany's position as an unconditional open-border policy contributed to an increase in the flow of refugees into the EU, with negative consequences for countries along the Balkan route as well as for frontline states such as Greece (ibid.). On the other hand, Hungary's reduction in the number of refugee flows entering the country followed the government's decision to seal off its borders with Serbia, resulting into an immense number of refugees changing route and making their way into Croatia, a country that became the latest transit pressure point (Mullen et al. 2015). However, once the Hungarian government sealed off their border towards Serbia, Croatia changed its approach and closed seven border crossings with Serbia, in a desperate attempt to force the Serbian government to re-route refugees to Hungary and not Croatia (Bodissey 2015).

In sum, the above-mentioned perspectives on the refugee crisis are of direct relevance for the analysis of my study, as they focus on, and contextualize how some EU Member States positioned themselves distinctively from each other in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation when dealing with the refugees at their borders. As revealed in the previous studies, the intensity of the refugee crisis in Europe in early summer of 2015 led to distinct border positioning among some member states, establishing border measures as individual national states and as transit and destination countries. Furthermore, the disagreement created the difficulty of negotiating a coordinated response among the member states and thereby resulting to the implementation of distinct measures that disharmonized with the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation. Member States resorted into distinct border measures in attempt to avoid large numbers of refugee inflows, while at the same time, there were concerns over the negative economic impact that the large influx would have in some countries. Conclusively, the previous studies shows that the kind of border measures adapted by some member states acted as either pull or push factors on the flows of refugees arriving into the countries.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1 Introduction

This Chapter presents some theoretical perspectives that I consider relevant in forming a guideline towards explaining how some EU Member States positioned themselves distinctively from each other in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation when dealing with the refugees at their borders. According to Kitchin & Tate (2000: 33), theory is taken to be a set of explanatory concepts that are useful for explaining a particular phenomenon, situation or activity, and are essential in defining a research problem.

Following data collection, I allocated sufficient time and effort in searching through a vast amount of literature to establish relevant theories for my study. After an extensive search, I was able to identify some theories that emerged to be significant and central for the study. One such theory is Bakewell's (2012) migration system theory that focuses on the dynamics within a migration system and provides an understanding of the interaction between countries dealing with large refugee inflows, and the ways in which changes in some elements of the system; such as an increase in the refugee flows; may create changes on the way these countries deal with the refugees at their borders. In addition, and in order to evaluate the distinct border positioning in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation, I have included Holzinger & Knills' (2005) theory on policy convergence and its mechanism of harmonization and regulatory competition, which illustrates the harmonization of EU immigration policies, and explains how migratory pressure may lead to regulatory competition and policy adjustment. Also included is the international relations theory on realism, which helps to explain the motives of the distinct border positioning, arguing that nation-states are purposive actors that make decisions based on their own interests (Viotti & Kauppi 2010: 40-41). Ultimately, the chapter concludes with the push and pull theory, affirming that border policies implemented in a country may influence the flows of refugees arriving into the country (Thielemann 2003).

2.2 Migration System Theory

Understanding the dynamics within a migration system is key to understanding the main objective of this study, which examines EU Member States distinct border positioning in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation when dealing with the refugees at their borders. To provide

such knowledge, I find it important to draw in a theory that has evidence of migration system dynamics at play, which operates at the level beyond the individual (Bakewell 2012: 15). Therefore, using the migration system theory, this thesis provides a clear understanding of its objective, by first and foremost, utterly defining the concept of migration system, and thereafter, providing an explanation of the interaction and the changes that may occur within the system. Rooted in geography, the concept of migration system has caught the attention of different renowned migration scholars who have given it different forms of definitions. One such Scholar is Mabogunje (1970: 3), who describes a system as a complex of interacting elements, together with their attributes and relationships. He argues that the system operates in a way that any change in the attributes of the system's objects may affect the whole system. However, while commending Mabogunje's (1970: 3) contribution for providing a good start by distinguishing between the system elements and their attributes and relationships, Bakewell (2012: 13-14) adapts this formulation, but in a more narrowed theme, where he provides a more abstract two-part definition of a migration system. He explains that:

“A migration system can be defined by first and foremost, a set of interacting elements, including the flows of people, ideas, institutions, and strategies as in plans for action by actors such as policies of governments among others. Secondly, by the dynamics governing the way in which the elements (flows and strategies) change in relation to changes in these system elements (Bakewell 2012: 13-14).”

As much as Mabogunje's (1970) remarkable contribution is commendable, I find Bakewell's (2012: 13-14) refined notion of the migration system to be more relevant to the objective of my thesis, as it provides a more narrow and idea of the system. The first step to placing his definition in the context of my study is to identify the interacting elements within the crisis in the EU, while bearing in mind his narrow approach by which he recommends three primary elements that can be used as a starting point when analyzing the migration system; that is origin, transit and destination areas (ibid.). However, my study focuses on only two of the elements, that is, the transit and destination countries, and has excluded the developments in the sending countries. This exclusion is based on the fact that the focus of the study is not on the countries of origin, but on specifically the refugee crisis in Europe and how the member states positioned themselves distinctively when dealing with refugees at their borders in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin regulation. Even though focusing on the countries of origin, such as Turkey and Jordan would have further legitimized the relevancy of the theory, it would have presumably demanded more resources and a larger scope of the study.

Within the context of this study, the EU Member States can be described as a set of interacting elements within a migration system, linked together by the refugee crisis and by how they deal with the refugees at their borders in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation. According to the theory, any changes within the migration system may affect the way the system elements operate. In other words, changes such as an increase in the refugee flows in the host countries may create changes in the border strategies adapted by the countries. Furthermore, the way the system elements operate may also be a product of their distinguished positioning with which they are mainly associated with within the system (ibid.: 14). Conversely, member states (as elements within a migration system) may react differently to changes within the system depending on whether they are positioned as transit or destination elements. In reality, the escalation of the flows of refugees in early summer 2015, induced changes on how some member states would imminently deal with the refugees arriving at their borders. Member states established distinct border measures as individual national states, and as transit and destination countries, with each group using different policy and tools in governing the refugee flows directed to them (Toktas et al. 2006: 21).

2.3 Policy Convergence and its Mechanisms of Harmonization and Regulatory Competition

Holzinger & Knill (2005) refers to the growing similarities of policies as policy convergence. As EU countries continue to cooperate economically, politically and on cultural platforms, they develop similar policies and thus establish the process of policy convergence (ibid.: 776). Holzinger & Knill (2005: 782) further maintains that international harmonization or co-operation assumes the existence of interdependencies or externalities that push governments to resolve common problems through co-operation within international institutions such as the EU, which constrain and shape the domestic policy choices even as they are constantly challenged and reformed by their member states.

Countries might be exposed to several different mechanisms of convergence (ibid.: 779). However, the two mechanisms that in my opinion may relevantly be applied when explaining EU Member States' distinct positioning in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation are the policy harmonization and regulatory competition. The mechanism of policy harmonization leads to cross-national convergence if the involved countries comply with uniform legal obligations defined in international or supranational law. Harmonization refers to a specific outcome of international co-operation, in which national governments; such as the EU Member States; are legally required to adopt similar policies and programmes as part of their obligations as members of international

institutions (ibid: 781-782). Some of the similar policies adapted by the EU Member states include the Schengen Agreement, which provides a common set of rules applying to people crossing the external borders of the EU Member States, and the harmonization of the conditions of entry among these members (EU-Lex: 2009), and the Dublin Regulation that mainly determines the member state responsible for processing the requests of asylum seekers from outside the union (Lyons 2015).

However, while the mechanism of harmonization is based on domestic compliance with legal obligation, regulatory competition explains how countries facing pressure may mutually adjust their policies (Holzinger & Knill 2005: 782). Placed in the context of the refugee crisis in Europe, the escalation of the influx in early summer of 2015, induced pressure among some EU Member States, creating a lack of agreement on how to deal with the refugees arriving at the borders, and thus resulting to deep divisions that led to the establishment of solitary distinct positioning within the individual national states and among the transit and destination countries (Lehne 2016). Some Member States resolved into violating the Schengen Agreement by adapting strict border control strategies such as building fences or restricting refugee entries into their countries. Further, some transit countries responded by diverting the flows of refugees to other nations by selectively closing their borders, or by passing the refugees along to the next country as rapidly as possible (ibid.); and as a result challenging the Dublin Regulation. It is clear that member states were adjusting their policy instrument and regulatory standards in order to cope with the pressure from the high refugee influx (Holzinger & Knill 2005: 789). As affirmed by Castells (2008: 88), coordinating a common policy usually means a common language and a set of shared values, however, more often than not, governments may not share the same principles, or the same interpretation of common principles when faced with immense pressure. Furthermore, Thielemann (2003: 11) argues that when faced with immense pressure, policy harmonization may be perceived to come at the expense of states' ability to use distinct national policies to counter-balance large influx.

2.4 International Relations Theory on Realism

International Relations (IR) theorists are interested in among others, the behavior of actors in the international system, which operates across or transcends state borders. These include the relations within supranational organizations such as the EU, with national states as members (Daddow 2013: 8). The IR academics have devised a variety of different important theories to explain the particular interaction which they feel best explain the international relations that interest them the most (ibid.: 8). One such theory is realism, which I also consider as a relevant tool in conceivably elaborating

why some member states resolved into distinct positioning when dealing with the refugees at their borders when the crisis escalated in early summer 2015. While recognizing the importance of balance of power among states as a key concept in the theory of realism, I notably choose to adapt Trnik's (2007: 14) suggestion of presenting the arguments that are most relevant for my research objective.

Principally, the primary assumption of realism theory is that nation-states are essentially purposive actors that make decisions based on their own interests and on the benefits and costs associated with each decision. Realists argue that governmental decision makers select the alternative that achieves an acceptable outcome that serves the interests of the state (Viotti & Kauppi 2010: 40-41). In other words, the primary motive of states is to survive, which means that they seek to make decisions that may be favorable to them as national states (Mearsheimer 2009: 242). As echoed by Cierco & Silva (2016: 1), EU Member States have particular interests and goals as national states, and given the large-scale pressure of the current refugee crisis, these countries may make decisions to establish distinct border positioning, while looking at each territory as a space that needs protection from the external pressure induced by the large influx. They maintain that on a realistic perspective, states are based on territories and all states may take control over their delimited territories (ibid.: 3). Correspondingly, Cierco & Silva (2016: 11) affirms that the escalation of the refugee crisis led some member states to place their national interest above the EU cooperation, risking a violation of the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation, and instead strengthening their national sovereignty by implementing measures aligned with their own repelling interest of protecting their borders from the large inflows. Furthermore, the measures established by some economically disadvantaged member states can be explained by their central fear that the refugee inflows could further overwhelm their countries' weak economy, increase unemployment, strain infrastructure, and burden already fragile public budgets beyond the point of sustainability (Dullien 2016: 1).

2.5 Push–Pull Theoretical Model in Migration

According to Thielemann (2003: 11), the push-pull model is one of the most commonly known theoretical migration models. This model has been popularly applied on the micro or individual level to explain the principal causes of refugee and migrants movements from their homelands, by drawing in systematic factors such as warfare, political instability and repression, among others. All in all, the push factors are usually depicted to be negative and may push the refugees away from their countries of origin, whereas the pull factors are generally seen as positive and are those that attract the refugees to the receiving countries (Loescher 1993: 16). However, what captures my attention to render this

theory relevant and to endorse it for my study is the fact that it can also be analyzed on a macro level, and can therefore be used to explain how the flows of refugees into a country may be influenced by the country's positioning in relation to the kind of policies it adapts for dealing with refugees. Even though Thielemann (2011: 6) states that the policy-related push and pull theoretical model may be criticized for having a smaller impact on the flows of refugees as compared to the key structural pull factors, the outcome of its impact may still not be ignored; and especially in the manner in which the current refugee crisis in Europe demonstrated that conditions such as refugee admission and immigration control policies adapted in the host countries are important determinants on the flows of refugees into the country (Loescher 1993: 16).

According to Thielmann (2011: 2), the more lenient and generous a country's policies are, the larger the numbers of refugees that may be pulled into the country. He maintains that a country may push or reduce the refugee inflows by increasing the restrictiveness of its policy. Presumably, refugees are pushed away from countries with strict immigration policies and pulled towards those countries with more moderate policies. When the crisis in Europe escalated in early summer 2015, the Hungarian authorities resolved into constructing a fence along the Serbian border, which clearly meant a push of the course of the refugee streams towards Croatia (Gyori 2016: 41-42). This affirms Neumayer (2004: 12) argument that restrictive policy measures undertaken by any one-host country may work on the basis of creating a negative externality and pushing refugees to countries with more lenient measures. At the same time, the Croatian government warned that it would allow the refugees a free transit passage that would create a possible push factor, which would extend the refugee inflow into northern Europe (Gyori 2016: 43). In some destination countries like Germany, the initial response to the escalation of the crisis was followed by a declaration of maintaining open borders. In addition, Germany also initially decided to wave the Dublin rules by not sending back refugees to be registered in their first country of arrival (European Parliament 2016: 7). The declaration of the open border policy and the decision to wave the Dublin rule may have contributed to a pull factor that saw Germany become a target of large unprecedented numbers of refugees. The country received an astounding 1.1 million refugees entering its borders in 2015, which was four times the number recorded in 2014 (Cermak 2016). In Denmark, the escalating inflow compelled the country to establish strict immigration policies to discourage further entry of refugees. The country's major highways with Germany were blocked, and as a result, the majority of the hundreds of people who arrived in the country were pushed through to neighboring Sweden instead of applying for asylum in Denmark (MCHugh 2016b).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Kothari (2004: 8) describes research methodology as a way of systematically solving research problems and explaining why a research has been undertaken, what data has been collected, methods adopted, why particular techniques of analysing data have been used and why others have not been used. It is vital for a researcher to specify clearly and precisely the decisions selected and why they have been selected, so that others can evaluate them as well (ibid.). Research methodology may mainly be in the form of quantitative methods that consist of statistics and mathematical modelling; and qualitative methods, which is a set of techniques used to explore subjective meanings, values and emotions, such as interviewing and participant observation (Clifford, French & Valentine 2010: 3). For my research study, I chose to apply a qualitative research approach, with data collected from both primary and secondary sources. In my opinion, a qualitative research approach was most relevant for reflecting the main focus of my study of finding out how some EU Member States positioned themselves distinctively from each other when dealing with refugees at their borders.

Consequently, this chapter presents, illustrates and defends my choice of applying a qualitative research approach. The chapter describes in details the various steps adapted in the research process, including, the type of data collected, the source of data, and the method used for generating the data. Further, the chapter presents the methods and techniques applied in the selection and sampling of the informants, the formulation of the interview guide, how the informants were contacted and recruited, implementation of the interviews, and the ethical issues and verification of the research quality through highlighting the reliability and validity of the study. Conclusively, the chapter presents a description of how the data produced was analysed, before finally highlighting the limitations encountered amid the study.

3.2 Qualitative Research Approach

According to Kitchin & Tate (2000: 211), choosing a research method is not just a case of picking the one that seems the easiest, but picking the most appropriate and relative to the knowledge required. They state that even though the data produced using qualitative techniques are generally not analysed

using dreaded statistics, it is important to keep in mind that the studies that utilise, generate, analyse and interpret qualitative data are quite complex to design and are more demanding. In my case, a qualitative research approach emerged to be the most relevant method in explaining and availing a deep level of understanding that would provide the basis for tackling my research objective and research questions (ibid: 34). I chose the qualitative approach for its valuability in relation to tackling the questions of “why” and “how”, and for the possibility of assessing the knowledge, attitudes and opinions of people (Kothari 2004: 5). Unlike a quantitative approach, the qualitative approach does not assume that there is a pre-existing world that can be known, or measured, but instead, it sees the social world as something dynamic and changing (Dwyer & Limb 2001: 6).

In as much as the quantitative method (as compared to the qualitative approach) would have equipped me with the possibility of sampling a large population with statistical validity that could have reflected the population at large, the qualitative technique gave me the possibility of obtaining data rich in quality, with valuable in-depth, and representing a narrative description of the sample (Research methodology 2016). Moreover, the qualitative approach allowed me to collect sufficient data that endorsed my use of an inductive approach, which involves establishing relevant theories from data collected. Whereas a deductive approach is mainly applied in quantitative research, and seeks to test the validity of assumptions and theories in hand, the inductive approach contributes to the emergence of new theories by starting with the formulation of research objective, aims and questions that need to be achieved during the research process (ibid.).

