THE IMPACT OF MIGRATION POLICY CHANGES ON THE PUBLIC OPINION ON IMMIGRATION

A Case Study of Austria and Sweden

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Abstract

In this thesis, I examine the relationship between national immigration policy changes and its effect on public opinion towards immigration in Austria and Sweden. Previous literature had mainly focused on the impact of public opinion on policy changes while the reverse relationship has not been examined to the same degree. The empirical background and starting point of the thesis is the so-called migration or refugee crisis which had its onset in the second half of 2015. As immigration became more salient due to the crisis, I am going to examine policy changes and public opinion from the end of 2010 until the end of 2016 using the comparative case study approach and qualitative content analysis. The result is that there is a connection between the restrictive policy changes and public attitudes towards immigration even though the link is not as strong as expected.

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1.   Introduction and Research Puzzle

Even though there has always been migration to Europe and the European Union, the issue gained significantly in salience when there was a large and sudden influx in people fleeing to Europe from war-torn countries such as Syria, Afghanistan or Iraq (European Parliament, 2017a; Börzel and Risse, 2018, p. 84). In order to deal with the migration wave, European countries as well as the European Union as a whole implemented several new migration policies and amended existing ones. Furthermore, the media started to report extensively on the causes and effects this so-called migration crisis, which likely lead to a perceived increase of the saliency of immigration.

Due to the influx in immigration to Europe, the increased salience and the response of the national European governments to it, is it likely that the public opinion towards immigrants has also changed. However, it has not yet been examined what the effect of the policy changes on the public's perception of immigration and immigrants is and whether this effect increased due to the increase in saliency. Yet, most research has focused on the effect of public opinion on policies, but it is equally important to investigate the effects policies have on the public's opinions and attitudes.

Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to investigate whether the migration policy changes implemented by the Austrian and Swedish governments, after the onset of the so-called migration crisis, impacted the public opinions of Austrians and Swedes towards migration. This means, would more restricting policy changes lead to less favorable views and attitudes towards migrants and migration while less restricting policy changes would lead to a more favorable public opinion towards migration and migrants. Furthermore, the thesis aims to see if the increased issue salience of migration led to a stronger influence of the policy changes on the public's opinion than previous migration policy changes. From this research aim, I derive the following research questions. Have the public opinions towards migration in Austria and Sweden changed after the onset of the so-called migration crisis? Do these changes in public attitudes correspond to the migration policy changes the governments implemented after the onset of the crisis (more restrictive versus less restrictive)? Is the impact of the migration policy changes on the public opinion stronger after the beginning of the so-called migration crisis than before when the issue salience of migration was lower?

In order to better understand the effect the crisis had on Europe, one has to first define the terms refugee, migrant and asylum-seeker. The European Union defines an immigrant as someone who "establishes their usual residence in the territory of an EU/EFTA Member State for a period that is, or is expected to be, of at least 12 months, having previously been usually resident in another EU/EFTA Member State or a third country" (Migration and Home Affairs, 2018b). A refugee is someone who "is outside the country of nationality and is unable or, owning to such fear, is unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country" out of fear of persecution due to several factors (Migration and Home Affairs, 2018c). The last term that needs to be defined is asylum seeker, who is someone that "has made an application for protection under the Geneva Refugee Convention and Protocol in respect of which a final decision has not yet been taken" (Migration and Home Affairs, 2018a).

So, to answer my research questions, I will proceed as follows. First, I am going to discuss the so-called migration crisis and how it relates to a rise of anti-immigrant policies and parties in the European Union in general as well as Austria and Sweden specifically. Then, I am going to review the previous literature and research on the relationship between public opinion and policy changes. Afterwards, I will introduce the case study approach as well as the qualitative content analysis as the methodological foundation of my analysis and show why it is suitable to answer my research questions. Following this, I will conduct my analysis of Austria and Sweden before coming to a conclusion for my thesis.

2.   The Migration Crisis

Between 2014 and 2015, the number of asylum seekers doubled from 625,000 (Eurostat, 2015, p. 4) to more than 1.2 million (Eurostat, 2017).The considerable increase in people who arrived in the EU exposed shortcomings in the EU's asylum system (European Parliament, 2017a, 2017b). Which is why some scholars claim that the crisis is rather a crisis of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) than a refugee or migration crisis (Niemann and Zaun, 2018, p. 3). Especially a reform of the Dublin regulation, which regulates that the EU member state an asylum applicant first enters the EU is responsible for processing the claim, has been called for (European Parliament, 2017b). This practice led to an unequal burden sharing amongst EU member states with countries on the border of the Schengen area, such as Italy or Greece, being disproportionally affected" (European Parliament, 2017b).

Despite many calls for a reform of the Dublin regulation, the Dublin III agreement from 2013 (European Union, 2013) is still in place as the EU member states could not agree on the proposed amendments (European Commission). The lack of cooperation and burden-sharing amongst the EU member states regarding asylum seekers is causing problems to this day, causing tensions within the European Union. The discussions about whether private ships should engage in civil sea rescue and whether countries are obliged to take these ships in are illustrating these rifts and undermine the importance of a Dublin agreement reform (Becker *et al.*, 2019).

2.1   Rise in Anti-immigrant Policies

The measures undertaken by the European Union to handle the crisis can be categorized into an internal as well as an external dimension. These dimensions refer to whether the policies focus on changes within or between EU-member states (internal) or whether the policies and measures undertaken also impacted other countries that are not a member of the European Union, such as the EU-Turkey deal (external dimension) (Niemann and Zaun, 2018).

On the internal dimension, the EU implemented the so-called 'hotspot approach' (Niemann and Zaun, 2018, p. 5) which is aimed at supporting member states with tasks such as "registration, identification, finger-printing and debriefing of asylum-seekers, as well as with return operations" (Niemann and Zaun, 2018, p. 6). Another EU-internal approach at

alleviating the effects of the crisis relied on the relocation and resettlement of asylum-seekers within the EU. However, this scheme failed, largely due to the resistance of the Visegrad countries (Niemann and Zaun, 2018, p. 7; Trauner, 2016, p. 320).

On the external dimension, the European Union tried to tackle its "worst refugee crisis since the end of World War II" (European Parliament, 2017a), through reforming and expanding its border agency Frontex in October of 2016 (Niemann and Zaun, 2018). With this reform, the agency was officially renamed European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex, 2019) and it is aiming to reinforce "the management and security of the EU's external borders" (European Parliament, 2017b). In addition, the EU reformed its European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and transformed it into the EU Agency for Asylum (EUAA) (Fernández Rojo, 2018). Through this, the EU was able to strengthen and tighten its border controls as well as "improving the ability of member states to track people entering Europe" (European Parliament, 2017b).

Besides reforming and strengthening EU agencies tasked with border security and the supervision of refugees and migrants coming to Europe is the European Union working on increasing the efficiency of its return policy (European Parliament, 2017b). In addition to these more structural responses to the migrant crisis, there are also more concrete policy examples of how the EU tries to manage the large migration flow. One very prominent policy change on the external dimension is the EU-Turkey deal that got adopted on the 18th of March 2016 (Niemann and Zaun, 2018, p. 8). With this deal, Turkey agreed to take in all refugees and migrants that entered Greece through Turkey (Weber, 2017, p. 7). The intention of this deal was to substantially decrease the amount of irregular migration towards the EU. For every Syrian that was sent back to Turkey, the EU agreed to resettle one Syrian refugee from Turkey (Cremer, 2017). Turkey conceded to this arrangement because the country would receive 3 billion Euros for handling the refugees in Turkey (Weber, 2017, p. 8). Furthermore, the EU promised to later voluntarily resettle more refugees from Turkey, as well as working on speeding up the EU accession process (Weber, 2017, p. 8). On top of that did the EU categorize Turkey and several other countries as safe countries of origin (Niemann and Zaun, 2018, pp. 9–10). The intended outcome of this policy change, that affects both the external and internal dimension, is to advance and reduce the number of asylum applications from these countries (Niemann and Zaun, 2018, p. 10).

Yet, as not all countries of the European Union were affected in the same way by the crisis, there was also a considerable difference in how the EU member states responded to the refugee crisis. Initially, the EU's reaction to the crisis was "led by Germany and a coalition of member states willing to take in the refugees and migrants" (Weber, 2017, p. 7), whereas countries such as Hungary and the other Visegrad states (Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic) were not as welcoming to the refugees (Trauner, 2016, p. 320). Especially Hungary became known for its poor treatment of asylum seekers (Niemann and Zaun, 2018, p. 4). Due to Hungary's location on the border of the Schengen area, the country initially received large amounts of asylum seekers but eventually erected a fence on its border which shifted migration flows away from its territory (Trauner, 2016, p. 320). This disobedience to EU-norms had a ripple effect and ultimately led to other EU governments giving in to domestic populist pressures and become stricter in their asylum and migration policies (Weber, 2017, p. 7).

2.2 Rise in Anti-immigrant Parties

Overall, the measures taken by the European Union are oftentimes designed to reduce the number of immigrants coming to the European Union. However, the inability to find a solution for the distribution of asylum-seekers across the EU member states, has affected other areas as well. For instance, the sudden increase in asylum-seekers and the ensuing media attention also correlated with a surge in popularity for right-wing and populist parties that are anti-immigrant in their rhetoric and proposed policies (Cook, 2019). This content helped these parties to gain significant success, not only in national elections, but also in the European Parliament (EP) elections. The composition of the EP has drastically changed since the elections in 2009 and 2014 with right-wing and populist parties gaining more and more votes as well as forming their own political groups in the European Parliament (Weise, 2019; Cook, 2019). These populist parties especially gained influence in top-recipient countries such as Austria, Germany and Sweden (Niemann and Zaun, 2018, p. 13). Though Germany's *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD) is a new party quickly discovered anti-immigrant rhetoric for their advantage (Lees, 2018), the Austrian *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs* (FPÖ), or the Swedish *Sverigedemokraterna* or Sweden Democrats (SD) have existed for decades and have been part of the European parliament and their respective national parliaments before the onset of the crisis (European Parliament, 2019).

However, the success of the FPÖ is remarkable as it became the coalition partner of the conservative *Österreichische Volkspartei* (ÖVP) in the Austrian government from December 2017 until May 2019 (Das Gupta, 2019). This showed how popular and mainstream anti-immigrant positions have become in Austria. For instance, the FPÖ positioned itself for border controls in order to fight illegal migration and for restricting access to social welfare and subsidized housing for non-Austrians (FPÖ, 2017). Even though the Sweden Democrats are not in the Swedish government, they became the third biggest party after the national elections in 2018 with 17.53% compared to 12.86% in 2014 (Valmyndigheten, 2018). Their campaign also focused heavily on more restrictive migration policies (Sverigedemokraterna, 2018).

3. The Relationship between Public Opinion and Policy Changes

In the following chapter, I will examine previous literature on the relationship between public opinion and policy changes. Furthermore, I will derive my theoretical expectations in the form of hypotheses regarding the causal impact of migration policy changes on public opinion.

Over the years, there has been a lot of research conducted on the relationship between public opinion and policy changes. The focus there was especially on representative democracies, as the people elect representatives that are expected to execute their electorates will. This relationship works through the mechanisms of public responsiveness and policy representation (Soroka and Wlezien, 2010a, 2010b, p. 263). The latter refers to public preferences for policies being displayed in the government's policies (Soroka and Wlezien, 2010b, p. 263) whereas public responsiveness is the mechanism of an informed public reacting to policy (Soroka and Wlezien, 2010b, p. 263). This shows that the connection between policies and the public's opinion is a reciprocal one (Soroka and Wlezien, 2010a, p. 3). The informed public is expected to adjust to the policy changes and sending signals of content or discontent to the policy makers (Wlezien, 1995, p. 982). These two mechanisms have also been referred to as policy feedback (Kumlin and Stadelmann-Steffen, 2014, p. 3).

