

Degree in Political Sciences and Public Administration
Treball de fi de Grau/ Bachelor's Degree Final Project (21686)
Academic course 2022-2023

**WAVES OR REFUGEE CRISES?
THE SECURITIZATION OF THE LAST TWO
MASSIVE REFUGEE WAVES IN THE EU**
(Translated from Catalan to English ex-post, in 2025)

Carles Rodríguez Fité

NIA: 229953

Thesis' Tutor:

Adrià Rodríguez Pérez



DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP AND ORIGINALITY

I, *Carles Rodríguez Fité*, certify that this work has not been submitted for assessment in any other subject, either in part or in its entirety. I also certify that its content is original and that I am the sole author, not including any material previously published or written by other people except in those cases indicated throughout the text.

Carles Rodríguez Fité

Barcelona, 9 de juny del 2023

“We are living on the edge of hell.

*We have been waiting for so long for
the day that the world would hear our voice.*

I hope it is today”.

(Zohar, Palestinian-Syrian refugee, 2015)

Abstract:

The mass displacement of more than 8 million refugees resulting from the war in Ukraine constitutes the largest wave of refugees in Europe since World War II. The solidarity and coordinated reception efforts by EU member States present a completely different image compared to the refugee wave of 2015, when the EU appeared divided and largely closed off to refugees, with the Commission in conflict with several member States. The aim of this research is to analyse the response of EU member States to the 2022 wave and the explanatory factors behind it by comparing it with the response given in 2015. To achieve this, after reviewing the literature and confirming the differences in the management of both waves by the EU and its member States, it has been concluded —through a discourse analysis based on securitization theory— that this difference lies in the fact that, while in 2015 the wave was securitized mainly in opposition to refugees, in 2022 it was securitized around the refugees and in opposition to Russia, which was identified as the common enemy. This explains why the 2015 wave was criminalized and labelled a crisis, whereas the 2022 wave was treated as a consequence of war, framing the refugees as victims of the same side from the securitizing actors.

Key words: refugee wave, securitization, European Union, crisis, hosting of refugees, cooperation, threat, solidarity.

Table of contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Theoretical framework	2
	i) <i>The evolution of the concept of security and the Critical Security Studies</i>	2
	ii) <i>The securitization of migration in the EU</i>	5
	iii) <i>Critiques to the securitization theory</i>	6
	iv) <i>Joint securitizing action in Member States in 2015 and 2022:</i>	8
3.	Methodology	9
	i) <i>Selection of the sample</i>	9
	ii) <i>Descriptive analysis</i>	10
	iii) <i>Causal analysis</i>	10
4.	Results	12
	a. Descriptive analysis.....	12
	i) <i>The EU's management of the two refugee waves</i>	12
	ii) <i>Member State management in line with the Commission instructions</i>	14
	b. Causal analysis	18
	i) <i>Securitization of the 2015 wave</i>	18
	ii) <i>Securitization of the 2022 wave</i>	23
5.	Conclusions	33
6.	Bibliographic References and Other Sources Consulted.....	36
7.	Annexes	44

1. Introduction

On the morning of February 24, 2022, after weeks of tension and a massive buildup of Russian troops at various points along the border with Ukraine, Russia launched an invasion of Ukrainian territory, marking the beginning of the still ongoing War in Ukraine. One of the many consequences of this conflict has been the massive displacement of war refugees, to the extent that Europe has experienced the largest wave of refugees since World War II. According to UNHCR data, the number of displaced individuals has surpassed 8 million, with more than half of them being children, according to UNICEF (2023).

In light of this situation, the role of the European Union (EU) and its member States (MSs) has become crucial in humanitarian terms, as the EU has developed and presented itself to the world as a coordinated, open, and supportive entity towards refugees. However, this response stands in stark contrast to the one seen eight years earlier during the so-called "Refugee Crisis" of 2015, when the management of a wave of over a million migrants—most of them Syrian refugees, but also individuals from other Middle Eastern and Sub-Saharan African countries¹—was confronted with a divided and largely unwelcoming EU.

In this regard, the focus of this research is precisely to analyse the response of EU MSs to the wave of refugees resulting from the War in Ukraine, within the framework of the guidelines set by the European Commission, and the explanatory factors behind this response, in comparison with the management of the 2015 refugee wave. Thus, the research question guiding this study is: ***What are the underlying causes behind the implementation of the European Commission's guidelines by member states in the context of the Ukrainian refugee crisis?***

This research question is structured around the confrontation and disobedience of MS towards the Commission's guidelines, as the core objective is to analyse the reasons behind the differing behaviour of states in the two refugee waves. Specifically, it seeks to understand why, in one wave, some states failed to comply with the reception mechanisms established by the Commission, while in the other, states had no hesitation in opening their borders and welcoming refugees without challenging the Commission.

¹ Regarding this wave of refugees, it is important to note that migration flows began in 2011, reaching their peak in 2015 with the mass arrival of 800,000 refugees in Greece (Åslund, 2022).

The main innovation that this research aims to contribute is, first, to compare the response to the Ukrainian refugee wave with the refugee wave of 2015, adding context to the analysis in order to determine whether the response has changed, in what way, and for what reasons.

Regarding this causal analysis, the second innovation would be to analyse these state responses from the perspective of securitization theory, conducting an analysis of how securitizing discourses have constructed the image of these refugees and how this has influenced their reception by MSs and, consequently, whether they have resulted in disobedience or confrontation with the Commission.

Linked to the last two points, the third innovation will be to include in the research an analysis of how the presence of the far right has influenced this securitizing discourse surrounding the two waves.

In this way, in order to answer and complement the main question, the following research sub-questions are posed: how have states complied with the guidelines issued by the Commission in both waves? How have the two refugee waves been securitized? Does the presence of the far right explain the differences, if any, in the securitization of the two waves?

Regarding the structure of the study, this *i) introduction* will be followed by a *ii) theoretical framework* that will analyse the existing literature on the concept of security, securitization, and its application to migration in the EU, including the influence of the far right; the *iii) research methodology*; the *iv) results*, covering both the descriptive analysis of the main measures established by the Commission and their implementation by the States, as well as the causal analysis of how securitization has influenced the response of the MSs; and the *v) conclusions*.

2. Theoretical framework

i) The evolution of the concept of security and the Critical Security Studies:

Security is undoubtedly one of the most relevant concepts in the discipline of International Relations, constituting a complex yet controversial notion (Kolodziej, 2005), whose study has evolved over time. However, paradoxically, the historical theorization of the concept prior to the 1980s was scarce (Delkáder, 2020), as it was understood as an objective and anachronistic truth (Sanahuja, 2015), revolving around the State, the military dimension, survival, and exceptionalism (Deláader, 2020; Huysmans, 2006; McDonald, 2008).

With the decline of military threats at the international level following the end of the Cold War, several proposals emerged aimed at expanding the notion of security, emancipating it from its predominantly military character (Baldwin, 1995). In this context of evolving security concepts, Critical Security Studies emerged, with the Aberystwyth, Paris, and Copenhagen Schools standing out.

Despite stemming from different intellectual traditions, the three schools share a common opposition to traditional security theories. Ontologically, they consider security not to be a static and objective reality. Epistemologically, they reject the idea that security can be analysed in a neutral manner. This implies that security depends on political, ideological, and value-based factors², leading them to view security as intersubjective (Buzan et al., 1998; de Armiño, 2015; Delkáder, 2020; Wæver, 1993).

The main characteristics of the Aberystwyth, Paris, and Copenhagen Schools will be presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Main Characteristics of the Three Schools of Critical Security Studies.

Aberystwyth School	<u>Intellectual Foundations</u>: It draws from the neo-Marxist thought of the Frankfurt School, as well as the ideas of Gramsci. <u>Main Contributions</u>: The most significant contributions of this school come from critical theories that analyse the theorization process and the institutional construction and change of security (Cox, 2014). The most academically relevant proposal is Booth's (2013), which argues that security should be defined in terms of emancipation, as the lack of emancipation from factors such as poverty, oppression, or lack of education prevents individuals from freely carrying out their desired actions. Additionally, Charrett's (2009) proposal is noteworthy, as it advocates for incorporating non-dominant actors, such as socially marginalized groups, into security analysis, deconstructing the institutional power of security actors. <u>Concept of Security</u>: This school is committed to social emancipation and proposes a break with the security status quo, linking security to emancipation.
----------------------------------	--

² Which implies that they move away from the traditional view, which holds that security only encompasses military-related issues.

Paris School	<u>Intellectual Foundations:</u> Intellectually grounded in the works of Foucault and Bourdieu. <u>Main Contributions:</u> Its most notable innovation is the introduction of the International Political Sociology approach, which analyses the notion of security interdisciplinarily through Political Science, Sociology, Criminology, and Anthropology (Delkader, 2020). This multidisciplinary approach stems from rejecting the traditional distinction between an <i>internal</i> non-existential security order—examined by Political Science at the state level—and an <i>external</i> existential security order—analysed by International Relations at the international level. Instead, it unifies both spheres into a transnational security field (Bigo, 2001). <u>Concept of Security:</u> Within its constructivist paradigm, this school rejects an objective and generic definition of security. Instead, it conceives security as the result of a discursive process of securitization or desecuritization, in which securitizing actors do not know the outcome in advance (Bigo, 2001, 2008; Delkader, 2020). These discursive processes are uncertain, as they can generate either more security (securitization) or less security (desecuritization). This uncertainty arises because security is based on contested social constructions that depend on multiple power relations, meaning both domestic and international political struggles over legitimation strategies aimed at defining what, who, and why something is considered security (Delkádér, 2020).
Copenhagen School	<u>Intellectual Foundations:</u> Grounded in <i>Schmittian</i> and realist theories. <u>Main Contributions:</u> Its primary innovation is the theory of securitization. The securitizing act is a social construction shaped by a political discursive process, in which political elites (the <i>securitizing actors</i>) transform an issue (<i>referent issue</i>) into a security matter that must be protected or defended against (<i>referent object</i>), which legitimizes the adoption of exceptional and extraordinary emergency measures, as the issue is framed as an existential threat. Thus, the two essential components of securitization are survival and exceptionalism. <u>Concept of Security:</u> Security is defined as the pursuit of freedom from threats and the possession of resources to counter threats while maintaining independence regarding identity and functional integrity (Buzan, 1991). The dimensions of security in this definition include military, political, economic, societal, and environmental dimensions, collectively forming what Buzan (1983) calls <i>comprehensive security</i>.