3.3 Data Collection Methods

As aforementioned, my qualitative research study was based on data collected from both primary and secondary sources. According to Kothari (2004: 95), primary data are usually collected afresh and for the first time, and thus happens to be original in character. The secondary data, on the other hand, are those that have already been collected by others and therefore needs only a compilation (ibid.).

3.3.1 Primary Data

There are several methods of collecting primary data, the most important ones include, interviews, observation, focus groups, and questionnaires (Kothari 2004: 96). According to Kitchin & Tate (2000: 213), interviews are probably the most commonly used qualitative technique, which allows the researcher to produce rich and varied data, set in a less formal setting, while simultaneously examining the experiences, feelings, views or opinions of informants in relation to the study being

undertaken (Boyce & Neale 2006: 3). The primary data in my study was based on in-depth interviews conducted with the help of semi-structured interview guide consisting of pre-formulated questions, with which I thoroughly examined the views and opinions of professional and scholarly experts in the field of migration. These experts included, senior researchers, associate professors, NGO executive, research associates and PhD fellows.

Kitchin & Tate (2000: 39) emphasizes that primary data (as compared to secondary data) is more context dependant to a researcher's study. However, one of the disadvantages of collecting primary data through in-depth interviews is that generalizations about the results may usually not be made because of the small samples chosen and the fact that random sampling methods are not used (Boyce & Neale 2006). In addition, interviews can be time-intensive evaluation activity because of the time it takes to conduct, transcribe and analyse the results (ibid.). Nevertheless, and despite the drawbacks, I experienced that collecting data through interviews (as compared to for instance questionnaires) allowed me to obtain detailed information and instant feedback from the informants. More details on the informants, and the in-depth interview process are included later on in the chapter.

3.3.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data consist of information that has been collected for another purpose but which is available for others to use if considered relevant for their research (White in Clifford et al. 2010: 61). As a student, such data are an indispensable source of information where resource limitations, such as time and money, may preclude data collection for extensive study areas (ibid.). Consequently, the secondary data used in my research was obtained from the widely available data in relevant print and electronic media, gathered from reliable sources, including television news channels, various internet sites, national and international newspapers, previous research articles, policy documents, books, journals, scholarly articles, among others. Most of the secondary data on the migration statistics used in the study were retrieved from online websites such as United Nations High Commissioner for refugees (UNHCR), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Eurostat and Frontex. In addition, I obtained data from "NewsNow", which is an automated Internet news portal that displays real-time headlines linking to news websites from local, national and international sources from all around the world (NewsNow 1997-2016). Nevertheless, with the extensive amount of secondary data that was available from different sources, I found it important to assess the usefulness of the sources before finally gathering information that would be used in my study. I therefore chose to make the assessment on the basis of Kitchin & Tate's (2000: 227) suggestions, of first and foremost, checking

the authenticity of the data source through confirming that the source has been correctly attributed; and secondly, assessing the credibility of the source by checking its accuracy; and lastly, using other sources to find out whether a certain source is representative of opinion at that time and place.

3.4 Selecting and Sampling of Informants

Prior to selecting the informants, I made the decision to pre-determine the kind of sampling unit that would be relevant for my study. My aim was to select a unit that would provide high quality and reliable information. I decided to exclusively recruit experts from the field of migration. Interviewing experts that are proficient in the field related to my research could legitimize data and help me to better understand the various dynamics of my research objective. Moreover, I decided in advance that all the successfully recruited experts would be equally considered as key informants, as they could possibly be in a position to provide distinctive insights or information covering a whole set of issues that may not likely be obtained from other sources (Yin 2012: 56).

All in all, by determining a relevant sampling unit for my study meant that I directly applied a theoretical sampling method. In place of the random sampling method, theoretical sampling approach involves gaining selective access to appropriate groups of people who may be concerned with the research problem and encouraging them to provide information from their various perspectives (Crang & Cook 2007: 14). In addition, I set up a source list, or a sampling frame from where samples were to be drawn, which included a comprehensive, reliable and appropriate list with names of potential informants from the selected countries (Kothari 2004: 56). I consequently used Google Web Search to search for names and contact information of various migration experts, with a focus on professional and scholarly experts who had published articles or appeared in television or newspapers for matters related to the European refugee crisis. I also searched in government official websites, Universities, and governmental and non-governmental organizations, such as UNHCR, IOM, and Red Cross. I was also fortunate to get a few recommendations from reliable sources at NTNU.

In general, the selection of the informants was strategically based on two important criteria. First and foremost, it was significant to select experts from the specific sampled study areas of Greece, Croatia, Denmark and Germany, and secondly, their current work had to involve or be related to the current European refugee crisis. Whether the informants were male or female was not significant for my study since my research objective was not based on any kind of gender comparison. Nevertheless, recruiting the specific group of experts with the aforementioned criteria had some sorts of challenges,

which included, lack, or limited time for interviews because of their busy work and travel schedules. I however proceeded with this sampling unit, keeping in mind that they were the kind of informants who would provide distinctive insights or information covering a whole set of issues that may not likely be obtained from other sources (Yin 2012: 56). I further had to acknowledge the significance of having a comprehensive sampling frame with a sample size substantial enough to increase my chances of finding informants who would be willing to participate in the interviews. Subsequently, my original sampling frame with the total sample size from each country was as presented below:

Table 2. Original Sampling frame

Study Areas	Sampling Frame
Greece	08
Croatia	07
Germany	09
Denmark	07

Prepared by Oloo, L. (2016)

From the above sampling frame, my goal was to successfully recruit 2 informants from each of the 4 countries, and thus a total of 8 informants. Even though sampling and recruiting a large unit would result to a large amount of information that would eventually affirm the findings in my research study, my targeted sample was limited because I had to take into consideration the limited resources and scope of my study. And as Crang & Cook (2007: 14- 15) conclusively note, researching a large number of interest group may be unnecessary because there usually comes a point in the research process where the range of arguments which can be made concerning a particular matter has been made, and furthermore, what matters is not the sheer number typically or representatives of people approached, but the quality and positionality of the information that they can offer.

3.5 Interview guide

As aforementioned, the in-depth interviews carried out in my research study were conducted with the help of semi-structured interview guide consisting of pre-formulated questions that were carefully modified with information and facts that corresponded with the sampled countries of Greece, Croatia, Denmark and Germany. Even though Tjora (2010: 119) explains that using an interview guide with pre-formulated questions may feel stiff or stilted when carrying out interviews, in my situation, it

created a more conversational feel while ensuring that all the topics of interest were explored, and that I had the possibility of varying the wording of the questions and the sequence in which the questions were tackled, and thus creating much greater freedom to explore specific avenues of enquiry (Kitchin & Tate 2000: 214). However, I also implemented Charmaz' (2006: 17) suggestion of evaluating the interview guide between the pre-formulated questions and the data that was emerging from the actual interviews. I followed the leads from the interviews by pursuing some of the topics that the informants expressed as crucial, and used the same information to further refine the interview guide (*ibid.*). Therefore, the interview guides presented at the end of this thesis are not affixed, as I was refining the questions gradually with the new knowledge I was gaining from the informants during the interviews. Consequently, most of the questions presented in the interview guides herein are those that were consistent, and were presented in all the different guides.

I began constructing the interview guide through thorough research on various print and electronic media sources to ensure that I was well informed on the issues and facts related to my research objective. Being well informed was a significant part of the interview guide creation process, as my aim was to formulate questions that would give informants an impression that I was knowledgeable, as well as curious, and was not therefore wasting their time (Crang & Cook 2007: 63). Subsequently, I structured the questions into three parts, comprising of warm-up questions, reflection questions and round-up questions, while constantly keeping in mind that good questions are generally ones which are clear, concise and easy to understand (Kitchin & Tate 2000: 217). The warm-up questions comprised of simple, but concrete demographic questions, where the informants were requested to state their age, profession, place of work, job title, and how their work was related to the current refugee crisis. These questions were meant to make the informants feel at ease and to also create a good connection between them and myself as a researcher (Tjora 2010: 96-97). It was important that the warm-up questions were not too prolonged, and that I prioritized the most important demographic questions, keeping in mind that my study was dealing with experts who presumably had limited time.

The reflection questions allowed the informants to go deeper into the different parts of the research topic by going through their views sequentially (*ibid.*: 97). Since I was dealing with experts, I chose to present some of the questions in the form of short and solid factual debates with the anticipation that the informants would express their deep personal thoughts and opinions on the issues. The first reflection question required the informants to explain how their respective countries responded to the refugee flows at the borders when the crisis escalated in early summer of 2015. This type of question

was more general and open and allowed the informants to reveal their own versions of events in their own words. However, it was important to ensure that the questions were not presented in a dominating or conclusive manner, but instead used as a starting point for a discussion. Through out the interview guide, I developed more precise follow- up questions that encouraged and critically questioned the informants' recollections of events (Crang & Cook 2007: 69). Consequently, I kept the reflection questions brief, factual and straight to the point, in consideration that I was dealing with informants who were well conversant with the current refugee crisis. Furthermore, prolonged interviews would lead to a point where they would eventually be boring, mentally exhausting and intense (ibid.: 71). It was also vital for me to arrange the reflection questions in order of importance, ensuring that I prioritized the most critical questions, just in case an informant, for some reasons, would feel the need to stop or leave the interview before it was fully completed.

Ultimately, the third part of the interview guide consisted of the round-up questions, which were simple, brief, and aimed at normalizing the interview situation through directing the attention away from the reflection phase (Tjora 2010: 97). As shown on the interview guide at the end of this thesis, the round-up questions concluded with the respondents being asked whether they had any further comments to add in relation to the discussion.

3.6 Contacting the informants

Following the formulation of the interview guide, I proceeded with contacting potential informants with a goal of recruiting a total of 8 participants. In consideration of my limited resources and the geographical scope of the study areas, I chose to make the initial contact through electronic mail (e-mail), and ultimately carry out the interviews through Skype or telephone. In all, Kitchin & Tate (2000: 216) maintains that when contacting informants for interviews, it is important to keep in mind that interviewing requires quite a large commitment from the informants, as they are not only giving up their time but also imparting significantly more information than they might otherwise do in another medium. They explain that as a student researcher, I would need to be able to persuade people to take part in my research and make them feel that my study is worthwhile. They emphasize the importance of preparing in advance a summary of who I am, why I have chosen my research topic, and formally briefing the informants when first contacted, and making them aware of how they were chosen. Consequently, I prepared a well-detailed introduction e-mail that is included at the end of this thesis. As revealed in the e-mail, I presented myself and described the objective of my study, before formally inviting the informants for interviews. Due to the informants' presumably busy

schedules, I chose to leave the interview dates and time open for them to respond with what was most suitable. However, I courteously specified a time limit for the period when the interviews were to be completed. Thereafter, I sent the emails after thoroughly reading through the content a number of times to ensure that all the important information were included and correct grammar had been used.

Contacting informants through email had its drawbacks despite being a faster and cheaper method as compared to for instance face-to-face communication. First and foremost, not all the emails were delivered as expected, presumably due to invalid email addresses that were available on the Internet. Secondly, as compared to face-to-face communications, emails did not guarantee an instantaneous feedback from the informants. Two and a half weeks after sending the initial email, I had only 6 confirmed participants out of the 8 targeted, as some of the experts sent their regrets explaining that they were busy, while one stated respectfully that their research and teaching obligation would not allow them to participate in my study. I therefore decided to apply the snowball sampling method, which is a non-probability (non-random) sampling method used when characteristics to be possessed by samples are rare and difficult to find. This sampling method involves primary data sources nominating other familiar potential primary data sources for the research (research Methodology 2016). Snowball method provides the ability to recruit hidden populations in a cost-effective manner and it may also reduce the time used on the informant recruitment process. However, it is important to understand that informants may be hesitant to provide names of peers and asking them to do so may raise ethical concerns (ibid.). Nonetheless, my snowball method was well endorsed by the informants, and as a result, I was able to successfully recruit a total of 9 informants; with an additional informant from Greece. As table 3 below shows, my targeted sample was 2 informants from each of the 4 sampling frames. Instead I ended up with 3 informants from Greece, and 2 from each of the remaining member states (Croatia, Denmark, and Germany). As further described in the section that follows, I decided to utilize one of the Greek informants for my pilot study.

Table 3. Sample Selection

	Greece	Croatia	Denmark	Germany	Total
Sampling frame	8	7	9	7	31
Targeted sample	2	2	2	2	8
Total Sample selected	3	2	2	2	9

Prepared by Oloo, L. (2016)

As aforementioned, one of the main limitations of targeting experts for my study was their busy schedule. This became a challenge as some of the informants immediately confirmed that they could only avail themselves for the interviews up to one month after the date of their initial recruitment. Despite choosing to confirm these dates while bearing in mind that these group of informants was not easy to recruit, I still considered the delay a setback for my study, as it would eventually result to a delay in transcribing the final interview data and thereby a delay in the analysis and completion of the thesis. However, despite the delays, I successfully conducted all the interviews, and thereby acquiring the necessary primary data for the study.

3.7 Implementation of the interviews

Kitchin & Tate (2000: 215) describes an interview as a complex social interaction in which an interviewer is trying to learn a person's experiences or thoughts on a specific topic. They maintain that face-to-face interview is the most common medium, owing to its advantage of being personal in nature and allowing a researcher to more easily gauge the informant's reaction to a specific topic through their body language and facial expression. However, for my research study, face-to-face interviews would have been costly and time consuming, considering my limited resources, and the geographical scope of my study areas. Fortunately, all my informants agreed to be interviewed through Skype. According to Opdenakker (2006), interviewing by telephone may be popular, but interviewing using the Internet is also rising. With Skype, the informants would be interviewed independent of time and place setting (*ibid.*). However, I had to be aware of the challenges connected to poor network connection, and I was therefore prepared to propose to the informants the use of telephone as a back-up medium.

Before embarking on the final interviews, I chose to conduct a pilot study with one of the Greek informants. Conducting a pilot study was significant for gauging whether the pre-formulated questions on the interview guide were consistent, had a proper flow, and if they were directed to the objective of my study. The pilot study also helped in testing the viability of my research study, and finally, getting a possible indication on the average span of my interviews (Kitchin & Tate 2000: 43). Moreover, since I was conducting a pilot study with an expert, my goal was to ensure that the information collected was as accurate as possible, keeping in mind that I would consider using the data as backup incase the quality was richer than what I would get from the final interviews, or incase of information distortion, or informant withdrawal.

I embarked on the actual interviews by presenting myself, thanking the informants for agreeing to participate, and confirming the topic of my research study. I thereafter went through the standard ethical procedure of requesting for permission to record the interviews, assuring the informants that their identity would be held anonymous and all information collected from them would remain confidential and only used for the purpose of the study. I also reminded them that they could stop the interview at any time they felt the need to, and they also had the freedom to withdraw from the survey at anytime, even after the interviews were completed (Tjora 2010: 142). More details on the ethical issues are presented on the section that follows.

All my informants granted their permission to be recorded. Collecting data digitally gave me certainty that I had with me what was said, and that I was able to concentrate more on the informants by giving them all my attention and thus ensuring good communication and a flow of conversation (ibid.: 120). In line with Kitchin & Tate (2000: 215), I put the informants at ease during the interviews by asking questions in a calm manner, and ensured that I was listening and recording the responses without upsetting the flow of the conversation. As a result, I was able to balance the establishment and maintenance of a rapport with the informants in a way that a trusting relationship was developed, while maintaining a neutral position about the topic under discussion (ibid.). My aim was to avoid the common interview mistakes of failing to listen carefully, repeating the questions, asking vague questions, failing to explore an interesting answer by leaving an interesting topic to move on to the next, and letting the interview proceed for too long (ibid.: 217). I also kept an open mind and refrained from displaying disagreements in any forms, even when the viewpoints expressed by the informants contradicted the information I had gathered from the secondary data (Research Methodology 2016). Every now and then I checked that my recorder was still recording, and immediately after the interviews, I listened to the recordings and confirmed that all the information was successfully recorded (Crang & Cook 2007: 85). I thereafter made extensive notes as soon after each interview was completed to act as back-up information incase of equipment failure, or where loud background noises or distortion meant that there would be important gaps to fill in the eventual transcript (ibid.: 82). All the interviews were conducted in English since all the informants were proficient in the language. Even though some of the interviews took longer than others, the overall average time was one hour. At the end of the interviews, I remembered to thank all the informants for their time and participation.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

Research Methodology (2016) describes ethical consideration as one of the most important parts of a research study. According to Davidson and Layder (1994: 55), ethics concerns the conduct of researchers and their responsibilities and obligations to those involved in the research study, and most importantly, the subjects of the research. They state that ethics refer to an abstract set of standards and principles, which social researchers can refer to in order to decide what is appropriate and acceptable conduct. As a student, I was required to report to the Norwegian Data Protection Official For Research (NSD) that my study was to involve the collection, processing, and storage of information; such as names, occupation, job title and place of residence; linked to people I was to interview. In general, NSD recommends that the persons requested to participate in a research (informant) must issue a voluntary consent for participation, and in order to define this consent as valid, a researcher must ascertain that the participants understand what the consent is concerning and what the consequences of participation will be.⁴ I received an approval from NSD, and I was obligated to firmly focus upon the standard ethical protocols on matters related to voluntary participation, privacy, confidentiality and anonymity (Kitchin & Tate 2000: 36).

