

PHD THESIS PROPOSAL

**Member States contribution to refugee protection provision in  
the EU:  
A public goods perspective**

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# **1. RESEARCH PUZZLE**

## **1.1. Research aim**

In the past years, researchers and policy-makers in asylum and migration fields have tried to understand to what extent Member States differ each other in cooperating at EU level. Recent research has been focused on identity, security, populist parties, etc. in order to understand these dynamics. When it comes to refugee protection, the same problematic arises, why some Member States are reluctant to contribute to refugee provision in the EU? Accordingly, this research seeks to assess why EU burden-sharing in refugee protection has fallen under the situation of the refugee crisis in some Member States. This will be assessed through the analysis of the political parties in the governments of Germany, Italy and Poland.

This research attempts to analyze how German, Italian and Polish ruling political parties' perceive "refugee protection" as a public good by looking at, especially, security and humanitarian issues as a cost or benefit. One could argue that for some Member States, security could be considered a benefit in terms of "human security" for refugees, to this extent, Member States could benefit of international recognition and gratitude in supporting the most needed; on the other hand, other Member States may see security as a cost in terms of hard core security/stability issue, so this may lead to national responses and not burden-sharing measures. On this subject, Bosson and Rhinard (2012, p. 130) suggest that "EU cooperation on internal security can be characterized as a combined effort to produce some type of *public good* generated by individual contributions and available to the collective entity (...). These dynamics are analogous to EU cooperation, in which Member States must take actions to produce joint benefits (...).The public goods framework, offers a rich set of tools for assessing goals, identifying incentive structures, analyzing cooperation problems and specifying institutional solutions surrounding EU internal security cooperation".

## **1.2. Background**

In 1997 the Schengen Convention was incorporated by the Amsterdam Treaty in the EU law. Accordingly, in 1999 the abolition of borders controls in the EU took place. In fact, few years before, the Yugoslav wars provoked a major refugee crisis, approximately 700,000 asylum applications were filed in the European Member States (Wanner, 2002). During those years, with the opening of Eastern Europe, migration and asylum issues become the centre of EU and national governments' agendas. These events fostered more cooperation and migration and asylum policy-making at the EU level."

Currently, a migratory crisis with similar characteristics (forced migrants coming from third countries in war) has been taking place in Europe since 2010. The Syrian war has caused one of the most massive influx of forced migrants in Europe since World War II. In this regard, “the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR) informs that the number of sea arrivals across the Mediterranean to Europe amounted to: 216.1 thousand in 2014, 1 million in 2015, 362.8 thousand in 2016 and 172.3 thousand in 2017” (Pachocka and Vizvizi 2018, p. 456, 457). The massive number of people, that have attempted to cross the Mediterranean into Europe, led to a political tension over burden-sharing and refugee protection within the European Union and has posed challenges to the Schengen Agreement on freedom of movement.

Since 1999, the EU has been working to create a Common European Asylum System (CEAS) and improve the current legislative framework. Between 1999 and 2005, some legislative measures harmonizing common minimum standards for asylum were adopted: the European Refugee Fund, the Temporary Protection Directive (year 2011), in which allows a common EU response to return to their country of origin, and the Family Reunification Directive.<sup>1</sup>

Other important legal measure in refugee and asylum fields has been the current Qualification Directive of 2011. The Directive “sets out criteria for applicants to qualify for refugee status or subsidiary protection and defines the rights afforded to beneficiaries of these statuses, hence provisions on protection from refoulement, residence permits, travel documents, access to employment, access to education, social welfare, healthcare, access to accommodation, access to integration facilities, as well as specific provisions for children and vulnerable persons are also contained in the legislative instrument. The Directive allows Member States to put in place or to keep more favorable standards than those set out in its provisions”<sup>2</sup>. This Directive main purpose is to seek defining refugee provision in order to encourage Member States to facilitate refugee protection burden-sharing measures.

