



Talking Migration: Narratives of Migration and Justice Claims in the European Migration System of Governance

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ABSTRACT

In the last few years, migration has been at the centre of attention of the European public and policymakers, sparking an unprecedented debate on responsibilities and rights. This Special Issue presents a collection of European case studies analysing narratives of migration and their embedded justice claims. It focuses on the way national newspapers have covered and discussed key political events related to European politics and migration dynamics between 2014 and 2018. The results reveal an increasing normalisation of extreme and anti-immigrant claims in all cases. The only rather frequent counter-narrative is 'humanitarian', yet, it predominantly depicts migrants as victims, hence denying their subjectivity and actorness. There is an important correlation between the debates on migration and the European Union, as the so-called 'crisis' has strengthened the political debate on the EU in European countries. All in all, the dominant narratives on migration embed a Westphalian understanding of justice (justice as non-domination), while little attention is devoted to cosmopolitan justice claims (justice ad impartiality) and, much less, to 'subjectivised cosmopolitan justice claims' (justice as mutual recognition).

KEYWORDS

GLOBUS; migration; narratives; Europe; EUMSG; content analysis; discourse analysis; global justice

Having been forged historically by centuries of migration and having forged other parts of the world through migration¹ (Livi Bacci 2012; Wolf 1982), characterised by areas of free transnational movement of people (the Single Market and Schengen), and going through a threatening demographic decline (Ceccorulli *et al.* 2015; Eurostat 2018), Europe should, in principle, be home to socio-political systems that are open to human mobility. The European Union (EU), in particular, is the area in the world in which the most significant transformation of state sovereignty has taken place. It has introduced a common, albeit secondary, European citizenship in the absence of a federal European state and has the most advanced system of international protection in the world. Moreover, attention to cosmopolitan claims has been a defining feature of the EU's foreign policy, from efforts to abolish the death penalty to support for the International Criminal Court, as has the assistance given to the creation of areas of free movement of goods and people in other parts of the world. All these things would lead one to expect Europe to have a stance on the migration

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¹In this Special Issue, 'migration' is considered a broad category encompassing several categories of people who reach the territory of a foreign state to stay for a relatively long time. Hence no distinction is made (unless explicitly stated) on the basis of the reason for the individuals' flight from their own country (economic or security-related).

phenomenon able to recognise the movement of people as a fact of life to be governed at the regional and global level through long-term structural measures – and never to the detriment of human rights.

Yet, this ideal-type migration policy of the allegedly “distinctive power Europe”, clashes strongly with the recent performance of the EU and the states party to the European Union Migration System of Governance (EUMSG).² Several works have shown how the so-called refugee crisis³ of 2015-16 enhanced the processes of securitisation of migration already underway in European countries (Huysmans 2006; Kaya 2009) and triggered dynamics of collective securitisation (Moreno-Lax 2018; Ceccorulli 2019; Zotti forthcoming). In the process, the European Union adopted measures to “save Schengen” – to use the telling name of the Commission communication (European Commission 2016) – by strengthening border controls, establishing selective hotspots (Ceccorulli and Lucarelli 2017a), and externalising migration policies and border control to third countries (CINI and Concord Europe 2018). This was the case with the EU-Turkey ‘deal’ of 2016, the Italy-Libya agreement of 2017 and the EU’s prioritising of anti-smuggling over search and rescue (S&R) (Cusumano 2019). Observers have also noticed how the resulting transformation of the modalities of functioning of the EUMSG are at odds with the EU’s (and indeed Europe’s) core values (Murray and Longo 2018, Bauböck 2018) and how attention has shifted from the migrants who need to be saved (as in the S&R operation *Mare Nostrum*) to the border that needs to be protected (Ceccorulli and Lucarelli 2017b).

Collective securitisation has occurred through a recursive interaction among different actors (mainly states and EU institutions) which, through speech acts and practices started to portray migration as a threat (Ceccorulli 2019). In this process, the media seem to have played a critical role as they have been used as a key communication platform to convey the message to the broader audience (citizens as well as other states and EU institutions). However, as in any lively society, a plurality of narratives entailing different understandings of what is ‘just’ in migration policy have coexisted in this process. Such narratives have often clashed in public debates, yet with different shades and emphasis in different countries and over time (Chouliaraki and Musarò 2017). What is self-evident, is that the degree of attention to migration in the public debate has risen significantly everywhere in the past few years. Indeed, migration has become highly politicised and often instrumentalised by populist leaders for the sake of gaining the votes of a public ever more disgruntled and perceiving themselves as threatened (Grande *et al.* 2018). Accordingly, the legitimising discourse used to sustain practices limiting migration across borders has been mainly sovereignist: the arbitrary suspension of the Schengen Accords or the refusal to share the burden of arrivals or even the refusal to let in migrants rescued at sea have been justified by calling them ‘necessary measures’ to ‘protect’ the country.