Consequently, my informants were assured that their identities would remain anonymous, and all the information collected from them would be handled in a private and confidential manner, and the data would remain secure on my computer database, accessible only by password and used only for the purpose of my study. I also notified them that the interviews would be recorded only with their permission and that they had the right to stop the interview at any time if they felt the need to, and the freedom to withdraw themselves from the study at any time without explanation (Clifford et al. 2010: 111). Furthermore, during the process of formulating the research topic, the research objective, the interview guide and the implementing the interviews, I made certain that my study would not cause any harm, or create negative consequences to the participants by avoiding the use offensive, discriminatory, or other unacceptable language (Research Methodology 2016). Subsequently, to ascertain that the identities of my informants remained anonymous, I chose to refer to them in this thesis as expert 1 and 2 from their respective countries. In other words, the two informants from Croatia are referred to in this thesis as expert 1, and expert 2, Croatia. Experts from Denmark are; expert 1, and 2, Denmark, those from Greece are; expert 1, and 2, Greece; and ultimately, expert 1, and 2 from Germany.

⁴ <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvernombud/en/notify/index.html>

3.9 Quality of the Research: Reliability and Validity

“All good studies aim to be valid and reliable, and this project should be no different.”
(Kitchin & Tate 2000: 34).

Reliability refers to the extent to which the same answers can be obtained using the same instruments more than one time (Research Methodology 2016). In other words, if other researchers should repeat my research study using the same tools and techniques that I have applied, and produce the same findings, then my research would be acknowledged as reliable. Essentially, the reliability of a study can be easily affected by the method used for selecting informants and the kind of relationship that exists between the researcher and the informants. In cases where there is a close relationship between the researcher and the informants, the question should be; would the findings be the same if a different researcher would repeat the same study? (Tjora 2010: 178). However, in my case, my informants and I were not known to each other prior to the recruitment process. As aforementioned, I used the internet Google Web Search to find names and contact information of various migration experts from professional and scholarly communities. Moreover, the reliability of my study was also strengthened by use of a semi-structured interview guide, with questions that I had prepared in advance. The interview guide provided a structured interview whereby I was able to ensure that the discussion was based around the objective of my study. To further strengthen the reliability of my study, I refrained from influencing the informants' views and opinions, through for instance displaying disagreements in any forms, even when the viewpoints expressed by the informants contradicted the information I had gathered from the secondary data (Research Methodology 2016). I was able to maintain a neutral position about the topic under discussion during the interviews (Kitchin & Tate 2000: 215).

Closely associated to reliability, is the subject of validity. According to Kitchin & Tate (2000: 34), validity is more concerned with the soundness, legitimacy and relevance of a research theory and its investigation. They state that validity can relate to theoretical or practical issues. Validity relating to practical issues is concerned with the soundness of the research strategies used in the empirical investigation and the integrity of the conclusions that can be drawn from a study. This validity relating to practise may include, construct validity, which is concerned with whether data generation techniques are sound, measuring the phenomenon they are supposed to without introducing error or bias, and analytical validity, which is concerned with whether the correct method of data analysis has been chosen, leading to results that truly represent the data (ibid.). For my research study, using the qualitative research approach based on both primary and secondary data secured construct validity, as

I was able to obtain rich data on views and opinions, and make sense of behaviour and understanding these behaviour within its wider context (Vaus 2014: 6). In addition, the validity of my study was also ensured through complete openness and clarity while describing the research process and the choices made while conducting the research, including the methods and the process involved in data analysis (Tjora 2010: 179). Moreover, my informants were experts in the field of migration, with opinions and views that could ensure valid conclusions in my findings. By being able to record the interviews, I was certain that I had with me the exact information that was provided, and thereby ensuring the validity of my study by avoiding written errors or misquoting informants. The secondary data was also obtained from reliable sources, and the usefulness and reliability of these sources was carefully assessed. Assessing the data ensured that valid conclusions could be drawn from my study (Kitchin & Tate 2000: 227). According to Crang & Cook (2007: 146), the validity of a study can also be ensured through its theoretical adequacy, which is by how the research relates theoretically and empirically to other studies. Consequently, my thesis has included other researchers interpretation on the objective of the study, as well as relevant theoretical concepts within which the study could be situated. My study has sougheed out and explored the tensions and commonalities between multiple perspectives on the research objective and that of other researchers (ibid.: 15).

While reviewing the quality of my study, I concluded that generalizability quality was not relevant, as my research is more interested in highlighting a concrete problem, rather than developing insights that goes beyond the specific case (Tjora 2010: 180). Furthermore, Boyce & Neale (2006: 3-4) argue that generalizations about the results collected through in-depth interviews may usually not be made because of the small samples chosen and the fact that random sampling methods are not used.

3.10 Analysis of Data

Chapter four and five in this thesis analyzes the research objective and questions formulated in my study by use of a qualitative research approach based on primary data collected from interviews. The objective of the study is to find out how some EU Member States positioned themselves distinctively from each other in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation when dealing with the refugees at their borders. The data analysis is thereafter linked to relevant theories and previous studies presented in the thesis.

As argued by Crang & Cook (2007: 133), writing and analysing are inseparable throughout the research process. The way data is constructed in a research means that it has been partly analysed

through focusing and refocusing on the research objective and questions, the methods used and the kinds of data they have constructed, and through the informants chosen to participate in the study. Basically, the formal stage of the analysis is subsequently meant for reconfiguring the data and looking at it much more carefully and critically and perhaps de- and re-contextualise different parts to be able to see new paths (ibid.). The formal stage of my data analysis began with the transcription of the interview data. I noted down the responses to each question separately on the interview guide. This method of transcribing data has the advantage that the responses to each question can be viewed together easily (Kitchin & Tate 2000: 236). While transcribing the data, I kept in mind that it is not always easy to immediately determine the most important topics and the appropriate level of details. I therefore found it wise to be more detailed than what I thought was necessary when transcribing, to avoid losing data that would turn out to be relevant for analysis (Tjora 2010: 126). Thereafter, I thoroughly and repeatedly reviewed the transcribed data to confirm that the information retrieved and noted down was relevant to the main objective of the study and the research questions.

Generally, qualitative analysis seeks to make sense of the data produced through categorisation and connection (Kitchin & Tate 2000: 229-230). In other words, the core of qualitative analysis consists of description and classification of data, and seeing how concepts interconnect (ibid.). Consequently, I embarked on coding and categorisation, with a plan of using a minimum selection of codes to save unnecessary data preparation and valuable time (ibid.). Bearing in mind that I had noted down the transcribed data under the separate set of questions on the interview guide, I selected some wordings from the data on the sets and used these to describe each separate set of data; also known as coding (ibid.: 160). I emerged with a total of eleven codes, which I further sorted out according to their similarities and differences, and thereafter grouped into four main categories. These four categories were to aid with analysing the data further and deeper (Kitchin & Tate 2000: 239). The categories that emerged and became relevantly dominant for my analysis were assigned on the basis of the research questions in the thesis, and the themes or labels given to each category were to represent the main titles in the analysis. The first category is themed; distinct border positioning; analysed on the basis of (i) individual national states and (ii) transit and destination countries. The second category is; distinct border positioning vis-à-vis the Schengen Agreement and Dublin Regulation. The third category is labelled as; motives for the distinct border positioning, whereas, the fourth category is themed; distinct border positioning and the influence on the flows of refugees. A table illustrating how the data was coded and categorized is subsequently included at the end of this thesis.

3.11 Coping with the Limitations of the Study

Despite allocating sufficient time and effort in establishing an adequate plan for undertaking my research study, it was still vital to acknowledge that unanticipated limitations could arise during the research process. In a typical thesis, limitations may relate to the formulation of the research aims and objectives, in the choice and implementation of data collection method and research technique, and in the scope and time allocated for the study (Research methodology 2016). Limitations could also occur due to issues related to health, informants' change of mind prior to the interviews, or withdrawal of their participation during or after the completion of the interviews.

The limitations in my research study were already imminent in the very early stages of planning, as I was compelled to modify my research objective a number of times. First and foremost, as part of my studies in Master of Globalization, Politics and Culture, I was expected to travel abroad for an internship program during the third semester, with a requirement of formulating a research objective in advance and collecting data at the area of the internship programme. However, after using a lot of time and effort searching for an internship abroad, it was clear that finding an available position required even more time. I was therefore compelled to search for a placement in Norway, which meant that I had to modify my research objective, and in the process, I was faced with an immense delay in data collection, data analysis, and eventually, the completion and submission of my thesis.

Additional challenges were inevitable when I chose to apply a qualitative research approach for my study, as I was noticeably faced with the limitation of not acquiring more factual, descriptive and large amount of information that may have been accessed through a quantitative approach (Vaus 2014: 6). However, the qualitative approach was more significant for my study, as it allowed me access to rich data on opinions and views of real life people and situations (ibid.). Another limitation came with accessing secondary data that had already been collected by someone else (Kothari 2004), as I had to use a lot of time and effort to review the data and to verify the adequacy and reliability of both the information and the source of data. Moreover, the large amount of secondary data available created a risk of retrieving information and facts that were already widely known publicly. Therefore, I devoted more time and effort to research deeper in order to retrieve data that would adequately and precisely provide exclusive information and facts that were beyond what was publicly known.

Further, as much as contacting informants through e-mail was presumably faster and cheaper for my study, some of the e-mails were not successfully sent as a result of invalid email addresses, and in

addition, the informants contacted did not respond immediately. Another limitation came with the collection of primary data through interviews. Even though interviews allows the researcher to produce rich and varied data set while simultaneously examining the experiences and opinions of informants in relation to the study being undertaken (Kitchin & Tate 2000: 213), conducting and transcribing interview data in my study turned out to be an exhausting, time consuming, and a tedious process. The actual interviews lasted for an average time of one hour per session, whereas I spent many hours transcribing and analysing the raw data. These hours could have possibly been reduced if I had for instance used questionnaires, which is accredited for its ability to increase the speed of data collection and transcription (Research Methodology 2016). Nevertheless, the interview method was more reliable for my study as it gave me the opportunity to obtain instant feedback from the informants, and the possibility to express my additional thoughts about matters that arose randomly and were due to the absence of relevant questions (ibid.).

I also experienced limitations while recruiting migration experts to participate in my study. Most of these experts had busy schedules, and despite my flexibility during the recruitment process; of allowing the informants to confirm a time and date they considered suitable to be interviewed; I still received feedback from some informants that they could only avail themselves up to one month after the initial contact. This kind of delay was a severe setback for my thesis, as it eventually resulted to additional delays in transcribing the interview data and eventually analyzing these data. Nonetheless, I considered recruiting migration experts as key to my study as they had the ability to provide distinctive insights, or information covering a whole set of issues related to my research objective, which may not have been likely obtained from other sources (Yin 2012: 56). In sum, despite all the delays and limitations, all the interviews were carried out successfully and none of the informants withdrew themselves from the study prior, during, or after the completion of the interviews.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYZING THE DISTINCT BORDER POSITIONING IN RELATION TO THE SCHENGEN AGREEMENT AND THE DUBLIN REGULATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of the main research question, as well as the first specific research question. The analysis is in relation to the primary data collected from the interviews carried out in the study. The analysis of the main research question is based on the distinct border positioning of the (i) individual national states, and (ii) transit and destination countries. On the other hand, the analysis of the first specific research question draws attention to the distinct border positioning in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation. All the analyses are subsequently linked to the relevant previous studies and theories presented in the thesis. The previous studies include, Gyori's (2016) study on "The Political communication of the Refugee Crisis in Central and Eastern Europe", Kiefer's (2015) "The Thirtieth Anniversary of the Schengen Agreement: Retrospective and Perspective in Light of the Migrant Crisis", Hassel & Wagner (in Vanhercke et. al 2016: 67) "EU's 'migration crisis': challenge, threat or opportunity?", Rasten's et al. (2015) study on "The 'refugee crises' in a Danish and European union perspective", and Dullien's (2016) "the cost of Europe's refugee crisis". The analysis is also linked to Bakewell's (2012) migration system theory, Holzinger & Knill's (2005) policy convergence and its mechanism of harmonization and regulatory competition, international theory on realism, and the push and pull theory. The findings and conclusions in the analysis chapters may include some relevant remarks previously mentioned in the thesis to further reinforce the arguments presented.

4.2 Distinct Border Positioning

The analysis in this category is based on the main research question, with a goal of finding out how some EU Member States positioned themselves distinctively from each other when dealing with the refugees at their borders. According to Gyori (2016: 9-10), the escalation of the crisis led to a staggering number of refugees to enter Europe, and despite EU common immigration policies, it emerged quickly that the cooperation between some member states on how to deal with the increasing inflow would not be forthcoming, as countries resorted to unilateral border positioning as individual national states and as transit and destination countries (ibid.).

4.2.1 Distinct Border Positioning as Individual National States

This thesis has undoubtedly illustrated how the escalation of the refugee crisis in Europe in early summer of 2015 led some EU Member States to adapt solely distinct border positioning as individual national states when dealing with the refugees at their borders. To clearly establish the distinct positioning established by some member states, I formulated a question that was aimed at revealing the kind of individual border strategies implemented in the study areas of Greece, Croatia, Germany and Denmark. Expert 1 in Greece explained that:

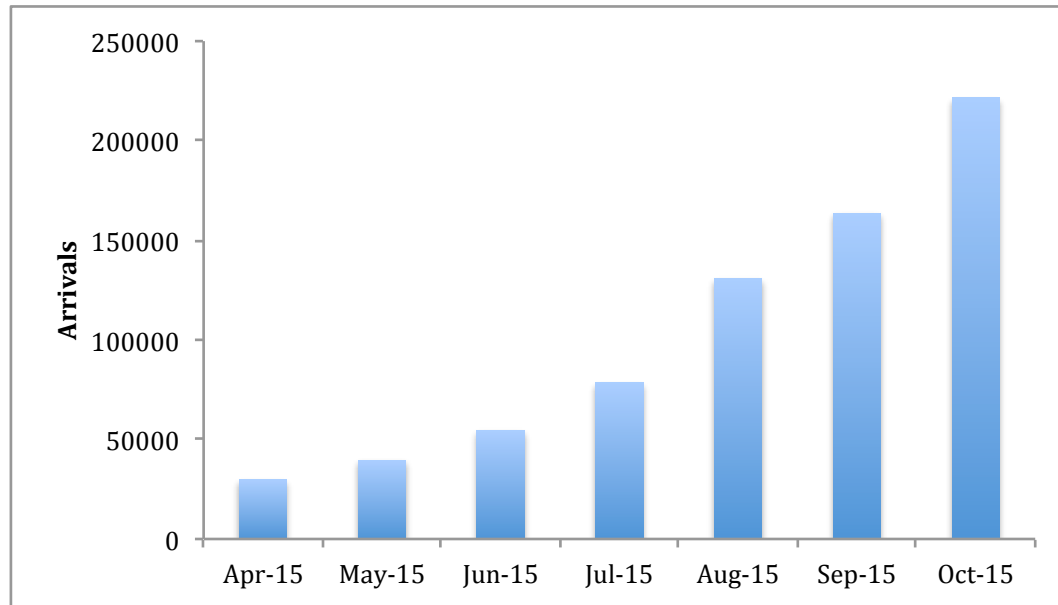
At first, the government obviously underestimated the problem and delayed registration procedures expecting that the flows of refugees would deteriorate (...). But when the situation worsened in 2015, the authorities began to quickly register refugees at the borders and allowing them to pass through to Macedonia as quickly as possible. (Expert 1, Greece)

Expert 2 in Greece stated that:

There wasn't enough space for the refugees in Lesbos where they first arrived. The government therefore quickly registered them as they arrived at the borders and granted them with documents that allowed them to buy transport tickets to the main land and to immediately proceed with their journey further into Europe. (Expert 2, Greece)

According to expert 1 in Greece, the Greek government initially underestimated the extent of the refugee crisis, and was reluctant to implement immediate registration procedures at their borders, as they were expecting that the flows of refugees would decrease. Both expert 1 and 2 in Greece imply that the government was not prepared for the unprecedented numbers of refugees who were accessing Europe through the country within just a short period of time following the escalation of the crisis. As verified on figure 4 below, the numbers of refugees entering Greece accelerated from 29, 867 in April of 2015, to a staggering 221, 638 in October the same year.