Source: own elaboration.

ii) *The securitization of migration in the EU:*

That said, the chosen theoretical perspective guiding this research will be the securitization theory, as it provides a clear framework for identifying who securitizes which issues to protect whom—in other words, who the securitizing actor is, what the referent topic is, and what the referent object is (Buzan et al., 1998). It is important to note that, according to securitization theory, an issue becomes a security problem when it is labelled as such (Wæver, 2004), with the issue becoming apolitical as it is treated as an objective problem (Buzan et al., 1998). This implies, on the one hand, that the security label is a political choice exercised through securitizing discursive practice and, on the other hand, that security is a discursive act in which the very utterance of the concept constitutes the act itself by the securitizing agent (Šulović, 2010). In other words, while the theory post-structurally conceives the construction of security as social, intersubjective, and discursive, it defines security in realist terms through two inherent components: exceptionalism and survival³.

In this vein, securitization theory has served as a paradigm for a great number of investigations related to the phenomenon of migration, particularly within the framework of the EU. The securitization of migration in the EU has been an ongoing process that began in the 1970s, accelerated after the 9/11 attacks, and culminated in the EU and Member States' management of the 2015 refugee wave, where the dominant trend was the conceptualisation of migration as a destabilising threat to the EU. This explains why migration and border policies have been central to the EU agenda (Demirkol, 2022; Benam, 2011; Léonard, 2010). In fact, this securitization of migration in the EU has turned immigration into one of the main security threats of the 21st century within the hegemonic governmental discourse (Huysmans, 1995; Bigo, 2002).

That said, the scientific literature agrees on addressing the securitization of migration in Europe from both the societal dimension—preserving traditions and common identities against threats—and the economic and public order dimensions (Demirkol, 2022; Galantino, 2020). In this way, Huysmans (2000) identifies three referent objects through which migration in the EU is securitized: cultural identity, the welfare state, and internal security.

³ Which is the reason why Wæver (2004) situates this theory into the post-structuralist realism theory.

In fact, according to Galantino (2020), there are two stages in the European securitization process of migration. The first stage positions immigration as a threat to national security in terms of its cultural—identity-related—, economic—displacing nationals in the labour market—, and public order consequences—linking migrants to terrorism. The second stage consists of the issuance of the securitizing discourse, with the main securitizing actors holding the most power being politicians (Messina, 2014) and the media (Buonfino, 2008). This also partly explains the rise of the far right within the EU framework and Brexit (Demirkol, 2022).

Building on the influence of the far right⁴, various studies have demonstrated that the entry of far-right parties into the political system causes other parties to adopt more restrictive stances on immigration, creating a contagion effect (Abou-Chadi & Krause, 2018; Benedicto & Brunet, 2018). Specifically, within the EU, the presence of the far right in some Member States has not only manipulated public opinion, fostering fear of migrants based on racist and xenophobic discourse, but has also had a significant influence on state policies, contributing to the securitization and criminalisation of migratory movements (Benedicto & Brunet, 2018).

Specifically, within the EU framework, the presence of the far right in some Member States has not only manipulated public opinion, fostering fear around migrants based on racist and xenophobic discourse, but has also had a significant influence on state policies, contributing to the securitization and criminalisation of migratory movements (Benedicto & Brunet, 2018).

iii) Critiques to the securitization theory:

That said, there are a series of academic critiques of securitisation theory that are relevant to this research.

From Table 2, these critiques will be presented and their relevance for applying the theory to this research will be discussed.

⁴ In this thesis, European far-right forces are identified as the set of parties that share populist, anti-elitist, nationalist, anti-immigration, and Eurosceptic positions, at least understood in opposition to the functionalist principles of integration. (Golder, 2016; Özgür & Selcen, 2021).

Table 2: Discussion on the critiques of securitisation theory.

	Critiques	Counter-arguments & relevance to the research
Ideological-moral critiques	Aradau (2004): considers it a contradiction to simultaneously refer to <i>Schmittian</i> exceptionalist securitization policies and democratic desecuritization policies. Hansen (2000): accuses the theory of silencing excluded groups by failing to consider their security issues. Williams (2003): links the methodological objectivism of the theory to the tolerance and lack of critique of securitizing discursive acts	The issue with these critiques is that they confuse the object of study—in Hansen’s case—and the method of study—in Aradau and Williams’s cases—with the ideology and personal stance of the researcher, associating the method with a lack of critical spirit. In reality, the method is a complementary first step, rather than an exclusive one, to subsequently conducting a critical analysis. In fact, as securitization represents the extreme politicization of an issue that removes it from being addressed by the normal instruments of public policy, the Copenhagen School authors hold a pejorative view of securitization, advocating for the reverse process in which a securitized issue is returned to the ordinary domain of public policy through desecuritization (Demurtas, 2019).
Methodological critiques	Williams (2003): accuses the authors of failing to explain how authorities legitimise the discursive act and criticises the exclusion of the media from the analysis. McDonald (2008) and Balzacq (2005): criticise the lack of a contextual explanation for securitization processes.	In order to justify the use of the theory in this research, it must be noted that the validity of these critiques does not exclude the possibility for the researcher to address them when applying the theory (Demurtas, 2019).

Source: own elaboration.

iv) Joint securitizing action in Member States in 2015 and 2022:

Thus, adopting the paradigm of securitization theory, the main hypothesis of this work is that **the questioning—or lack thereof—by Member States of the European Commission's guidelines on refugee reception is explained by the inability—or ability—to create a joint securitizing discourse that includes refugees within the referent object.**

Based on the premise that the referent object of securitization in both waves is the population, it seems that the difference between the two securitizations lies in whether or not refugees are included within the referent object.

Regarding the 2022 refugee wave, it is inferred that Ukrainian refugees were included within the referent object to be protected, treating them as European fellow citizens against a common enemy, Russia. In this sense, since this vision and discourse were shared by all Member States, no State distanced itself or failed to implement or question the Commission's guidelines. Therefore, it is considered that there was a joint and effective securitization focused on refugees, which rendered this issue apolitical and enabled compliance with migration policy by the EU and Member States.

In contrast, regarding the 2015 refugee wave, it is considered that the lack of a joint securitization that included refugees within the referent object, instead framing them as the threat to be protected against, prevented the issue from becoming apolitical and prioritised the logics and interests of Member States. Consequently, the lack of joint securitization and the exclusion of refugees from the referent object led to the questioning of the Commission's guidelines.

v) The presence of the far right and securitization:

That said, the sub-hypothesis of this work is that, **in the absence of joint securitization, the greater the presence of the far right in the political system of a Member State, the greater the likelihood of conflict between the State and the European Commission.**

In line with the analysed literature on the influence of the European far right, it is considered that the far right has influenced, whether from opposition or government, the securitization of immigration as a threat from which the State must be protected. Consequently, it is considered that, in the absence of joint securitization, a window of opportunity opens for the far right to embed its xenophobic discourse and lead the State to oppose the European Commission's guidelines on refugee reception.

3. Methodology

i) *Selection of the sample:*

The analysis of Member States' behaviour will be conducted through a sample of three countries. On the one hand, the sample must be representative of the different territorial characteristics of the EU Member States and the various coalitions within the Union, particularly the Frugal States Group and the Visegrad Group, as they have unique operational logics. On the other hand, as discussed in the theoretical framework, since the far right may play a significant role in the securitization of migration in Member States, countries with varying degrees of far-right presence will be analysed to determine whether it is a relevant variable and, if so, whether it is relevant in both waves and how it interacts with the securitizing discourse. In this regard, the countries must have a similar far-right presence between 2015 and 2022 to avoid introducing interferences into the study. Based on these criteria, the three countries comprising the sample will be Portugal, Finland, and Hungary.

From a territorial perspective, Portugal represents the southern and western European States; Finland represents the northern European countries and the Frugal States; and Hungary represents the eastern European countries with a Soviet past and the Visegrad Group. Therefore, the selection of these three countries appropriately encompasses the geographical space and the different coalitions within the EU.

From the perspective of the far right, as shown in Table 3, firstly, Portugal represents a country with a limited, though growing, institutional presence of the far right. In the Finnish case, the far right is consolidated among the most voted parties in the party system and was part of the Finnish coalition government with the conservative party during the 2015 wave. Finally, Hungary represents the quintessential European State with an overwhelming far-right presence at both the legislative and executive levels⁵.

⁵ In considering a party as a far-right party, for the Portuguese case, the comparative analysis by Rivas de Roca et al. (2022) was used; for the Finnish case, the categorisation by Sánchez de Dios (2020) was applied; and for the Hungarian case, the electoral analysis by Végh (2022) was utilised.

Table 3: Presence of the far right at the legislative and executive levels (marked with an asterisk when the party leads the executive) in Portugal, Finland, and Hungary.

	Portugal	Finland	Hungary
2015	No presence.	<u>Finns Party</u> : 38/200 seats, 17,65% votes (part of the governments).	<u>Fidesz*</u> : 133/199 seats and 44,87% votes.
2022	<u>Chega!</u> : 12/230 seats and 7,15% votes.	<u>Finns Party</u> : 39/200 seats and 17,48% votes.	<u>Fidesz*</u> : 135/199 seats and 54,10% votes. <u>MNP</u> : 6/199 seats and 5,88% votes. <i>(Elections held on 4 April 2022, one month after the start of the Ukraine War).</i>

Source: own elaboration.

ii) Descriptive analysis:

The descriptive analysis of the research, which involves examining the measures established by the Commission and the degree of compliance by the States, will have two phases.

Firstly, a general analysis will be conducted on the main differences between the management of the two refugee waves by the EU and its Member States.

Secondly, a more specific analysis will be carried out on the three selected States, identifying the main Commission guidelines regarding refugee reception in both waves. Based on this, the degree of compliance by the States—particularly those in the sample—will be determined, observing the number of refugees received and the reception actions—or lack thereof—undertaken.

iii) Causal analysis:

The causal analysis will involve conducting a discourse analysis to examine the securitizing role in determining the response of the sampled States.

a) Discourses to analyse:

As seen in the theoretical framework, the two main securitizing actors with the greatest power and influence are politicians and the media. Due to time and scope limitations, the discourse analysis will focus solely on politicians in the three mentioned States. Thus, public statements from the most critical moments of the two waves will be analysed, specifically those made by the head of government and the leader of the main far-right party⁶ in the three countries.

b) Discourse analysis:

Table 4: Les tres fases del model metodològic de Fairclough.