²The system governing migration is the result of multilevel interaction among EU institutions, member states, states belonging to the Schengen area, and non-state actors (Fassi and Lucarelli 2017).

³In this Special Issue, we use the term ‘refugee crisis’ or ‘migration crisis’ to refer to the high pressure created by the peak of arrivals to European countries in 2015-16 not because we believe there was an objective crisis, but because these are the terms most widely used in the European public debate, which have had an impact on the policies enacted. As for the use of the terms ‘refugees’ or ‘migrants’, the two have frequently been confused in the public debate, as can be seen in the country case studies.

In opposition to this line of reasoning, the voice of those who stress the importance of taking a humanitarian stance toward people in peril has risen as well; specifically, those who insist on recognising the rights of migrants as human beings, above and beyond emergency assistance (OHCHR 2017; Human Rights Watch 2018; Musarò 2013). These different discourses not only express diverse political positions on the issue but embed a specific view of global political justice. Seeing world governance as 'just' when it is made up of sovereign states whose main moral imperative is to protect their citizens and respect the other's sovereignty is quite different from viewing global justice as putting human beings at the centre of ethical reflections.

In the past few years, several attempts have been made to analyse discourses on migration in Europe (Boswell *et al.* 2011; Scuzzarello 2015), also from a comparative perspective (Chouliaraki and Stolic 2017; Krzyzanowski *et al.* 2018). Yet, despite exceptions (Helbling 2014; Georgiou and Zabarowski 2016; Caviedes 2015, 2018), these studies rarely analyse news coverage both over time and across nations, and seldom look at the same political events. Such a perspective, we argue, is crucial for capturing and accounting for differences in apparently similar political contexts. Moreover, to our knowledge, no study explores the debates with a view to extrapolating their embedded understanding of global political justice. The aim of this Special Issue is to analyse the way in which migration has been addressed in the national press of various countries of the EUMSG over time, provide an overview of the dominant narratives and assess the embedded justice claims of the narratives, which also constitute the normative arguments through which specific migration policies are legitimated.

It is worth clarifying here that the Special Issue will refer to migration in a broad sense, without distinguishing between the reasons that lead people to move. We also feel that the different ways the topic is named and discussed, using different labels, is actually a question worth investigating. As a result, the terminology used in the different articles in this Special Issue will vary, mirroring the dominant interpretation in the national context in question.

This introduction sets the stage for the case studies, by explaining the conceptual and methodological choices made. We proceed by first introducing the concept of narrative and its use in the area of migration studies. We then explore three conceptualisations of global justice which will guide our analysis of the normative embedded message of the narratives that we identify. And finally we sum up what we have learned through the case studies conducted for this Special Issue.

The political relevance of narratives and their embedded normativity

When discussing narratives of and on migration, several new studies on the topic have appeared in the past few years. Eberl *et al.* (2018) identified 89 English language journal articles investigating migration in news coverage in one or more European countries in the time span between January 2000 and June 2018. Most of those published in 2017 and 2018 dealt with the so-called European refugee crisis (Eberl *et al.* 2018). Much work has also been done on the role of narratives in migration affairs especially in Europe, both with respect to policymaking dynamics (Burscher *et al.* 2015) and migrants' experiences and perspectives (Gómez-Estern and de la Mata Benítez 2013). The same

attention has been devoted to the EU's stances on migration (Ceccorulli and Lucarelli 2017b; Volpicelli 2015).

This academic attention does not come as a surprise, as migration, especially in Europe, is one of the most *mediated* and *mediatised* issues today. It is *mediated* because media are a crucial platform of information and communicative exchange on migration between people and political actors. Yet, according to many, migration is also *mediatised* as media not only transmit information, but also concur in producing a specific effect on the audience (Krzyzanowski *et al.* 2018). By presenting the same issue in different ways, media have the power to affect people's perceptions and, therefore, social reality. This is particularly true at a time when there are abundant sources of information and an overall rapidity and impulsiveness in sharing information.