Figure 4. Arrival of refugees in Greece from April to October 2015



Source: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean>

Data accessed: 8th August (2016) Modified by Oloo, L. (2016)

Consequently, as the number of refugees entering the country escalated, the Greek government quickly induced changes on how it would eminently deal with the inflows (Bakewell' 2012: 14). As suggested in Holzinger & Knill's (2005: 789) mechanism of regulatory competition, the Greek government adjusted its policy instrument and regulatory standards in order to cope with the pressure from the high influx. Above expert 1 and 2 in Greece explains that the authorities began to quickly register the increasing flows of refugees before allowing them to proceed with their journey further into Europe. According to expert 2 above, the government was compelled to implement quick registration procedures, as there was not enough space to carter for the refugees at the Greek island of Lesbos where they first arrived. As argued by McHugh (2016a), the Greek government acted as an individual national state by choosing to hastily document newly arrived refugees before waving them through to the Macedonian border as they headed for Serbia. In Croatia, the situation as explained by expert 1 in the country was that:

The government initially reacted by opening its borders to the refugees and organizing the transit from Croatia to Slovenia and (mostly) Hungary. But after the Hungarian government closed its borders, the Croatian government responded as a nation state by closing 7 out of its 8 entry border points with neighboring Serbia. (Expert 1, Croatia)

Expert 2 in Croatia revealed that:

(...) Even though the closure of the Croatian border lasted for only a couple of days before reopening again as a transit route for the refugees, the government decided to maintain strict daily quotas of border crossing of only refugees with valid documents.
(Expert 2, Croatia)

Gyori (2016: 41-42) confirms that when the effects of the refugee crisis caught up with Croatia, the initial response from the government was that of optimism, maintaining that it would handle the refugee inflow, even as the Hungarian authorities were busy constructing a fence along the Serbian border, which clearly meant a diversion of the migrant streams towards Croatia. Expert 1 above explains that the country initially maintained its borders opened and organized refugee transit from Croatia to Slovenia, and mostly to Hungary. However, there was an obvious indication of lack of coordination of policies between the Hungarian and the Croatian governments, as Hungary's decision to construct a fence along the Serbian border, meant that the refugee flows would be diverted towards Croatia. As argued by Castell (2008: 88), coordinating a common policy usually means a common language and a set of shared policies. Nonetheless, the mechanism of policy harmonization and regulatory competition indicates that more often than not, governments may not share the same interpretation of common policies when faced with immense pressure (ibid.). Consequently, to respond to the Hungarian action, the Croatian government acted as a nation state and closed 7 out of its 8 border points with Serbia (Gyori 2016: 41-42). Expert 2 above maintains that even though the closure of the Croatian borders lasted for only a few days before reopening, the government was determined to control the mounting pressure by making a decision to maintain strict daily quotas of border crossing for only refugees with valid documents. In line with Viotti & Kauppi (2010: 40-41), the Croatian government made the decision to select the alternative that would achieve an acceptable outcome that would serve the interests of the country as an individual national state. When I asked the German informants to explain the kind of border strategies implemented in their country following the escalation of the crisis in early summer of 2015, expert 2 explained that the German authorities responded by:

(...) Allowing refugees into the country through the open border policy as a result of the symbolic suffering and the Hungarian seal off policy. **(Expert 2, Germany)**

Expert 1 in Germany stated that:

When the refugees kept on moving to Western Europe, Germany maintained a singular act of getting them across, agreed to take in more and process their asylum applications. This was until it became obvious that the numbers were increasing overwhelmingly, forcing the government to formally establish some border controls. (Expert 1, Germany)

As one of the main destination countries, Gyori (2016: 21) affirms that the German government initially decided to allow refugees into their territory by keeping their borders open even as the crisis escalated. According to expert 2 above, the German government responded by complying with the open border policy of the Schengen Agreement, and as a concern over the suffering of the refugees and the Hungarian seal off policy. In line with Holzinger & Knill's (2005: 781-782) mechanism of harmonization, Germany maintained its borders opened as part of a specific outcome of international co-operation, in which national governments are legally required to adopt harmonized policies as part of their obligations as members. However, as implied in the mechanism of regulatory competition, countries facing pressure may adjust their policies (ibid.), and Germany was not an exception. As the influx intensified, the German government eventually re-established border strategies as it felt that the numbers were beyond control and needed to be monitored (Kiefer 2015: 24-27). According to expert 1 above, Germany kept its borders open until it became clear that there was a need to establish border control as the influx increased. As table 4 below depicts, out of the total asylum applications registered in the EU in 2015 and 2016, Germany received an astounding 441,899 and 745,265 respectively; record high numbers as compared to Denmark, with a total of 20,970 in 2015 and 5,930 in 2016. Greece received 11,352 in 2015 and 36,765 in 2016, and Croatia 140 and 955 respectively.

Table 4. Asylum Applications in EU Member States in 2015 to 2016

EU Member States	Asylum Applications in 2015	Asylum Applications in 2016
European Union (28 States)	1,323,465	1,192,275
Germany	441,899	745,265
Denmark	20,970	5,930
Greece	11,352	36,765
Croatia	140	955

Source: European Stability Initiative (2017)

Accessed: 8th March (2017) Modified by Oloo, L. (2017)

Even though the statistics in table 4 above represents the asylum application claims received by the member states in the year 2015 and 2016, European Stability Initiative (2017: 23) explains that there is a wide gap between the number of asylum claims received, and the numbers that arrived into the countries' borders. The report claims that in 2015, the asylum registration authorities in most of the popular destination countries like Germany were not able to receive and process the claims of all the arriving asylum seekers (ibid.). The asylum authority in Germany, for example, was able to accept only 441,900 claims in 2015 (ibid.), out of more than a million refugees who arrived at its borders in the same year (Cermak 2016). The statistics in Croatia indicate that the country received 140 asylum applications in 2015, whereas Zuparic et al. (2015: 1) notably reports that between September 16, and November 5, 2015, up to 330,000 people arrived at the country's borders. Further on, I asked the informants in Denmark to explain the kind of border strategies established in their country following the escalation of the crisis, according to expert 1 in the country:

Denmark retained open borders and tried to imitate the same policy measures as that of other destination countries to start with. However, when Sweden implemented border controls, Denmark followed suit and implemented stricter measures (Expert 1, Denmark)

Expert 2 in Denmark revealed that:

When the crisis escalated, Denmark introduced passport control at its borders and restricted transport such as railways. These strict policies were meant to get fewer people to apply for asylum into the country. (Expert 2, Denmark)

According to Danish expert 1 above, the country initially reacted to the escalation of the crisis by keeping its borders open as in most other destination countries. Similar to Germany, Denmark's open border policy complied with the international co-operation established by the EU, where the member states are legally required to adopt harmonized policies as part of their obligations (Holzinger & Knill 781-782). However, when Sweden implemented border controls, Denmark followed suit. McHugh (2016b) explains that the Danish authorities established strict policies to discourage further entry of refugees into the country. The authorities implemented spot checks of passport identification concentrated mostly on the border with Germany. The country's major highways with Germany were blocked and in addition, the Danish parliament passed several policies that effectively heightened its existing laws on border control. It is evident that the Danish government did not allow policy

harmonization to deter their ability to use distinct national policies to counter-balance the large influx (Thielmann 2003: 11). As affirmed by Danish expert 2 above, the strict border policies were meant to reduce the number of asylum applications, which is a verification that the Danish authorities selected the alternative that would achieve an acceptable outcome that would serve their interests as an individual national state (Viotti & Kauppi 2010: 40-41).

4.2.2 Distinct Border Positioning as Transit and Destination Countries

The lack of coordination between some EU Member States on how to deal with the refugees at their borders were not only among the individual national states. In line with Lehne (2016), the disagreement created deep divisions among member states, prompting the organization of countries into transit and destination regions, with each group using different policy and tools in governing the refugee flows directed to them (Toktas et al. 2006: 21). To clearly determine the distinct border positioning established among some transit and the destination countries, I requested the informants in Greece, Croatia, Germany and Denmark to describe the border strategies adapted in their countries as either transit or destination states. One of the Greek informants revealed that:

As a transit country, the Greek government quickly registered refugees at the borders and allowed them to proceed with their journey further into Europe. (Expert 2, Greece)

On the part of Croatia, expert 2 in the country explained that:

Before the Hungarian border was closed, the Croatian government established a refugee transit route to Hungary and Slovenia, where the refugees were retained for only 2 to 3 hours for quick registrations before further transit into Europe. When Hungary closed its borders, Croatia followed suit, however the closure of the Croatian border lasted for only a couple of days before reopening again as a transit route. (Expert 2, Croatia)

The views from the Greek and the Croatian informants above affirms that as transit countries, Greece and Croatia diverted the flows of refugees to other nations by selectively closing their borders, or by passing the refugees along to the next country as rapidly as possible (Lehne 2016). As explained by expert 1 in Greece, the Greek authorities allowed most of the refugees to immediately proceed with their journey further into Europe after quick registrations. Correspondently, expert 2 in Croatia reveals that before Hungary closed its borders, Croatia positioned itself as a transit route for the

refugees, who were allowed to proceed with their journey into Hungary and Slovenia, after being retained for only 2 to 3 hours for quick registrations. The expert further explains that even though the Croatian authorities closed their borders to counteract Hungarian border closure, the closure of the Croatian border lasted for only a couple of days before reopening again as a transit route for the refugees. The border positioning adapted by Greece and Croatia implies that the way the system elements operate may be determined by their distinguished positioning with which they are mainly associated with within the migration system; in this case, as transit countries (Bakewell 2012: 14). Similarly, the border strategies adapted by Germany and Denmark could also be determined by their distinguished positioning as destination countries. As explained by expert 2 in Germany:

Unlike those countries that consider themselves as transit countries, and issue transit visas or seal off their borders, Germany maintained an open border policy like most destination countries. Even though at some point the country increased control on the main entry routes and the rail track, it was done with the true legal base of a destination country that was willing to let refugees enter the territory. (Expert 2, Germany)

Expert 2 in Denmark claimed that:

Denmark initially retained an open border policy like other destination countries, only to restrict its border measures afterwards. However, the strict measures were not meant for completely shutting down refugees from the country, but for sending signals that people should think twice before choosing Denmark as a destination. (Expert 2, Denmark)

In line with Gyori (2016: 9-10), the informants in Germany and Denmark implies that contrary to the transit countries, most destination countries fundamentally maintained an open border policy that allowed refugees to enter their countries. Expert 2 in Germany states that unlike the transit countries who issue transit visas or seal off their borders, Germany maintained an open border as a destination country that was willing to welcome refugees. Similarly, Danish expert 2 explains that Denmark also initially retained an open border policy like in other main destination countries. However, both informants from Germany and Denmark implies that their countries' open border policies created an attractive hub for refugees, which brought a lot of concerns, and as a result their governments felt the need to push away or reduce the inflows by strengthening and increasing the restrictiveness of their policies (Stern 2016: 6). German expert 2 affirms that when the number of refugees arriving at their

borders increased immensely, the authorities increased control on the main entry routes and on the rail track. On the other hand, Danish expert 2 explains that the Danish government eventually restricted its border measures. Nevertheless, the informants are quick to explain that the reinstated border measures were not meant to deter the refugees from entering the countries, but an attempt to control the large inflows. Expert 2 in Germany argues that the reinstated border controls were established with the true legal base of a destination country that was willing to let refugees enter the country, whereas Danish expert 2 concludes that the strict measures in Denmark were not meant for completely shutting down the refugees from entering the country, but for sending out signals that people should think twice before choosing Denmark as a destination.

4.3 Distinct Positioning Vis-à-vis the Schengen Agreement and Dublin Regulation

The analysis in this category is in relation to the first specific research question, concerned with the distinct border positioning among some EU Member States in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation. Consequently, Holzinger & Knill (2005: 782) refers to the growing similarities of policies; including the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation; as policy convergence that promotes international harmonization or co-operation, and simultaneously assumes the existence of interdependencies or externalities that push governments to resolve common problems through co-operation within international institutions like the EU. However, the escalation of the refugee crisis in early summer of 2015 led some EU Member States to conceivably violate the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation by withdrawing into themselves and reinstating their sovereignty with their border controls (Kiefer 2015: 27-28). Some of the member states resorted into increasing border controls, while others temporarily suspended the regulations by openly welcoming refugees (Hassel & Wagner in Vanhercke et. al 2016: 67). Subsequently, in order to clearly evaluate the distinct border positioning in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation, I asked the informants in Greece, Croatia, Germany, and Denmark to describe how the border strategies established in their countries was related to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation. Expert 1 in Greece had this to say:

It is obvious that the Greek government was violating the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation by allowing thousands of refugees to pass through its borders and to continue with their journey further into Europe without proper control, registration, or checks. (Expert 1, Greece)

McHugh (2016a) explains that following the escalation of the crisis; hundreds of thousands of refugees entered the Schengen Area through Greece because of its close proximity to Turkey, a common transitory stop for refugees from the Middle East. As echoed by above expert 1 in Greece, the Greek government allowed most of the refugees to transit through its borders without proper control, registration, or checks. Throughout 2015, the Greek officials quickly documented newly arrived refugees before waving them through into other European countries (ibid.). Greek expert 1 implies that the government violated the Schengen Agreement by not abiding to its harmonized rules as part of its obligation as a member state (Holzinger & Knill 2005: 781-782). Moreover, from the very beginning of the crisis, the Greek authorities were defying the Dublin Rules by demanding a stop to transfers of refugees back to its territories, arguing that it was unable to manage the large numbers (Hassel & Wagner in Vanhercke et. al 2016: 67). In Croatia, expert 2 stated that:

Like in a lot of other EU Member States, the Dublin Regulation could not be properly implemented in Croatia because of the large numbers of refugees passing through the borders. The government confirmed keeping track and registering the refugees, but in real sense, the data was not being entered in the relevant database due to lack of time and capacity for proper implementation of the registration process. (Expert 2, Croatia)

In line with Holzinger & Knill's (2005: 782) mechanism of regulatory competition, the high pressure from the increasing refugee influx led the Croatian government to violate the Dublin Regulation through adjusting its positioning by selectively passing the refugees along to the next country as rapidly as possible without proper registrations (Lehne 2016). As revealed by Croatian expert 2 above, the government acted against the Dublin regulation by improperly registering the refugees entering the country, as it could no longer cope with the increasing numbers that were crossing its borders. Expert 2 claims that as a result, the data was not being entered in the relevant database due to lack of time and capacity for proper implementation of the registration process. Hassel & Wagner (in Vanhercke et. al 2016: 67) concurs that the enforcement of the Dublin Regulation was a challenge, given the already existing burden created by the large refugee inflow in countries like Croatia. Further on, when I asked the German informants to describe the border strategies adapted in their country in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation, expert 2 in the country argued that:

Contrary to the maybe popular picture that Germany just opened its borders that were formerly closed and strictly controlled, the country was actually abiding by the open Schengen System, but had to temporarily defy the Schengen Agreement by establishing a fluid concept of border controls when the crisis escalated. (Expert 2, Germany)