However, one common model for explaining the relationship between policy changes and the public's responsiveness towards them is the thermostatic model developed by Christopher Wlezien (1995). This model views the public as "a collection of individuals distributed along a dimension of preference for policy activity" (Wlezien, 1995, p. 982) to be higher or lower, akin to a thermostat. If the existing policy differs from the public's preferences, the public would signal for a policy change (Wlezien, 1995, p. 982). When the policy adjusts sufficiently, the public's signaling would stop (Wlezien, 1995, p. 982). The thermostatic model is based on the assumption of democratic accountability (Wlezien, 1995) where governments do react to public opinion also throughout the election cycle (Soroka and Wlezien, 2010a) meaning that a constant adjustment of policies and the public's respon-siveness is happening. However, the model has been mostly tested using data for the UK, Canada, and the USA due to their similar political systems (Soroka and Wlezien, 2010a). It is also important to mention that the focus of the thermostatic model is more on the public's content or discontent of the policies itself instead of the impact the policy changes have on

public's opinion towards the recipients of the policy changes: the migrants. Nonetheless, I expect there to be a similar mechanism in place for migration policies and public opinion towards migration. From this, I derive my first hypothesis:

> *H1: Migration policy changes impact public opinion and attitudes towards migration and immigrants.*

The policy feedback approach on the other hand acknowledges that "attitudes and behaviour can be results of past policies" (Kumlin and Stadelmann-Steffen, 2014, p. 3). It is crucial to the policy feedback literature that preferences and attitudes of the (informed) public are actively shaped through policies (Hedegaard and Larsen, 2014, p. 269). This also fits the research conducted by Freeman (2006). He categorizes comparative immigration policy research into two general styles. The immigration policies are being shaped by general styles of public policy making as well as unique historical and situational experiences (Freeman, 2006, p. 227). Paul Pierson (1993) also sees policy feedback research as a part of a 'historical institutionalist' approach to comparative politics (Pierson, 1993, p. 596). He examines the different effects public policies can have on the public or politics. For instance, he argues that "public policies often create 'spoils' that provide a strong motivation for beneficiaries to mobilize in favor of programmatic maintenance or expansion" (Pierson, 1993, p. 599).

Victoria M. Esses, Leah K. Hamilton, and Danielle Gaucher (2017) examine possible determinants of public attitudes towards refugees. They show that within the research on perceived threat, the System Justification Theory theorizes that the public may perceive refugees "as a potential threat to the status quo because refugees' cultural values and traditions can provoke social, political, and economic change" leading to initial negative attitudes towards them (Esses *et al.*, 2017, p. 84). However, when for instance the media depicts refugees positively and the government starts to support refugees as well, the perceived threat refugees pose is reduced and the public's attitudes are expected to improve (Esses *et al.*, 2017, p. 84). This approach, in combination with the policy feedback approach leads to the derivation of the second hypothesis:

> *H2: Migration policy changes that are less restrictive are likely to cause public attitudes towards migration and migrants to become more favorable.*

Just as positive responses by the government to refugees are expected to lessen their perceived threat, negative responses by the government should cause the public to be less welcoming. Therefore, my third hypothesis is the following:

> *H3: Migration policy changes that are more restrictive are likely to cause public attitudes towards migration to become less favorable.*

3.1   The Role of Salience

Furthermore, scholars also emphasize that the issue salience of the policy area in question is very important when trying to explain the relationship between public opinion and policies. Issue salience is a moderator for the relationship between public opinion and policy changes. It is regarded to strengthen the relationship. For instance, Wlezien and Soroka notice that "the public salience of the policy domain matters – the public pays more attention to policy-making in domains it considers to be important" (2012, pp. 1409–1410). When the public sees a certain issue as very salient, and therefore pays more attention to what the government does in this policy field, the government is likely to be restricted in its policy changes. Paul Burstein (2003) shows that salience has a substantial effect on public responsiveness (2003, p. 30). Previous research also showed that this impact on public responsiveness is only high when the issue salience is high as well (Jones, 1994). Otherwise, the impact might not only be small but nonexistent (Wlezien and Soroka, 2012, p. 1410). For example, foreign policy issues tend to have a lower public responsiveness which is attributed to the public usually being inadequately informed on this policy area (Burstein, 2003, p. 31; Page and Shapiro, 1983; Jones, 1994). Therefore, I present my next hypothesis relating to the role of issue salience in the relationship between public policy changes and public opinion:

> *H4: A high salience of migration will lead the migration policy changes to have a stronger impact on public opinion towards migration than low issue salience.*

Nonetheless, there are several factors that can constrain the relationship between opinion and policy. Wlezien and Soroka (2012, p. 1408) for instance, examine the role of political institutions which can either constrain or enhance the connection, regardless of salience levels. They argue that the vertical division of powers in federalist governments could dilute the signaling of the government, meaning the public could be less informed about the intentions and impact of government policies (Wlezien and Soroka, 2012, p. 1411). This

can furthermore negatively influence the responsiveness of the government to the public, especially in between elections (Wlezien and Soroka, 2012, p. 1412).

Other scholars, such as Abou-Chadi *et al.* (2019) looked into how political parties adjust their policies in response to changes in issue saliency. Unlike smaller parties, larger parties adjust their policies according to the voters` preferences (Abou-Chadi *et al.*, 2019, p. 2). Interestingly, the authors found out that political parties adjust their positions regarding environmental and welfare issues, in regard to migration issues, the findings do "not reach a conventional level of statistical significance" (Abou-Chadi *et al.*, 2019, p. 12). As these theoretical and empirical deliberation show, it is not completely certain that the migration policy changes in Austria and Sweden have had an impact on public attitudes and opinion towards migration. Therefore, my last hypothesis is:

> *H0: The impact of migration policy changes on public opinion towards refugees is very limited and not affected by saliency.*

3.2 Migration Policies

I will now focus on the literature on migration policies as they are the policies of interest for this thesis. Contact theory is a prominent theory that expects an overall decrease in prejudices and anti-immigrant sentiments the more contact people have with immigrants (Allport, 1954). Nonetheless, newer research in the field of migration policies showed that there is a considerable gap between 'liberal' migration policies and the public's preferences for tough restrictions (Ford *et al.*, 2015, p. 1392). Previous literature identified two distinct ways of how people perceive immigration as a threat: as a clash of economic interests (Sniderman *et al.*, 2004, p. 35) and as threat to national identity (Luedtke, 2005). Concerns about culture or national identity has proven to be more relevant to explain migration policy preferences in Western European countries than the economic explanations (Ivarsflaten, 2005). This correlates with hypotheses 2 and 3 that postulate a relationship between the governments' response towards refugees and the perceived level of threat.

Traditionally, European countries had more experience with emigration than immigration (Freeman, 2006, p. 228). This does set them apart from countries such as the United States of America or Canada which were significantly built and shaped by immigrants. Ford *et al.* (2015) also found evidence for the importance of salience. They show that when a certain

area of immigration policy becomes politically salient, "policy-makers have responded by seeking to restrict it" (Ford *et al.*, 2015, p. 1393). Furthermore, the public's attitudes towards migration are reacting to changes in the migration levels and the attitudes also differ depending on the migrant groups (Ford *et al.*, 2015, p. 1391). This also aligns with the hypotheses 2 and 3.

Even though previous research has focused more on the impact of public opinion on policies than on the effect policy changes have on public attitudes, I think that the latter should not be neglected. Stating that policy affects policy more than the other way around (Page and Shapiro, 1983) does not mean that it is of lesser importance and is not worthy of research. Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to examine whether the whether the migration policy changes implemented by the Austrian and Swedish governments, after the onset of the so-called migration crisis, impacted the public opinions of Austrians and Swedes towards migration and if this impact has been increased due to a higher saliency of migration. This means that I assume public opinion towards immigration from non-EU countries to be more responsive to national migration policy changes after the onset of the so-called migration crisis as the influx in refugees and asylum-seekers that entered the EU in that time increased the salience of migration.

4.1 Methodology

4.1 Case Study Approach

A case study is a form of non-experimental research that is characterized by the small number of cases with a large number of diverse empirical observations for each case (Blatter and Haverland, 2012, p. 19). As a qualitative research method, it aims to paint an in-depth picture of the phenomenon (Yin, 2014, p. 16). Therefore, the data collection for the case study research is extensive and draws from various sources (Yin, 2014, p. 16). Through this, case studies derive their strong internal validity (Slater and Ziblatt, 2013, p. 1303). According to John Gerring, case study research consists of the following elements: the population which incorporates all relevant cases (Gerring, 2007, p. 22); a sample "of whatever cases are subjected to formal analysis" (Gerring, 2007, p. 21); the case that is "a spatially delimited phenomenon (a unit) observed at a single point in time or over some period of time" (Gerring, 2007, p. 19); and observations, which are "the most basic element of any empirical endeavor (Gerring, 2007, p. 20). I will discuss the case selection process in its own sub-chapter. Given this short introduction to what case study research is, it becomes apparent that it is a very broad term, and Gerring even goes as far as saying, that any research that is not a case study is quantitative (Gerring, 2007, p. 33). Since it is so broad, there are various forms of case study research, with the comparative method being the one I will apply for this thesis. It is a form of case study in which one compares two or more units of analysis at the same point in time (Gerring, 2007, p. 27). Even though, case study research is often paired with causal process tracing, I will use the method of Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) as a means of data collection for my independent variable of migration policy changes.

4.2 Qualitative Content Analysis

Qualitative Content Analysis is a method that was originally developed in order to analyse and interpret newspaper articles and therefore has its roots in communication studies (Schreier, 2012, p. 9). It is a research method that is used to systematically describe qualitative material and its meaning (Schreier, 2012, p. 1). This is achieved through "classifying material as instances of the categories of a coding frame" (Schreier, 2012, p. 1). It is applicable to various kinds of data which can be visual, written, or for example stems from interviews even though it is most often used for verbal data (Schreier, 2012, pp. 2–3).

However, QCA is especially useful when the data has latent meaning and therefore has to be interpreted (Schreier, 2012, p. 2). What distinguishes QCA from other qualitative methods is its focus on certain selected aspects of the data that are being dictated by the research aim (Schreier, 2012, p. 4). Therefore, qualitative content analysis does not provide a complete overview of the data, but rather focuses on relevant aspects.

With the systematic approach of QCA, Margrit Schreier lists the following sequence of steps that are to be followed (Schreier, 2012, pp. 5–6):

1. *Deciding on the research question*
2. *Selection of material*
3. *Building the coding frame which normally consists of several main categories with their own subcategories*
4. *Arrange the material into units of coding*
5. *Testing the coding frame*
6. *Evaluate and adjust the coding frame especially in terms of validity*
7. *Conduct the main analysis*
8. *Interpret and present the findings*

The coding frames, which are intended for structuring the data and material, consist of several levels of categories and subcategories depending on the scope and aim of the research question (Schreier, 2012, pp. 61–63). Nonetheless, the coding frame and the categories have to meet certain requirements. These are: "unidimensionality, mutual exclusiveness, exhaustiveness, and saturation" (Schreier, 2012, p. 71).

Unidimensionality means that each dimension of a coding frame only encompasses one aspect of the material (Schreier, 2012, p. 72). Mutual exclusiveness concerns the subcategories of a dimension, in which "a unit of coding can be assigned to one of these subcategories only" (Schreier, 2012, p. 75). Exhaustiveness refers to the ability "to assign each unit of coding in your material to at least one subcategory in your coding frame" (Schreier, 2012, p. 76). The last requirement, saturation, means that each subcategory of the coding frame has to be used at least once (Schreier, 2012, p. 77). As the coding frames and the categories in QCA are to a certain degree data-driven and inductive (Schreier, 2012, p. 7), I will show the specific coding frames and the utilized categories and subcategories later on in this thesis.