One of the main problems in research of asylum and refugee protection in the EU is to understand the different positions of Member States in cooperating at EU level. In order to develop solid policies in this area, national and EU policy-makers have to face up with the reluctance and opposition of some Member States in supporting EU legislation in order

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<sup>1</sup> Source: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum_en)

<sup>2</sup> The protection that states extend to refugees is not, properly speaking, “international protection”, but national protection extended in the performance of an international. Source: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/refugee-status\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/refugee-status_en)

to face up with the refugee crisis. In this regard, this project research attempts to put some light in this problematic issue following the research line of public goods and collective action theories. One of the roots of the policy and academic discussion on burden-sharing is “in welfare economics and focuses on issues of public goods, including the question of who will play” (Suhrke 1998, p. 399). In our case, the public goods focus revolves around Olson’s collective action theory (1965).

Firstly, when it comes to defining *international refugee protection*, “international protection” and “state protection” has to be distinguished. In this regard, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR) pointed out in response to EU legislation:

While acknowledging that this use of the term is common, UNHCR would like to point out that from an international law perspective, international protection is the protection that the international community accords to individuals or groups through special organs and mechanisms. The regime of international refugee protection exists independently of any State having accepted responsibility to protect the refugee in question. In conformity with paragraphs 1 and 8 of the Statute of UNHCR, adopted by General Assembly resolution 428(V) of 1950, the responsibility for providing international protection to refugees lies with the High Commissioner for Refugees.<sup>3</sup>

Accordingly, “international protection” should be differentiated from “state protection”: The protection that states extend to refugees is not, properly speaking, “international protection”, but national protection extended in the performance of an international obligation. This form of national protection is better described, in UNHCR’s view, as “asylum”.<sup>4</sup>

On this point, in order for refugee protection regime in EU to become a reality, each Member State individually may carry out a “state protection” cooperating with the rest of Member states in terms through burden-sharing and collective action.

Secondly, when it comes to defining public good, Kaul et al. (1999, p. 3) set “the ideal public good has two main qualities: its benefits are non-rivalrous in consumption and non-excludable. Few goods are purely public or purely private, most possess mixed benefits. Goods that only partly meet either or both of the defining criteria are called impure goods”. To this extent, Kaul et al. (1999, p. 4) claim that “as impure goods are more common than the pure type, the term *public good* is used to encompass both pure and impure public goods”. In this case, refugee protection has been identified not to be a pure good itself but impure as it provides private benefits as well, nevertheless, it is defined, in general terms, as

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<sup>3</sup> UNHCR: UNHCR’s observations on the European Commission’s proposal for the Council Directive on minimum standards for the qualification and status of third country nationals and stateless persons as refugees or as persons who otherwise need international protection. Paragraphs: 9, 10 [Brussels 12 September 2001, COM(2001) 510 final, 2001/0207(CNS)]. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2001:0510:FIN>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., paragraphs: 15,16.

a public good. Accordingly, the important element to be analyzed is the nature of the “goods” that the provision of refugee protection produces, as Thielemann (2018, p.70) claims: “a number of the ‘goods’ produced by refugee protection clearly do not fulfil the essential requirements to qualify as public goods, namely those of non-excludability and non-rivalry”. In this regard, some scholars (see Sandler, 1977), have argued that pure public goods are a rare phenomenon and that most goods (even those referred as public goods) yield contributor own benefits, that is to say, even when a good is partly public there might always be private reasons that motivate contributions, in this case, such benefits are both excludable, rival and impurely public or partly private (Thielemann, 2018). According to this criterion, in the next section, it will be show which benefits may move to Member States to contribute or not to the provision of refugee protection in the EU.