Bakewell (2012: 14) clearly implies that the way an element (country) operates in a system may be as a result of their distinguished locations with which they are mainly associated within the system. As a popular destination country, Germany initially responded to the escalation of the refugee crisis by maintaining its borders open and choosing to observe policy harmonization as part of its obligations as a compelling member of the EU (Holzinger & Knill: 781-782). Moreover, expert 2 above explains that the German borders were already opened prior to the crisis, and announcing that the country would maintain an open border policy was a confirmation that they would continue to comply with the Schengen Agreement despite the rising crisis. But as the influx intensified and hundreds of thousands of migrants entered the country in just a few days, even Germany had to breach the Schengen Agreement by reinstating border controls (European Parliament 2016: 7). The country was compelled to adjust its policy instrument and regulatory standards in order to cope with the pressure from the high refugee influx (Holzinger & Knill 2005: 789). Expert 2 in the country confirms that the authorities had to defy the rules of the Schengen Agreement as a result of the high refugee numbers. However, the expert is quick to argue that the border controls were based on a fluid concept after the government felt that the amount of refugees entering the country was beyond control and needed monitoring (Kiefer 2015: 24). Nevertheless, Hassel & Wagner (in Vanhercke et. al 2016: 67) points out that Germany further mounted a challenge to the Dublin Regulation by making a unilateral decision to suspend the Dublin rules for Syrian refugees and to offer them registration once they reached Germany. As echoed by German expert 1 below, the authorities' decision to withdraw from sending some refugees back to the countries responsible for their asylum applications may have violated the Dublin Regulation. In the expert's own words:

Germany's decision of not sending some refugees back to the countries responsible for their asylum registration might have breached the Dublin Regulation. But the reality is that 90% of refugees who entered through other European transit countries could not be sent back to these countries because of the asylum politics and the economic status in the countries. (Expert 1, Germany)

Despite the initial announcement that all the refugees from the Balkan states would be sent back immediately as they were not in need of protection (Akrap 2015), the German authorities challenged the Dublin Rules by allowing some refugees to stay and apply for asylum rather than be deported to their first countries of arrival (Berenson 2015). This affirms Holzinger & Knill (2005: 782) argument that member states may constantly challenge and reform harmonized policies through their domestic policy choices. However, German expert 1 above maintains that in real sense, the majority of the refugees who arrived in Germany through other EU transit countries could not be transferred back to these countries considering their restrictive asylum politics and fragile economic status. Furthermore, German expert 1 claims that the Dublin Regulation as a policy works well in times of low refugee inflow, but proves ineffective when faced with pressure from high influx. The expert maintains that even if the government had chosen to comply with the Dublin Rules and return the refugees back to their countries of first arrival, it could not be able to implement immense bureaucratic tools and processes needed to do so. According to the expert's own opinion:

The Dublin system has been a sort of a sunshine system, which works easily in times of low refugee inflow but not in crisis time or in time of higher strain (...). Even if Germany wanted to return the refugees to their countries of first arrival, the country could not implement a big bureaucratic machinery to return them back. (Expert 1, Germany)

Ultimately, in Denmark, expert 1 explained that:

Denmark was keen on maintaining policies that help reduce the number of refugees arriving in the country. But if you ask me, it has been a race to the bottom in terms of increased establishment of individualized border policies that disharmonize with the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation (...). (Expert 1, Denmark)

Furthermore, Danish expert 2 pointed out that:

Since the escalation of the crisis, the Dublin regulation has not been effective in Denmark as in most other EU States. Countries including Denmark, have not really been taking their share of responsibilities for the refugees. Moreover, Denmark has been establishing strict immigration laws to discourage the refugees from entering the country. It is more about border control and pushing away responsibilities. (Expert 2, Denmark)

The views from Danish expert 1 and 2 above implies that the escalation of the refugee crisis in early summer of 2015 led the Danish government to establish strict immigration policies that were meant for discouraging massive entry of refugees into the country, but at the same time, creating immense pressure on the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation. According to MCHugh (2016b), the country's major highways with Germany were blocked, and as a result, the majority of the hundreds of people who arrived in Denmark wanted to pass through to Sweden instead of applying for asylum in the country. In addition, the Danish parliament passed several policies that effectively heightened its existing border control laws (ibid.). Expert 2 above affirms that the escalation of the crisis rendered the Dublin Regulation ineffective as the country applied strict regulations that were waiving away their responsibilities for the refugees arriving at their borders. In line with Holzinger & Knill (2005: 782), Denmark was defying EU's harmonized immigration policies that push governments to resolve common problems through co-operation. Nevertheless, despite the risk of violating both the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin regulation, the Danish government was determined to establish strict border measures with the anticipation of achieving acceptable outcome that would serve the interests of the country (Viotti & Kauppi 2010: 40-41). As explained by expert 1 above, the Danish authorities focused on having policies that would be effective enough to help reduce the number of asylum applications in the country. The expert concurs that Denmark's positioning was a reflection of the increased establishment of individualized strict border policies that would imminently disharmonize with the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation.

In summary, table 6 below indicates the views from the informants above, while illustrating how the escalation of the refugee crisis led some EU Member States to establish border strategies that disharmonized with the objectives of the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation.

Table 5. Distinct Border Positioning in Relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation

Policy objective	Greece	Croatia	Denmark	Germany
Schengen Agreement: Promotes a common set of rules and procedures applied for asylum requests and border controls.	Hastened and improper checks and registration of refugees entering Europe		Established strict border policies and heightened border control laws.	Reinstated border controls.

Abolish all internal borders in lieu of a single external border.			Blocked its major highway with Germany.	Introduced highway controls.
Dublin Regulation:				
The country where an asylum seeker first enters the union is responsible for registering the asylum application.	Rapidly passed refugees along to the next country without proper, control, checks, or registration	Improperly registered refugees entering the country and selectively and rapidly passed them along to the next country.	Waived away their responsibilities for refugees by applying strict regulations to help reduce the number of asylum claims in the country.	
Refugees who move on to other countries after being registered, can be sent back to the responsible nation to be processed in what are called Dublin transfers.	Demanded a stop to transfers of refugees back to its territories, arguing that it was unable to manage the large numbers.	Maintained strict daily quotas of refugee border crossing		Suspended the Dublin Regulation for some refugees, which effectively stopped deportations.

Source: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal_content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM%3A133020, Dearde (2015), Gyori (2016: 41-42), Hassel & Wagner (in Vanhercke et. al 2016: 67), Kiefer (2015: 24-27), Lehne (2016), MCHugh (2016a), McHugh (2016b) Accessed: 8th March (2017) Modified by Oloo, L. (2017)

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYZING MOTIVES OF THE DISTINCT BORDER POSITIONING, AND THE INFLUENCE ON THE FLOWS OF REFUGEES

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of the third and the fourth research questions. The analysis of the third research question examines some of the motives, or the reasons why some EU Member States resolved to distinct border positioning as individual national states when dealing with the refugees at their borders. The analysis is themed as; motives for the distinct border positioning. Secondly, the fourth and final research question is in respect of the influence of the distinct border positioning on the flows of refugees at the borders of some EU Member states. The analysis has been themed as; distinct border positioning and the influence on the flows of refugees. As aforementioned, all the analyses in this chapter are also subsequently linked to the relevant previous studies and theoretical concepts presented in the thesis, and moreover, the findings and conclusions in the analyses may also include some relevant remarks that have been previously mentioned for further reinforcement of the arguments presented.

5.2 Motives for the Distinct Border Positioning

The aim of the analysis in this category is to bring to light some of the main reasons for the establishment of the distinct border positioning among some EU Member states. As affirmed by Rasten et al. (2015: 31), the escalation of the refugee crisis in early summer of 2015 led some member states to give precedence to their concerns and interests as national states by developing distinct border measures to protect themselves from the large refugee flows that was entering Europe. Moreover, Dullien (2016) identifies the economic capacity of some member states as yet another reason for the distinct border positioning. He maintains that the measures established by some of the economically disadvantaged member states can be explained by their central fear that the refugee inflow could further overwhelm their countries' weak economy (ibid.: 1-2). Nevertheless, in order to profoundly investigate the motives behind the distinct border positioning, I found it imperative to ask the informants from Greece, Croatia, Germany, and Denmark to clarify some of the reasons why their countries resorted into the implementation of individual border measures when dealing with the refugees. According to expert 2 in Greece:

The Greek government allowed refugees to quickly transit through to other countries as a measure for trying to avoid being stuck with large numbers making their way into Europe (...). There was no enough capacity, resources, and infrastructure to accommodate the migrants in Lesbos where they first arrived. The government was highly concerned over the economical impact of the large numbers. (Expert 2, Greece)

Moreover, expert 1 in Greece affirmed that:

Basically, all the refugees entering Greece were allowed to exit almost immediately because of lack of sufficient resources or functioning system to respond to the crisis, let alone the capacity to provide enough camp facilities for hosting all the refugees. (Expert 1, Greece)

Expert 1 and 2 in Greece implies that the Greek government allowed refugees to effortlessly proceed with their journey further into Europe due to the fear of being in a situation where they could be stuck with the large increasing numbers entering the borders. With its positioning as a key transit point for refugees from the Middle East, the Greek authorities were concerned over the hundreds of thousands of people who were transiting through the country (McHugh 2016a). According to the European Parliament (2016: 19), there was significant overcrowding at most of the reception sites with overall capacities for 34,150, as against 46,660 that was currently in the sites. The government could no longer cope with the rapidly increasing administrative and practical needs (Evangelinidis 2016: 32). As a result, the Greek authorities were compelled to make decisions based on their own interests (Viotti & Kauppi 2010: 40-41). This led to the officials basically documenting newly arrived refugees before waving them through to continue with their journey further into Europe (McHugh 2016). Moreover, expert 1 and 2 above similarly concur with Zafiropoulos (2015) that the Greek authorities were ill-equipped and under-funded to manage the enormous flows of refugees moving through the country. According to expert 2, the country lacks enough resources, proper infrastructure, and the capacity to cater for, and to accommodate large numbers of refugees. As ultimately viewed by both expert 1 and 2 above, the authorities were clearly concerned over the impact that the large numbers would have on their already strained economy. The crisis was clearly testing the limits of Greece's flagging economy, jeopardizing its ability to handle a flow of refugees that showed no signs of slowing down (Marans 2016).

In Croatia, the motives behind the distinct border positioning as explained by expert 2 in the country was that:

(...) After the closure of the Hungarian border, Croatia become an attractive transit route for large numbers of refugees, and the government was therefore compelled to react by immediately closing most of its border points with Serbia to ease the situation.

(Expert 2, Croatia)

On the other hand, expert 1 in Croatia revealed that:

Croatia unrealistically miscalculated the number of refugees that would enter the country within a short period of time. And as a result, the whole reception and accommodation system almost collapsed due to lack of resource capacity. The economic condition in the country is basically not funded or reliable enough to provide financial support for proper infrastructure for large numbers of refugees. (Expert 1, Croatia)

Gyori (2016: 41-42) affirms that when the effects of the refugee crisis caught up with Croatia, the initial response from the government was that of optimism, even as the Hungarian authorities were busy constructing the fence along the Serbian border, which clearly meant a diversion of the course of the migrant streams towards Croatia. As acknowledged by Neumayer (2004: 12), Hungary's restrictive border measures were seen to be working on the basis of creating a negative externality and pushing refugees to Croatia. Expert 2 in the country confirms that the closure of the Hungarian border resulted to Croatia becoming an alternative attractive transit route for high numbers of refugees. The expert continues to state that the government retaliated by immediately closing most of its border points with Serbia with the hope of easing the situation. Amid their tough economic condition, Zuparic et al. (2015: 1) reveals that the Croatian government was faced with hundreds of thousands of refugees entering the country, resulting to numerous challenges connected with matters of reception and management of the crisis. As affirmed by expert 1 above, the reception system in the country almost collapsed, as the government could not provide the necessary resource capacity and accommodation needed for large numbers of people. The expert concludes that the economic condition in Croatia is fundamentally not sufficient or reliable enough to provide the financial support required for the necessary infrastructure to cater for large numbers of refugees. On the part of Germany, expert 1 in the country explained that:

Even though Germany is one of the biggest economies in Europe, (...) and despite maintaining an open border policy to respond to the looming crisis in Central and Eastern European countries that were congested with refugees who could no longer be hosted in suitable ways (...), the large numbers entering Germany was still a concern to the government, and measures had to be taken to control the inflow. (Expert 1, Germany)

According to expert 2:

Germany was forced to implement some sort of border controls because the streams of refugees arriving in large numbers would not just stop and would increase on a daily basis. It did not just happen in Greece and Bulgaria, but the capacity for registering and accommodating the refugees in Berlin was overwhelmed, resulting to people sleeping outside for weeks in the streets, in tents, or on the grounds (...). (Expert 2, Germany)

Among all the EU host countries, Germany received the highest number of refugees as the crisis in Europe escalated. Out of the 1,323,465 total asylum applications registered in the EU countries in 2015, an astounding 441,899 applications were received only in Germany (Eurostat 2016). These numbers resulted to the government's concern that the inflow was beyond control and needed to be monitored (Kiefer 2015: 24). Expert 1 in Germany explains that even though the country maintained an open border policy to respond to the crisis, and to attempt to ease the congestion of refugees who could no longer be hosted in suitable ways in other EU countries, the authorities were faced with intense pressure and concern over the large growing numbers. Despite being one of the biggest economies in Europe, expert 1 reveals that eventually even Germany was inclined to implement some sort of border control measures to curb the growing situation. The German authorities were compelled to adjust some of the immigration policy instrument and regulatory standards in order to cope with the pressure from the high influx (Holzinger & Knill 2005: 789). According to expert 2 above, the capacity for registering and accommodating the refugees in places like Berlin were clearly overwhelmed, resulting to people sleeping outside in the streets in makeshift accommodation facilities such as tents. Further on, when I asked the informants in Denmark to explain some of the reasons why their country resorted to the implementation of individual border strategies when dealing with the refugees, expert 2 in the country had this to say:

Denmark was keenly trying to implement strict measures to discourage refugees from entering the country in large numbers. Denmark saw how Sweden and Germany were swamped with large numbers of refugees and decided to implement strict policies hoping to shift away the flows from the country. (Expert 2, Denmark)

Furthermore, expert 1 in Denmark revealed that:

Even though Denmark is a strong welfare state, with an economy that is much stronger compared to other EU countries, the authorities here were making it difficult for the refugees to enter the country in large numbers (...). When the refugee crisis escalated, the authorities were concerned, and publicly began to discuss the huge financial costs of hosting and integrating the refugees. (Expert 1, Denmark)

The views from above expert 1 and 2 in Denmark confirm that the Danish government was similarly concerned over the large escalating numbers of refugees that was potentially making their way into the country, and the huge economical costs of accommodating such numbers. As a result, the Danish authorities felt the need to make decisions based on their own interests, and to focus on the benefits associated with each decision (Viotti & Kauppi 2010: 40-41). Out of their concern to avoid the large influx that was entering neighboring Sweden and Germany, Denmark resolved into increasing the restrictiveness of its border policies in order to push or reduce the refugee inflows (Thielmann 2011: 2). As affirmed by expert 2 above, the Danish government was following the growing situation in neighboring Sweden, and decided to focus on implementing strict border measures that would discourage refugees from entering the country in large numbers, and hopefully shift the flows away from the country. According to MCHugh (2016b), the Danish authorities blocked the country's major highways with Germany, leading to the majority of the hundreds of people who arrived in Denmark to prefer passing through to neighboring countries instead of applying for asylum in Denmark. Expert 1 maintains that even with its strong welfare state and an economy that is much stronger than most other EU countries, the Danish authorities aimed at making it difficult for refugees to enter the country in large numbers. The expert concludes that when the crisis escalated, the authorities were concerned, and publicly began to discuss the huge financial costs of hosting and integrating refugees. As a result, the Danish parliament passed several policies that effectively heightened its existing border control laws to discourage refugees from entering the country (ibid.).