Qualitative content analysis emerged from quantitative content analysis (Schreier, 2012, p. 18) and even though both forms of content analysis cannot be sharply divided, there are some important differences (Schreier, 2012, pp. 15–16). These differences for instance concern the role of reliability and validity. In quantitative content analysis, validity is less important than reliability, whereas in QCA both are of equal importance (Schreier, 2012, p. 16). Another distinction between both forms is that in QCA, the coding is partly data-driven, while in quantitative content analysis is more concept-driven (Schreier, 2012, p. 16). This focus on latent meaning makes reliability harder to achieve in QCA than in quantitative content analysis. And the inductive approach to the coding frame makes validity checks more important as one has to make sure that the coding frame captures the latent meaning of the material (Schreier, 2012, p. 16). This focus on the latent meaning also means that QCA needs more context for the analysis than its quantitative counterpart.

Therefore, I will use QCA to systematically describe and categorise the migration policy changes in Austria and Sweden before and after the onset of the so-called migration crisis. The categorization of the policy changes will be useful to determine the direction the policy changes take. The relationship of these policy changes and the publics opinion on migration however cannot be directly captured through QCA. Thus, I will use QCA primarily as a method of data collection for my analysis.

5.   Empirical Analysis

As mentioned before, the aim of this thesis is to see if the more restrictive migration policy changes in Austria and Sweden affected public opinion to become more critical towards immigration and if less restrictive policy changes would affect public opinion to become more welcoming as well. Therefore, I will be looking into migration policy changes in these two countries in the time period from late 2010 to 2016. I chose this timeframe as it encapsulates the time before the large influx of migrants coming to the European Union and the time period after the onset of the crisis in the second half of 2015. In 2015 and 2016, immigration was also deemed most salient (European Commission, 2018c, pp. 13–15) by European citizens. Furthermore, I expect the governments of Austria and Sweden to have implemented more changes shortly after the onset of the crisis than in the years that followed. I derive this expectation from the fact that the number of first-time asylum-seekers and applicants has decreased significantly after 2016 in the EU overall, as well as Austria and Sweden (Eurostat, 2018).

In 2018, the number of applications reached its pre-crisis levels again (Eurostat, 2019). This implies that the European Union, as well as the two countries of my analysis have implemented policies that are better equipped to restrict the arrival of asylum-seekers in the EU. Especially since the conflicts in the countries the most asylum-seekers derive from – Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq (Eurostat, 2019) – have not yet died down.

The second half of 2010 was chosen as the starting point for the analysis due to several reasons. The first reason is that the Eurobarometer studies started to include the question on what the public deems important (European Commission, 2015c, p. 48). This is a very practical reason. Another reason for starting in 2010 is that it enables me to better analyze and compare the development of migration policies in Austria and Sweden overall. Furthermore, Austria implemented major changes to its migration policies in 2010 and 2011 as well (DEMIG, 2015), making it important to include these years in the analysis as well.

5.1   Case Selection

The selection of Austria and Sweden as the units of analysis is based on the countries' public opinions towards immigration. I based the selection on a Special Eurobarometer Survey that was conducted in the fall of 2017 (European Commission, 2018b). Even though this survey was conducted after time period for my analysis, it is a very useful report that deals with

the integration of immigrants in the European Union and measured citizens' personal experiences and attitudes towards migrants from non-EU countries as well. Compared to the other EU member states, Sweden was the country in which the citizens expressed the most favorable views towards immigration from outside the EU with 45% of Swedes stating that they see immigration as more of an opportunity (European Commission, 2018b, p. 58). 19% of those polled in Sweden stated that they see immigration to be more of a problem. This number was only lower in Luxembourg at 17% (European Commission, 2018b, p. 58). In Austria on the other hand, only 13% see non-EU immigration as more of an opportunity, which is significantly below the EU average of 20% (European Commission, 2018b, p. 58). On top of that, 37% of Austrians regarded immigration to be more of a problem and 40% see immigration as equally a problem and opportunity (European Commission, 2018b, p. 58). Albeit, there are other European countries that have even less favorable opinions towards immigration than Austria. However, they are mostly Eastern European countries and Italy and France (European Commission, 2018b, p. 58) which makes them a lesser fit for a comparative study in my opinion.

Austria and Sweden have several similarities. They are two Western European countries with similar population sizes and economic performances that joined the European Union at the same time (European Commission, 2015a, p. 2). On top of that are both member countries of the Schengen area and do not have an outer Schengen border, unlike Hungary or Greece. Another big advantage of studying Austria and Sweden is the availability of the data as there is no language barrier for me with these two countries.

5.2 Data and Sample

The data I chose and collected for my analysis stems from various sources. This has several reasons. First, as I need data for the policy changes, the increased salience, as well as the public's opinion towards immigration, I need to rely on several sources. And second, by applying triangulation, I am able to get data from different angles which helps to minimize inaccuracy (King *et al.*, 1995, pp. 479–480). Conforming to the Qualitative Content Analysis methodology , I derived the following categories for the migration policy changes in Austria and Sweden:
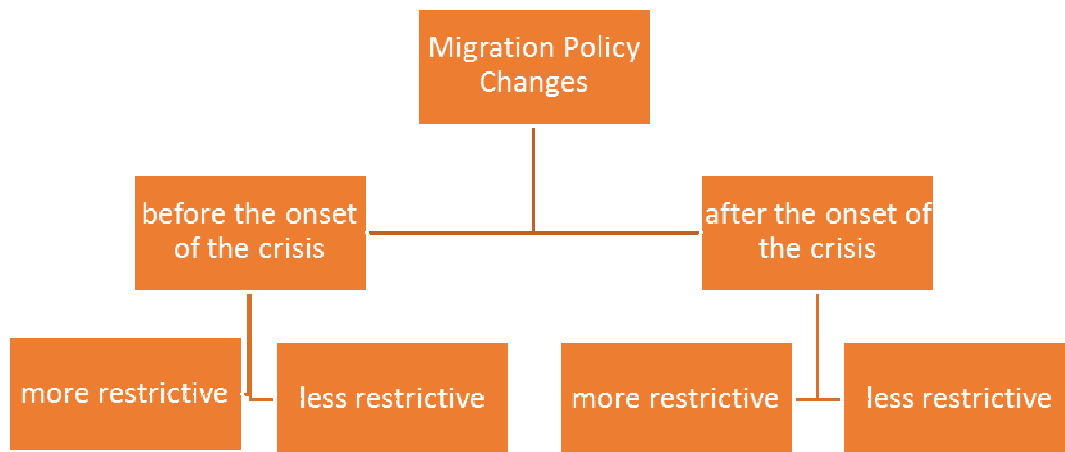
Figure 1: The coding frame for the analysis.

The coding divides the migration policy changes depending on when the migration policy change was introduced. This means, I differentiate between before and after the onset of the crisis. Furthermore, I then subdivide the policy changes according to their character or intention. These subcategories are named more restrictive and less restrictive and are part of each main category. Less restrictive policy changes refer to policies that have the intention of improving the situation for the policy recipients. This could for instance mean, that the government is providing more funding, granting refugees access to the labor market, or granting refugees permanent residency. More restrictive migration policy changes, on the other hand, refer to policies that have the intention of deterring refugees and migrants from entering the country or limiting their access to the labor market. This coding frame therefore enables me to clearly identify and classify all migration policy changes in Austria and Sweden.

In line with my chosen timeframe, I will use the Standard Eurobarometer surveys number 74-86 for data on the issue saliency of immigration in Austria and Sweden. These reports are being conducted and published twice a year by the European Commission in the EU's member states (European Commission, 2019). Due to their large scale and regular publishing, the Eurobarometer surveys are suitable to measure the public's opinion as well as identify salient issues over a given time period. The survey routinely asks what the citizens see as the two most important issues facing their country and the European Union as a whole. Starting in the fall of 2010, when the question was asked for the first time (European

Commission, 2015c, p. 48), one can see that the average rate at which immigration was named sharply increased after the onset of the crisis, even though it was on an upwards trend beforehand as well (European Commission, 2018c, pp. 13, 17).
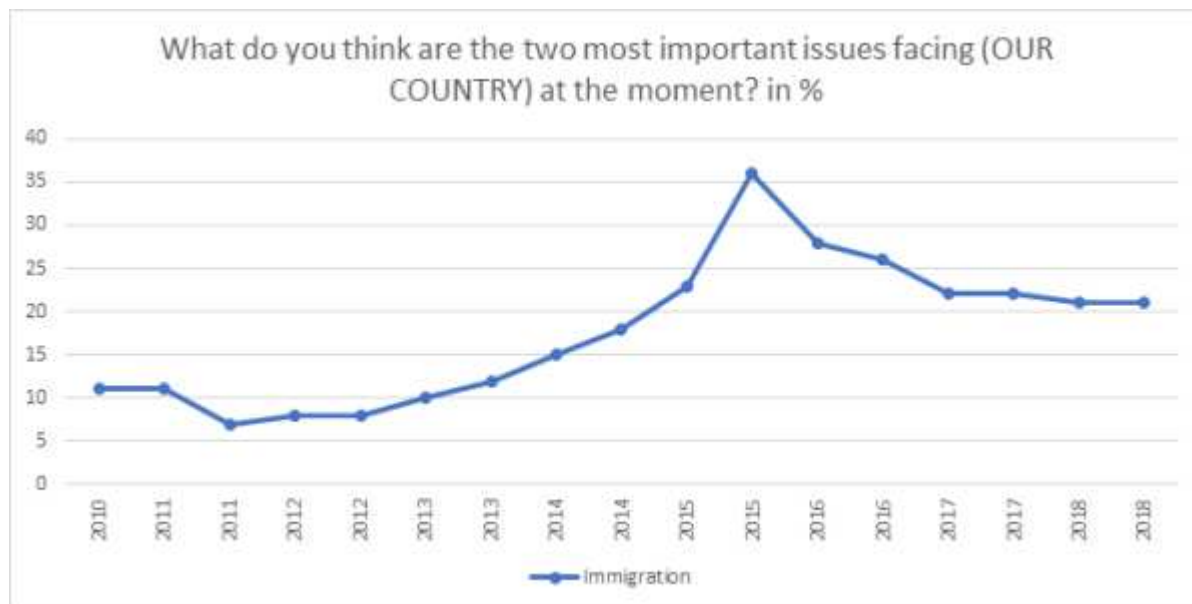

Figure 2: The two most important issues facing (OUR COUNTRY) at the moment.