Scholars from the international relations studies have taken the concept “public good” from the economic field and use it in political sciences/international environment (Rhinard, 2009); accordingly, they refer to “*global, international, regional, and transnational* public goods as ones necessary for solving problems” (Rhinard 2009, p. 443). In this regard, “global” does not refer only to geography but sociological and temporal dimensions as well (Kaul et al., 1999), in this case, for instance a “public good that benefit just one country would not be considered global but regional or national” (Kaul et al. 1999, p.12). In the next section, the main distinction between “global” and “non global” public goods is explained as well as it is discussed why refugee protection may be considered a regional public good in the EU. According to Rhinard (2009), international cooperation main aim should be to provide common solutions to common problems, nevertheless, to seek solutions in a cooperative way is a tough task. The problematic of finding common solutions could be explained by analyzing the troubles of producing a public good through a common collective action (Rhinard, 2009). On this point, the public goods approach helps us to confirm that solutions are at the national level (Rhinard, 2009), that is to say, “solutions to public goods problems come in the form of a delegation to a third party with enforcement power: the government” (Rhinard 2009, p.444). Through the basis of these assumptions, refugee protection could be seen as a global public good in the EU; consequently, depending on the costs/benefits produced by such a public good (i.e. security), Member States’ governments would enhance the provision of the refugee protection in burden-sharing and collective action terms.

This research relies upon Suhrke’s premises about refugee protection and public goods theory in her article “*Burden-Sharing During Refugee Emergencies: The Logic of*

*Collective Action Versus National Action*” (1998). The author was the first scholar in analyzing refugee provision and burden-sharing debate applying public goods theoretical framework. In her article (1998), Suhrke claims that states face up refugee crises with a double moral dilemma: on the one hand, they have to fulfill with the humanitarian obligations from the international law, on the other hand, states seek to minimize refugees on its territories. In this regard, the maintenance of the refugee protection system is a public good, nevertheless the security threat to each state may be consider as a private cost. Accordingly, “Suhrke’s provision dilemma can be expanded to explain the public goods inherent to existing perceptions of refugee protection” (Betts 2003, p. 276). In addition, other scholars have analyzed the public good character of the refugee provision regime in the EU, for instance, Betts (2010) refers to the governance of refugee protection as a global public good.

Thirdly, in recent years, it has been claimed that one of the core reasons for the slow development in migration policy in the EU is security (Kicinger, 2004). According to Huysmans (2006, p.45) “security studies picked up the theme of societal insecurity with special reference to the case of migration (...). Immigration can present threats to security in the receiving countries”. Political integration at the EU might be altered with the emergence of existential threats. In other words, European cooperation can suffer changes when a ‘critical juncture’ occurs in some policy areas of the EU (Huysmans, 2000), in this case a refugee crisis. In that instance, Member States’ political parties could see migration as a matter of threat that modifies their national interests and willingness to embrace international cooperation.

### **1.3. Relevance of the project**

Recently, “public goods and burden-sharing approaches have been applied to refugee studies, but without any attempt to identify explicitly the public goods inherent in refugee provision or to test empirically the often implicit assumption that it is a pure public good” (Betts 2003, p. 274). Accordingly, not only this project may reinforce and develop further public goods theory and collective action theoretical frameworks in analyzing refugee protection in the EU, but it may provide the empirical analysis left in assessing refugee protection as global public good with its costs/benefits for Member States.

This research will provide a much needed empirical analysis of how public goods and collective action approaches can be used in analyzing and interpreting the current refugee crisis in the EU. Many scholars have attempt to use these frameworks in order to understand Member States’ different positions in refugee and migration policy-making, but further

empirical research in this field is left. Due to its multidisciplinary nature, not only will this research be interest to researchers in the field of refugee and migration studies, but also to the fields of party ideology, EU public policy/policy-making and economics allowing to see how an economic based framework can explain a political event so far.

## **2. STATE OF ART IN LITERATURE AND RESEARCH THEORIES**

This part will show a theoretical and conceptual framework based on a review of literature and research. On the one hand, as the project covers some fields (international relations, EU studies, economics, etc.), it is crucial to identify the main theoretical approach, in this case, liberal institutionalism, that is part from the international relations field and, recently, has been used to understand cooperation within the public goods framework. On the other hand, for the same reason, there is a need of a conceptual defining; concepts such as public goods come from economics, in this regard, it is necessary to define them in the context of political sciences.