In summary, the views expressed by the informants in Greece, Croatia, Germany and Denmark clearly implies that the decisions made by some EU Member States to establish distinct border positioning as individual national states, were principally driven by first and foremost, a realistic perception of protecting their borders from the immense inflow, given their particular interests of avoiding to host the large numbers of refugees who were entering Europe (Cierco & Silva 2016). According to Rasten et al. (2015: 21-22), transit countries such as Greece and Croatia could no longer keep up with the growing numbers, and therefore quickly registered the refugees and allowed them to proceed with their journey towards the more affluent destination countries. As a result, Stern (2016: 6) argues that even the most welcoming destination countries like Germany and Denmark were eventually compelled to establish stricter measures aimed at stopping or redirecting the refugee inflows. Secondly, the views from the experts above concur with Dullien (2016: 5) that the economic capacity of some member states may have also led to the establishment of distinct border positioning. It is clear that the distinct measures established by some of economically disadvantaged member states can be explained by the central fear that the refugee inflows could further overwhelm their countries' weak economy, increase unemployment, strain infrastructure, and burden already fragile public budgets beyond the point of sustainability (ibid: 1). As expert 1 in Greece ultimately concludes:

Basically, most countries like Greece are forced to consider their internal challenges first. These countries still have their economic problems and high unemployment, and therefore cannot prioritize dealing with accommodating large numbers of refugees.
(Expert 1, Greece)

Hassel & Wagner (in Vanhercke et. al 2016: 67) maintains that from the very beginning of the crisis, Greece demanded a stop to transfers of refugees back to its territories, arguing that it was unable to manage the large numbers. According to Greek expert 1 above, the refugee crisis transpired when some member states like Greece were already curbed with internal economic and unemployment challenges. According to the expert's conclusion, countries like Greece might have been compelled to prioritize their internal economical challenges first, before dealing with the costs related to accommodating large numbers of refugees, and their minimal ability to handle flows that showed no signs of slowing down (Marans 2016).

5.3 Distinct border Positioning and the Influence on the flows of refugees

This category in the analysis draws attention to the third and final specific research question, which aims at finding out the influence of the distinct border positioning on the flows of refugees at the borders of some EU Member States. According to Loescher (1993: 16), conditions such as refugee admission and immigration control policies adapted in a country are important determinants on the flows of refugees into the country. He concludes that the flows of refugees tend to be pushed away from countries that adapts strict border regulations and pulled towards those with more lenient border policies. All in all, with an aim of finding out the influence of the distinct border positioning on the flows of refugees, I asked the informants in Greece, Croatia, Germany and Denmark to explain how the border strategies adapted in their countries may have influenced the flows of refugees into their countries. Expert 1 in Greece explained that:

From the beginning of the crisis, Greece became an attractive route for large numbers of refugees, not only because of its close borders to the Middle East, but also due to the fact that the Greek authorities chose to implement a system where they could quickly register and allow refugees to pass through into other European countries. (Expert 1, Greece)

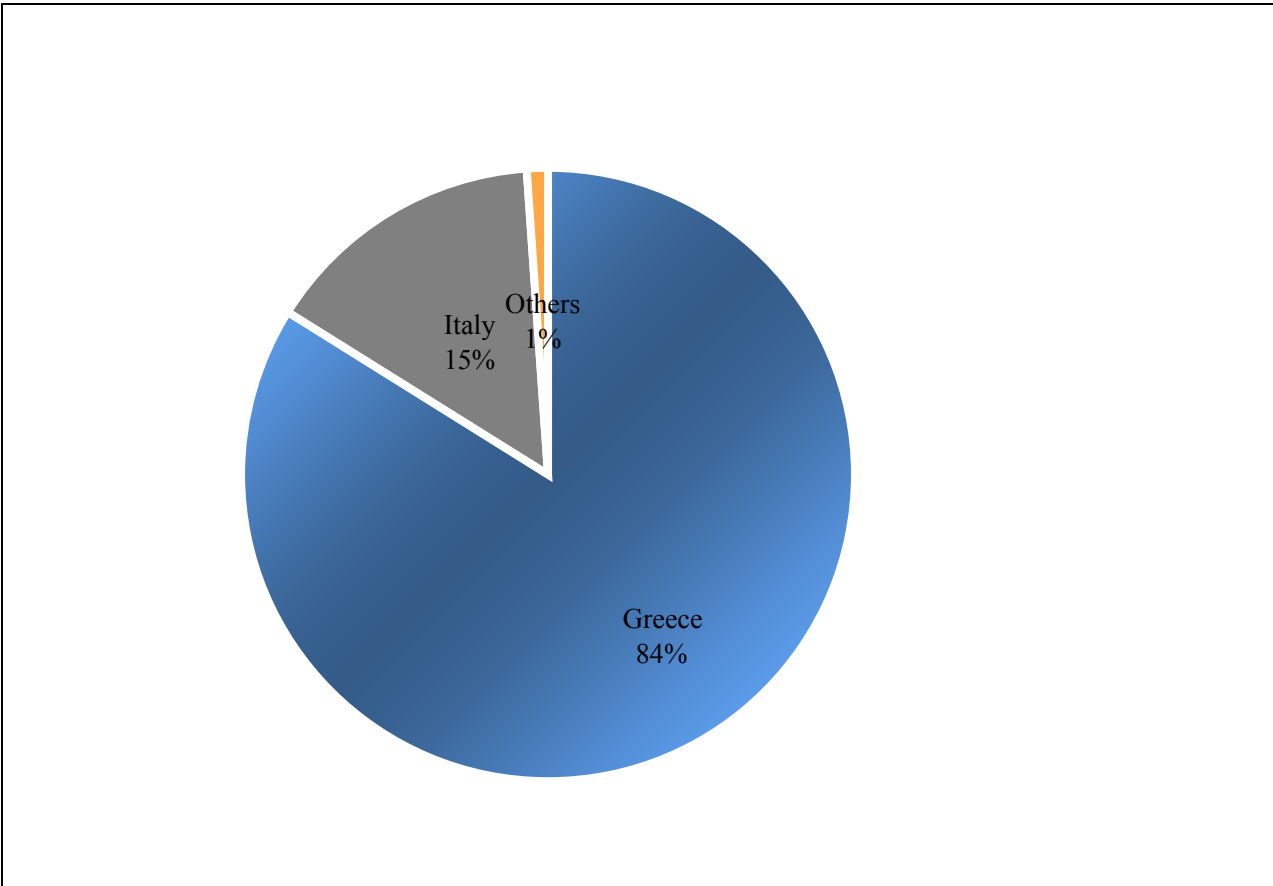
On the other hand, expert 2 in Greece implied that:

Even though most of the refugees only wanted to use Greece as a transit route to reach countries like Germany, which were welcoming with open border policy, being allowed to pass through Greece quickly without proper registration really attracted a lot of refugees at the Greek borders. (Expert 2, Greece)

Both expert 1 and 2 in Greece reveal that when the crisis escalated, the Greek government quickly registered the refugees before allowing them to rapidly continue with their journey further into Europe, a situation that attracted large numbers into the Greek borders. McHugh (2016a) confirms that throughout 2015, Greek officials basically documented newly arrived asylum seekers and other migrants before waving them through as they headed for Serbia. Expert 1 above explains that even though Greece was already an attractive transit route for refugees due to its close proximity to the Middle East, the increasing large numbers were also attracted by the authorities decision to adapt a strategy that allowed for quick registrations and permission to proceed further into Europe without delay. Although expert 2 above maintains that most of the refugees were not interested in applying

for asylum in Greece, the implication given is that the quick registrations at the Greek borders, and the lack of detainment attracted large numbers of refugees who wished to transit through the country. This view concurs with Thielmann's (2011: 2) argument that the more lenient and generous a country's policies are, the larger the numbers of refugees that may be pulled into the country. The decision made by the Greek authorities to adapt quick registration strategies executed a pull factor that influenced a large number of refugees to choose Greece as their preferred transit route. As showed on figure 5 below, the number of refugees entering Europe through Greece in 2015 was an astounding 84% as compared to only 15% in Italy and 1% in other transit countries combined:

Figure 5. Arrival of refugees at the external EU borders in 2015



Source: http://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Annula_Risk_Analysis_2016.pdf
Accessed: 10th April (2017) Modified by Oloo, L. (2017)

When I asked the Croatian informants to explain how their border positioning may have influenced the flows of refugees into their country, expert 2 in the country had this to say:

When Croatia first allowed refugees to pass through the country, word spread quickly that the authorities were offering quick, undisrupted transfer processes, and that refugees were practically and immediately being transferred to Slovenia within a day. Within a very short time, the flows into the country increased drastically. (Expert 2, Croatia)

Expert 1 in Croatia pointed out that:

Before Hungary closed its borders, Croatia attracted a large flow of refugees because it allowed transit through the country and also tried to distribute the flow between Slovenia and mostly to Hungary. But after the Hungarian border closure, Croatia followed suit by closing most of its border points with Serbia and as a result, slowing down the refugee flow. (Expert 1, Croatia)

Gyori (2016: 41-42) explains that when the refugee crisis escalated in Europe, Croatia's initial position was that they would handle the influx, and thereby opening its borders and allowing transit through the country. Croatia's lenient and generous positioning pulled in large numbers of refugees into the country (Thielmann 2011: 2). According to the informants' views above, the country initially attracted a large number of refugees when the government opened its borders for those who wished to continue with their journey further into Europe. Expert 2 confirms that word spread quickly among the refugees that the government was offering quick, undisrupted transfers. Within a short period of time after Hungary's decision to seal off its borders, the refugee flows increased drastically as Croatia became an attractive hub for the immense number who were changing route and making their way into the country (Mullen et al. 2015). In line with Neumayer (2004: 12), Hungarian's decision to restrict its policy measures worked on the basis of creating negative externality of pushing refugees into Croatia. In an attempt to push away or reduce the increasing inflow, the Croatian government changed its approach just a day after opening its borders by closing seven border crossings with Serbia, following an overwhelming 11,000 migrants who streamed into the borders and exceeding the authorities expectation of handling only an influx of 500 migrants and refugees a day (Mullen et al. 2015). Expert 1 in Croatia conclusively states that the country's change of strategy contributed immensely to the slowing down of the refugee inflows. Sabic & Boric (2016: 12) affirms that when Croatia restricted its entry policies, the numbers of daily arrivals fell below 3,000 from the initial 5,500 to 11,000 refugees a day. In Germany, expert 1 in the country explained that

The months following the government's decision to keep its borders open resulted to unintended consequences, where the stream of refugees just would not stop, and would increase on a daily basis. The refugees were desperate to make their way to Germany, and the Eastern European states were just allowing them to transit through their countries and ending up in Germany. (Expert 1, Germany)

Expert 2 in Germany ultimately stated that:

Because of the open borders, and the government's decision to waive the Dublin rules for some refugees, the general flows increased by day and the asylum registration authorities became seriously overburdened. Germany was even accused of being responsible for the large influx into Central Europe. However, the government's ultimate decision to reinstitute some border control led to a slight decline on the inflow. (Expert 2, Germany)

From the very beginning of the refugee crisis in Europe, the German authorities had announced that they were going to maintain an open border policy for the refugees. In addition, the government suspended the Dublin rules under which refugees must apply for asylum in the first European country they arrive in (Dullien 2016: 5). The German chancellor responded positively with the declaration: "Wir schaffen es", which means, "We can do it" (Connolly 2015). However, as expert 1 above explains, the months following the government's decision to keep the borders open resulted to unsolicited consequences with constant flows of refugees in large numbers that increased on a daily basis, and moreover, the expert claims that the transit countries allowed most of the refugees to pass through without detention, and ending up in Germany. According to German expert 2 above, the government's decision to waive the Dublin rules for some refugees also contributed to the daily increase of the inflows, and thus seriously overburdening the authorities working with the asylum claim registrations. The declaration of the open border policy and the decision to waive the Dublin rule showed every sign of leniency and generosity that contributed to a pull factor, pulling in large numbers of refugees into the country's borders (Thielmann 2011: 2). As indicated in table 5 below, between April and September 2015, Germany had the highest total rate of asylum applications at 189,240 followed by Sweden at 56,815, and Denmark with only a total of 8,015 applications.

Table 6. Total Asylum Applications in Germany, Denmark and Sweden between April and September 2015.

EU Member States	Asylum Applications in 2015 (April – September)
Germany	189,240
Sweden	56,815
Denmark	8,015

Source: Eurostat (2015)

Accessed: 10th March (2017) Modified by Oloo, L. (2017)

However, as the influx intensified and hundreds of thousands of refugees continued to enter the country in just a few days, the German authorities reinstated border controls (European Parliament 2016: 7), as they felt that the inflow was beyond control and needed to be monitored (Kiefer 2015: 24). Subsequently, even Germany felt compelled to make decisions based on their own interests (Viotti & Kauppi 2010: 40-41). As German expert 2 above maintains, the ultimate decision by the government to reinstitute border controls led to a slight decline on the refugee inflows into the country. When I conclusively asked the Danish informants to explain how their border positioning might have influenced the flows of refugees into their country, below is what expert 1 in the country had to say:

By implementing strict border measures, Denmark was successful in a way, in essentially avoiding the large numbers of refugees that were swarming the Swedish and German borders. The border measures did what they were set up to do, by avoiding the large influx problem and shifting the flow away from Denmark. (Expert 1, Denmark)

Danish expert 2 argued that:

(...) In the choice between Denmark and Sweden, 10 times more refugees chose to move to Sweden instead of Denmark, and I think the strict border policies have something to do with it. If you ask the government, they would say that the strict measures had immediate impact, because the numbers of the incoming refugees dropped and there was also a small rise of asylum applications. (Expert 2, Denmark)

McHugh (2016b) concurs that when the refugee crisis escalated in early summer of 2015, Denmark resolved into establishing strict immigration policies to discourage further entry of refugees into the

country. The country's major highways with Germany were blocked and as a result, the majority of the hundreds of people who arrived in Denmark wanted to pass through to Sweden instead of applying for asylum in the country. As Danish expert 2 above explains, the authorities in Denmark were confident that the strict regulations had an immediate impact on the flows of refugees, claiming that the numbers entering the country dropped and there was only a small rise of asylum applications. As indicated in table 5 above, the total number of asylum applications in Denmark between April and September of 2015, was much lower as compared to those registered in neighboring member states of Sweden and Germany. Expert 1 in Denmark echoes that by implementing strict border measures, the Danish authorities successfully avoided the large numbers of refugees that were swarming the borders of neighboring Sweden and Germany. According to MCHugh (2016b), the Danish parliament passed several policies that effectively heightened its existing border control laws, aimed at discouraging refugees from entering the country. The authorities went to an extent of publishing advertisements in Lebanese newspapers to discourage Middle Eastern refugees from fleeing to Denmark (ibid.). Danish expert 2 above, claims that the strict regulations led to 10 times more refugees choosing to move to Sweden instead of Denmark. Concurrently, Loescher (1993:16) argues that the flows of refugees tends to be pushed away from countries that adapt strict border regulations, and pulled towards those with more lenient border policies. As concluded by Danish expert 1, the strict border measures adapted in the country were able to achieve what they were set up to achieve, which was shifting the flows of refugees away from Denmark and consequently avoiding large influx entering the country.

CHAPTER SIX

6.1 CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

With a focus on the current refugee crisis in Europe, this thesis has examined how some EU Member States positioned themselves distinctively from each other in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation when dealing with the refugees at their borders. The thesis has drawn attention to the periodic development in Europe from when the crisis escalated in early summer of 2015, until the Western Balkan route (a significant fast refugee transit route) was officially closed in March 2016 (Lilyanova 2016: 2). The thesis has reviewed the distinct border positioning of the member states as individual national states and as transit and destination countries. In addition, the thesis has also examined some of the motives of the distinct border positioning, and the influence of the distinct positioning on the flows of refugees. Greece, Croatia, Germany, and Denmark have been reviewed as primary study areas in the thesis. With an aim of arriving at profound and legitimate findings and conclusions, this thesis has analyzed qualitative primary data collected from interviews that entails the views and opinions of eight migration experts from the aforementioned study areas.

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

6.2.1 Distinct Border Positioning

The findings in this thesis ascertain that the escalation of the refugee crisis in Europe in early summer of 2015, led some EU Member States to establish distinct border positioning as individual national states and as transit and destination countries, when dealing with the refugees at their borders. These findings concur with Gyori's (2016: 9-10) study, which affirms that the escalation of the crisis led to a staggering number of refugees to enter Europe and it emerged quickly that the cooperation between the member states on how to uniformly deal with the increasing flows would not be forthcoming. The unilateral response led to a division between the individual national states on one hand, and the transit and the destination countries on the other hand. In line with Bakewell's (2012) migration system theory, the findings indicate that EU member states mirror a set of interacting elements in a migration system, linked together by the refugee crisis, and by how they deal with the refugees at the borders. Hence, any changes within the migration system may affect the way the system operates. Changes such as an increase on the flows of refugees into the member states may create changes in the border strategies adapted by the countries (ibid.).