In order to measure the migration policies of Sweden and Austria, as well as the policy changes before the onset of the migration crisis, I will, amongst others, also use the DEMIG POLICY datasets on migration policy changes in Sweden and Austria until 2014 (DEMIG, 2015). These datasets list migration policy changes for 45 countries worldwide dating back several decades. In the cases of Sweden and Austria, the dataset provides information on migration policies from 1918 onwards. However, as the DEMIG POLICY datasets do not cover policies in Austria and Sweden that were introduced after 2014, I rely on different sources for the more recent migration policy changes that were implemented in 2015 and 2016. For Sweden, the data material used for the migration policy changes also stem from the English website of the Swedish migration agency *Migrationsverket* which lists an historical overview of migration in Sweden (Migrationsverket, 2019). Another source for Swedish migration policy changes, starting in 2015, is the Swedish ministry of justice which publishes fact sheets on Sweden's migration and asylum policy in English (Ministry of Justice, 2018, 2019) on a regular basis. These governmental agencies provided most of the material used for the Swedish policies. I used additional input from articles written by Bernd Parusel on Sweden's reaction to the so-called migration crisis.
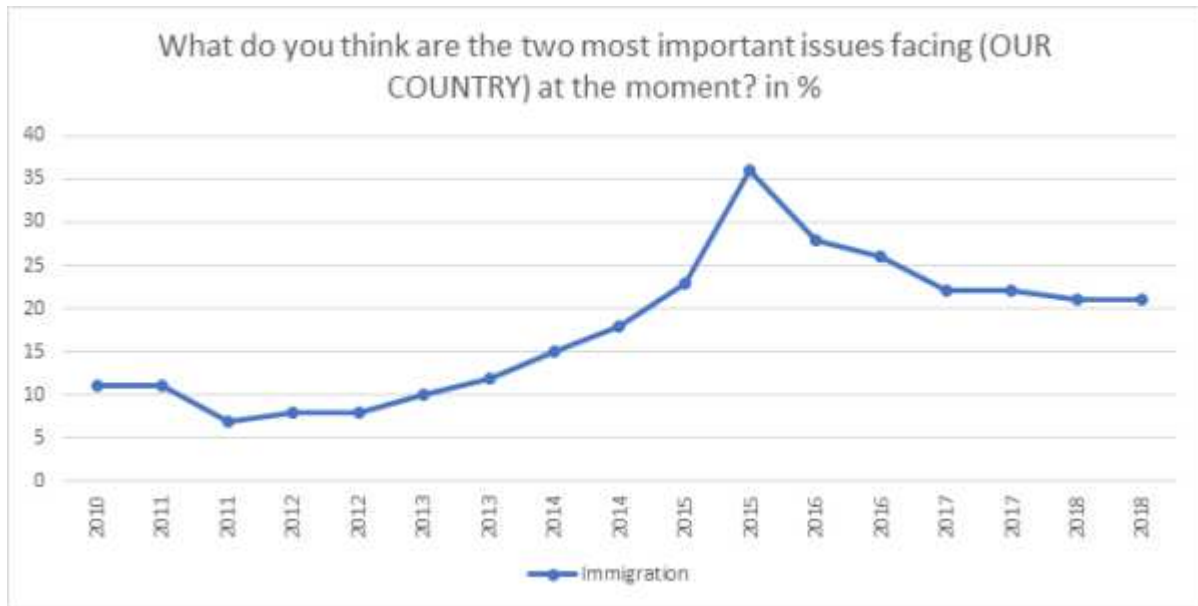
Figure 3: Immigration named as one of the two most important issues facing the EU at the moment.

For migration policy changes in Austria, I also relied on DEMIG POLICY datasets, as well as a multitude of other sources. For instance, Heinz Fassmann's articles written for the German Federal Agency for Civic Education (*Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung)* in 2015 have proven to be informative (Fassmann, 2015a, 2015b). For the policy developments in 2015 and 2016, I heavily relied on Austrian, as well as international newspapers written in German and English. Another important source for policy changes were the country reports written by Anny Knapp and the *Asylkoordination Österreich* (asylum coordination Austria) which were published by the Asylum Information Database (AIDA).

If possible, I tried to use sources and material provided by the national governments. However, this was not always possible, especially in the case of Austria. Therefore, I resolved to using secondary sources from various origins. I tried to objectively classify the migration policy changes mentioned in my material according to my coding scheme. Lastly, it is important to mention that the reason for not extending the timeframe of the analysis to also cover 2017 or even 2018 is that there were no further migration policy changes after 2016 in Sweden (Migrationsverket, 2019).
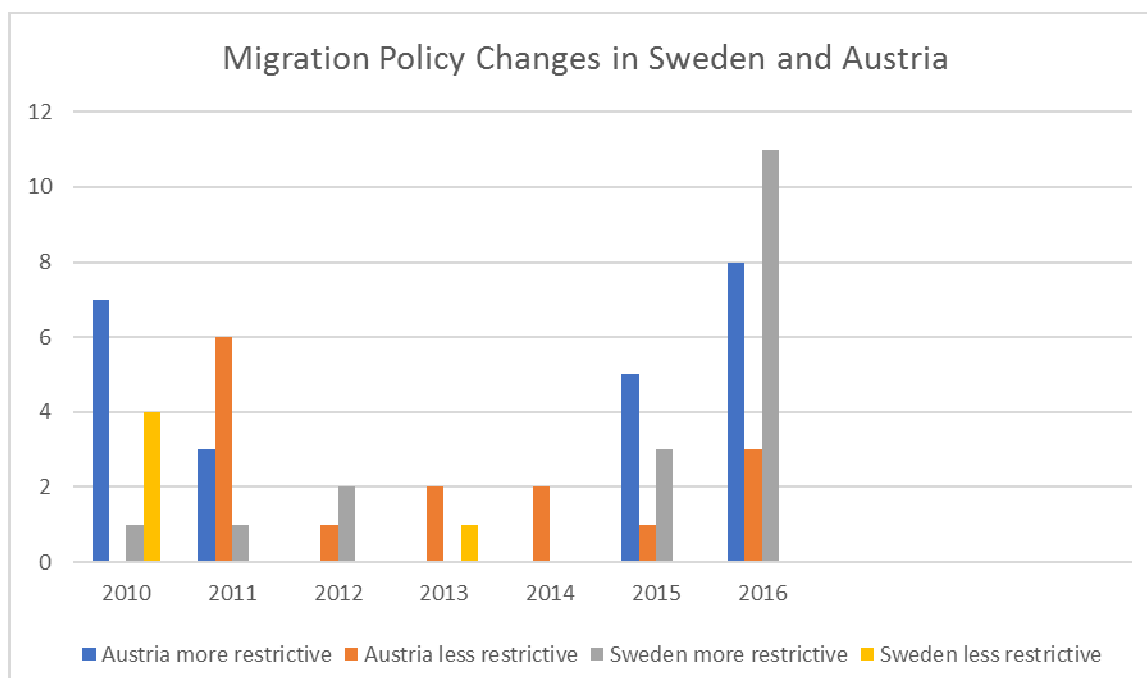
5.3 Main Results

Figure 4: Migration Policy Changes in Austria and Sweden 2010-2016

Figure 10 gives an overview over the number of migration policy changes that were implemented in Sweden and Austria between 2010 and 2016. It shows that there were quite a few policy changes before the onset of the so-called migration crisis. Especially in Austria, the government under former Austrian chancellor Werner Faymann (social democrats) implemented various reforms in 2010 and 2011 that focused on high-skilled labor integration (Fassmann, 2015b). One example of these changes is the introduction of the Red-White-Red card for highly skilled workers in July of 2011 (Fassmann, 2015b). At the same time were the amendments focused on restricting access for migrants with little to no German skills (DEMIG, 2015). In 2012, Austria made it easier for minor asylum seekers to be granted work permits for vocational training (DEMIG, 2015). This liberalization to the labor market continued in Austria until 2014, where Austria opened its labor market to Romanians and Bulgarians (DEMIG, 2015).

Similarly, in Sweden, most migration policy changes before the onset of the so-called migration crisis were about migrants' and asylum seekers' access to the Swedish labor market in 2010 (DEMIG, 2015). However, some of the changes were more restrictive. For instance, in 2010, it became harder for labor migrants from non-EEA countries to get their families to migrate to Sweden as well (DEMIG, 2015). In 2011, Sweden introduced tuition fees for students of non-EU countries, which was also a more restrictive policy change.

Furthermore, the Swedish government imposed stricter requirements for employers hiring workers from outside the European Union in 2012 (DEMIG, 2015).

When comparing Austria's and Sweden's migration policy changes leading up to the so-called migration crisis, one can say that Austria's main focus was on attracting highly skilled workers from non-EU countries. Sweden's focus was similar, however, a larger portion of their migration policy changes before the onset of the crisis was addressing asylum seekers than the migration changes in Austria.

Austria and Sweden both experienced national elections within the time period of analysis. Sweden elected a new parliament in 2010 (Valmyndigheten, 2010). There was no government change with the center-right alliance governing, however, the Sweden Democrats entered the parliament for the first time. Austria reelected its social-democratic chancellor in 2013 who remained in office until 2016. Another similarity between Austria and Sweden is that the populist right-wing parties in both countries experienced electoral successes. The growing success of those parties, that often proclaim anti-refugee and anti-immigrant sentiments is likely to also have influenced the public and their opinion towards immigration.

5.3.1 Austria:

As mentioned before, Austria's asylum and migration policies mainly focused on the accommodation, the reception, the asylum process, voluntary returns and deportations (Fassmann, 2015a) before the onset of the crisis. This can also be seen in the policy changes from 2013 and 2014 (DEMIG, 2015). Austria passed legislation on labor market integration in 2013 that was less restrictive (DEMIG, 2015). Furthermore, Austria opened its labor market for Romanians and Bulgarians in 2014 (DEMIG, 2015). In January 2014, Austria created a Federal Office for Asylum and Migration meant to bundle its competences (DEMIG, 2015). Then, in August 2015, Austria installed a new refugee coordinator tasked with finding accommodations and lodgings for the ever increasing number of asylum seekers coming to Austria (Sablatnig, 2015). As I will discuss later, most of the migration policy changes starting with the appointment of the refugee coordinator in August of 2015 are more restrictive on both, the external and internal dimension. Because of this, I expect the public opinion in Austria to become less welcoming as well (hypothesis 3). However, as I Austria's

migration policy changes were mainly more restrictive in 2010, and less restrictive in 2011, I expect the public's attitude to become more favorable over the period from 2010 to 2015.

The following figure shows how many Austrians regarded immigration as one of the two most important issues the EU and Austria are facing at the moment. The data stems from the Standard Eurobarometer Surveys 74-86 where these two questions are regularly asked. The responses given are a good indicator for the perceived saliency of an issue. Therefore, the graph clearly shows a sharp increase in the saliency of immigration at the same time as the onset of the so-called migration crisis in the EU in general and in Austria. Furthermore, the levels are higher in the years 2010 and 2011 which correlates with the relatively large amounts of policy changes that were implemented in these years. Afterwards, the issue was mentioned less in these surveys. However, in 2013, parallel to the national elections, more Austrians perceived immigration on a European level to be an important issue than before. Nonetheless, the saliency levels remained low compared to the later years.
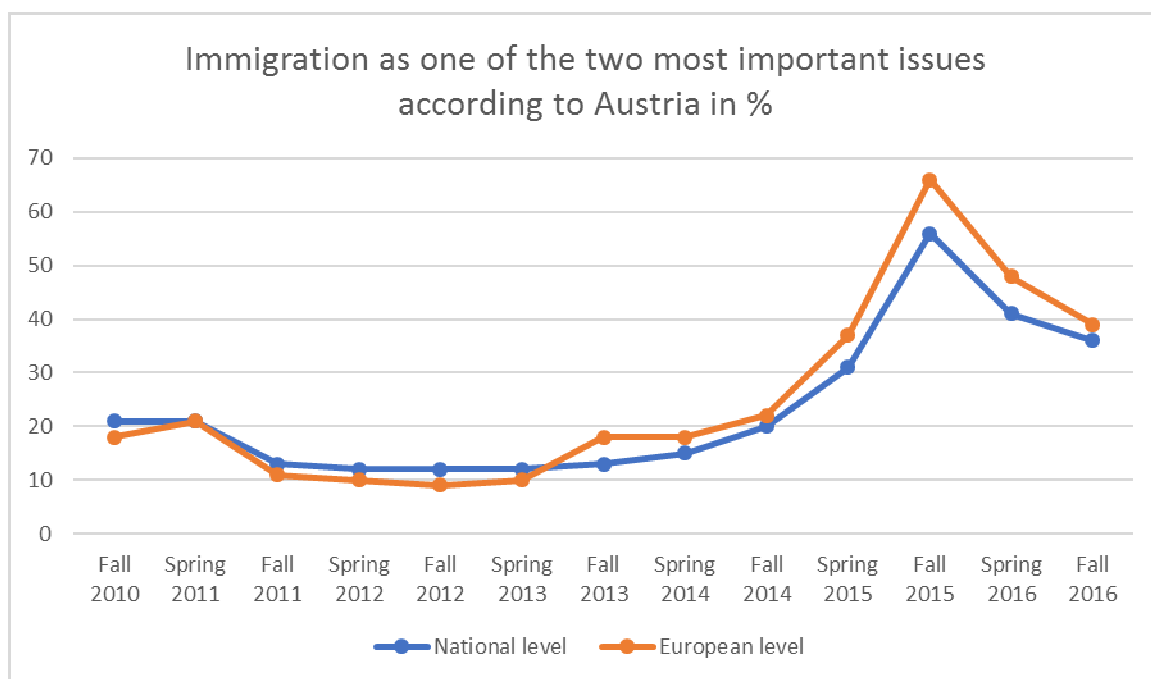
Figure 5: Immigration as one of the two most important issues according to Austria