Dimension of discourse	Description	Application to the research
<i>Discourse as text</i>	Involves analysing the textual characteristics of discourses through the vocabulary, semantics, grammar, and rhetoric used (Blommaert et al., 2000; Fairclough, 1992).	The aim to determine how, through language, meanings are constructed around refugees and how different migratory phenomena are linked to security.
<i>Discourse as discursive practice</i>	Involves analysing how texts are socially produced, distributed, and consumed (Blommaert et al., 2000; Fairclough, 1992).	The aim is to identify the form these discursive texts take, how they relate in content and register to other discourses, how they circulate, and in what political context they are situated.
<i>Discourse as social practice</i>	Through this dimension, it is possible to observe, via its ideological effects, how discourse contributes to creating, maintaining, or changing sociopolitical relations and imposing a narrative within the framework of struggles for normativity (Blommaert et al., 2000).	This dimension aims to determine what sociopolitical reality is being constructed through discourse and how the discourse impacts States' actions within the framework of existing power struggles.

Source: own elaboration.

⁶ When it does not coincide with the head of government.

The most suitable approach for conducting discourse analysis within the framework of securitization theory is the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) theory. Based on this, discourse is not only socially conditioned but also socially constitutive, serving as an opaque power object within political systems (Blommaert et al., 2000). In this way, CDA aims to analyse the dynamics of power, discrimination, and control that are manifested, transmitted, and created through language and discourse (Wodak, 1995).

Specifically, this research will focus on Fairclough's (1992) methodological model, which consists of a three-dimensional framework configuring discourse through text, discursive practice, and social practice, as summarised in Table 4, along with how they will be applied to this research.

iv) *Problematization of the methodology:*

Finally, there are several shortcomings of the methodology in this research that must be highlighted and considered. Firstly, although an effort has been made to ensure the sample is representative, the three selected States fall short of establishing external validity of the results at the EU level. Secondly, it should be noted that the discourse analysis regarding the securitization of refugee waves should go beyond analysing only the discourses of prime ministers and the far-right opposition. It should have a broader scope, particularly regarding the necessary study of how the press securitizes this issue, as emphasised in the theoretical framework. Thirdly, conducting a discourse analysis of politicians from another country and relying on specialised translators for some of the speeches may lead to the omission of essential connotative elements relevant to the country's context, which may not be perceived or included in the analysis. This is an important consideration.

4. Results

a. Descriptive analysis

i) *The EU's management of the two refugee waves:*

Firstly, a general analysis will be conducted on the main differences between the EU's management of the two refugee waves and its impact on Member States. The primary difference between the 2015 wave and the 2022 wave essentially lies in the implementation—or lack thereof—of ad hoc measures. While the EU's framework of action in 2015 was determined by the legacy of a past public policy not designed for a scenario of mass refugee arrival, in 2022, the EU adopted specific policies to manage the Ukrainian refugee wave.

On the one hand, the management of reception and asylum during the 2015 wave was based on the Dublin III Regulation, a policy created prior to the wave, whose core principle was that refugees had to seek asylum in the first EU country they entered. This caused Europe's external border countries to be overwhelmed with refugees, many of whom began journeys across Europe where each country decided whether to open or close their borders to them.

In contrast, regarding the 2022 refugee wave, the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) was unanimously activated in March 2022. It offered temporary protection to all refugees residing in Ukraine, regardless of their nationality. As a result, all refugees were granted three-year work and residence permits with social benefits. Additionally, refugees were not forced to remain in the first EU country they entered; instead, they had freedom of movement within the EU once admitted to its territory (Åslund, 2022).

This divergence leads to two further crucial differences. Firstly, the legacy of the Dublin Regulation caused an accumulation of refugees in certain countries, especially Greece and Italy. For this reason, the Commission introduced a Relocation Policy for 160,000 refugees⁷ and ⁸, establishing quotas of refugees to be received by each Member State. This was a failure because, on the one hand, Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia refused to accept this refugee distribution, and on the other hand, because, ultimately, the number of relocated refugees did not reach 30,000. At the same time, it should be noted that both the UN, the Council of Europe, and civil society organisations have demonstrated and denounced inadequate access and continuous delays in asylum procedures and evaluations, as well as inhumane detention conditions for refugees in various States (Carrera et al., 2015).

It is evident that the Dublin Regulation is unsuitable in the current context of migratory waves, as it places a disproportionate burden on the border States on the EU's periphery. The Relocation System also fails because, apart from the lack of willingness of many Member States to receive refugees, its "exceptional" character ceases to apply as migratory waves become an increasing phenomenon. Moreover, neither the Dublin Regulation nor the quota system it seeks to adapt take into account refugees' personal preferences.

⁷ Firstly, through a mechanism to relocate 40,000 refugees proposed in May 2015, and later, through a second relocation mechanism for 120,000 refugees in September 2015 (European Commission, 2015a).

⁸ It should be noted that this policy was part of the European Agenda on Migration, which also established a mechanism to relocate refugees outside the EU territory, increased the powers of Frontex and Europol, provided financial aid to EU Member States bordering refugee flows, and combated human trafficking mafias and smugglers.

The second major difference arising from these events is the EU's final reliance on the EU-Turkey Declaration as a solution to the 2015 wave. Under this March 2016 agreement, Turkey essentially committed to preventing refugee flows from entering Greece and authorised the EU to return refugees arriving in Greece to Turkey. In exchange for this agreement, which made the EU's unwillingness to host refugees publicly evident, Turkey received €6 billion in aid to manage refugee flows, reactivated negotiations for EU membership, updated the customs union, and reduced visa restrictions for Turkish citizens (Åslund, 2022; European Commission, 2015b; Terry, 2021).

In summary, the 2015 management was unequal, uncoordinated, and dysfunctional through a regulation incapable of managing a massive refugee wave and a series of decisions that induced disobedience, free-riding, and resulted in an agreement of questionable morality. Conversely, the 2022 wave management abandoned the principle of the Dublin Regulation through *ad hoc* policies, which eliminated the need for refugee accumulation in specific border States, made the quota concept unnecessary, and fostered an environment where no EU State closed its borders, leading to widespread cooperation and solidarity.

ii) Member State management in line with the Commission instructions:

In line with what has been presented so far, below are the main European Commission directives to Member States regarding refugee reception and their compliance, first for the 2015 wave and then for the 2022 wave.

Starting with 2015, as previously outlined, the accumulation of refugees in border Member States led to the Commission directing Member States to establish a system of reception quotas through two successive relocation and resettlement mechanisms with a dual objective. On the one hand, to relocate 160,000 refugees present in Italy, Greece, and Hungary within a two-month period through a mandatory quota system⁹ (European Commission, 2015a). On the other hand, to ensure a unified, coordinated, and joint response from Member States.

The determination of quotas varied over the months depending on the context and the degree of compliance. In this regard, apart from noting that only 4,500 refugee transfers took place during the first year¹⁰, the resistance shown by States must also be acknowledged, particularly

⁹ The quotas were determined proportionally based on a series of state indicators: 40% corresponded to the size of the population, 40% to GDP, 10% to the average number of asylum applications received, and 10% to the unemployment rate.

¹⁰ If the pace of refugee relocations from the initial phases of the mechanism had continued, it would have taken 750 years to relocate the 160,000 asylum seekers intended for relocation (Higgins, 2015).

by the Visegrad Group, which accused the Commission of acting beyond its competences and initiated proceedings against it at the CJEU. Due to these difficulties, the Commission, which also took the Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary to the CJEU, decided to reduce the relocation target from 160,000 to 98,000 refugees.

The specific implementation of these new quotas and their compliance by obligated States, as shown in Table A (annex), was largely insufficient. Of the 98,225 refugees to be received, the obligated countries hosted only 26,426, amounting to 26.9% of the quotas established by the Commission, with an average compliance rate of 37.61%. In this context, while only Malta fully complied with the Commission's directives, and three other States—Finland, Ireland, and Luxembourg—complied with more than 75%, 17 countries fulfilled less than 50%, with Hungary and Poland not receiving any refugees at all.

Regarding the selected sample States, as shown in Table 5, only Finland nearly complied with its quotas. Along with Portugal, which received only half the refugees it was obligated to host, these are the only countries for which the Commission did not initiate infringement proceedings for breaching EU law. Conversely, Hungary did not host any refugees and closed its borders, leading the Commission first to send formal letters of notification¹¹ for breach of EU law, then to open infringement proceedings against Hungary, and finally, two years later, to file a lawsuit at the CJEU.

The other cause that leads to this major confrontation between Hungary and the Commission, beyond the systematic rejection of all asylum applications, is the series of legislative reforms on asylum, borders, and defence adopted in the summer of 2015 by the Hungarian parliament. Under this legislation, Hungary constructed walls on its borders with Croatia and Slovenia to prevent refugees from entering the country—a move heavily criticized by the Commission, as building walls to block international protection for asylum seekers violates the Schengen Treaty. Additionally, it promoted the 'pushbacks' of refugees, established criminal penalties of up to 5 years in prison for migrants—including refugees—who entered Hungary illegally through the establishment of quasi-judicial courts with judicial powers¹², and granted the army authority over border management (European Commission, 2015d).

¹¹ The Formal Letters of Notification are the first step in the EU law infringement process (European Commission, 2015c).

¹² The submission to these quasi-judicial courts also implied a lack of legal protection, through the absence of the guarantee of the right to defence, violating the principles of separation of powers and effective judicial protection.

Table 5: Degree of compliance and confrontation with the Commission by the analysed States.

	Number of refugees hosted relative to the quota	Requirements or infringement procedures initiated by the European Commission against the State
Portugal	1,451 refugees out of quota of 2,951 (49.17%) (8th best country).	No requirements or infringement procedures initiated.
Finland	1, 975 refugees out of quota of 2,078 (95.04%) (2nd best country).	No requirements or infringement procedures initiated.
Hungary	0 refugee out of quota of 1,294 (0%) (worst country).	European Commission actions in 2015: a) Two formal letters of request for failing to communicate either the transposition of the Asylum Procedures Directive or the transposition of the Reception Conditions Directive. b) Administrative letter requesting clarifications regarding compliance with the EURODAC Regulation. c) Initiation of infringement proceedings for the incompatibility of its asylum legislation with EU law. European Commission action in 2017: A lawsuit against Hungary in the European Court of Justice (ECJ) for refusing to accept the refugee relocation mechanism. The C-718/17 ruling confirmed Hungary's actions violated EU law.

Source: own elaboration based on data from European Commission (2015c) and Harris (2017).