According to the 'priming theory' for instance (Iyengar and Kinder 1987), in contexts where individuals do not rely completely on their own knowledge with regard to political decisions or evaluations, media can actually set the context in which a certain issue is placed. This can help attribute a positive or negative connotation to the selected issue, so as to cause "changes in the standards that people use to make political evaluations" (63). Decades-old social experiments have demonstrated precisely that, by emphasizing certain aspects rather than others, media are able to influence how people position themselves in relation to specific issues, such as terrorism or migration (Iyengar *et al.* 1982; Iyengar 1987).

Media analyses have produced a number of concepts to deal with how migration is presented. There has been a proliferation of concepts like "narrative frames" (Wasinski 2011) or "master narratives" (Hackett and Zhao 1994), which have contributed to a certain "confusion" (Vliegthart and van Zoonen 2011, 101) particularly with respect to the relationship between frames and narratives (Scheufele 1999). In general, we share the view of Castells (2009, 175) and understand narratives to be "based on frames", meaning a general plot based on "aspects of a perceived reality" (Entman 1993, 52) and developed through a communicative interaction among different actors (Miskimmon *et al.* 2015).

More precisely, in the context of this Special issue, we are interested in the interconnection between narratives and policies, in other words in "policy narratives" (Boswell *et al.* 2011; Ceccorulli and Lucarelli 2017b). Building on Boswell *et al.* (2011), we conceptualise narratives in the socio-political sphere as cognitive devices which provide an interpretation of a complex event by making empirical claims on the causes and dynamics of the phenomenon and by pointing to causal relations between political actions and events. Such narratives, we argue, do not necessarily make all relations explicit; they embed these causal relations cognitively in an *implicit* form. In this sense, a narrative always implies selecting and emphasising specific aspects of reality (framing), and presenting them in the context of a plot in which a story is told. If frames are important (Strömbäck *et al.* 2017; Haynes and Devereux 2006) in that they "select for attention a few salient features" (Schön and Rein 1994, 26), identifying narratives provides a more accurate understanding of the speaker's cognitive frameworks, the causal correlations s/he makes, the appropriate political actions and, eventually, her/his normative stance.

Specifically, we can identify four main functions of narratives in the socio-political context: interpretative, instrumental, cognitive and ontological. The *interpretative function* of a narrative offers plausible and simplified interpretations of complicated issues,

often by providing information and data but also by underlining correlations. The *instrumental function* instead refers to the intentionality of building and spreading a belief. A typical example would be what the literature on securitisation refers to as a “speech act” (Wæver 1995), which always entails “credible” narratives on the threat represented by a securitised issue in order to convince a (referent) audience of the reality of the threat. The *cognitive function* of a narrative provides an interpretation of a phenomenon within the context of a broader worldview that makes sense not only of cause-and-effect relations, but also of responses to the phenomenon. Finally, *the ontological/self-identification function* communicates and defines self-representations, self/other relations, and self/world relations, as well as projecting values with respect to a specific issue, in this case, migration. The existing literature has largely recognised that narratives about migration are usually used as tools to define a society or a group in relation to an ‘other’ (van Dijk 1988; Leudar *et al.* 2008; Musarò and Parmiggiani 2017; Wodak and Krzyzanowski 2017).

The political relevance of media narratives of migrations is hence quite clear. What needs to be explored further are meanings and the contextual knowledge transmitted by these narratives in different cases. Even more pressing seems to be the need for analysis of the normative worldview embedded in the different political narratives, this being a neglected aspect in media narratives on migration.

To respond to these shortcomings in the literature, this Special Issue has two aims: first, to provide an original systematic account of the way in which different countries have approached migration through analysis of news narratives focusing on two Europe-wide events, one national event, and one eventless week; second, to offer an innovative conceptual framework able to identify diversity in national patterns of conceptualisation of justice by focusing on justice claims embedded in the narratives of migration. In this regard, we show that migration, which has become a highly salient topic in European politics in recent years, reveals different senses of justice across European political classes and European publics. Therefore, news articles transmitting embedded justice claims can be regarded as both a mirror of the dominant narratives and normative positions in a society, and the result of the efforts of competing elites to influence the public with respect to migration and political responses to it.

But what do we mean by ‘justice claims’? How can we conceptualise competing positions on global political justice and their relevance to narratives of migration? Below we attempt to deal with both aspects.