### **2.1. Liberal institutionalism**

On the one hand, when it comes to analyzing policy and institutional change in Europe, within the international relations and EU studies, scholars have usually adopted either a multi-level governance approach and new-institutionalism theory (Aspinwall, 1997). Accordingly, some scholars have analyzed EU migration and asylum policies cooperation in within the criteria of that framework (Shepsle, 1989, Bulmer, 1994). In Trauner et al.'s words (2014, p.14): "strong integration is therefore understood as the efforts to substitute national regimes with common EU policies and to commit Member States to narrowly implement the content of EU legislation. On the contrary, in cases of weak integration, EU legislation is less committing and offers more room to maneuver in order to accommodate national interests and maintain distinct national processes". According to the new institutional approach, Member States governments' interests and the environment in which these elements play, are fundamental in the European migration/asylum policy-making process, nevertheless, a "critical juncture" may lead to a change in those interests and in the policy-making process (Collier and Collier, 1991). In other words, a "critical juncture" can produce a change in Member States governments' interests and this can lead to national responses instead of international bargaining. From this perspective, Member States' interests and strategies change as consequence of a change in the international

environmental conditions (Aspinwall, 1997).

On the other hand, institutions (in the form of venues, rules and structures), have the capacity to provide public goods when those institutions are able to assure participation and contribution by all the participants in the process (Rhinard, 2009). This assumption comes from the liberal institutionalism approach that challenged the neorealist perspective in analyzing refugee protection at international level (Hoolfield, 1998). From a liberal institutionalism perspective, some scholars claim that “institutions with their ability to provide a common ground for interaction play a mediating role and encourage cooperation among states whose interests are likely to minimize their differences and pave the way for sustained cooperation” (Nuruzamann 2008, p. 195). In addition, liberal institutionalism establishes that “states are rational actors; they maximize absolute gains through cooperation and are less concerned about relative gains made by other states” (Cornelia Beyer 2016, p. 127).

Non-cooperation in the global order results from mistrust among states as well as ‘cheating’ by some of them while being part of a cooperative arrangement” (Nuruzamann 2008, p. 195). Accordingly, liberal institutionalism approach link public goods economic-based concept in order to explain cooperation in refugee protection (Hoolfield, 1998). In this regard, public goods theory has been used by many scholars in order to explain cooperation in refugee protection in the EU (Suhrke, 1998, Netts, 2009; 2010; Thielemann, 2004). Based on these theoretical assumptions, one could argue that public goods perspective and collective action theory in analyzing cooperation among states in political sciences have their roots in the liberal institutionalism theoretical framework.

Having specified the correlation between new institutionalism and, more specifically liberal institutionalism with public goods and collective action theories, the main points and assumptions linked with refugee and EU studies are outlined below.

## **2.2. Public goods theoretical framework**

During the refugee crisis, when it comes to refugee protection, some Member States appear to adopt policies by which seems they accept voluntarily to increase responsibility and burden-sharing (Thielemann, 2018). In order to explain the refugee protection dynamics in the EU and understand why some Member States voluntarily increase their burden-sharing initiatives while others are reluctant to do it, literature on public goods may be very useful (Thielemann, 2018). As mentioned above, on this subject, Thielemann (2018, p. 69) has further explained the main two characteristics of public goods:

- Non-excludability: if the collective good is provided for everyone, automatically benefits



(in others words, non-contributors cannot be kept from benefiting from that good).

- Non-rivalry: if the good is available to any one person/state, it is available to others at little or no additional cost.