Shifting to the 2022 wave, as previously mentioned, the reception of Ukrainian refugees in the EU centred around the activation of the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD), unanimously approved in March 2022 and extended until March 2024 at the Commission's initiative. This led to a coordinated response from the Member States, with no border closures or systematic denials of asylum applications. Instead, collective protection was provided to all refugees from Ukraine through a mechanism that also facilitated a more equitable distribution of refugees among Member States, involving all countries. This approach avoided the establishment of a mandatory quota system by the Commission.

As shown in Table B (annex), nearly 4 million refugees have benefited from this temporary protection mechanism, with an average reception ratio of 8.63 refugees per 100,000 inhabitants at the community level. In line with this, Table 6 also highlights significantly higher convergence compared to Table 5 in terms of refugee reception in Portugal, Finland, and Hungary.

Table 6: Hosting of refugees from Ukraine under temporary protection by Portugal, Finland and Hungary.

Portugal	55,920 refugees (5.4 refugees per 1,000 inhabitants).
Finland	46,810 refugees (8.44 refugees per 1,000 inhabitants).
Hungary	29,555 refugees (3.05 refugees per 1,000 inhabitants).

Source: own elaboration based on data from European Council (2023) and Eurostat (2023).

However, there are several aspects where state autonomy has caused some divergences—though not conflicts with the Commission—in the implementation of the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) in certain areas of the refugee reception regime. The most significant areas are entry and re-entry requirements and the protection status of refugees. Below, these areas will be briefly analysed for the three states in the sample, based on data from the European Council (2023a) on Refugees and Exile.

Starting with entry requirements, there are two approaches. While Portugal allows refugees to enter without a visa if they hold a biometric passport, the Finnish and Hungarian approaches permit visa-free entry outright¹³. Regarding re-entry requirements, all three states allow for temporary trips to Ukraine without losing temporary protection status.

In terms of granting temporary protection status¹⁴, all three states extend protection to Ukrainian citizens, third-country nationals residing in Ukraine, and their close family members, albeit with minor differences. Hungary provides a less protective regime for Ukrainian nationals who arrived in the country before the war's outbreak, whereas Portugal has expanded the scope to include additional family members and third-country nationals. Concerning the duration of protection, all three states foresee the possibility of extending temporary protection status.

¹³ In case of not having a biometric passport, in Hungary, one could only obtain a temporary residence certificate instead of temporary protection.

¹⁴ The beneficiaries of temporary protection status have freedom of movement within the Schengen area (sometimes with temporary limitations), the right to a temporary residence permit, the right of access to the labour market, the right to social assistance, the right to healthcare, the right to financial support, and, in the case of unaccompanied minors, the right to legal guardianship and education.

Ultimately, considering the actions of the Member States during the 2015 and 2022 waves, the stark divergence between the two is evident. On the one hand, in 2015, the States asymmetrically failed to comply with the Commission's directives, with Finland and Hungary representing the most opposing extremes in terms of compliance and confrontation with the Commission. On the other hand, in 2022, the States demonstrated unanimous alignment with the Commission's directives.

This contrast between Hungary's widespread non-implementation of EU law and the non-application of the Commission's directives shown by Hungary and Portugal directly clashes with the unified and coordinated implementation of the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD). This highlights that what determines whether a refugee is considered an illegal immigrant has nothing to do with the individual's circumstances but rather with the State's willingness to provide refuge. In other words, the legality or illegality of a refugee's stay in a country is not initially a legal fact but a political decision from which legal facts subsequently arise. The actions of the Member States during both waves and the resulting number of refugees they ultimately hosted reflect this, revealing a clear politicisation of asylum.

Additionally, up to this point in the research, it appears that the presence of far-right influence in decisions to host refugees only has an impact when it is part of the executive and in a context of generalised non-cooperation among Member States, as observed in Hungary's stance during the 2015 and 2022 waves.

b. Causal analysis

The main results of the causal analysis will be presented below, consisting of a discourse analysis of the securitizing role played by the States in the sample as a causal factor in the uneven implementation of the Commission's guidelines during the two waves of refugees

i) Securitization of the 2015 wave¹⁵:

Based on how the 2015 refugee wave was discursively addressed by the analyzed securitizing actors, three different strategies can be identified: the strategy of double securitization, the strategy of securitization around refugees, and the strategy of securitization in opposition to refugees.

¹⁵ As for the heads of government, the speeches of the Prime Minister of Portugal—António Costa—, Finland—Juha Sipilä—, and Hungary—Viktor Orbán—will be analysed; regarding the far-right leaders, only the speeches of the leader of the Finns Party—Timo Soini—will be analysed, since in Hungary this role overlaps with the head of government, and in 2015, no far-right party had parliamentary representation in Portugal.

Double securitization strategy:

Starting with Portugal, a series of speeches delivered by its Prime Minister, the socialist **António Costa**, in March 2016 were analyzed—a period in which discourse around the refugee wave intensified, particularly through parliamentary interventions and press conferences related to European Council meetings. At that time, the Relocation and Resettlement Mechanism was in an early phase of implementation, while several Member States were already expressing strong opposition to the mechanism, notably Hungary. Additionally, it is important to note the context of EU negotiations with Turkey regarding the management of the refugee wave, as well as bilateral negotiations between Turkey and Greece, which was overwhelmed by the influx of refugees.

Costa's discursive strategy consists of a double securitization of related, though clearly distinct, referent issues. On one hand, Costa (2015a, 2015b, 2015c, and 2015d) identifies two main referent issues: what he calls the “refugee crisis” and the “threat to the Europe of values.” On the other hand, the referent objects he identifies are the refugees and European citizens, respectively. At no point does he place refugees and Europeans within the same conceptual framework, clearly distinguishing between both spheres.

With regard to refugees, Costa demonstrates strong support for their reception through emotional rhetoric. On one hand, he presents welcoming them as an absolute priority “above bilateral agreements between Greece and Turkey, and above the decisions of the European Council”; on the other hand, he emphasizes the morality of their reception, stating that it is necessary to guarantee “the opportunity for every human being to find a new chance (...) for self-fulfillment,” even drawing on temporal narratives by comparing this “humanitarian catastrophe” to the refugee wave of World War II (Costa, 2015b and 2015c).

Nevertheless, this dominant emotional narrative is accompanied by a pragmatic one, which semantically conveys that refugee reception poses an inconvenience to Member States, as a factor of instability for the EU, affecting institutional security and its citizens. Precisely for this reason, Costa (2015a, 2015c, and 2015d) repeatedly emphasizes that this “effort (...) must be fairly and jointly shared” among Member States, and that a “shared burden must be assumed.” He links this “refugee crisis” to the rise of populism that “combats the European project” and the consequent “destruction of Schengen” (Costa, 2015b and 2015c). Notably, terms like “solidarity” or “understanding” are used only when referring to the situation in Greece—rather than the refugees—highlighting, indirectly, the massive wave as a potential threat (Costa,

2015d). Therefore, he identifies other challenges related to the refugee wave that endanger the stability of the European project and frames messages with connotations of managing the “burden” posed by the refugees.

Securitization around refugees strategy:

The second identified discursive strategy was employed by Finnish Prime Minister **Juha Sipilä**, a conservative, through nationally televised institutional speeches delivered in September 2015, when the Relocation and Resettlement Mechanism was established, coinciding with a major economic crisis in the country.

Sipilä’s discursive strategy consists of a **securitization of the “refugee situation”**—never using the term “crisis” to describe their arrival—aimed at protecting refugees as the referent object, based on the “war, hunger, and poverty” they were fleeing (Sipilä, 2015b). In other words, the security threat he identifies lies in the situation of these refugees “wherever they may be” (Sipilä, 2015a).

Although he refers to the reception of refugees as an “unprecedented challenge” in a time of “economic hardship,” Sipilä not only states that the government is “fully prepared” to receive and integrate asylum seekers, but he also calls on all citizens to “find the humanity within themselves” and “look in the mirror and ask how they can help” (Sipilä, 2015a and 2015b). In fact, Sipilä offered and adapted his second private residence to host refugees (Sipilä, 2015a).

In this way, Sipilä combines a discourse appealing to reason—providing reassurance about the state’s ability to host and integrate refugees—with one appealing to emotion and Finnish pride, to awaken their most humanitarian side and turn Finland into an example to follow. He frames the refugee as a victim deserving of help by all means and identifies Finnish society as the main potential helper (Sipilä, 2015a and 2015b). All of this is done through a dramatization of the refugee situation and by going from words to action through the offer of his own home, assuming a clear leadership role.

Securitization in opposition to refugees strategy:

It can be ruled out that Sipilä’s discourse was influenced by the far-right, considering that the then-leader of Finland’s far-right and Minister of Foreign Affairs, **Timo Soini**, developed an opposing discursive strategy. His speeches at European and international conferences during the same period as Sipilä’s were analyzed.

Although Soini expressed concern for the refugees' situation, he discursively identified them as the threat from which Finns needed protection, framing the "refugee crisis" as the referent issue, and the Finnish and European citizenry as the referent object (Soini, 2015a and 2015b).

Specifically, as noted by Huysmans (2000) and Galantino (2020) regarding the securitization of migration in the EU¹⁶, Soini identifies the economy and welfare state as the specific referent objects under threat. He describes the situation as "unsustainable" for European states, as none of them can "handle so much pressure," lacking "money, schools, social services, or resources" (Soini, 2015b).

Because of this, he criticizes the Relocation and Resettlement Mechanism for sending a message to refugees and human traffickers that "they can go wherever they want" (Soini, 2015b). Instead of trying to alleviate the refugees' situation, Soini offers vague proposals to "address the root of the problem" by "tackling climate change," "resolving conflicts," and "ending wars" (Soini, 2015a and 2015b). Moreover, he discursively transfers the responsibility of "taking care of refugees" to UNHCR (Soini, 2015a).

Ultimately, this discursive strategy was taken to the extreme by **Viktor Orbán**, Hungary's far-right Prime Minister, through a series of speeches delivered at EU and international level during September and October 2015, and nationally during the first quarter of 2016.

Like Soini, Orbán (2015c and 2015d) securitizes the Hungarian and European citizenry as referent objects. However, unlike Soini, he refers to the situation not as a refugee crisis, but as a "**migrant crisis**"—thus denying their right to asylum—and claims the wave comprises economic migrants, refugees, and foreign fighters.