Global political justice and migration

The idea of justice, explored for centuries with reference to the state, and put at the core of normative theory by John Rawls’ *A Theory of Justice* (1971), later started to be applied to world politics in Rawls’ *The Law of Peoples* (1999). In the latter, the author developed a liberal theory of global justice pointing to the need to take both intra-national and inter-national relations into account. By then, the increased globalisation of world politics had made clear that “the sharp distinction between *intranational* and *international* relations [as if they were] two separate domains of moral theorizing” had become “obsolete” (Pogge 2008, xvii). Since migration lies precisely at the border between inside and outside, it triggers justice claims that are pertinent to the domestic

community, to relations between the state of arrival and the state of origin or transit, to the migrant simply as a human being, and to the migrant as a specific individual. Indeed, migration is at the crossroads of different worlds of justice, and the management of migration is, in fact, the art of unravelling various, sometimes irreconcilable, justice claims. That is why a global justice perspective adds to our ability to analyse the deeper implications for politics of migration management.

In broad terms, we can identify three perspectives on global justice: justice as non-domination, justice as impartiality and justice as mutual recognition.

Based on a Westphalian interpretation of the international system, *Justice as non-domination* refers to a situation in which states do not subjugate or control others. According to this view, the integrity and sovereignty of states are respected together with their system of protecting rights (Eriksen 2016, 11; Pettit 1997). The corollary of such a perspective is the right (and duty) of every state to protect its own citizens, control the community's borders and decide on who has the right to cross those borders and who is entitled to citizenship. Selective immigration (if not closed borders) responds to the idea that a state is a community of people who have special bonds of loyalty and shared affiliation (Miller 2005b), with such bonds providing the resources of meaning indispensable for social cohesion. In the literature on the ethics of migration, this normative position comes close to that of authors like Michael Walzer (1983), David Miller (2007) and Christopher Wellman (2008). According to this view, even in the case of liberal democracies characterised by internal pluralism (political and increasingly also cultural and ethnical), while internal differences should be actively protected, policies of selective immigration are legitimate tools to guarantee "cultural stability" (Perry 1995, 105). In other words, communities have a right to defend what in International Relations is now labelled their "ontological security", the security of the most profound self.⁴ For the majority of scholars, this does not totally exclude a responsibility towards foreigners in difficulty (Walzer 1981; see also Miller 2005a), but for some, states are entitled to reject all potential immigrants, even asylum seekers (Wellman 2008).

Selective immigration is also defended in the name of the right to self-determination of political communities (Wellman and Cole 2011); the need to safeguard the welfare state and avoid the economic costs of immigration (Cf. Greblo 2015, 57-64); the need to protect against possible terrorist or criminal infiltrations brought about by immigration (Guild 2009; Atak and Simeon 2018); the need to safeguard the countries of origin from losses of human resources (Miller 1998, 176); and the need to allow entry only to those who can be taken care of by the community (Ruhs 2013). However, in this case, the liberal democratic state has to compensate such selective policies by investing in the fight against the global inequality that causes migration (Greblo 2015, 25). In this perspective, a just migration policy also includes taking on historical (Miller 2007) and global responsibilities.

In the perspective of *justice as impartiality*, men and women are the ultimate unit of moral concern. Related to the field of migration, this would imply recognition of individuals' basic rights, liberties and human dignity (Eriksen 2016, 14-15), as well as

⁴Giddens (1991) defined ontological security as a "person's fundamental sense of safety in the world [which] includes a basic trust of other people [in order to] maintain a sense of psychological well-being and avoid existential anxiety" (1991, 38-39). Others have developed and applied the concept to international relations, mainly translating the reflection on the individual to the state level (Mitzen 2006; Steele 2008).

treating migrants and asylum seekers according to leading international (and EU) laws and conventions. According to scholars and activists, a just political system should be based on policies of ‘open borders’ for various reasons (the relevance of which varies depending on the author): libertarian (migration is a right), utilitarian (migration is economically positive), democratic (political coercion cannot be legitimate unless it is under the democratic control of all those coerced) and egalitarian (everyone should have equal opportunities) (e.g. Carens 1987; 2013; Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy 2015). This perspective is clearly at odds with the previous one, in that it privileges individuals over the sovereign state.

According to Joseph Carens (1987, 270),

The current restrictions on immigration in Western democracies [...] are not justifiable. Like feudal barriers to mobility, they protect unjust privilege. [...] What is not really compatible with the idea of equal moral worth is the exclusion of those who want to join. If people want to sign the social contract, they should be permitted to do so.