These assumptions are shown important insights in the refugee protection analysis. Accordingly, “given the ‘non-excludability characteristics’ of public goods, (...) countries have an incentive to rely on positive spill-ins, they try to conceal their true preferences for the particular good in question in the hope of being able to free-ride on the efforts of others. Due to their particular characteristics, public goods lead to actions that are rational from an individual’s perspective, but that can be suboptimal (or even disastrous) from a collective viewpoint, the point of view of a local, national or international community” (Thielemann 2018, p.70). In the Table 1, the main characteristics of private and public goods are defined:

Table 1: Public goods characteristics

<b>PRIVATE AND PUBLIC GOODS</b>	<b>Rivalrous</b>	<b>Non-rivalrous</b>
Excludable	<b>Private good</b>	Network  Club good (mostly non-rivalrous inside the club)
Non-excludable	Good subject to congestion or depletion, yet accessible to all  Some global commons	<b>Pure public good</b>  Existence value Some global commons (high seas, ozone layer)

Source: Kaul et al., 1999, p. 5.

In order to identify refugee protection as a regional public good, it is important to point out the main differences between local, national, regional and global public goods. In this context, to differentiate those concepts, Kaul and Mendoza (2003) point out that one may focus on “the scope of the public goods” benefits and the level at which it may be situated or from which its effects may emanate” (Kaul and Mendoza 2003, p. 107). In this regard, “the notion of reach or scope implies that the wider concept includes all others” (Kaul and Mendoza 2003, p. 107); they show some examples such as pollution can arise locally but spread globally or development assistance can be situated at the international level but be designed for a regional good such as support for the management. According to these criteria, this project identifies refugee protection as a global public good at the international level, and regional public good in the EU context. In this case, refugee protection effects emanate from an international cooperation among countries, in the EU context – among EU Member States. Despite refugee protection has national, regional and local effects, i.e. regional health assistance to refugees, national legal status, etc., in the case of the EU, the scope of refugee protection as a regional public good is situated at the EU level. In this context, the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) would be the international regime providing the regional public good (refugee protection). Accordingly, if the EU asylum policy framework lacks of cooperation in refugee protection, it may lead to a weak CEAS. Despite the fact that EU Member States have their own national legislation related to refugee protection, this project focuses mainly on refugee protection at the EU level.

When it comes to applying public goods theoretical approach in order to understand refugee protection dynamics, Thielemann (2018, p. 70) has claimed that “providing protection opportunities reduces the incentives and/or necessity to engage in onward movement for asylum seekers. A state’s refusal to protect refugees or efforts to divert refugee flows onto other countries can be expected to lead to increased instability and heightened insecurity as a result of tensions at the border, irregular onward movements and tensions with other states which might end up being the new target countries for such migrants as a result of such restrictive policies by other states”. In this context, in order to understand how Member States may perceive refugee protection as a public good, it is important to identify its costs/benefits. In this regard, Suhrke’s provision dilemma (1998) identifies the public goods inherent to existing perceptions of refugee protection: 1) the benefit of fulfilling moral and humanitarian obligations; 2) reducing the security cost of asylum. Accordingly, the first type of public good may be considered an “altruistic public good” in which it is suggested that state interests in refugee protection stem from a moral duty and obligation under international law. The second

type is a “security public good” that relates to the perceived cost of refugees/asylum-seekers. Accordingly, if refugees/asylum seekers are perceived as a cost, “mitigating or containing their flow will be construed to provide a benefit, such an attitude is central to the pervasively enshrined and state-centric conceptions of national security” (Betts 2003, p. 277). Both public goods (altruistic and security) have private benefits: in the case of the altruistic public good, a Member State provision to refugee protection will be benefit of international recognition and prestigious, this benefit is private in nature as is excludable and rivalrous; on the other hand, in the case of security public good, a Member State that decides not to provide refugee protection, it is moved by the benefit of internal security for its own territory, this benefit I private as well. Despite these benefits are private, we may talk about refugee protection as public good as it may also produce other public benefits and the free-riding problem always exists. This project will be based on identifying those benefits that are incentives for Member States in cooperating or not in refugee protection. The perceptions of benefits/costs in the provision of refugee protection may show EU Member States’ positions in cooperating in refugee protection, as Betts (2003, p. 277) points out: “if the net perceived benefit per refugee/asylum-seeker from the altruistic public good is less, the net perceived benefit from the security public good will be greater”. Analyzing how the refugee protection provision produces different public goods and, taking into account the altruistic and security public goods inherent, some insights of why some Member States are reluctant to cooperate in burden-sharing measures may arise.