In line with the conclusions of Huysmans (2000) and Galantino (2020), Orbán identifies multiple threats posed by this "crisis" to public order and European identity and culture. First, he links the arrival of migrants with "crime, terrorism, homophobia, and antisemitism," and with "gangs hunting our women and daughters" (Orbán, 2015a and 2016). Second, he claims that the "heritage of civilization" is at risk due to a "forced cultural shift" and the rise of "parallel societies" (Orbán, 2015d).

In response, Orbán (2015a, 2015b, and 2015d) advocates for a quasi-military policy of "defending borders" and "defending Europe" through Schengen and the rule of law, to put an end to the mass arrival of migrants that, he asserts, is causing chaos, shame, and

¹⁶ See section 2 of the theoretical framework.

instability in Europe. He warns that the current approach sends a general message that “Europe has its doors open to everyone,” which would turn “ourselves into victims” of the migrants.

His discourse is delivered with a combative tone, using semantics evocative of an invasion—identifying the wave as an army, continually referencing border defence, and framing the necessity of non-reception as if Hungary’s and the EU’s very survival were at stake.

Table 7: Securitization of the 2015 refugee wave.

Securitizing actor	Referent issue	Referent object
António Costa, Portugal PM	Double and Interrelated: a) The institutional and values crisis of the EU; b) The "refugee crisis".	a) The EU and European citizens; b) Refugees.
Juha Sipilä, Finland PM	The “refugees’ situation”.	Refugees and the war, hunger and poverty they flee from.
Timo Soini, Finnish Foreign Affairs Minister and Finnish Party leader	The “refugees’ crisis”.	Finnish and European citizenship, specifically in relation to the economy and the welfare state.
Viktor Orbán, Hungary PM	The “migrants’ crisis”.	Hungarian and European citizenship, specifically in relation to public order and cultural identity.

Source: own elaboration.

ii) Securitization of the 2022 wave¹⁷:

Despite the securitisation of the refugee wave resulting from the war in Ukraine having been unified in terms of the necessary reception of refugees, within this consensus three distinct securitisation strategies can be identified.

Securitization strategy of the Prime Ministers:

Both **António Costa** and **Sanna Marin**, the social-democratic Prime Ministers of Portugal and Finland respectively, have pursued a very similar securitisation strategy regarding the refugee wave caused by the war in Ukraine. This has been conveyed through their national and international speeches, with both having visited Ukraine on several occasions.

On the one hand, Costa and Marin identify the war in Ukraine as the central referent issue. Regarding the referent object, it is key to understand that both employ a discursive strategy that portrays Russia as Europe's enemy within the context of a war in which Ukraine, as part of the European side, is seen as the first victim of aggression. Thus, the principal referent object is the Ukrainian people, within the broader European community, which is also included in this referent issue. This means that the securitisation of the refugee wave must be understood within the broader securitisation of the war in Ukraine. From this derive other issues that Costa and Marin frame as major threats: the energy crisis (Costa, 2022a & 2022b; Marin, 2022c & 2023), the food crisis (Costa, 2022b & 2022d), Russian cyberattacks (Marin, 2022c), and the paradigm shift in international relations due to the "blatant violation of international law" (Costa, 2022d), which has "completely changed the security environment" (Marin, 2022b).

Regarding refugees, both leaders take responsibility for their reception and integration, framing it as a "duty of all countries around the world" (Costa, 2022e), and presenting asylum as an apolitical issue, outside the scope of political debate (Costa, 2022a, 2022b & 2022e; Marin, 2022a & 2022d). They achieve this through a dramatizing discursive strategy, in which they consistently appeal to "solidarity" as the core value that should emerge from the behaviour of states and citizens alike (Costa, 2022b; Marin, 2022a & 2022d).

In line with this, both Costa (2022c)—expressing his "admiration for the courage of the Ukrainian people"—and Marin (2022a)—stating that Ukrainians "in our hearts, have already

¹⁷ Regarding the heads of government, the speeches of the Prime Minister of Portugal—António Costa—, Finland—Sanna Marin—and Hungary—Viktor Orbán—will be analysed; regarding the leaders of the far right, the speeches of the leader of the Portuguese extreme right—André Ventura—and of the leader of the Finnish extreme right—Riikka Purra—will be analysed.

won”—discursively present the refugees as heroes, legitimising their reception. Another strategy of legitimation used is drawing historical parallels between the Ukrainian refugee wave and the history of their respective countries. While Costa (2022e) refers to the time when “under the rule of the Inquisition, Portuguese people sought refuge,” Marin (2023) refers to how “we’ve been at war with Russia and we know what that means.” Additionally, it is worth noting that this pro-reception discourse takes place within a rhetoric and tone of militarism, especially from Marin, given Finland’s geographical proximity to Russia and its historical relationship with it.

Finally, the proposals by Costa and Marin to manage the war and the refugee wave are bold and twofold: on the one hand, deepening sanctions against Russia, and on the other, sending financial, military, and humanitarian aid to Ukraine, including the reception of refugees. For all these reasons, both call for a united and strong Europe, including Ukraine within the European bloc to confront Russia as a common enemy (Costa, 2022a; Marin, 2022a). As Costa (2022a) puts it, “only a strong Europe can help Ukraine and can be capable of strengthening its security and defence instruments.”

Securitisation Strategy of the Far-Right in Opposition:

If the securitisation strategies of Costa and Marin share many common points, the securitising discourses of the far-right leader of *Chega!* **André Ventura** and the leader of the Finns Party, also far-right, **Riikka Purra**, are even more alike.

Through a series of statements and social media posts in the months following the onset of the war, both expressed support for welcoming Ukrainian refugees and opposition to the war (Ventura, 2022a; Purra, 2022a). Therefore, they too identify the war in Ukraine as the referent issue and Ukrainian refugees as the referent object. In Ventura’s case (2022a), he also identifies Europe as a referent object, opposing the policy of “abandoning armies and defending Portugal and Europe (...) with paper and flowers in hand,¹⁸” advocating instead for increased focus on NATO, the military, and national defence, in contrast to Russia’s actions.

However, regarding refugees, although Ventura (2022a, 2022b) and Purra (2022a, 2022b & 2022c) stress their vulnerability and the fact that they are fleeing the bombs of an “unjust, illegal, and aggressive war” (Ventura, 2022a), they also underline the limited resources of the

¹⁸ We can observe how he uses an expression with a high symbolic load in Portugal, despising the symbolism of the Carnation Revolution that ended the authoritarian and militaristic far-right regime in Portugal in 1974.

state and highlight the need to prioritise covering the basic services for the national population. This is why Purra (2022a) argues for the “reinstatement of the refugee quota.”

What makes these discourses unique is their introduction of a parallel narrative, effectively conducting a double securitisation. They contrast Ukrainian refugees with “subsistence refugees” (Purra, 2022c)—that is, non-Ukrainian refugees—whom they frame as a different referent issue to be securitised in opposition, using emotionalised discourse and a markedly nationalist language.

In this way, a discursive narrative of the “good” and “bad” refugee is constructed, based on the referent object both identify. On one hand, Ventura (2022a) securitises the European and Portuguese citizenry, referencing the three categories identified by Huysmans (2000) and Galantino (2020) in the securitisation of migration in Europe: public order, cultural identity, and the welfare state. He claims these (non-Ukrainian) refugees “come to Europe to promote terrorism, division, and the humiliation of women,” and that they “put burqas on our women and strip away our social security benefits.” On the other hand, the referent object established by Purra (2022a & 2022c) is the European and Finnish citizenry in relation to the threat posed to the welfare state. She identifies refugees coming “from the Middle East and Africa” as “subsistence migrants” in a context of resource scarcity in Finland.

Orbán’s intermediate securitization strategy:

The securitisation strategy of Hungarian far-right Prime Minister **Viktor Orbán** regarding the 2022 refugee wave occupies a middle ground between the two positions previously analysed, based on a series of statements he made during a visit to a refugee reception centre on the Hungarian-Ukrainian border at the start of the war, and in a national interview.

Like the other actors, Orbán identifies the war in Ukraine as the referent issue. He also identifies Ukraine and its refugees, along with Europe, as referent objects—similarly to Costa and Marin (Orbán, 2022a & 2022b). Thus, Orbán unequivocally supports receiving Ukrainian refugees, stating that “they can count on us” and that “humanity comes first” (Orbán, 2022a).

In this vein, although he does not question Hungary’s ability to receive and integrate these refugees—unlike Ventura and Purra—he does draw a parallel with them by stating that “migrants”—in reference to non-Ukrainian refugees—“are stopped,” whereas “refugees”—meaning Ukrainians—“can have all our help” (Orbán, 2022a). Once again, as in 2015, he identifies refugees from the Middle East and Africa as a threat to be securitized.

Table 8: Securitization of the 2022 refugee wave.

Securitizing actor	Referent issue	Referent object
António Costa, Portugal PM	War in Ukraine (“war unleashed by Russia”).	Ukrainian refugees, within the framework of Ukraine, within the framework of Europe, in opposition to Russia.
André Ventura, <i>Chega!</i> leader	It is twofold: a) War in Ukraine and b) The “other” refugees.	a) Ukrainian refugees and Europe, in opposition to Russia and b) Portuguese citizenship, specifically, in relation to internal security, cultural identity and the welfare state.
Sanna Marin, Finland PM	Ukrainian War.	Ukrainian refugees, within the framework of Ukraine, within the framework of Europe, in opposition to Russia.
Riikka Purra, Finnish Party leader	It is twofold: a) War in Ukraine and b) The “subsistence” refugees.	a) Ukrainian refugees, in opposition to Russia and b) Finnish citizenship, specifically, in relation to the welfare state.
Viktor Orbán, Hungary PM	Ukrainian war.	Ukrainian refugees, Ukraine and Europe, in opposition to the war.

Source: own elaboration.

The other major divergence between Orbán and Marin and Costa lies in his ambiguity in condemning Russian actions and in proposing conflict resolution measures. On the one hand, he does express opposition to Russia's actions, stating that "war is never acceptable for any reason" (Orbán, 2022b), and affirming that he will not block EU sanctions against Russia and that "EU unity is now the most important thing¹⁹" (Orbán, 2022b). However, he implies that the West shares some blame for the conflict, saying "we are caught in the crossfire of (...) NATO, which has expanded eastwards, and Russia, which has liked it less and less," having decided to "secure guarantees for its demands through war (...) after failing to obtain them politically" (Orbán, 2022b).