Also moving from a cosmopolitan perspective (yet not denying the relevance of borders to state democracy), Sheila Benhabib (2004) calls for rethinking state sovereignty at a time of transnational migration and global interdependence. A stringent reason for this is proposed by Ayelet Shachar (2009), who points a finger at the immorality of the so-called “birthplace lottery”: the fact that people acquire citizenship – and the associated privileges – by accidental circumstances of birth. Cosmopolitan perspectives range from the more extreme position of those who consider migration a fundamental human right, to a more moderate position that grants the right to move, but not the duty to welcome every migrant. From an impartiality perspective, management of migration across borders could be considered just if it were respectful of the human rights of migrants, as well as of the principles of *non refoulement* and equal treatment of persons in need of protection, while attempting to develop a global governance of migration, broadening the scope for legitimate international protection.

Justice as mutual recognition (a category which has produced less literature than the previous two) acknowledges the right of each subject (individual, group or polity) to be heard and taken into consideration in the governance of the phenomenon. In the case of migration, mutual recognition implies taking the personal histories of migrants into account, caring for their vulnerabilities, but also recognising their agency (they are not simply victims) in the governance of migration. In other words, this means recognising the migrants’ subjectivity (Balibar *et al.* 2012; Fassin 2011) – something that can be neglected even when there is technical respect of human rights – and going beyond the alternative between the Westphalian and cosmopolitan perspectives on justice. Borders are one of the places where these alternative conceptions of justice meet and clash the most. If we were to take up the invitation of Balibar *et al.* (2012) to think about justice outside of existing theories of justice and look at migrants not only as marginal subjects, but as justice-seeking subjects, challenging the normative and political order (6), we would, from the perspective of mutual recognition, consider these subjects’ voices a narrative.

From each justice perspective derive different moral obligations and justice prescriptions. At the same time, each justice perspective is the normative worldview through which reality is filtered and actions legitimised. The narratives of migration are the texts in which such worldviews are revealed.

A note on method

By focusing on linguistic patterns and trends in narratives of migration across the EUMSG, this work is informed by the methodological and analytical tools offered by discourse analysis. Thus, it maps and analyses what kind of 'communicated' and potentially 'filtered' knowledge on migration European citizens have been exposed to, as well as what such communication tells us of the dominant justice claims in that community. Each article in the Special Issue addresses a case study of narratives of migration and justice claims within the EUMSG. The methodological approach (discourse analysis aimed at extrapolating narratives and their embedded justice claims) and the kind of corpora (newspapers) examined were the same in each. Specifically, to account for the complexity of these topics, the analysis of the narratives in the various cases used a mixed strategy of qualitative discourse analysis, meaning content analysis and discourse analysis. The first phase of content analysis allowed the authors to explore the relative salience of different concepts, offering a comparative view of the co-occurrence of themes, main actors and claims across different key periods and types of newspapers. Discourse analysis then made it possible to elaborate on the meanings associated with the different kinds of narratives, and investigate and analyse potential similarities and differences, as well as specific relations between them (Coticchia and D'Amato 2018). Finally, an assessment of the justice claims embedded in the narratives was carried out keeping in mind the categories of global justice described above.

The selection of national newspapers for each case study (see Table 1) was based on two criteria: representation of different – and potentially contrasting – political views, and circulation. The objective was threefold: to gather data in order to identify the dominant narratives in the European mainstream debate; detect alternative or counter narratives (if any), usually of radical groups, that did not make it into the mainstream newspapers but could possibly be part of the wider public debate, and explore any variance in the debate on migration over time, especially in key political moments. Accordingly, data was collected from two weeks before to one week after three key political events between January 2014 – January 2018:

- the 2014 European Parliament elections (22-25 May 2014);
- the EU-Turkey Statement ('agreement/deal'), 18 March 2016;
- one key 'national moment' related to migration within the designated timespan.

An 'eventless' week was also looked at as a control.

While the selection of the two key events was essential for comparing national public debates and narratives across countries, the nationally relevant political moments and

Table 1. Overview of the newspapers selected

Italy	France	Hungary	Norway	United Kingdom
<i>Corriere della Sera; Il Fatto Quotidiano; Il Giornale, La Stampa</i>	<i>Le Figaro; Le Monde; Libération, L'Opinion</i>	<i>Index; Magyar Nemzet; Magyar Magyar Hirlap; Népszava</i>	<i>Aftenposten; Klassekampen; Vårt Land VG</i>	<i>Daily Mail; The Daily Telegraph; The Guardian; The Independent</i>

non-politically relevant (eventless) weeks made it possible to compare narratives of migration and their (potential) politicisation across different contexts.

Moreover, in order to assess and account for the variety of meanings, narratives and senses of justice in Europe within and outside the EU, cases were selected from EU members inside (France, Italy, Hungary) and outside (the United Kingdom) the Schengen system, as well as non EU-members included in the Schengen area (Norway). These countries not only have different national histories of immigration/emigration, but have also been exposed to recent migrant flows in different ways.