### **2.3. Olson’s collective action and EU cooperation**

According to Olson (1965), the main conditions that determine collective action are group size and the heterogeneity of preferences. Some scholars studying cooperation in the EU in some fields such as internal security have identified that “if preferences towards a cooperation outcome are aligned, different preference intensities matter. States with weak preferences can exploit states with stronger preferences, thus ‘easy riding’ on the efforts of others and raising concerns of fairness and equitable burden sharing”. In this case, in our analysis it could be interesting to see how Poland (weak interests) may exploit the rest of the Member States that are strong interests in refugee protection cooperation. In addition, it is important to take into account that the analysis of collective action based on Olson’s assumptions, that actors’ preferences are rational, independent and exogenous (Betts, 2003).

In the EU context, collective action dynamics have been often used to explain

policy- making changes and cooperation among Member States. The most common measure used in cooperation in the EU are ad-hoc measures, as Greenwood and Aspinwall (1998, p. 12) explain, “EU collective action is often highly informal and ad-hoc: cooperation in one type of structure can lead to collaboration elsewhere”. According to Betts (2003, p. 286) “(...) this is because EU countries have many areas of shared interest and mutual negotiation; concession in one area can generate leeway in another”.

Within the framework of this criteria, “in the international state system the problem of burden-sharing in refugee admission can be resolved only through building coalitions of states who are ready to ‘take up the slack’ if other states are unwilling to do their part” (Miller, 2013, pp. 206–227). By contrast, in the EU context when refugee protection becomes a collective action problem, according to Noll (2003) the *Prisoners’ Dilemma type*<sup>5</sup> can help to resolve such a collective action problem, predicting suboptimal outcomes for all the actors if do not succeed in cooperating or put together a common action.

One might expect that European integration and the commitments that Member States have made towards each other should provide a nearly ideal context for resolving the problem of burden-sharing in refugee protection. States that are ready to comply with their duties do not have to look around who else might be ready to do so.

### **3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

In this section, the research design of the project and research methodology is presented. First of all, the rationale of the selection of the political parties in the government in Germany, Italy and Poland is defined. Finally, we will see how the variables are measured, which methods are applied for it and which the hypotheses to test are.

#### **3.1. Germany, Italy and Poland as case studies**

The project adopts a comparative research design. That is, it aims at offering rich descriptions of a few instances of a certain phenomenon (Della Porta, 2008). Taking Germany, Italy and Poland as cases studies, the research project consists in a comparative analysis of a short period of time (2013-2018). The perception of refugee protection in the political parties of the German, Italian and Polish governments are analyzed in order to assess the collective action and cooperation at EU level in burden-sharing terms.

The rationale followed in choosing the countries for case studies analysis has been:

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<sup>5</sup> See Thielemann 2018, p. 69: the prisoner dilemma points to a constellation where actors who act solely with the aim of maximizing their own individual utility will produce a result which is contrary to their collective interest (Rapoport and Chammah, 1965).

- Exporting/importing migrants in each state’s history.
- New/old Member States (consequence of the EU enlargement process).
- Pro/anti European political parties in the period of 2013-2018.
- Approach to accepting asylum seekers/refugees during the refugee crisis (i.e. the case of relocation scheme).