Moreover, all the aid he announces in support of Ukraine does not entail any threat to Russia. Unlike Costa and Marin, he does not send arms to Ukraine but instead advocates for "negotiating with the Russians," "delivering fuel and basic foodstuffs," and "providing humanitarian aid" (Orbán, 2022b). This behaviour is likely linked to his close relationship with Putin, which is confirmed when he declares, for instance, that "there is no argument in favour of breaking off our energy cooperation with the Russians" (Orbán, 2022b).

iii) Comparison and discussion of the causal analysis, connection with the descriptive analysis, and validation of the hypotheses:

Through the discourse analyses conducted around the two waves of refugees, it has been determined that, in general terms, the differentiation between the securitization of the two lies in the fact that, while the 2015 wave was securitized in opposition to refugees within a context characterised as a crisis due to their arrival in Europe, the 2022 wave was securitized around refugees in opposition to Russia as a common enemy in a wartime context.

It is true that there were securitizing actors during the 2015 wave who were in favour of reception, such as Costa and Sipilä, who stood in stark contrast to far-right politicians who were openly opposed to it. However, only in the case of the Finnish Prime Minister was there no identification or association of refugees with a potential threat or crisis due to their consequences. Conversely, during the 2022 wave, refugees were not associated with any threat to European security²⁰. Instead, Russia's actions were securitized as the central issue, with the atypical case of Orbán focusing more on the war itself without explicitly including Russia.

¹⁹ He once again agrees with Marin and Costa regarding the importance of a united EU.

²⁰ With the exception of Ventura and Purra, who hinted that they posed an obstacle to the economy despite clearly supporting reception.

Another aspect confirming the discursive differentiation between the two waves lies in the solutions proposed, the specificity, and the commitment shown by the securitizing actors. On the one hand, during the 2022 wave, prime ministers not only demonstrated solidarity with refugees but also travelled to Ukraine, offering concrete and bold solutions, such as sending military aid to Ukraine²¹. In contrast, during the 2015 wave, beyond expressing a degree of sympathy and discursive solidarity with refugees— even from figures like Soini— there was no significant step taken to propose solutions addressing the root causes of the refugee situation. When proposals were made, they were often ambiguous, impractical, or unfeasible.

In other words, while in 2022 the root of the problem was addressed by framing the refugee wave within the context of the War in Ukraine— leading to solutions that considered this continuity and aimed to counter and combat Russia— in 2015, the refugee wave was treated as an isolated phenomenon. No credible proposals were made to address the causes of the migratory flow. This is why the term "crisis" was never used to describe the arrival of Ukrainian refugees, whereas the 2015 wave was labelled the "Refugee Crisis." It was treated in isolation from the reasons why these refugees were fleeing their countries, and thus, the arrival of refugees was identified as a problem for Europe

Connecting the causal analysis with the descriptive one, it is evident that the contrast between the unitary securitization of the 2022 wave and the non-unitary securitization of the 2015 wave resulted in a unified response by the States to the 2022 wave and a non-unified response to the 2015 wave. Therefore, as observed in Table 9, based on the results of this research, it can indeed be confirmed that the degree of securitization influenced the confrontation—or lack thereof— with the European Commission and the subsequent reception of refugees.

This clearly translates into the fact that the securitization of refugee arrivals, depending on whether it is done in opposition to or around them, implies either an apoliticisation or a politicisation of asylum, respectively. That is, while in 2022 the reception of refugees was not a subject of debate or disagreement, in 2015 the reception or non-reception of refugees was clearly politicised by parties across Europe, leading to different actions depending on the State regarding the reception of refugees, and becoming a key issue on the political agenda.

²¹ The exception in this case was Orbán, who displayed significant ambiguity and very little initiative in decision-making on how to assist Ukraine and Ukrainians, in stark contrast to the active role he played during the 2015 wave.

Therefore, based on the results of the descriptive and causal analysis, the main hypothesis related to the research question can be validated. According to this hypothesis, the lack of questioning by the States of the Commission's guidelines on refugee reception in the 2022 wave—and, therefore, the reception of refugees—can be explained by the issuance of a securitizing discourse that includes refugees within the referent object. Conversely, the other side of this question, concerning the 2015 wave, has allowed for the determination that the questioning of the Commission's guidelines observed in the descriptive analysis—and, therefore, the insufficient reception of refugees—can be explained by the inability to issue a joint securitization that included refugees within the referent object.

Finally, regarding the influence of the presence of the far-right, the sub-hypothesis suggesting that, in the absence of joint securitization—i.e., in the case of the 2015 wave—a greater presence of the far-right in a State's political system increases the likelihood of conflict with the Commission cannot be validated. Although the causal analysis, particularly concerning the 2015 wave, has shown that the far-right's securitizing discourse is much more aggressive in opposition to refugees, the case of Finland during the 2015 wave does not allow for the validation of the sub-hypothesis. Despite being governed by a coalition government with a far-right party opposed to reception, this did not influence the country's compliance with the Commission's guidelines—being one of the few that did so—nor the securitization carried out by its prime minister. However, based on the results, it can be affirmed that the presence of the far-right increases the likelihood of conflict with the Commission when it holds executive power and there is no joint securitization, as was the case with Hungary in the 2015 wave.

Table 9: Influence of securitizing discourse on the reception of refugees and the degree of confrontation with the Commission

Member State	Wave	Securiti- zing actor	Referent issue	Referent object	Hosted refugees	Confrontation degree vs Commission
<i>Portugal</i>	2015	Costa	Double and Interrelated: a) The institutional and values crisis of the EU; b) The "refugee crisis".	a) The EU and European citizens; b) Refugees.	1.451 refugees out of the quota's 2.951 (49,17% compliance)	Moderate-low.
	2022	Costa	War in Ukraine ("war unleashed by Russia").	Ukrainian refugees, within the framework of Ukraine, within the framework of Europe, in opposition to Russia.	55.920 refugees (5,4 refugees per 100.000 inhab)	None.
		Ventura	It is twofold: a) War in Ukraine and b) The "other" refugees.	a) Ukrainian refugees and Europe, in opposition to Russia and b) Portuguese citizenship, specifically, in relation to internal security, cultural identity and the welfare state.		
<i>Finland</i>	2015	Sipilä	The "refugees' situation".	Refugees and the war, hunger and poverty they flee from.	1.975 refugees out of the quota's 2.078 quota (95,04% compliance)	None.
		Soini	The "refugees' crisis".	Finnish and European citizenship, specifically in relation to the economy and the welfare state.		

Member State	Wave	Securiti- zing actor	Referent issue	Referent object	Hosted refugees	Confrontation degree vs Commission
<i>Finland</i>	2022	Marin	Ukrainian War.	Ukrainian refugees, within the framework of Ukraine, within the framework of Europe, in opposition to Russia.	46.810 refugees (8,44 refugees per 100.000 inhab.)	None.
		Purra	It is twofold: a) War in Ukraine and b) The “subsistence” refugees.	a) Ukrainian refugees, in opposition to Russia and b) Finnish citizenship, specifically, in relation to the welfare state.		
<i>Hungary</i>	2015	Orbán	The “migrants’ crisis”.	Hungarian and European citizenship, specifically in relation to public order and cultural identity.	0 refugees out of the quota’s 1.294 (0% compliance)	Very high.
	2022	Orbán	Ukrainian War.	Ukrainian refugees, Ukraine and Europe, in opposition to the war.	29.555 refugees (3,05 refugees per 100.000 inhab).	None

Source: own elaboration.

5. Conclusions

With the primary aim of analysing the response of the Member States (MS) to the wave of refugees resulting from the still-persistent War in Ukraine and the explanatory factors behind it, this research has approached the analysis through a comparison with the response given by the MS to the 2015 refugee wave, due to the apparent divergence in the management of both waves.

The first part of the analysis has consisted precisely in confirming these differences in the management of the two waves by both the EU and the MS. At the EU level, the main difference was the application in 2015 of an outdated EU regulation incapable of managing large waves of refugees, which led to the need to establish a Relocation and Resettlement Mechanism and a controversial agreement with Turkey. In contrast, in 2022, ad hoc policies were implemented through the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD), facilitating the reception of refugees by the States. At the MS level, in 2015, a generalised lack of cooperation and solidarity was identified, resulting in widespread non-compliance with the quotas established by the Commission and subsequent confrontations between some States and the Commission, with Hungary being a notable case. Conversely, in 2022, generalised solidarity and cooperation were observed, with all States receiving refugees without confrontations with the Commission.

The second part of the research aimed to identify the reasons for these differences, confirming whether the securitization carried out in these States is a causal factor of these divergences and analysing the impact of the far-right on this securitization and reception.

While in the 2015 wave, a generalised securitization was carried out in opposition to refugees, in the 2022 wave, there was securitization in opposition to Russia and around refugees as victims of a common enemy shared by the MS. This resulted in the 2015 wave being treated as a phenomenon in itself, categorising the crisis and refugees as a danger to the States and the EU. In contrast, the 2022 wave was treated as a phenomenon resulting from a war affecting all of Europe, identifying refugees as victims.

Regarding the far-right, its influence on securitization and state action was only observed when it held executive power in a context of non-unitary securitization at the EU level, as was the case with Hungary in 2015.

In conclusion, connecting the two parts of the research, it has been identified that the non-unitary securitization of the 2015 wave—carried out in opposition to refugees—resulted in a

non-unitary and generalised non-reception response by the MS. In contrast, the unitary securitization of the 2022 wave—with refugees included as a referent object, in opposition to Russia—resulted in a unitary and solidary response by the MS. Furthermore, it was identified that those countries that securitised around refugees in 2015 did comply with the quotas established by the Commission, as was the case with Finland. Therefore, a connection can indeed be observed between securitization, the actions of the MS, and confrontations with the Commission.

The main practical implication of the results is that the management of refugee asylum as a political or apolitical issue, depending on the degree of securitization, indicates that Europe is experiencing a politicisation of asylum. Based on this, States offer asylum depending on the type of refugee and the narrative constructed around them. Thus, while the reception of Ukrainian refugees should be valued, the EU and its States cannot afford to act as they did in 2015. The real crisis in 2015 was not the arrival of refugees in Europe but, firstly, that they had to leave their country and become refugees due to the misery of war and oppression, and secondly, that after risking their lives crossing to Europe for a better life, they faced systematic denials of asylum contrary to international law, which criminalised and left them defenceless²². At present, it cannot be said that the lesson has been learned, as the current reception of refugees takes place in a completely different context where a common enemy is shared. Nevertheless, the management of the 2022 wave gives hope and has demonstrated how essential it is for the EU to act in a coordinated and unified manner to address common challenges.