6.2.1.1 Distinct Border Positioning as Individual National States

My findings conclude that the escalation of the crisis led some EU Member States to adapt solely distinct positioning when dealing with the refugees at their borders. The lack of a uniform solution led to individualized actions, such as the re-imposition of strict border controls (Lehne 2016). The findings reveal that the Greek government acted as an individual national state and quickly registered refugees at the borders before allowing them to proceed with their journey further into Europe. On the other hand, the general opinion from the Croatian informants is that their government initially responded by opening its borders for the refugees to transit through further into Europe. However, when Hungary closed its borders, Croatia responded as a nation state by quickly closing all but one of its border crossings to Serbia after an overwhelming increase of refugee inflow (Gyori 2016: 42). Moreover, the findings also conclude that Germany responded by maintaining open borders for the refugees, until it became obvious that the numbers were becoming overwhelming and thus compelling the government to re-establish border controls. Similarly, the informants in Denmark reveal that the country initially responded by keeping its borders open. But as the refugee flows increased, the authorities implemented border controls that included spot checks of passports identification and blocking its major highway with Germany to discourage entry (MCHugh 2016b).

6.2.1.2 Distinct Border Positioning as Transit and Destination Countries

My findings further reveals that the escalation of the refugee crisis and the lack of a uniform solution for dealing with the refugees, led to the division of some EU Member States as transit and destination countries, with each group using different policy and tools in governing the refugee flows directed to them (Toktas et al. 2006: 21). The primary data confirms that the destination countries of Germany and Denmark initially maintained an open border policy for the refugees, with Germany responding as a destination country that was willing to welcome refugees. However, the initial response by the destination countries to maintain open borders was not similarly welcomed by some of the transit countries. My study has established that most transit countries; including Greece and Croatia; made it clear that they could not agree to the underlying principles of accommodating refugees, and therefore quickly registered refugees before allowing them to transit further into other EU states (Gyori 2016: 9-10). The informants in Greece and Croatia confirm that their governments allowed the refugees to immediately transit further into Europe after quick registrations. Even though the findings confirm that eventually even Germany and Denmark were compelled to establish strict border measures due to the increasing inflow, the data concludes that the reinstated measures were not meant to deter refugees from entering the countries, but for controlling the large influx.

6.2.2 Distinct Positioning Vis-à-vis the Schengen Agreement and Dublin Regulation

My findings notably reveal that the escalation of the refugee crisis in Europe created the difficulty of negotiating coordinated response among the member states and thereby resulting into implementation of distinct measures that disharmonized with the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation. My analyses indicate that Greece and Croatia violated the Dublin Regulation, by allowing most of the refugees to transit through their borders without proper control or check. The Greek and the Croatian governments established quick and improper registration processes of refugees at their borders before allowing them to proceed further into Europe. Moreover, from the very beginning of the crisis, the Greek authorities were violating the Dublin Rules by demanding a stop to transfers of refugees back to its territories (Hassel & Wagner in Vanhercke et. al 2016: 67). Croatia violated border agreements with Serbia by closing 7 out of its 8 border points. After reopening the borders a couple of days later, the Croatian government announced that it was going to maintain strict daily quotas of refugee crossings. Further, the findings reveal that as the influx intensified, the German authorities deferred the Schengen Agreement by reintroducing border controls in an attempt to monitor the amount of refugees entering the country (Kiefer 2015: 24). Moreover, the primary data reveals that Germany's decision to withdraw from sending some refugees back to the countries where they first arrived was a violation of the Dublin Regulation. In Denmark, the findings reveal that the government established strict immigration policies that were meant for discouraging massive entry of refugees into the country, but at the same time disharmonizing with the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation. The escalation of the crisis rendered the Dublin Regulation ineffective as Denmark applied strict regulations that were waiving away their responsibilities for the refugees.

6.2.3 Motives for the Distinct Border Positioning

The findings herein indicate that some EU Member States were motivated to resolve into distinct border positioning in attempt to notably avoid large inflows at their borders following the escalation of the refugee crisis. Secondly, the findings reveal that some member states were motivated by their concerns over the economic impact of the large refugee influx. The findings imply that the Greek government allowed the refugees to quickly proceed with their journey further into Europe due to the fear of being stuck with large numbers. Further, the analyses reveal that the country lacked enough resources, proper infrastructure, and the capacity to carter for large numbers of refugees. In Croatia, the findings indicate that the government closed some of its border crossings to ease the large numbers that were making their way into the country following the Hungarian border closure. The study affirms that the reception system in the country almost collapsed, as the government could not

provide the necessary resource capacity needed for the large numbers. Further on, the findings reveal that even Germany was eventually inclined to implement some border control to curb the growing inflows. The data unveil that despite the country's strong economies, the capacity for registering and accommodating refugees in Berlin were clearly overwhelmed, resulting to people sleeping outside in the streets in makeshift accommodation facilities. In Denmark, the findings conclude that the distinct border positioning was motivated by concerns over the large refugee inflow, and the presumed huge economical costs of accommodating such numbers. Even with the country's strong welfare state and an economy stronger than some other countries, Denmark resolved into increasing the restrictiveness of its border policies in order to push or reduce the refugee inflows (Thielmann 2011: 2).

6.2.4 Distinct Border Positioning and the Influence on the Flows of refugees

My findings are in line with Thielman's (2011: 2) assertion that the more lenient and generous a country's policies are, the larger the numbers of refugees pulled into the country. Subsequently, the findings concur that the flows of refugees tends to be pushed away from countries that adapt strict border regulations, and pulled towards those with more lenient border policies (Loescher 1993: 16). My findings indicate that the large numbers arriving at the Greek borders were evidently attracted by the government's decision to quickly register and permit the refugees to proceed with their journeys. Similarly, Croatia attracted large numbers of refugees at their borders by choosing to initially allow easy transit. However, after the Hungarian border closure, the Croatian government felt compelled to change its strategies by closing some of its border entry points and in the process, slowing down the influx. In Denmark, the findings indicate that the implementation of strict border measures may have pushed away the refugee inflow from the country, leading to a drop on the numbers. Ultimately, my findings reveal that Germany experienced increasing refugee inflows, following the announcement that the country was going to maintain an open border policy, and its decision to waive the Dublin rules. Conclusively, my findings reveal that the large unprecedented number of refugees arriving at the German borders eventually compelled the government to establish some border control measures; which in combination with the border closures between different Southeast European countries and the EU-Turkey agreement⁵, led to an effective decline on the refugee inflows.⁶

⁵ On 18 March 2016, EU Heads of State and Turkey agreed on the EU-Turkey Statement to end the flow of irregular migration from Turkey to the EU and replace it with organized, safe and legal channels to Europe. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/eu_turkey_statement_17032017_en.pdf.

⁶ The detailed analysis of the EU-Turkey agreement is however outside the scope of my study.

6.3 Theory Discussion

The theories applied in this thesis have been presented with a central goal of forming a guideline towards relevantly clarifying the research questions in the study, which were formulated with a main objective of finding out how some EU Member States position themselves distinctively from each other in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin regulation when dealing with refugees at their borders. First and foremost, the Migration System theory is presented in virtue of its focus on the dynamics and changes within a migration system, and as a means of providing an understanding of the interaction between countries dealing with large inflows and harmonized policies. Within the context of the theory, the EU Member States may be viewed as a set of interacting elements within a migration system, linked together by the large refugee inflows and by how they position themselves when dealing with the refugees at their borders in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin regulation. The theory maintains that any changes within the migration system may affect the way the system operates. In other words, changes such as an increase on the flows of refugees may result to changes in the border strategies adapted by the member states (Bakewell 2012: 14). Illustratively, the escalation of the refugee crisis in Europe in early summer of 2015 prompted some member states to induce changes on how they dealt with the increasing flows of refugees arriving at their borders.

Secondly, I presented the theory of policy convergence and its mechanism of harmonization and regulatory competition to clarify the harmonization of EU immigration policies. The theory describes policy convergence as the growing similarities of policies that push governments to resolve common problems through co-operation within international institutions (Holzinger & Knill 2005: 6). The theory also draws attention to regulatory competition that explains how countries faced with pressure may adjust harmonized policies and regulatory standards to cope with the pressure (ibid.: 789). In context, the theory helps to explain how some EU Member States are coordinated through uniform policies such as the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation. However, member states may disharmoniously adjust policies when faced with immense pressure from high refugee influx. Further on, I have included the international theory on realism to explain the motives for the distinct border positioning. The theory maintains that governmental decision makers select alternatives that achieves acceptable outcome that serves the interests of their states (Viotti & Kauppi 2010: 40-41). Given the large-scale pressure from the escalation of the crisis, some EU Member States gave precedence to their own interests as individual national states and established distinct border positioning to avoid large influx (Cierco & Silva 2016: 1). Furthermore, the decisions made by some individual member states were based on their concerns over their weak economies and their minimal ability to handle a

flow of refugees that showed no signs of slowing (Marans 2016). Finally, I presented the push and pull theory that has contributed in explaining the kind of influence that the distinct border positioning may have on the refugee inflows. This theory elaborates how the flows of refugees into a country may be influenced by the country's positioning in relation to the kind of border policies adapted for dealing with refugees. The theory maintains that the more lenient and generous a country's policies are, the larger the numbers of refugees that may be pulled into the country (Thielmann 2011: 2). Refugees are likely to be pushed away from borders with strict policies and pulled towards the borders with moderate policies. The theory argues that conditions such as refugee admission and immigration control policies adapted in the host countries are important determinants on the flows of refugees into the country (Loescher 1993: 16). Illustratively, Germany's decision to maintain open borders created an attractive hub for refugees who were arriving into the country in high numbers. Whereas, the implementation of strict border measures in Denmark may have had an impact on the flows of refugees by successfully contributing to pushing the flows away from the country.

6.4 Suggestion for further studies

While presenting the migration system theory in this thesis, I revealed that the first step of defining a migration system, according to Bakewell (2012: 13-14), is to identify the interacting elements within the system in view of the three primary elements that can be used as a starting point when analyzing the migration system; namely, origin, transit and destination countries. However, due to the limited resources, scope, and primary focus of my study, I excluded the development of the refugee crisis in the origin or sending countries (in this case the Middle East), and alternately identified and focused on only two elements, which I considered relevant for my study, that is, the transit and the destination countries in Europe. Without a doubt, it would be interesting to carry out a further study with a larger study area that would include the development of the refugee crisis in countries of origin, such as Turkey and Jordan, and analyze how these countries position themselves as individual national states and as origin (or sending) countries when dealing with refugees at their borders, and the impacts of their positioning on the flows of refugees into the EU borders. The findings of such a study would further legitimize the relevancy of the migration system theory, and in addition, contribute to more important facts in the analysis of this study. In relation to the present development of the crisis, and for a more comprehensive analysis, I also suggest that future studies may include the interactions among the system elements produced by European efforts to externalize its immigration policies, such as agreements with Turkey and other non EU-countries, aimed to curb large-scale migration towards Europe.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Interview guide (Greece)

Profile and background information

- 1) Name
- 2) Profession
- 3) Place of work
- 4) Job title
- 5) How is your work connected to the current refugee crisis?

Reflection questions

Q1. When the refugee crisis in Europe escalated in early summer of 2015, how did Greece respond to the inflows at the borders?

Follow up:

- a) What kind of border strategies did Greece establish to deal with the large inflows?
- b) How were the strategies similar or different to those implemented in other EU Member States?
- c) In general, what are your comments on how Greece was dealing with the refugees at the borders in terms of the border strategies established?
- d) Can you please describe how Greece is currently dealing with the refugees arriving at its borders?

Q2. What particular border strategies did Greece implement as a transit country?

Follow up:

- a) How was Greece dealing with the refugees at the borders as a transit country?
- b) How were the border strategies implemented in Greece similar or different to those implemented in other transit countries like Croatia?
- c) And how were the strategies adapted in Greece similar or different to those of destination countries like Germany and Denmark?

- d) Germany, a key destination country maintained an open border policy for refugees. What is your view on that?
- e) Did the open border policy in Germany influence the border strategies adapted in Greece? If yes, how?
- f) Do you have any comments on how other destination countries like Denmark were dealing with the refugees at their borders? If yes, what are your comments?
- g) What made Greece an attractive transit country?
- h) Why did most of the refugees prefer to continue with their journey further into Western Europe instead of applying for asylum in Greece?
- i) Can you please give an account of the rejection and approval rates of the asylum requests in Greece?

Q3. How did the border strategies adapted in Greece relate to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation?

Follow up:

- a) An increasing number of EU Member States went ahead and restricted their border control measures. What are your thoughts on that?
- b) What effects do you think the increased border measures had on the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation?
- c) Greece has been criticized by the European Union for neglecting to control its external borders. What is your comment on that?
- d) Macedonia enhanced its border security by restricting refugee entry and building a second fence across its border with Greece. Croatia also followed suit on restricting entry. What are your comments on that?
- e) What consequences did Greece face as a result of Croatia and Macedonia's restrictions?
- f) Did Greece impose any countermeasures to deal with the restrictions? If yes, what kind?
- g) What effects did the countermeasures in Greece have on the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation?
- h) Has Greece imposed any additional restrictions at its border? If yes, what kind?
- i) Is Greece coordinating with any of its neighboring countries to establish common border policies? If yes, which countries in particular?

Q4. Can you please explain some of the motives, or the reasons why Greece resorted into the implementation of individualized border measures when dealing with the refugees at its borders?

Follow up:

- a) What were some of the main reasons that led Greece to implement individualized border measures?
- b) What influence does the economic status in Greece have on the border strategies that were adapted in the country?
- c) If Germany and other destination countries were to decide to fully close their borders, what kind of impact do you think this would have on the refugee situation in Greece?
- d) What if other transit countries were to decide to fully close their borders, how do you think Greece would be affected?

Q5. Can you please describe how the border strategies established in Greece may have influenced the refugee inflows into the country?

Follow up:

- a) What kind of effects did the implemented strategies have on the flows of refugees arriving at the Greek borders?
- b) How did the quick registration of refugees at the Greek borders affect the refugee inflows?
- c) When Macedonia and Croatia enhanced their border control measures, what kind of effects did this have on the refugee flows in Greece?
- d) What countermeasures did Greece impose as a response to these restrictions?
- e) Do you think Germany's open border policy influenced the flows of refugee arriving into Greece? If yes, how?

Q6. What are your main concerns in relation to how some EU Member States responded to the escalation of the refugee crisis?

Follow up:

- a) What are your main concerns in relation to the Dublin Regulation?
- b) What concerns do you have in relation to the Schengen Agreement?
- c) What are your main concerns in relation to the European Union solidarity?
- d) Did you have any concerns over the European Union disintegrating as a result of the crisis?
- e) Did you have any concerns over some key host countries fully closing their borders when the refugee crisis escalated? If yes, which countries in particular?

- f) Did you have any concerns over Greece reaching a limit on the number of refugees it could host?
- g) In your opinion, what consequences would Greece have to deal with if the current situation would not to improve?
- h) What is your prediction about the status of the refugee situation in Europe in 5 years?

Round-up questions:

Q7. What would be your recommendation to the EU Member States on how to effectively and harmoniously deal with a future refugee crisis?

- a) What can the EU Member States learn from the current crisis that may be considered as an effective preparative strategy in case of any future recurrence?

Q8. Before concluding the interview, do you have any further comments in relation to the discussion?

Please be informed that I will analyze the information that I have received from you and from other participants, and consequently use it for my thesis. The thesis will thereafter be submitted to the Department of Social Work at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, and be examined by the relevant examiners.

I sincerely thank you once again for your participation in this interview!

Appendix 2

Interview guide (Croatia)

Profile and background information

- 1) Name
- 2) Profession
- 3) Place of work
- 4) Job title
- 5) How is your work connected to the current refugee crisis?

Reflection questions

Q1. When the refugee crisis in Europe escalated in early summer of 2015, how did Croatia respond to the inflows at the borders?