It is interesting to see how Member States shift of governments change of perception of refugee protection. This analysis gets its importance when looking at these shifts of political parties in the governments through the criteria mentioned above. To this extent, the case study read as follows:

1. Germany: Northern European Member State; pro European government; and historically importing migrants; old Member State; accepting refugees during the refugee crisis within relocation.
2. Italy: Southern European Member State; pro European and anti European governments; historically an exporting migrants country (now is importing migrants as well); old MS; frontline and first reception EU Member State during the refugee crisis, in need of relocate asylum seekers/refugees from its territory (as in case of Greece) to other EU MSs,
3. Poland: Eastern European Member State; pro and anti-European government and historically an exporting migrants country (exporting and importing migrants, depending on the historical period); new Member State; not accepting refugees during the refugee crisis within relocation

The timing chosen to analyze the political parties in governments goes from 2013-2018. Since in 2013, the refugee crisis increased, there has been several changes in the three Member States’ governments.

*Table 2: Ruling political parties*

COUNTRIES	RULING POLITICAL PARTIES (2013-2018)
Germany	2013-2018: CDU (Christian Democratic Union of Germany)
Italy	2013-2018: coalition among Democratic Party (centre-left wing and pro-European); NCD (New Centre Right), pro-European and conservatism; SC (Civic Choice),

	<p>centre; UDC (Union of the Centre), centre, centre-right.</p> <p>2018: M5S (centre wing, populism) and Northern League (right-wing populism and Eurosceptic)</p>
Poland	<p>2013-2015: Civic Platform (centre/right wing, liberal conservatism and pro-European)</p> <p>2015-2018: Law and Justice (right-wing populism and Eurosceptic)</p>

The rationale of the selection of these Member States is to look at the changes in perceptions of refugee protection according to the Member State action during the refugee crisis period. By analyzing refugee protection as a public good, other important factors such as new Member State (Poland), the history of importing/exporting migrants (Poland, Germany and Italy) and the geographic location (South, North and East of Europe) could arise as other determinant variables that may explain cooperation in refugee protection. Nevertheless, this project main attempt is focuses on how refugee protection is perceived by governments from different geographic, historical and EU ancient membership Member States and how it may affect the provision of refugee protection as a global public good and, consequently explain, to some extent, burden-sharing cooperation.

### 3.2. Hypothesis and outcomes

This project is focused on the following research question: *what does explain different positions of the governments of EU Member States concerning (non)cooperation in the field of burden-sharing of refugee protection in the EU?* The purpose is to investigate one of the factors that may explain the reluctance of some Member States in cooperating in refugee protection in the EU: *‘the perception of refugee protection as a public good’*. As mentioned above, the ‘perception and provision of public goods’ can be directly linked with cooperation at EU/collective action, so if Member States do not see refugee protection as a global public good but just with costs, they may be reluctant in

adopting burden-sharing measures in refugee protection cooperation. In order to narrow the research, one sub-research question arises:

- SubRQ: Are Member States governments more willing to enhance collective action if they see refugee protection as a public good?

Accordingly, the hypothesis reads as follows:

- **H1:** Member States' governments that see refugee protection as a public good, are more willing to cooperate at EU level for its provision.

### **3.3. Measurement of variables**

The measurement of perceptions in political sciences and public goods, normally has been carried out by surveys and in depth-interviews (see Lee, 2015). In political sciences, when it comes to analyzing perceptions, a deconstruction of the results has to be made. In this research project, perceptions of refugee protection as a global public good will be measured through:

- Frame (content) analysis of 1) political parties' party manifesto; 2) official speeches of the relevant ministries (e.g. of Foreign Affairs and Internal Affairs); 3) parliamentary debates; 4) migration policy strategy documents
- 10-15 semi-structured interviews (IDIs) per country with: 1) politicians from the political parties; 2) experts/policy makers from public administration and researchers, and 3) EU representatives (e.g. Frontex).

The research project will be based on these qualitative analytical methods in order to deconstruct the perceptions of refugee protection as a public good.

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