In September of 2015, the Austrian government started to introduce controls on its southern borders (Eddy and Bilefsky, 2015). Later, in October 2015, Austria publicly announced its plans to build a border fence on its border with Slovenia (The Telegraph, 2015). The building of said fence then began on December 7th, 2015 (Der Standard, 2015a). Like Sweden, Austria also restricted its asylum rights. People under subsidiary protection have

to wait for three years for family reunifications instead of the previous 12 months (Der Standard, 2015b). Furthermore, refugees have to meet certain financial requirements to qualify for family reunifications (Der Standard, 2015b). In January 2016, Austria was announcing even stricter border controls than before (DW, 2016). They intended to mainly let those asylum seekers in who wanted to merely pass through Austria. On January 20th, 2016, Austria announced that it wanted to limit the number of asylum applications to 37,500 per year (Der Standard, 2015c). This decision was met with a lot of criticism (BBC News, 2016b) as it is seemingly in violation of the Geneva convention (Der Standard, 2015c). A couple weeks later, on February 19th, Austria reduces the number of applications to 80 a day (Der Standard, 2016). There were also several changes regarding the financial aid people under subsidiary protection are entitled to, which were reduced in several Austrian states (Knapp and Asylkoordination Österreich, 2017, pp. 13–14). A major policy change was also that asylum is now only being granted for three years (Knapp and Asylkoordination Österreich, 2017, p. 13). Before that, asylum seekers had indefinite right of residence (Knapp and Asylkoordination Österreich, 2017, p. 13).

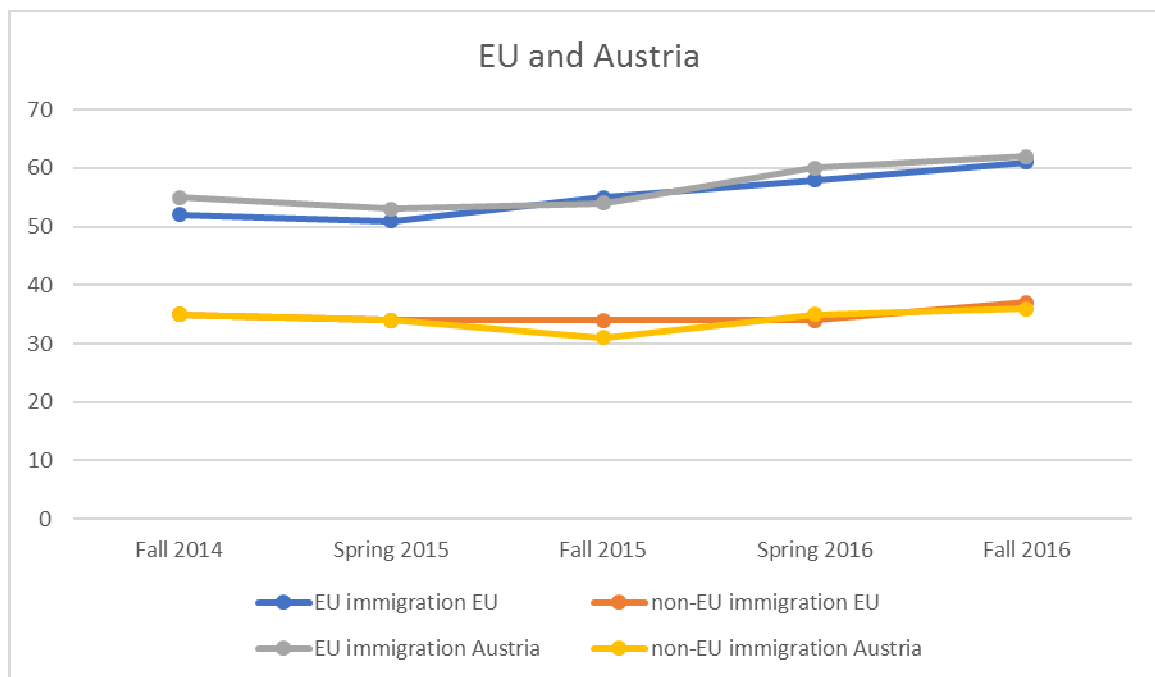*Figure 6: Immigration evokes a positive feeling in %*

However, there were also some policy changes that are less restrictive. For example was the time limit for the submission of appeals extended in February 2016 (Knapp and Asyl-koordination Österreich, 2017, p. 12). And on June 1st, 2016 "the maximum duration of proceedings at the BFA was extended" (Knapp and Asylkoordination Österreich, 2017,

p. 12). There was also a slight increase in funding and reimbursements of expenses in relation to asylum seekers; this also included the allowance asylum-seekers receive (Knapp and Asylkoordination Österreich, 2017, p. 13). Lastly, on October 1st, 2016, asylum-seekers' rights for legal representation in appeals were strengthened (Knapp and Asylkoordination Österreich, 2017, p. 12).

When it comes to the public opinion in Austria towards immigration and immigrants, I also rely on data provided by the Standard Eurobarometer surveys. Unfortunately, there is no previous data provided by the Eurobaromter surveys for the whole period of analysis. Starting with the Standard Eurobarometer Survey 82, which was conducted in the fall of 2014, respondents were asked a series of questions relating to their attitudes towards immigration. These questions were whether they are in favor of a common European policy on migration, if EU and non-EU immigration evokes a positive feeling, and whether the EU should apply additional measures to fight illegal/irregular immigration. Unfortunately, these questions were not asked in earlier Eurobarometer surveys, which could be attributed to the lower issue salience of immigration at that time.
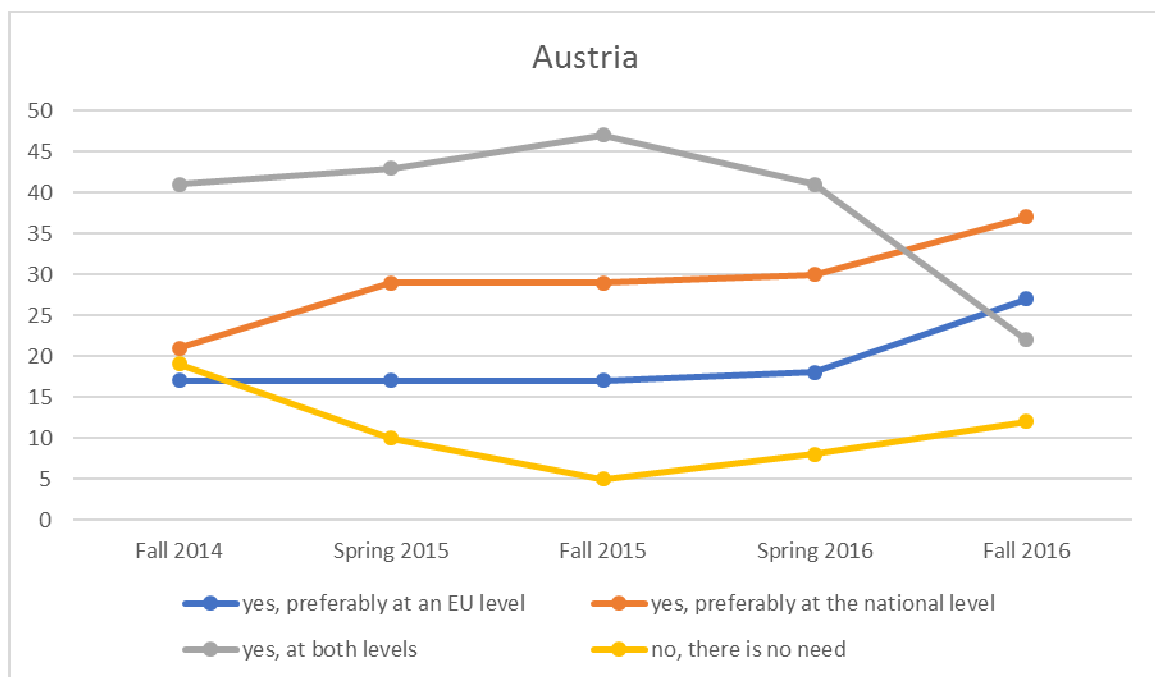

Figure 7: "Should additional measures be taken to fight irregular immigration of people from outside the EU?" in %

Regarding the support of a common European policy on migration, Austrians were less supportive than the Swedes and the European average. In the fall of 2014, 59% of Austrians were in favor, this was the lowest value with Czech Republic, Finland and the UK (European

Commission, 2014c, p. 175). Austria's support level remained the same until the fall of 2016, when it dropped to 55% (European Commission, 2016a, p. 43). Regarding to Austria's attitudes towards immigrants from the EU and other countries, Austrians opinions are very similar to the European-wide average, as the following figure 6 shows. Interestingly, the support for migrants from other EU member states and from non-EU countries goes up or stays relatively stable between the fall of 2014 and the fall of 2016.

The question regarding whether there should be additional measures taken against irregular migration was asking about fighting illegal immigration at first. From the Eurobarometer survey 85 in spring 2016 onward, the question was rephrased to irregular immigration (European Commission, 2016b, p. 54). Here, one can see that most Austrians favor joint efforts on the national and European level (see figure 7). Between spring and fall of 2016, however, this option loses support while efforts mainly on the national or European level gain support.

5.3.2 Sweden:

Sweden is and was one of the main destination countries for asylum-seekers in Europe. Compared to its population size, Sweden took in more than other EU countries (Parusel, 2016a, p. 2). In 2015 alone, there were more than 160,000 new asylum-seekers in Sweden, which was twice as much than in 2014, where around 80,000 came (Parusel, 2016a, p. 2). However, Sweden was able to reduce that number to less than 29,000 in 2016 (Migrations-verket, 2017, p. 24). This drastic drop in numbers is also a sign that Sweden has implemented various migration policy changes after the onset of the so-called migration crisis in the second half of 2015.

Before the onset of the crisis, Sweden was known for its 'generous' asylum policies (Parusel, 2017) which is in line with the aforementioned large number of asylum-seekers. This generosity can also be seen in the last asylum and migration policy change before the crisis in September of 2013. This policy change granted all Syrians and stateless people who came to Sweden from Syria permanent residence permits (Migrationsverket, 2019). The policy changes which were implemented after the onset of the crisis all fall into the more restrictive category of my coding frame (which can be found in the appendix). Therefore, I expect the Swedish public opinion towards immigration to become more critical as well (hypothesis 3).