Follow up:

- a) What kind of border strategies did Croatia establish to deal with the large inflows?
- b) How were the strategies similar or different to those implemented in other EU Member States?
- c) In general, what are your comments on how Croatia was dealing with the refugees at the borders in terms of the strategies established?
- d) Can you please describe how Croatia is currently dealing with the refugees arriving at its borders?

Q2. What particular border strategies did Croatia implement as a transit country?

Follow up:

- a) How was Croatia dealing with the refugees at the borders as a transit country?
- b) How were the border strategies established in Croatia similar or different to those implemented in other transit countries like Greece?
- c) Do you have any comments on how neighboring transit countries like Greece and Hungary were dealing with the refugees at their borders? If yes, what are your comments?
- d) When the Hungarian government built a fence along its borders with Serbia, how did it affect Croatia as a transit country?

- e) Why did the Croatian government feel compelled to counteract to the Hungarian action by closing its border crossings with Serbia?
- f) How were the strategies adapted in Croatia similar or different to those of destination countries like Germany and Denmark?
- g) Germany, a key destination country maintained an open border policy for the refugees. What is your view on that?
- h) Did the open border policy in Germany influence the border strategies adapted in Croatia? If yes, how?
- i) And do you have any comments on how other destination countries like Denmark were dealing with the refugees at their borders? If yes, what are your comments?
- j) What made Croatia an attractive transit country?
- k) Why did most of the refugees prefer to continue with their journey further into Western Europe instead of applying for asylum in Croatia?
- l) Can you please give an account of the rejection and approval rates of the asylum requests in Croatia?

Q3. How did the border strategies adapted in Croatia relate to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation?

Follow up:

- a) An increasing number of EU Member States went ahead and restricted their border control measures. What are your thoughts on that?
- b) What effects do you think the increased border security had on the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation?
- c) When Croatia closed its border crossing with Serbia to respond to the Hungarian action, how did this affect the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation?
- d) Macedonia enhanced its border security by restricting refugee entry and building a second fence across its border with Greece. Croatia also followed suit on restricting entry. What are your comments on that?
- e) Why did the Croatian government feel compelled to follow suit?
- f) Has Croatia imposed any additional restrictions at its border? If yes, what kind?
- g) Is Croatia coordinating with any of its neighboring countries to establish common border policies? If yes, which countries in particular?

Q4. Can you please explain some of the motives, or the reasons why Croatia resorted into the implementation of individualized border measures when dealing with the refugees at its borders?

Follow up:

- a) What were some of the main reasons that led Croatia to implement individualized border measures?
- b) What influence does the economic status in Croatia have on the border strategies that were adapted in the country?
- c) If Germany and other destination countries were to decide to fully close their borders, what kind of impact do you think this would have on the refugee situation in Croatia?
- d) What if other transit countries were to decide to fully close their borders, how do you think Croatia would be affected?

Q5. Can you please describe how the border strategies established in Croatia may have influenced the flow of refugees into the country?

Follow up:

- a) What kind of effects did the implemented strategies have on the flows of refugees arriving at the Croatian borders?
- b) How did the Hungarian border closure affect the refugee inflows into Croatia?
- c) Croatia responded to the Hungarian action by closing its border crossings with Serbia. How did this response affect the flows of refugees into Croatia?
- d) Do you think Germany's open border policy influenced the flows of refugee arriving into Croatia? If yes, how?

Q6. What are your main concerns in relation to how EU Member States responded to the escalation of the refugee crisis?

Follow up:

- a) What are your main concerns in relation to the Dublin Regulation?
- b) What concerns do you have in relation to the Schengen Agreement?
- c) What are your main concerns in relation to the European Union solidarity?
- d) Did you have any concerns over the European Union disintegrating as a result of the crisis?
- e) Did you have any concerns over some key host countries fully closing their borders when the refugee crisis escalated? If yes, which countries in particular?

- f) Did you have any concerns over Croatia reaching a limit on the number of refugees it could host?
- g) In your opinion, what consequences would Croatia have to deal with if the current situation would not to improve?
- h) What is your prediction about the status of the refugee situation in Europe in 5 years?

Round-up questions:

Q7. What would be your recommendation to the EU Member States on how to effectively and harmoniously deal with a future refugee crisis?

- a) What can the EU Member States learn from the current crisis that may be considered as an effective preparative strategy in case of any future recurrence?

Q8. Before concluding the interview, do you have any further comments in relation to the discussion?

Please be informed that I will analyze the information that I have received from you and from other participants, and consequently use it for my thesis. The thesis will thereafter be submitted to the Department of Social Work at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, and be examined by the relevant examiners.

I sincerely thank you once again for your participation in this interview!

Appendix 3

Interview guide (Germany)

Profile and background information

- 1) Name
- 2) Profession
- 3) Place of work
- 4) Job title
- 5) How is your work connected to the current refugee crisis?

Reflection questions

Q1. When the refugee crisis in Europe escalated in early summer of 2015, how did Germany respond to the inflows at the borders?

Follow up:

- a) What kind of border strategies did Germany establish to deal with the large inflows?
- b) How were the strategies similar or different to those implemented in other EU Member States?
- c) In general, what are your comments on how Germany was dealing with the refugees at the borders in terms of the strategies established?
- d) Can you please describe how Germany is currently dealing with the refugees arriving at its borders?

Q2. What particular border strategies did Germany implement as a destination country?

Follow up:

- a) How was Germany dealing with the refugees at the borders as a Destination country?
- b) How were the border strategies implemented in Germany similar or different to those implemented in other destination countries like Denmark?
- c) And how were the strategies adapted in Germany similar or different to those of transit countries like Greece and Croatia?
- d) Germany, a key destination country maintained an open border policy for the refugees. What is your view on that?

- e) Was Germany's open border policy influenced by the border strategies adapted in other EU Member States? If yes, how?
- f) Do you have any comments on how other destination countries like Denmark were dealing with the refugees at their borders? If yes, what are your comments?
- g) What made Germany an attractive destination country?
- h) Can you please give an account of the rejection and approval rates of the asylum requests in Germany?

Q3. How did the border strategies adapted in Germany relate to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation?

Follow up:

- a) An increasing number of EU Member States went ahead and restricted their border control measures. What are your thoughts on that?
- b) What effects do you think the increased border measures had on the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation?
- c) Why did Germany decide to initially maintain an open border policy?
- d) The German government announced that they would return all refugees from the Balkan states except those from Syria. What comments do you on this?
- e) How did this decision affect the Dublin Regulation?
- f) What consequences did Germany face as a result of the Hungarian border closure?
- g) How did Germany respond to Hungarian action?
- h) What effects did Germany's response have on the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation?
- i) Has Germany imposed any additional measures at its border? If yes, what kind?
- j) Is Germany coordinating with any of its neighboring countries to establish common border policies? If yes, which countries in particular?

Q4. Can you please explain some of the motives, or the reasons why Germany resorted into the implementation of individualized border measures when dealing with the refugees at its borders?

Follow up:

- a) What were some of the main reasons that led Germany to implement individualized border measures?

- b) What influence does the economic status in Germany have on the border strategies that were adapted in the country?
- c) If other main destination countries were to decide to fully close their borders, what kind of impact do you think this would have on the refugee situation in Germany?
- d) What if transit countries were to decide to fully close their borders, how do you think Germany would be affected?
- e) As a destination country, what kind of countermeasures do you think Germany would impose to respond to such actions?

Q5. Can you please describe how the border strategies established in Germany may have influenced the refugee inflows into the country?

Follow up:

- a) What kind of effects did the implemented strategies have on the flows of refugees arriving at the German borders?
- b) How did the open border policy in Germany affect the flows of refugees into the country?
- c) How did Germany deal with the effects of the open border policy?
- d) When other destination countries such as Denmark introduced strict border regulations, what kind of effects did this have on the refugee flows into Germany?
- e) What countermeasures did Germany impose as a response to these restrictions?
- f) Did the Hungarian border closure affect the refugee inflow into Germany? If yes, how?
- g) Why did the German government feel compelled to reinstitute its border controls

Q6. What are your main concerns in relation to how EU Member States responded to the escalation of the refugee crisis?

Follow up:

- a) What are your main concerns in relation to the Dublin Regulation?
- b) What concerns do you have in relation to the Schengen Agreement?
- c) What are your main concerns in relation to the European Union solidarity?
- d) Did you have any concerns over the European Union disintegrating as a result of the crisis?
- e) Did you have any concerns over some key EU host countries fully closing their borders when the refugee crisis escalated? If yes, which countries in particular?
- f) Did you have any concerns over Germany reaching a limit on the number of refugees it could host?

- g) In your opinion, what consequences would Germany have to deal with if the current situation would not to improve?
- h) What is your prediction about the status of the refugee situation in Europe in 5 years?

Round-up questions:

Q7. What would be your recommendation to the EU Member States on how to effectively and harmoniously deal with a future refugee crisis?

- e) What can the EU Member States learn from the current crisis that may be considered as an effective preparative strategy in case of any future recurrence?

Q8. Before concluding the interview, do you have any further comments in relation to the discussion?

Please be informed that I will analyze the information that I have received from you and from other participants, and consequently use it for my thesis. The thesis will thereafter be submitted to the Department of Social Work at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, and be examined by the relevant examiners.

I sincerely thank you once again for your participation in this interview!

Appendix 4

Interview guide (Denmark)

Profile and background information

- 1) Name
- 2) Profession
- 3) Place of work
- 4) Job title
- 5) How is your work connected to the current refugee crisis?

Reflection questions

Q1. When the refugee crisis in Europe escalated in early summer of 2015, how did Denmark respond to the inflows at the borders?

Follow up:

- a) What kind of border strategies did Denmark establish to deal with the large inflows?
- b) How were the strategies similar or different to those implemented in other EU Member States?
- c) In general, what are your comments on how Denmark was dealing with the refugees at the borders in terms of the strategies established?
- d) Can you please describe how Denmark is currently dealing with the refugees arriving at its borders?

Q2. What particular border strategies did Denmark implement as a destination country?

Follow up:

- a) How was Denmark dealing with the refugees at the borders as a Destination country?
- b) How were the border strategies implemented in Denmark similar or different to those implemented in other destination countries like Germany?
- c) And how were the strategies adapted in Denmark similar or different to those of transit countries like Greece and Croatia?
- d) Germany, a key destination country maintained an open border policy for the refugees. What is your view on that?

- e) Did the open border policy in Germany influence the border strategies adapted in Denmark? If yes, how?
- f) Do you have any comments on how other destination countries like Germany were dealing with the refugees at their borders? If yes, what are your comments?
- g) Was Denmark an attractive destination country? If yes/no, why?
- h) Why did some refugees choose to move further into Sweden instead of seeking asylum in Denmark?
- i) Can you please give an account of the rejection and approval rates of the asylum requests in Denmark?

Q3. How did the border strategies adapted in Denmark relate to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation?

Follow up:

- a) An increasing number of EU Member States went ahead and restricted their border control measures. What are your thoughts on that?
- b) What effects do you think the increased border measures had on the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation?
- c) What countermeasures did Denmark impose as a response to these restrictions?
- d) What effects did the implemented border measures in Denmark have on the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation?
- e) Has Denmark imposed any additional measures at its border? If yes, what kind?
- f) Is Denmark coordinating with any of its neighboring countries to establish common border policies? If yes, which countries in particular?

Q4. Can you please explain some of the motives, or the reasons why Denmark resorted into the implementation of individualized border measures when dealing with the refugees at its borders?

Follow up:

- a) What were some of the main reasons that led Denmark to implement individualized border measures?
- b) What influence does the economic status in Denmark have on the border strategies that were adapted in the country?
- c) If other destination countries were to decide to fully close their borders, what kind of impact do you think this would have on the refugee situation in Denmark?

- d) What if transit countries were to decide to fully close their borders, how would Denmark be affected?
- e) As a destination country, what kind of countermeasures do you think Denmark would impose to respond to such actions?

Q5. Can you please describe how the border strategies established in Denmark may have influenced the refugee inflows into the country?

Follow up:

- a) What kind of effects did the implemented strategies have on the flows of refugees arriving at the Danish borders?
- b) Did Germany's open border policy affect the flows of refugees into Denmark? If yes, how?
- c) When other destination countries such as Sweden introduced strict border regulations, what kind of effects did this have on the refugee flows into Denmark?
- d) What countermeasures did Denmark impose as a response to these restrictions?
- e) Why did the Danish government feel compelled to reinstitute its border controls

Q6. What are your main concerns in relation to how EU Member States responded to the escalation of the refugee crisis?

Follow up:

- a) What are your main concerns in relation to the Dublin Regulation?
- b) What concerns do you have in relation to the Schengen Agreement?
- c) What are your main concerns in relation to the European Union solidarity?
- d) Did you have any concerns over the European Union disintegrating as a result of the crisis?
- e) Did you have any concerns over some key host countries fully closing their borders when the refugee crisis escalated? If yes, which countries in particular?
- f) Did you have any concerns over Denmark reaching a limit on the number of refugees it could host?
- g) In your opinion, what consequences would Denmark have to deal with if the current situation would not to improve?
- h) What is your prediction about the status of the refugee situation in Europe in 5 years?

Round-up questions:

Q7. What would be your recommendation to the EU Member States on how to effectively and harmoniously deal with a future refugee crisis?

b) What can the EU Member States learn from the current crisis that may be considered as an effective preparative strategy in case of any future recurrence?

Q8. Before concluding the interview, do you have any further comments in relation to the discussion?

Please be informed that I will analyze the information that I have received from you and from other participants, and consequently use it for my thesis. The thesis will thereafter be submitted to the Department of Social Work at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, and be examined by the relevant examiners.

I sincerely thank you once again for your participation in this interview!

Appendix 5

Dealing with the Refugee Crisis.

Border Positioning of EU Member States in Relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation.

Interview guide Introduction and Informed Consent

First and foremost, I would like to thank you for responding to my e-mail and agreeing to participate in this interview. As mentioned on the e-mail, my name is Lucy Oloo and I am a Master student in Globalization, Politics and Culture, at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim, Norway. I'm in the process of writing my Master's thesis on how some EU Member States are dealing with the current refugee crisis in Europe, where I intend to get your opinions and views on how some Member States positioned themselves distinctively from each other in relation to the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation when dealing with the refugees at their borders, when the crisis escalated in early summer of 2015. The interview is expected to last for an average time of one hour. Please be assured that your identity will be held anonymous and all the information provided by you will be kept secure, held confidential, and only used for the purpose of this thesis. You may however at any point stop the interview if you feel the need to, and you have the freedom to withdraw yourself from the survey at any time, even after the completion of the interview, if you feel the need to.

Do you have any questions with regards to what I have explained?

Are you still willing to participate?

Would it be okay with you if I use a digital recorder in order to be certain that I have all the information from the interview session?

Appendix 6

Introduction E-Mail to potential informants

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Lucy Oloo and I'm conducting a research study under the program of Globalization, Politics and Culture, at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) in Trondheim, Norway. The study is in relation to the current refugee crisis in Europe, and it focuses on how some EU Member states positioned themselves distinctively from each other, when dealing with the refugees at their borders, when the crisis escalated in early summer of 2015. I have selected you as a potential participant due to your expertise in the field of migration, and in relation to your work with the current European refugee crisis. I believe that your expert views and opinions in the topic will contribute to making a significant analysis and conclusion to my thesis.

In relation to this, I will be highly appreciative if you could agree to participate in an interview that will focus primarily on your country's response to the refugee crisis. The interview is expected to last for about 45 minutes to an hour and would be conducted through Skype or telephone depending on what is most convenient for you. I leave the interview date and time open for you to respond with what is most suitable, but allow me to kindly inform you that I'm anticipating to complete all the interviews before end of the month.

Many thanks in advance for the time that you will take to participate in the interview, and please do not hesitate to get in touch in case of further clarification.

Best Regards,

Lucy Oloo.

Data Coding and Categorizing

<u>Category 1</u>	<u>Category 2</u>	<u>Category3</u>	<u>Category 4</u>
Distinct border positioning (i) Individual national states (ii) Transit and destination countries	Distinct border positioning vis-à-vis the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation	Motives for the distinct border positioning	Distinct border positioning and the influence on the flows of refugees
Policy established	Schengen Agreement	Economic status	Strict measures
Transit countries	Dublin Regulation	Resources	Lenient measures
Destination countries	Disharmonized policies	Large inflows	Refugee inflows