That said, there are three theoretical implications to highlight. Firstly, discourse analysis confirms the validity of studies by Huysmans (2000) and Galantino (2020), which argue that the securitization of migration in Europe involves linking it to threats to cultural identity, the welfare state, and public order. This was evident in the securitization opposing the 2015 refugees based on these threats. Secondly, the external validity of studies such as those by Abou-Chadi and Krause (2018) or Benedicto and Brunet (2018), which claim that far-right parties make other political parties more restrictive on immigration, is questioned. In Finland during the 2015 wave, the far-right's anti-reception discourse—as the second parliamentary force and a government member—did not affect the prime minister's securitization or refugee reception. Finally, these results highlight the importance of discursive constructions in securitising a referent object and acting accordingly, based on the identified connection between

²² Most of whom ended up in refugee camps in Turkey under inhumane conditions.

securitization and each State's reception in each wave, although, as highlighted in the methodology, they only offer internal validity.

Finally, regarding possible future research lines, beyond replicating the analysis for the remaining 24 MS to obtain EU-wide external validity and expanding discourse analysis to include the securitization exercised by the media, several interesting lines stand out. On the one hand, it would be interesting to analyse the actions of the MS in addressing refugee waves from the perspective of Collective Action Theory, replicating the prisoner's dilemma and the willingness to cooperate or not, depending on what other States do, and the incentives provided by the Commission, as a possible alternative causal explanation. On the other hand, a way to deepen this study is to conduct a comparative analysis examining the reception and integration of Ukrainian refugees into associative life and the labour market compared to Middle Eastern refugees who were received, to identify whether these differences in reception also translate into integration. Finally, another interesting line of research would be to analyse how migration policies adopted by the EU and the MS are influenced by public opinion, examining how the migration issue is positioned at the centre of the political agenda at the national or EU level and how different parties use this issue for electoral gain.

6. Bibliographic References and Other Sources Consulted

i) Bibliography:

- Abou-Chadi, T., & Krause, W. (2020). The causal effect of radical right success on mainstream parties' policy positions: A regression discontinuity approach. *British Journal of Political Science*, 50(3), 829-847.
- Aradau, C. (2004). Security and the democratic scene: Desecuritization and emancipation. *Journal of international relations and development*, 7(4), 388-413.
- Åslund, A. (2022). A New Perspective on the Ukrainian Refugee Crisis. In *CESifo Forum* (Vol. 23, No. 04, pp. 3-7). München: ifo Institut-Leibniz-Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung an der Universität München.
- Baldwin, D. (1995). Security studies and the end of the Cold War. *World politics*, 48(1), 117-141.
- Balzacq, T. (2005). The three faces of securitization: Political agency, audience and context. *European journal of international relations*, 11(2), 171-201.
- Benam, Ç. (2011). Emergence of in Europe: Border Control and Securitization of Migration. *Insight Turkey*, 13(3), 191-207.
- Benedicto, A., & Brunet, P. (2018). Building walls: Fear and securitization in the European Union. *Transnational Institute*.
- Bigo, D. (2001). The Möbius ribbon of internal and external security (ies). *Identities, borders, orders: Rethinking international relations theory*, 18, 91-116.
- Bigo, D. (2002). Security and immigration: Toward a critique of the governmentality of unease. *Alternatives*, 27(1), 63-92.
- Bigo, D. (2008). Globalized (in) security: the field and the ban-opticon. In *Terror, insecurity and liberty* (pp. 10-49). Routledge.
- Blommaert, J., & Bulcaen, C. (2000). Critical discourse analysis. *Annual review of Anthropology*, 29(1), 447-466.
- Booth, K. (2013). Seguridad y emancipación. *Relaciones Internacionales*.

- Buonfino, A. (2004). Between unity and plurality: the politicization and securitization of the discourse of immigration in Europe. *New political science*, 26(1), 23-49.
- Buzan, B. (1983). *People, States and Fear; The National Security Problem in International Relation*. The University of North Carolina Press.
- Buzan, B. (1991). New patterns of global security in the twenty-first century. *International affairs*, 67(3), 431-433.
- Buzan, B., Wæver, O., Wæver, O., & De Wilde, J. (1998). *Security: A new framework for analysis*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Carrera, S., Blockmans, S., Gros, D., & Guild, E. (2015). The EU's response to the refugee crisis: Taking stock and setting policy priorities. *CEPS essay*, (20/16).
- Charrett, C. (2009). A critical application of securitization theory: Overcoming the normative dilemma of writing security. *International Catalan Institute for Peace, Working Paper*, (2009/7).
- Ciută, F. (2009). Security and the problem of context: a hermeneutical critique of securitisation theory. *Review of international studies*, 35(2), 301-326.
- Cox, R. (2013). Fuerzas sociales, estados y órdenes mundiales: Más allá de la Teoría de Relaciones Internacionales. *Relaciones internacionales*.
- de Armiño, K. (2015). Estudios de seguridad: de la visión tradicional a los enfoques críticos. In *Teorías de las relaciones internacionales* (pp. 301-328). Tecnos.
- de Dios, M. (2020). El avance electoral de la extrema derecha en el siglo XXI y sus efectos en los sistemas de partidos europeos. *Política y Sociedad*, 57(3), 747.
- Delkáder, A. (2020). Los Estudios Críticos de Seguridad y la Escuela de París: un estudio sobre Frontex y la securitización de la migración en la UE.
- Demirkol, A. (2022). An Empirical Analysis of Securitization Discourse in the European Union. *Migration Letters*, 19(3), 273-286.
- Demurtas, A. (2019). Veinte años de la teoría de la securitización: puntos fuertes y débiles de su operacionalización. *Revista Análisis Jurídico-Político*, 1(1), 167-187.
- Fairclough, N. (1993). *Discourse and social change*. Polity.

- Galantino, M. (2022). The migration–terrorism nexus: An analysis of German and Italian press coverage of the ‘refugee crisis’. *European journal of criminology*, 19(2), 259-281.
- Golder, M. (2016). Far right parties in Europe. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 19, 477-497.
- Hansen, L. (2000). The Little Mermaid's silent security dilemma and the absence of gender in the Copenhagen School. *Millennium*, 29(2), 285-306.
- Huysmans, J. (1995). Migrants as a security problem: Dangers of ‘securitizing’ societal issues. *Migration and European integration: The dynamics of inclusion and exclusion*, 53, 72.
- Huysmans, J. (2000). The European Union and the securitization of migration. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, 38(5), 751-777.
- Huysmans, J. (2006). *The politics of insecurity: Fear, migration and asylum in the EU*. Routledge.
- Kolodziej, E. (2005). *Security and international relations* (Vol. 10). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Léonard, S. (2010). EU border security and migration into the European Union: FRONTEX and securitisation through practices. *European security*, 19(2), 231-254.
- McDonald, M. (2008). Securitization and the Construction of Security. *European journal of international relations*, 14(4), 563-587.
- Messina, A. (2014). Securitizing immigration in the age of terror. *World Politics*, 66(3), 530-559.
- Özgür, Ü., & Selcen, Ö. (2021). Securitization of migration and the rising influence of populist radical right parties in European politics. *Ankara Avrupa Çalışmaları Dergisi*, 20(1), 161-193.
- Rivas de Roca, R., Morais, R., & Jerónimo, P. (2022). Comunicación y desinformación en elecciones: tendencias de investigación en España y Portugal. *Universitas-XXI, Revista de Ciencias Sociales y Humanas*, (36), 71-94.
- Sanahuja, J. (2015). Los desafíos de la Teoría Crítica de las Relaciones Internacionales.

- Šulović, V. (2010). Meaning of security and theory of securitization. *Belgrade Centre for Security Policy*, 5.
- Terry, K. (2021). The EU-Turkey deal, five years on: A frayed and controversial but enduring blueprint. *Migration Policy Institute*, 8.
- Végh, Z. (2022). Tormenta en el horizonte de Viktor Orbán. *Política exterior*, 36(207), 40-46.
- Wæver, O. (1993). *Securitization and desecuritization*. Copenhagen: Centre for Peace and Conflict Research.
- Wæver, O. (2004). Aberystwyth, Paris, Copenhagen: New ‘schools’ in security theory and their origins between core and periphery. In *annual meeting of the International Studies Association, Montreal* (No. s 8).
- Williams, M. (2003). Words, images, enemies: Securitization and international politics. *International studies quarterly*, 47(4), 511-531.
- Wodak, R. (2011). Critical linguistics and critical discourse analysis. *Discursive pragmatics*, 8, 50-70.

ii) *Altres fonts consultades:*

- Berry, Appleman & Leiden. (2017). *EU-Ukraine Visa-Free Agreement Takes Effect*. Retrieved from <https://www.bal.com/bal-news/eu-ukraine-visa-free-agreement-takes-effect/>.
- European Commission. (2015a). *Refugee Crisis – Q&A on Emergency Relocation*. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/fr/MEMO_15_5698.
- European Commission. (2015b). *PRESS RELEASE. Draft Action Plan: Stepping up EU-Turkey cooperation on support of refugees and migration management in view of the situation in Syria and Iraq*. Retrieved from https://trustfund-syria-region.ec.europa.eu/news/managing-refugee-crisis-budgetary-measures-under-european-agenda-migration-2015-09-30_en.
- European Commission. (2015c). *PRESS RELEASE. More Responsibility in managing the refugee crisis: European Commission adopts 40 infringement decisions to make European Asylum System work*. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_15_5699.

European Commission. (2015d). *PRESS RELEASE. Commission opens infringement procedure against Hungary concerning its asylum law*. Retrieved from <https://www.statewatch.org/media/documents/news/2015/dec/eu-com-infringement-hungary-10-12-15.pdf>.

European Council. (2023). *Infografía - Protección temporal de la UE para las personas desplazadas*. Retrieved from <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/es/infographics/temporary-protection-displaced-persons/>.

European Council on Refugees and Exiles. (2023). *Information Sheet – Measures in response to the arrival of displaced people fleeing the war in Ukraine*. Retrieved from <https://ecre.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/ECRE-Update-November-2022-Implementation-of-the-TPD.pdf>.

Eurostat. (2023). *Population change - Demographic balance and crude rates at national level*. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/DEMO_GIND__custom_5468764/bookmark/table?lang=en&bookmarkId=47b3db3a-b5e7-4a7b-a4ee-d61e2d1d259b.

Martínez, S. (2020). La justicia europea condena a Hungría, Polonia y República Checa por no acoger refugiados. *El Periódico*. Retrieved from <https://www.elperiodico.com/es/internacional/20200402/la-justicia-europea-condena-a-hungria-polonia-y-republica-checa-por-no-acoger-refugiados-7914604>.