The following figure shows how many Swedes regarded immigration as one of the two most important issues the EU and Sweden are facing at the moment. The data also stems from the Standard Eurobarometer Surveys 74-86 where these two questions are regularly asked. The figure clearly shows a sharp increase in the saliency of immigration at the same time as the onset of the so-called migration crisis. Compared to Austria and the European average, immigration is a much more salient issue in Sweden. Before the onset of the crisis, Swedes however regarded European immigration as less of an issue as immigration to Sweden. This goes along with the kind of migration policies that were implemented in that time period and hypotheses 2 and 3. Furthermore, immigration was also one of the main issues in the Swedish national elections in 2014 and 2018 (Skodo, 2018), also indicating a high saliency of the issue. In these elections, the populist Sweden Democrats were very successful and laid focus on immigration in their campaigning, this is likely to have contributed to the rise in saliency of the issue of immigration. Nonetheless, Sweden elected a new prime minister, Stefan Löfven from the social democrats.
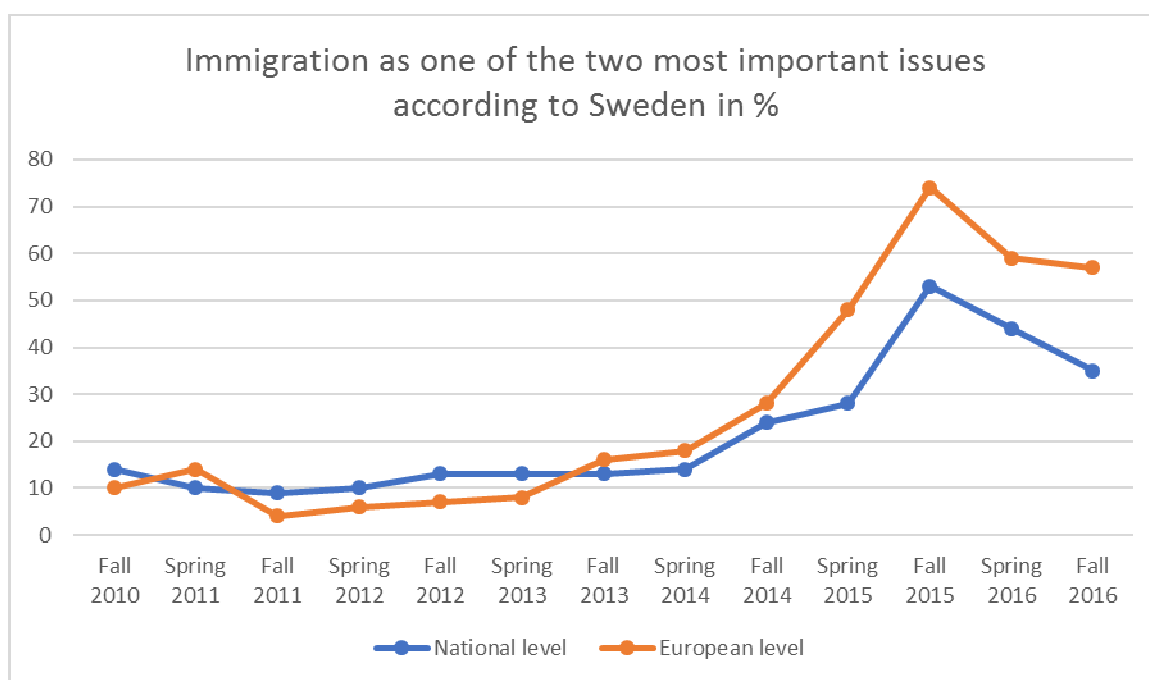
Figure 8: Immigration as one of the two most important issues according to Sweden

The first policy change the Swedish government implemented after the beginning of the crisis was to introduce temporary border controls with the intention to reduce the amount of asylum-seekers (Parusel, 2017). This was on November 12th, 2015. Shortly after, on January 4th, 2016, Sweden installed temporary ID checks on its borders (Regeringen och Regeringskansliet, 2017). This meant that "bus, train and ferry companies are no longer

allowed to carry passengers without identity documents from neighbouring Denmark or Germany to Sweden" (Parusel, 2016c). Through these policy changes, the "weekly arrivals were only about 5% of those recorded in early November 2015" (Parusel, 2016c). Another reason for why the numbers were so low probably was the closing of the 'Balkan route' and the EU-Turkey deal (Parusel, 2017).

Two months later, on March 1st, it was stated that "all municipalities are compelled to receive a portion of the refugees" (Migrationsverket, 2019) which aimed at a better distribution across Sweden. On June 1st, 2016, a policy came into force that was meant to increase the number of voluntary returns of people whose asylum application got a negative response (Parusel, 2017). The policy cut the right to aid for these asylum-seekers (Migrationsverket, 2019). Furthermore, persons that were to be deported lose "the right to a daily allowance, and to asylum accommodation paid for by the Swedish Migration Agency" (Migrationsverket, 2019). However, according to a report from the Swedish migration agency, the incentives for a voluntary return do not seem to have the desirable effect, as only a small fraction of these asylum seekers leave Sweden voluntarily (Migrationsverket, 2017, p. 53).

In July 2016, Sweden reduced the protection granted to the minimum mandated through EU and international law for three years (Parusel, 2017). This means that, unlike before, Sweden only grants protection for a maximum of three years at a time (Migrationsverket, 2019). On top of that, the possibility of family reunions has also been limited (Ministry of Justice, 2019, p. 1; Parusel, 2017). People that are granted subsidiary protection and therefore did not receive refugee status are no longer granted family reunifications (Migrationsverket, 2019). Also, people under subsidiary protection are only given permits for 13 months that can be extended (Migrationsverket, 2019). As people with refugee status are in a minority, the restriction on family reunions has a huge effect on migration numbers (Parusel, 2017).

Furthermore, the amount of women and children seeking asylum in Sweden rose, as they are affected most by the restriction on family reunions (Parusel, 2017). Even though the immigration and asylum policies became more restrictive on both, the internal and external dimension, made the Swedish government "more funding available for integration measures" (Parusel, 2016b, p. 12), especially in the field of labor market integration (Skodo, 2018). Nonetheless, the changes can be seen as a "move toward tying immigration rights to integration achievements" (Skodo, 2018).
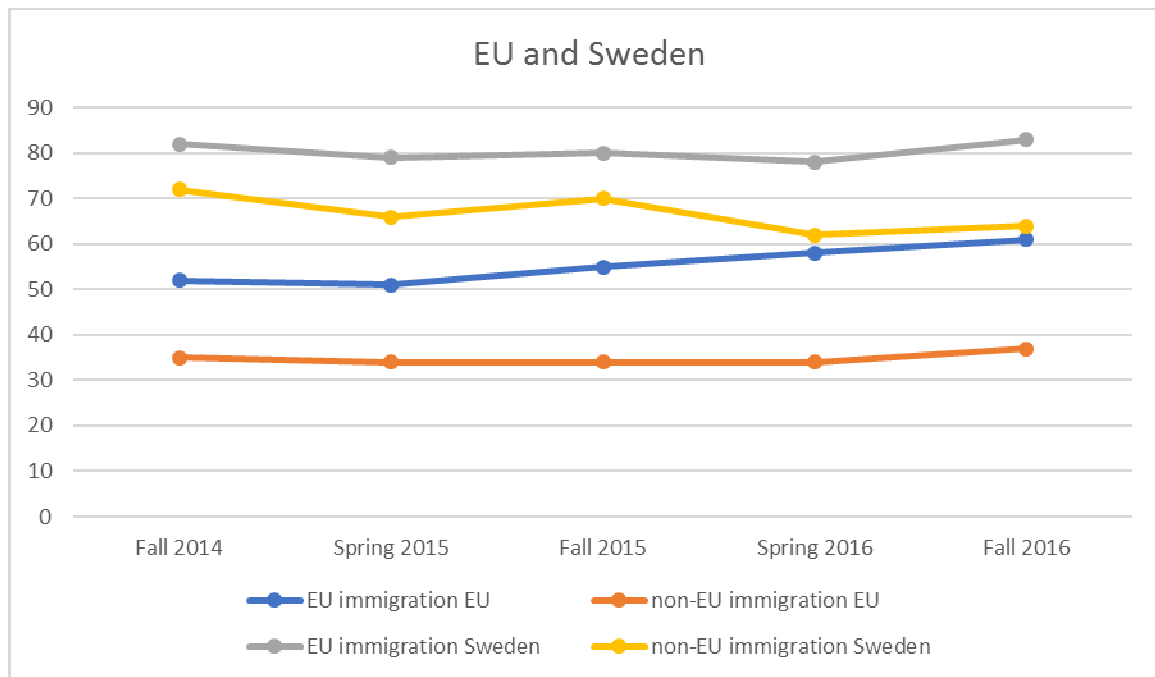
Figure 9: Immigration evokes a positive feeling in %

When it comes to the public opinion in Sweden towards immigration and immigrants, I also rely on data provided by the Standard Eurobarometer surveys as I did for Austria. Regarding the support of a common European policy on migration, there was consistently a high percentage of Swedes who were in favor. Compared to other countries, Sweden had one of the highest approval rates for such a policy.

The lowest support rate given for such a policy was in the fall of 2014 with 69% (European Commission, 2014c, p. 175) and the highest was in the fall of 2015 with 78% (European Commission, 2015b, p. 47). In the other surveys, 76% approved in the fall of 2016 (European Commission, 2016a, p. 43), 75% in the spring of 2016; and 77% approved in the spring of 2015 (European Commission, 2015c, p. 151). This stance is also supported by the Swedish government (Ministry of Justice, 2018) which is promoting burden-sharing and further cooperation amongst countries.

Concerning attitudes towards immigrants from the EU and other countries, Sweden scored amongst the highest values when it comes to support for immigrants. For immigrants that stem from other European countries, the values are higher, however, Sweden's attitude towards non-EU immigrants was a lot higher compared to the European average. The following figure illustrates Sweden's attitude towards immigrants over time compared to the EU average.
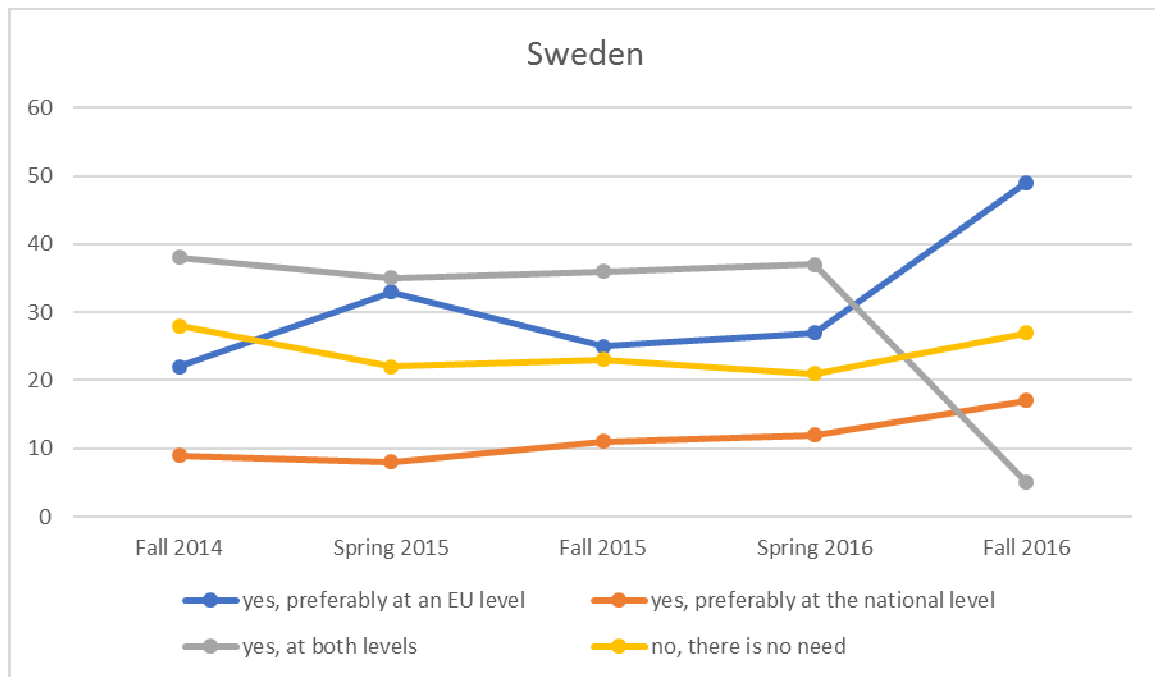
Figure 10: "Should additional measures be taken to fight irregular immigration of people from outside the EU?" in %

When the Eurobarometer surveys asked about whether there should be additional measures taken to fight illegal/irregular migration, Sweden's preferences stay relatively consistent (see figure 10). However, there is a large increase in Swedes favoring efforts taken mainly at the EU level from spring to fall 2016 and a significant drop in respondents favoring efforts on both levels. Compared to Austria's responses, a lot more Swedes do not see a need for further efforts and Swedes prefer the EU level over the national level, unlike Austrians (see figure 7).