For data gathering, the majority of articles relied on automated searches through either open source newspapers or databases such as Lexis-Nexis and Factiva.

The collected texts were coded using a scheme purposely designed to identify narratives by breaking them down into different characterising elements – themes – representing the main attributes of a narrative. Thus, the creation of the coding frames for each case was driven by a ‘mixed strategy’. First, by adopting a deductive perspective, an overall and general frame was proposed to the authors which included key general categories: claimant (e.g. national politicians, journalists, representatives of EU institutions); issue (news or topic of the article); problem (rationale); proposed solutions; actors (referent of justice); justice claim (non-domination; mutual recognition; impartiality). In order to account for potential nationally-based differences, however, an open coding was used to allow for a number of subcategories to emerge inductively on the basis of the concepts identified in the data.

All the data gathered for this Special Issue allow for cross-national comparative studies, in addition to comparison of narratives in national debates, if need be, retracing their presence and role in EU narratives.

What we discovered: overview of the Special Issue and the contribution it makes

Through an across-case and across-time comparison, this Special Issue attempts to glean insights into how the same political events are discussed in different countries and what role the question of migration plays in the problematisation of such events. In this way, we can contribute to understanding whether and how discussion of these events is (or is not) used to convey specific knowledge. However, besides merely examining narratives of migration in Europe, each case has also been used to determine the dominant conceptions of justice that national media concur in prioritising and disseminating.

Specifically, the first article by Michela Ceccorulli opens the case studies of the Special Issue with an article on Italy (“*Così è (se vi pare)* [Right you are (if you think so)]: Talking Migration to Italians”). In addition to the two shared key events already mentioned, the national key event on which the Italian case focuses is the end of the *Mare Nostrum* Mission (18 October-8 November 2014), and then an eventless week (21-28 November 2016). Ceccorulli finds that while the so-called ‘migration crisis’ was predominant in the Italian public debate in different periods, the actors directly involved in the crisis, that is, the migrants, whether asylum seekers or economic migrants, were totally overlooked, as were the Italian actors engaged in the system of

initial reception. Hence, the author argues that the biased coverage of migration led to an overexposure of its negative consequences.

More generally, the article argues that a *humanitarian narrative* was frequently found throughout the periods examined, however, it was not based on issues of the migrants' rights, but more on arguments of (our) "benevolence" and (migrants') victimisation. Interestingly, this narrative was also used in support of claims of migration control, if not the closing of borders. For instance, the right-wing newspaper *Il Giornale* consistently used a humanitarian narrative to call for borders to be closed. Despite the overall rather schizophrenic attitude towards migration, the coherent message of *Il Giornale* was powerful, grounded in a non-domination vision of justice with humanitarian arguments. An understanding of justice in terms of non-domination was also embedded in most of the other narratives identified (*Westphalian, solidarity, responsibility, instrumental*), while much less evidence was found for justice claims inspired by impartiality and mutual recognition.

In the next article, Silvia D'Amato and Anna Lavizzari look at the French case ("The Migration Triangle: Narratives, Justice and the Politics of Migration in France"), focusing on debates in the two common periods, as well as in the 2017 national presidential elections (9-30 April 2017). The article argues that the French attitude and discourse on migration, as developed by mainstream media, is still largely influenced by the country's history of immigration and its long-standing view of the issue as a matter of foreign policy rather than simply a domestic affair. Interestingly, the French case makes it possible to investigate the extent to which migration is a pivotal issue in European politics beyond the typical dynamics of intra-European competition. In fact, part of the French press expressed concerns about German leadership in the management of the crisis, advocating a stronger role for Paris in the negotiation processes, also to limit Turkey's bargaining power. In addition, the authors show that, contrary to expectations given the unprecedented wave of terrorist events in the country, with the exception of *Le Figaro's* coverage of Marine Le Pen's anti-Islam statements, the security frame remained largely marginal across the mainstream national press when discussing migration issues. The authors find *the Westphalian, humanitarian* and *multilateral* narratives to be the three dominant ones. Interestingly, the article shows that during electoral periods (i.e. European Parliament elections in 2014 and presidential elections in 2017), politicians were more eager to employ a Westphalian narrative centred on claims of justice as non-domination. The focus here was on the domestic community as the referent actor not only in relation to migrants and asylum seekers, but also in competition with other EU member states. Instead, during less domestically relevant periods, such as the EU-Turkey deal, voices of different actors, such as journalists and civil society representatives with claims of impartiality and mutual recognition were echoed more strongly.