Harris, C. (2017). Fact check: How many refugees has each EU country taken in?. *EuroNews*. Retrieved from <https://www.euronews.com/2017/09/26/fact-check-how-many-refugees-has-each-eu-country-taken-in>.

Higgins, A. (2015). European Leaders Look Again for a Unified Response to Migrant Crisis. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/26/world/europe/merkel-and-east-european-leaders-discuss-migrant-crisis-in-brussels.html?_r=0.

RTVE. (2023). *El mapa de los refugiados de la guerra de Ucrania: más de ocho millones de personas han abandonado el país*. Retrieved from <https://www.rtve.es/noticias/20230221/mapa-refugiados-guerra-ucrania/2297260.shtml>.

Court of Justice of the European Union. Case-718/17. Judgement from 2 Abril 2017.

UE. (2013). Summary of Regulation (EU) No. 603/2013 on EURODAC, the European Union's fingerprint database for asylum seekers, used to compare their fingerprint records. Retrieved from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/ES/legal-content/summary/eurodac-european-system-for-the-comparison-of-fingerprints-of-asylum-applicants.html>.

Unicef. (2023). *Ucrania: niños y niñas desplazados o refugiados*. Retrieved from <https://www.unicef.es/noticia/ucrania-la-mitad-de-los-desplazados-son-ninos>.

iii) Citació dels discursos analitzats:

Costa, A. (2016a, 7/03). Press statement upon arrival at the meeting of EU Heads of State and Government with Turkey. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkHBG9nzs8M>.

Costa, A. (2016b, 16/03). Parliamentary statement at the opening of the European Council debate (17–18 March) on the refugee crisis. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9sx9YWRvpCA>.

Costa, A. (2016c, 17/03). Parliamentary statement at the closing of the European Council debate (17–18 March) on the refugee crisis. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uHBaCPbtFS0>.

Costa, A. (2016d, 18/03). Press conference statement on the EU-Turkey agreement on the refugee crisis. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6cpJ6KfdZqE>.

Costa, A. (2022a, 18/03). Joint press conference of Draghi, Sánchez, Costa, and Mitsotakis following their meeting in Rome. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P4f6s9cuIsw>.

Costa, A. (2022b, 4/05). Press conference by Costa after his meeting with the Ukrainian Prime Minister. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ugjIHwwzqS4>.

Costa, A. (2022c, 23/05). Media responses by Costa during his visit to Kyiv. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ML4o1VXjPXU>.

Costa, A. (2022d, 22/09). Costa's intervention at the 77th session of the UN General Assembly. Retrieved from <https://www.portugal.gov.pt/pt/gc23/comunicacao/noticia?i=primeiro-ministro-sublinha-necessidade-de-reforma-do-conselho-de-seguranca-da-onu>.

- Costa, A. (2022e, 22/09). Interview with Costa during the 77th session of the UN General Assembly. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vo-HS4FtKJM>.
- Marin, S. (2022a, 9/04). Official announcement by Marin regarding the war in Ukraine. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FcBYxWAQKSE>.
- Marin, S. (2022b, 13/04). Joint press conference of the Finnish and Swedish Prime Ministers. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nEZHCjnrkTc>.
- Marin, S. (2022c, 3/05). Press conference by Marin following a meeting on European security. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/FinGovernment/status/1521508723734327296?lang=ca>.
- Marin, S. (2022d, 6/05). Marin's intervention at the "High-Level International Donors' Conference for Ukraine" in Warsaw. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G_aT7R8jJaI.
- Marin, S. (2023, 19/01). Marin's intervention at the panel "War in Europe: Year Two" at the World Economic Forum in Davos. Retrieved from <https://www.euronews.com/2023/01/19/how-is-europe-preparing-for-the-next-phase-of-the-war-in-ukraine>.
- Orbán, V. (2015a, 3/09). Press conference after a meeting with European Parliament President Martin Schulz on refugees. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cu7u0EWNkBc>.
- Orbán, V. (2015b, 23/09). Press statement upon arrival at an extraordinary EU summit in Brussels. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=axftspLCN08>.
- Orbán, V. (2015c, 30/09). Statement during the UN General Assembly debate on strengthening cooperation on migration and refugee movements within the new development agenda. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/events/ga/2015/docs/statements/HUNGARY.pdf>.
- Orbán, V. (2015d, 22/10). Statement at the European Conservatives meeting in Madrid. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3sD3iThh9UI>.
- Orbán, V. (2016, 16/03). Statement at the annual demonstration commemorating Revolution Day. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=54RqGatrO3I>.

- Orbán, V. (2022a, 26/02). Statements to various media after visiting a refugee reception centre in Beregsurány, on the Hungarian-Ukrainian border. Retrieved from: <https://www.ruptly.tv/es/videos/20220227-005-Hungr-a-Lo-m-s-importante-para-nosotros-es-ayudar-a-los-que-llegan-primer-ministro-Orb-n>; <https://www.swissinfo.ch/spa/ucrania-guerra-hungr%C3%ADa-primer-ministro-h%C3%BAngaro-dice-que-la-guerra-en-ucrania-puede-prolongarse/47383816>; <https://hang.hu/belfold/orban-viktor-megint-az-ukran-hataron-jart-137741>.
- Orbán, V. (2022b, 3/03). Interview with Mandiner newspaper. Retrieved from https://mandiner.hu/cikk/20220302_kozelet_orban_viktor_interju_orosz_ukran_haboru.
- Purra, R. (2022a, 16/03). Call for an EU refugee quota system. Retrieved from <https://www.suomenuutiset.fi/purra-hallituksen-nollattava-pakolaiskiintio/>.
- Purra, R. (2022b, 31/03). Parliamentary speech supporting an EU refugee quota system. Retrieved from <https://yle.fi/a/3-12385070/64-3-66418>.
- Purra, R. (2022c, 2/04). Interview with HS newspaper. Retrieved from <https://yle.fi/a/3-12385070/64-3-66418>.
- Sipilä, J. (2015a, 9/09). Institutional speech by the Finnish Prime Minister on the refugee wave. Retrieved from <https://www.dw.com/en/finnish-pm-refugees-welcome-in-spare-home/a-18696193>.
- Sipilä, J. (2015b, 16/09). Institutional speech by the Finnish Prime Minister on the crisis in Finland. Retrieved from <https://yle.fi/a/3-8311098>.
- Soini, T. (2015a, 30/09). Statement during the UN General Assembly debate on strengthening cooperation on migration and refugee movements within the new development agenda. Retrieved from https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/unpd_desa-event_ga2015_debates_finland.pdf.
- Soini, T. (2015b, 18/11). The status quo is not an option: Driving Reform in Europe. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tgce7oXfcSE>.
- Ventura, A. (2022a, 23/03). Parliamentary intervention on the Ukraine war. Retrieved from <https://debates.parlamento.pt/catalogo/r3/dar/01/14/03/038/2022-03-22?sft=true#p1>.
- Ventura, A. (2022b, 3/04). Tweet about refugee reception. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/AndreCVentura/status/1642831022151680001>.

7. Annexes

Table A: Degree of Compliance by States with the Refugee Relocation Mechanism (ordered by compliance degree^{23, 24} and ²⁵).

	Quota of refugees to be accepted established by the Commission	Hosted refugees	Degree of compliance
Malta	131	148	112,98%
Finland	2.078	1.975	95,04%
Ireland	600	552	92%
Luxembourg	557	430	77,2%
Latvia	481	321	66,74%
Sweden	3.766	2.294	60,91%
Lithuania	671	382	56,93%
Portugal	2.951	1.451	49,17%
Cyprus	320	143	44,69%
Estonia	329	141	42,86%
The Netherlands	5.947	2.442	41,06%
Slovenia	567	217	38,21%
Germany	27.536	8.287	30,1%
Belgium	3.812	997	26,15%
France	19.714	4.468	22,66%
Romania	4.180	728	17,42%

²³ Norway, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein, despite participating in the mechanism, have not been included at the end of the table as they had no obligation, not being EU Member States.

²⁴ It is worth noting, on the one hand, that neither Denmark (with an opt-out preventing participation) nor the United Kingdom (with an opt-out allowing non-participation) took part in this mechanism.

²⁵ Data as of 1 September 2017.

Spain	9.323	1.279	13,72%
Croatia	968	78	8,06%
Bulgaria	1.302	50	3,84%
Slovakia	902	16	1,77%
Austria	1.953	15	0,77%
Czech Republic	2.661	12	0,45%
Hungary	1.294	0	0%
Poland	6.182	0	0%
	$\Sigma = 98.225$	$\Sigma = 26.426 (26,9\%)$	$\bar{x} = 37,61\%$

Source: own elaboration based on Harris (2017).

Table B: Number of refugees from Ukraine hosted (sorted by the ratio of refugees hosted per 1,000 inhabitants)²⁶.

	Number of refugees hosted under the temporary protection regime	Percentage of total refugees hosted in the EU	Ratio of refugees hosted per 1,000 inhabitants
Czech Republic	432.415	11,21%	41,12
Estonia	39.085	1,01%	29,35
Poland	974.060	25,26%	25,87
Lithuania	66.455	1,72%	23,68
Bulgaria	149.790	3,88%	21,9
Latvia	36.235	0,94%	19,32
Slovakia	95.550	2,48%	17,58
Ireland	73.065	1,89%	14,44
Cyprus	12.610	0,33%	13,94

²⁶ Data as of 14 April 2023.

Germany	967.715	25,09%	11,63
Austria	88.690	2,3%	9,88
Finland	46.810	1,21%	8,44
Luxembourg	4.655	0,12%	7,21
The Netherlands	109.640	2,48%	6,23
Denmark	32.915	0,85%	5,6
Belgium	63.210	1,64%	5,44
Portugal	55.920	1,45%	5,4
Romania	100.955	2,62%	5,3
Croatia	18.970	0,49%	4,91
Sweden	47.310	1,23%	4,53
Slovenia	7.675	0,2%	3,64
Spain	165.415	4,29%	3,49
Hungary	29.555	0,77%	3,05
Malta	1.570	0,04	3,01
Italy	145.800	3,78%	2,47
Greece	21.985	0,57%	2,1
France	68.430	1,77%	1,01
	$\Sigma = 3.856.485$		$\bar{x} = 11,13$

Source: own elaboration based on European Council (2023) and Eurostat (2023) data.