6. Discussion of Results:

As the analysis showed, the migration policy changes of both countries changed after the onset of the crisis, not only in quantity, but also in the sense that they became more restrictive. The issue salience of immigration also increased significantly in the second half of 2015. The Eurobarometer surveys showed that 58 per cent of Europeans considered immigration as one of the two most important issues facing the EU (European Commission, 2018c, p. 13) in the fall of 2015. However, only 36% of Europeans saw immigration as one of the two most pressing issues for their own countries (European Commission, 2018c, p. 17). In the two countries of the analysis, Austria and Sweden, these values were a lot higher. 56% of Austrians saw immigration as an issue for Austria, whereas 66% thought immigration was of high importance for the EU (European Commission, 2016c, pp. 49; 56). For Sweden, these numbers are even higher. 53% of Swedes considered immigration to be one of the main issues for Sweden whereas 74% of Swedes considered immigration to be important for the European Union. In the fall of 2010, 14% of Swedes considered immigration to be an important issue for Sweden, this number dropped to 9% in the fall of 2011, but then rose tp 14% in the spring of 2014, therefore remaining relatively stable over these years.

Starting in 2014, the numbers then started to increase from 14% in spring to 28% in early 2015 (see figure 8). Austria's responses started off higher at 21% for the national level in fall 2010 and spring of 2011 (see figure 5) and then dropped to 12% in the spring of 2012. Afterwards, they remain relatively consistent until they began to rise in 2014 being 20% in the fall of 2014 (see figure 5). The highest value was achieved in the fall of 2015 with 56% of Austrians naming immigration an important issue (see figure 5). I would attribute Austria's relatively high values for 2010 and 2011 to the many migration policy changes that were implemented at that time (see figure 4) that were restricting for asylum seekers (DEMIG, 2015) while trying to attract highly skilled workers. The same, albeit to a lesser extent, I would also explain the small spike in Sweden with the comparatively high amount of migration policy changes that were implemented in 2010 (see figure 4). As the levels of migration policy changes and issue saliency correlate, I see a connection between these two and my first hypothesis somewhat validated.

According to my theoretical assumptions, the public in both countries should therefore have become a lot more responsive in their attitudes towards their governments' policy changes.

The Eurobarometer surveys, however, do not show that. Austria's attitudes towards immigration from other EU countries became more positive starting in spring of 2015 (figure 6). This somewhat supports hypothesis 2 stating that migration policy changes that are less restrictive are likely to cause public attitudes towards migration and migrants to become more favorable. The approval rates for non-EU immigrants, which includes refugees and asylum-seekers, is considerably lower in Austria (figure 6). It decreased from 35% in the fall of 2014 to 31% one year later (figure 6). Nonetheless, did the approval of immigrants from outside the EU increase to 36% in Austria in later 2016 and is therefore even higher than before the onset of the crisis (figure 6). EU-immigration in Sweden evoked a positive feeling in 80% of Swedes in the fall of 2015 (figure 9). Even though that number slightly decreased in early 2016, it went up to 83% in the fall of 2016 (figure 9). Swedish attitudes towards immigration from non-EU countries has been far more positive than on the European average or even in Austria. In the fall of 2014, 72% of Swedes claimed that it evoked a positive feeling and right after the onset of the so-called migration crisis in the second half of 2015, this number stood at 70%, compared to 34% in the European average (figure 9). However, the amount of people in Sweden stating a positive feeling towards non-EU immigration then dropped to 62% in spring of 2016 and 64% in the fall of 2016 (figure 9). This is in line with the third hypothesis that migration policy changes that are more restrictive are likely to cause public attitudes towards migration to become less favorable.

These numbers show that in both countries, attitudes towards migrants from other EU countries became even more positive over the time period of analysis. This might be explained by the same theoretical assumptions that hypothesis 2 is based on. When asylum seekers and refugees are painted as 'foreign' and not a part of the culture, people might be more critical towards them. At the same time, migrants from other EU countries could however automatically be considered more as a part of society and therefore attitudes might be more welcoming. This differentiation between EU and non-EU migrants can often be seen in the rhetoric of parties such as the FPÖ and the Sweden Democrats. Considering non-EU immigrants, who were the target of the migration policy changes, there is a decrease in positive attitudes visible in Sweden. Austria's attitudes towards non-EU immigration has been a lot less positive throughout the period of analysis. Yet, Austrians have not become less positive towards non-EU immigration (figure 6). Therefore, my third hypothesis cannot be validated for the Austrian case. Still, one must keep in mind that not all the implemented policy changes were more restrictive in nature. Even though the more restrictive ones

garnered far more media attention which can be seen in the fact that international newspaper, such as the New York Times reported on them (Eddy and Bilefsky, 2015). In the case of Sweden, there is a decline in positive attitudes towards non-EU immigrants that correlate with the implementation of the more restrictive policy changes from the Swedish government (hypothesis 3). Nonetheless, Swedes still voiced more positive attitudes than Austrians. Sweden seems to therefore fulfill my assumptions.

Regarding hypothesis 4 that a high salience of migration will lead the migration policy changes to have a stronger impact on public opinion towards migration than low issue salience, no clear answer could be found. There are changes in public opinion noticeable, however the impact salience has on the relationship is not entirely measurable. Hypothesis 1, on the other hand, can be verified, as can hypotheses 2 and 3 even though to varying degrees. Hypothesis 0 also cannot directly be falsified. In the Austrian case, when the migration policy changes became more restrictive after the onset of the crisis, did the public opinion not change accordingly. However, that does not necessarily mean that policies do not affect opinion. What has been noticeable in my study however is that there seems to be a connection between policy changes and saliency levels.

Having said that, there are several limitations to my study. As I only looked into two countries, it would be interesting to see how migration policy changes in the wake of the so-called refugee crisis would affect public attitudes towards immigration and migrants in other European countries. Furthermore, one would also need to account for media and press coverage of the crisis and investigate how the media framed the situation on the national and European level. It would also be interesting to find out if the effects of policy changes on attitudes vary depending on the initial public opinion towards migration. Other confounding factors could be the political system, or the political parties in government. For instance, Wlezien and Soroka (2012, p. 1411) state that the level of federalism can dilute the effect policy changes have on public opinion. Another criticism might be that the Eurobarometer surveys do not differentiate between the different types of immigration when asking European citizens about their attitudes towards immigration. However, I would argue that most people are not aware about the differences between refugees, asylum-seekers, regular immigration, and irregular immigration. Therefore, I think only measuring people's attitudes towards immigration in general is sufficient. One of the main advantages of the Eurobarometer surveys definitely lies within its comparability across countries. If I had

chosen national surveys, I might have been able to gather more detailed information while simultaneously losing the possibility to compare the responses over time and across countries.

In the years following the time period I analyzed, there were several Special Eurobarometer surveys conducted that focused on the Schengen Area (European Commission, 2018a) and on the integration of immigrants in the EU (European Commission, 2018b). In the survey on the Schengen Area which was conducted in the summer of 2018, a vast majority of Europeans (72%) are in favor of increased funding for strengthening the EU's external borders (European Commission, 2018a, p. 20). And 79% of respondents would like to see the EU be more involved in helping countries secure the EU's external borders (European Commission, 2018a, p. 18). The Special Eurobarometer survey on the integration of immigrants in the EU (European Commission, 2018b) found out that 38% of Europeans see non-EU immigration as more of a problem and 31% see it as equally a problem and an opportunity (European Commission, 2018b, p. 58). Unfortunately, as they were conducted after 2016 their responses are not as relevant for my study.

7. Conclusion

In this thesis, I showed that there is a connection between immigration policy and public opinion. As the Swedish case showed, public attitudes towards immigration can somewhat change after policy changes are being implemented. However, it remains unclear if there were other confounding factors which had an effect on the strength of the relationship. In Austria, where the government had implemented even stricter and more restrictive policy changes than the Swedish government, the public opinion towards non-EU immigration did not change as I expected. Nonetheless, I made an important contribution to the research field of policy changes and public opinion. Even though the effects were smaller than expected, it showed a connection. Furthermore, and just as important, the usual explanation of public opinion affecting policy changes might also not fit in these cases. This shows that there is a need for further research into the specific effects the policy changes had on the public attitudes and why.

Even though the Eurobarometer survey data does not show a massive change in public opinion towards immigration, right-wing populist parties have gained a lot of popularity since the onset of the so-called migration crisis in Sweden, Austria, and across Europe. Immigration from outside the European Union also remains a highly relevant topic in the EU and its member states. And several of the restrictive migration policy changes that had been implemented in the wake of the crisis are still in place. Therefore, it might also be possible that the effect and impact these changes had on the public's attitudes towards immigration and immigrants is more long-term than I expected, and the consequences can only be seen with some temporal delay. But it also shows that the topic of this thesis was and remains highly relevant. Particularly when considering that the causes of the crisis, the conflicts across the world have not yet been resolved. Furthermore, there has not been a reform of the Dublin regulation and as Austria and Sweden also showed, exit costs for the Schengen regime are too small. The European Union therefore was not able to find a sustainable solution to the so-called migration crisis. In order to tackle future crises similar to the so-called migration crisis, there needs to be further integration on the European level. Interestingly, as both Austria and Sweden reduced their asylum rules to the EU-mandated minimum, the crisis might have led to further harmonization across Europe in the field of a Common European Asylum System.