Focusing on the Hungarian case, in "Positional Insecurity and the Hegemony of Radical Nationalism. Migration and Justice in the Hungarian Media", Attila Melegh, Anna Vancsó, Márton Hunyadi and Dorottya Mendly put forward the concept of "positional insecurity" to understand the Hungarian news coverage of migration affairs. Specifically, the authors argue that, regardless of political affiliations, when discussing migration, the national press focuses mostly on national sovereignty as a means to oppose European integration. Specifically, they find that the Hungarian public debate is characterised by a set

of different narratives (which they label *securitisation*, *humanitarian*, *biopolitics*, *evaluation*, *risk of nationalism*, *EU integration Westphalian*), most of which embed a non-domination view of justice. In fact, the article shows that across the four periods, including the nationally specific ‘quota referendum’ (17 September-8 October 2016), references to justice claims of non-domination prevail and concur in reinforcing the image of the country as ‘subjugated by the West’. Yet, in the case of the securitisation, humanitarian and biopolitical frameworks, justice claims of mutual recognition and, most importantly, condemnation of the lack of it, are indeed significantly frequent.

Similarly, in the case of the United Kingdom (“Justice Claims in UK Media Narratives of (Im)migration: Normative Orientations and EU Migration Governance”), Cinzia Bevitori and Antonio Zotti find that in the news covering migration, the ‘EU question’ becomes progressively more salient in driving the debate. By focusing on the period of the Brexit referendum (23 June 2016) and an eventless week in January 2017, in addition to the two shared periods, the article shows that the question of European integration was able to inform and polarise the views reported and the tone of the newscasts. Next to the “EU matters” narrative, the authors identified several others: *the threatened island nation*; *(im)migration as a socio-economic issue*, and *(im)migration as a question of humanity*. Unsurprisingly, the predominant justice claim is non-domination, followed by impartiality, and – lastly – justice as mutual recognition. Interestingly, while migration narratives largely point to the need to ‘take back control’ and ‘defend’ a threatened nation, the EU proves to be a very significant – albeit problematic – component of Britain’s debate on immigration.

In the following article (“From Humanitarian Needs to Border Controls: Norwegian Media Narratives on Migration and Conceptions of Justice”), Espen D. H. Olsen and Ragnhild Grønning address the case of Norway, which is particularly revealing as a non-EU member, yet party to the Schengen agreements and hence the EUMSG. The authors shed light on two dynamics. First, all the dominant narratives (*humanitarian*, *statist/border control*, *EU integration*) point to a process of ‘internalisation’ of the migration question. Specifically, the authors find that problems related to migration are essentially discussed as a problem of the Norwegian state, ignoring a whole series of other multilateral issues at stake. Also, the analysis shows that in Norwegian media discourse, the EU is mostly framed as an ‘outsider’, and Norway portrayed as far less implicated in the EU migration crisis than is actually the case, considering its participation in EU asylum and migration cooperation. In terms of justice claims, the article shows that non-domination (mostly associated with the *statist/border control* narrative and the *EU integration* one) and impartiality (in the case of the *humanitarian* narrative) prevail across the four periods.

Overall, even though the conceptual and methodological frameworks were the same for all, the findings vary in accordance to the contextual specificities of the case studies. Table 2 provides an overview of the dominant narratives found. Interestingly, despite minor national differences, three narratives were found in almost all countries: *Westphalian*, *humanitarian* and *multilateral*.

Specifically, the *Westphalian* narrative detected in all the national case studies entails a self-representation of European countries as state-like entities whose most basic and important duty is guaranteeing and protecting its citizens’ safety. Hence, a number of narratives tend to match with non-domination justice claims, as the main referent of justice is the domestic community.

Table 2. Main narratives

Italy	solidarity; responsibility; Westphalian; instrumental; humanitarian
France	Westphalian; humanitarian; multilateral
Hungary	securitisation; humanitarian; biopolitics; evaluation; risk of nationalism; EU integration; Westphalian
Norway	humanitarian; statist-border control; EU integration
UK	Westphalian; utilitarian; socio-economic; humanitarian

In the case of the United Kingdom, for instance, Bevitori and Zotti find that references to traditional Westphalian themes are made when discussing independence from the EU as a post-modern authority. That is, mostly involving questions of empirical control – border management, taxes and revenues – rather than supreme authority. This is similar to the case of Norway, where the preferences for national solutions are formulated as a way to implement more technical and practical measures. By contrast, the Hungarian case reveals an overall dominance of Westphalian elements as messages of emancipation from an alleged ‘Western authority’ in order to protect and serve ethno-national Hungarians’ interests more effectively.

Interestingly, the humanitarian narrative presents the same features in all the cases. Specifically, the narrative underlines the humanitarian necessities of migrants, emphasising conflicts and war as causes of migration and the associated risks for migrants’ lives. However, the analyses also revealed some interesting nationally specific nuances. The Norwegian case shows, for instance, that the discussion of the needs and rights of migrants as individuals is made almost in parallel to state and political institutions as actors responsible for the protection of these rights. Italy, as mentioned, reveals a more instrumental use of the humanitarian narrative in which migrants are portrayed as both victims and threats, while humanitarian themes are used to justify arguments emphasising the need for border protection.

Finally, with respect to the multilateral narrative associated with respect of international law, the French case displays the predominance of this narrative during the EU-Turkey deal as part of a normative argument. More specifically, there were concerns that Turkey might violate international human rights while carrying out its part of the deal. Multilateral themes are also largely present in the Italian case although, as Ceccorulli highlights, the Italian press relates multilateralism more with solidarity, increasingly associated to burden-sharing. With a slightly different nuance, the Hungarian and Norwegian ‘EU integration’ narrative also points to the relevance of multilateral themes with negative connotations. Specifically, both cases refer to the EU project as a set of multilateral engagements that could, in some way, undermine the country’s political and social situation.

Finally, the contributions offer a varied picture in terms of embedded interpretations of justice. There is evidence of all three proposed conceptualisations of justice, albeit with variations with respect to time and events. For instance, in the case of the EU-Turkey deal, there is a prevalence of the non-domination justice claim in Norwegian news coverage, whereas the Hungarian press focuses much more on impartiality associated with humanitarian concerns. Overall, however, as mentioned, all cases display a prevalence of claims of justice as non-domination, especially in relation to the issue of border control with representatives of the state as the main claimants.

On the whole, this Special Issue shows the strong correlation between the issue of migration and the EU in the political debate of the last five years. Specifically, we find that the so-called migration crisis has strengthened the presence of the EU in European countries' political debate. In a sense, migration has served as a pivotal issue for rethinking European integration and its political meaning as well as its practical usefulness. Such a rethinking, as the articles in this Special Issue confirm, has mostly taken the shape of political opposition to – and contestation of – the normative framework and political order that the EU represents. The main beneficiaries of this connection appear to be the Eurosceptical and nationalist parties which, since the 2014 European Parliament elections have increasingly gained space and relevance in national media. Indeed, all contributions point to a similar dynamic at play in Europe.

First, in terms of narratives, there has been a process of normalisation of what once would have been defined as populist claims. Linguistic registers used to speak about migration and related interpretations of justice that only a few years ago were the prerogative of right-wing populist parties such as the *Front National* (National Front) in France, *Lega Nord* (Northern League, now simply *Lega*) in Italy or *Fidesz* in Hungary, are today largely also employed by mainstream parties. As such, they have increasingly appeared in centre, or even traditionally left-wing newspapers and media. As a result, various shades of Westphalian justice claims have legitimised restrictive migration measures and even a disregard (when not open violation) of the rights of migrants.

Second, in the process of normalisation of extreme and anti-immigrant claims, European national media have not been able to develop alternative narratives. In fact, all the cases analysed show that, despite some minor attempts to oppose dominant anti-migrant sentiments, national media have not granted particular coverage to counter narratives and pro-migrant claims, above and beyond the classic humanitarian approach portraying migrants as victims of an unjust crisis. This point puts the findings of this Special Issue in line with that part of the literature that highlights a general lack of agency when portraying migrants, usually framed through aid interactions as ahistorical and anonymous victims (Musarò and Parmiggiani 2017; Little and Vaughan-Williams, 2017).

On a conclusive note, given the excellent results in the May 2019 European Parliament elections of sovereignist, anti-immigration parties like the *Lega* in Italy or *Fidez* in Hungary, this Special Issue seems particularly timely as it attempts to offer some fresh empirical elements for understanding the state of national public debates on a crucial topic that has created tensions in the EU in recent years. Considering that the specialised literature agrees that migration, as a controversial, politicised issue (Krzyzanowski *et al.* 2018) is very likely to remain at the centre of European politics in the years to come (Eberl *et al.* 2018), more research on media coverage and dominant justice claims in European countries seems to be needed.

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