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Appendix

Source for Figure 1:

Niemann, A. and Zaun, N. (2018)

Source for Figure 2:

(European Commission, 2018c, p. 17)

Source for Figure 3:

(European Commission, 2018c, p. 13)

Sources for Figure 4:

See Timelines in Appendix

Sources for Figures 5 and 8:

(European Commission, 2014c, p. 54), (European Commission, 2014c, p. 60),
(European Commission, 2014a, p. 13), (European Commission, 2014b, p. 42),
(European Commission, 2015c, p. 46), (European Commission, 2015c, p. 53),
(European Commission, 2016c, p. 49), (European Commission, 2016c, p. 56),
(European Commission, 2016d, p. 26), (European Commission, 2016d, p. 33),
(European Commission, 2016e, p. 26), (European Commission, 2016e, p. 32),
(European Commission, 2013b, p. 39) (European Commission, 2013b, p. 45)
(European Commission, 2013a, p. 48) (European Commission, 2013a, p. 52)
(European Commission, 2012b, p. 29) (European Commission, 2012b, p. 33)
(European Commission, 2012a, p. 41) (European Commission, 2012a, p. 44)
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Sources for Figures 6 and 9:

(European Commission, 2016a, p. 45), (European Commission, 2016a, p. 46),
(European Commission, 2016b, p. 50), (European Commission, 2016b, p. 51),
(European Commission, 2015b, p. 49), (European Commission, 2015b, p. 50),
(European Commission, 2015c, p. 153), (European Commission, 2015c, p. 154),
(European Commission, 2014c, p. 176), (European Commission, 2014c, p. 177)

Sources for Figures 7 and 10:

(European Commission, 2016a, p. 51), (European Commission, 2016b, p. 55),
(European Commission, 2015b, p. 54), (European Commission, 2015c, p. 157),
(European Commission, 2014c, p. 182)

Timeline	Migration Policy Changes Austria
January 2010	„Reform of the Asylum Act entered into force in January 2010 - abolished the protection from deportation for claimants of subsequent asylum applications (asylum seekers who have been rejected and apply a second time). > If the asylum applicant files a new application after a negative asylum procedure, the asylum applicant does not automatically enjoy de facto protection against deportation." More Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
January 2010	"Reform of the Asylum Act entered into force in January 2010 – redefined the offenses which may lead to detention of asylum seekers. > Detention pending deportation can be imposed on asylum applicants if the asylum applicant has received a negative decision due to the responsibility of another EU MS for the procedure (Dublin cases), as well as if the residence requirement, the reporting obligation or the obligation to cooperate are violated or there are specific cases of subsequent asylum applications. In all of these cases, detention pending deportation must be administered, if it is necessary to secure the expulsion procedure or the removal of the asylum applicant" More Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
January 2010	"Reform of the Asylum Act entered into force in January 2010 – introduced the possibility to deprive, under certain conditions, delinquent refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection of their status." More Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
January 2010	"Reform of the Asylum Act entered into force in January 2010 - requiried asylum seekers whose request for asylum is judged by the authorities as unlikely to be successful to register" More Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
2010	"As a measure to prevent forced and arranged marriages, the minimum age of partners requesting to enter Austria as family migrants was raised from 18 to 21 years in 2010." More Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
January 19th, 2010	"On 19 January 2010, the National Action Plan on Integration (NAP.I) was adopted - defining the principles on integration policies as well as goals in the areas of language, education, profession, rule of law, values, health, social issues, intercultural dialogue, sports, leisure, housing." Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)

2010	"Creation of a Federal Office for Asylum and Migration planned in October 2010 under the Federal Ministry of the Interior - to bundle all competences at first instance. It should be created in 2014. > Currently, 113 offices, including district commissions, municipal authorities, federal police headquarters and the Federal Asylum Offices, are in charge of administering these processes, which often leads to inconsistent practices. " Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
July 2011	„Amendment to the Alien Law (Fremdenrechtsänderungsgesetz) enteres into force in July 2011 - created the Red-White-Red Card for specific labour migrants (highly qualified persons (Tier 1), skilled workers in shortage professions and key workers (Tier 2)). > The Card is granted on the basis of a points-based system, which replaces the previous quota system. The PBS takes into account age, professional background and german language skills. The RWR card is limited to one year and can then be transformed either in a RWR card plus or in an ordinary residence permit. " Less Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
2011	"Amendment to the Alien Law (Fremdenrechtsänderungsgesetz) - introduces the Red-White-Red Card Plus granting entry and working rights to family members of holders of the RWR Card or the EU Blue Card or of permanent residents in Austria. " Less Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
2011	"Amendment to the Alien Law (Fremdenrechtsänderungsgesetz) - created the "Visa for the Purpose of Job Search", as well as the subsequent Red-White-Red Card for third-country nationals who completed a diploma or a master's programme in Austria, as well as their family members. > The visa and the Card are granted on the basis of a points-based system. Once a job has been found, the graduates have the possibility to apply for the residence title 'Red-White-Red Card'." Less Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
2011	"Amendment to the Alien Law (Fremdenrechtsänderungsgesetz) - raises the language requirements for naturalisation from level A2 to B1." More Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
2011	"Amendment to the Alien Law (Fremdenrechtsänderungsgesetz) - requires people wishing to live in Austria to prove basic knowledge of the German language (A1) already before entering the country." More Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)

2011	"2004 EU enlargement - Austria finally opens its labour market for workers from the 2004 enlargement states" Less Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
2011	"Amendment to the Alien Employment Law - loweres from May 1st onwards, the federal maximum number of migrant workers relative to the number of native workers from 8% to 7%." More Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
July 2011	"Amendment to the Asylum Act in July 2011 - forbids asylum seekers to leave the first reception centres for a period of up to 7 days maximum after filing the application for international protection, as part of the so called "duty to collaborate". >The aim of this measure, according to policy makers, is to prevent individuals from absconding and to clarify whether Austria is responsible for the respective application for international protection" More Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
October 2011	"Since October 2011, asylum seekers who have had their claim rejected by the asylum court are automatically provided with legal counceling and support by one of the NGOs designated to provide those services. > This was introduced because of EU-requirements." Less Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
2011	"In early 2011 a Secretary of State for Integration, in charge of the coordination of integration policies in various ministries, was created. > Together with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, it launched a website in early 2012 to provide information and guidance for the accreditation of foreign degrees. Information-points offering counselling services for the recognition and validation of foreign qualifications were established country-wide in early 2013. " Less Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
2012	"June 2012 decree - allowing minor asylum seekers until the age of 18 years to be granted a work permit for vocational training (Lehre) in occupations where there is a shortage of apprentices. > This is, however, only possible three months after the application for asylum has been lodged and if the person has passed a labour market test." Less restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
2013	"2013 Amendment to the Alien Employment Law - cancells the federal maximum number of migrant workers to adapt the law to EU law. > This was done because the federal maximum stock number lost its relevance due to the opening of the labour market to EU8 in 2011.

	Since then, the percentage of third country nationals in the federal stock of workers is much lower than 7% because new EU member states are not counted in anymore. The quota has hence lost its reason of being." Less restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
2013	"Alevits are being recognized as a religious community." Less restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
January 2014	"Creation of a Federal Office for Asylum and Migration in order to bundle all competences at first instance." Restrictive / Less restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
2014	"2007 EU enlargement, open labor market for Romania and Bulgaria." Less restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
August 2015	New refugee coordinator who is ordered to find new accommodation solutions; and the army is now allowed to help with the situation; mainly aimed at distribution and logistics. Restrictive Source: (Sablatnig, 2015)
September 14th, 2015	Austria introduced border controls. More Restrictive Source: (Eddy and Bilefsky, 2015), (Murphy, 2015)
October, 2015	New constitutional law that is supposed to help with the accommodation of refugees. Less restrictive Source: (Sablatnig, 2015)
October, 2015	Austria announces plans to build fence on the border to Slovenia. More Restrictive Source: (The Telegraph, 2015)
November 15th, 2015	Restricting asylum rights; People under subsidiary protection have to wait 3 years for family reunifications instead of 12 months; furthermore, refugees have to adhere to certain financial standards to qualify. This does not apply for unaccompanied minors (refugees); law is retroactive. More Restrictive Source: (Der Standard, 2015b)
December 7th, 2015	Beginning of building border fence to Slovenia. More Restrictive Source: (Der Standard, 2015a)
January 17th, 2016	Austria is announcing stricter border controls; Austria has now temporarily suspended the Schengen rules. More Restrictive Source: (DW, 2016)

January 2016	Austria only wants to let those through that want to apply for asylum in Germany.
	More Restrictive
	Source: (DW, 2016)
January 20th, 2016	Limit on the number of asylum applications per year to 37500 per year. More Restrictive
	Source: (Knapp and Asylkoordination Österreich, 2017, p. 12), (BBC News, 2016a), (Der Standard, 2015c)
February 19th, 2016	Austria sets a limit on asylum applications per day to 80. More Restrictive
	Source: (BBC News, 2016b), (Der Standard, 2016)
February 23rd, 2016	"The time limit for the submission of an appeal had to be raised following a judgment of the Constitutional Court (VfGH). The appeal period for challenging return decisions is 2 weeks, up from the previous 1-week deadline. For decisions of the BFA which are not accompanied by a return decision, the appeal period is now 4 instead of the previous 2 weeks. The appeal period was not raised with regard to cases where an asylum application is rejected and a return decision was ordered"
	Less restrictive
	Source: (Knapp and Asylkoordination Österreich, 2017, p. 12)
April 2016	"People granted subsidiary protection have been excluded from the needs-based minimum benefit system in Lower Austria, contrary to Article 29 of the recast Qualification Directive. Even before the reform, this group was only entitled to basic care benefits in some federal provinces"
	More Restrictive
	Source: (Knapp and Asylkoordination Österreich, 2017, pp. 13–14)
June 1st, 2016	"Several changes to the asylum procedure and content of international protection were introduced through the Aliens Law Amendment Act 2016 (FrÄG 2016) entering into force on 1 June 2016"
	More Restrictive
	Source: (Knapp and Asylkoordination Österreich, 2017, p. 12)
June 1st, 2016	"The maximum duration of proceedings at the BFA was extended from 6 to 15 months, only subsequently request for devolution (*Säumnisbeschwerde*) is admissible"
	More Restrictive / Less restrictive
	Source: (Knapp and Asylkoordination Österreich, 2017, p. 12)
July 1st, 2016	"The reimbursement of expenses concerning accommodation and subsistence were adjusted: the maximum cost rate for accommodation, subsistence and care in an organised reception centre is €21 per day. Asylum seekers living in private accommodation receive €365 instead of €320 per month. The rate for unaccompanied minors requiring the highest care was raised from €77 to €95. Places for unaccompanied minors with less intensive care receive €63.50 instead of €60 and €40.50 instead of €37.7

Although the amendments entered into force on 1 July 2016, not all states have adjusted the amount of the daily rate equally"

Less restrictive

Source: (Knapp and Asylkoordination Österreich, 2017, p. 13)

June 2016	Asylum is now only granted for 3 years; law is retroactive "Following the "temporary asylum" (*Asyl auf Zeit*) reform, the previously indefinite right of residence granted with asylum is now issued for the duration of 3 years since June 2016. The right to residence becomes indefinite *ex officio*, when no cessation proceedings have been commenced within these 3 years. The BFA issues yearly reports on the situation in important countries of origin. If these reports indicate that a substantial change has taken place in the countries, cessation proceedings have to be commenced" More Restrictive Source: (Knapp and Asylkoordination Österreich, 2017, p. 13), (Der Standard, 2015b)
October 1ˢᵗ, 2016	"**Legal representation in appeals:** The duties of the legal advisors provided by the state for the appeal procedure were clarified by a decision of the Administrative High Court. As of 1 October 2016, they are under the obligation to participate in hearings before the Federal Administrative Court and to represent applicants during the proceedings, if the asylum seeker so wishes. The Constitutional Court decided that differentiating the scope of legal advice according to the type of procedure – asylum, basic care or return proceedings – is discriminatory and, therefore, unconstitutional. " Less restrictive Source: (Knapp and Asylkoordination Österreich, 2017, p. 12)

Timeline	Migration Policy Changes Sweden
April 2010	"In April 2010, new rules for family member immigration were introduced - requiring labour migrants from non-EEA countries who have had a permanent residence permit for less than four years to be able to support themselves and have adequate housing if they want their family to join them from abroad. > The financial support requirement demands that the sponsor, i.e. the person already staying in Sweden, must be able to support themselves and have housing of adequate size and standard for themselves and the alien. However, there are several exceptions to this requirement, such as if the applicant is a child." More Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
August 1st, 2010	"Since 1 August 2010, asylum seekers are allowed to work from the first day they arrive in Sweden if they prove their identity. > The aim is to make it easier for asylum seekers to enter the job market after their application have been granted" Less Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
September 1st, 2010	"On 1 September 2010, Sweden introduced a law - enabling municipalities to pay a performance-based bonus to newly arrived immigrants who complete their studies in Swedish for Immigrants with a pass grade within 12 months." Less Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
October 7th, 2010	"On 7 October 2010, a new law on civic orientation for new arrivals was introduced - guaranteeing a minimum of 60 hours of civic orientation. > The municipalities are responsible for delivering civic orientation which aims to give the participants knowledge of human rights and basic democratic values, individual rights and responsibilities, how society is organised, and practical aspects of everyday life. Civic orientation shall be delivered in a language that the new arrival understands" Less Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
2010	"Act on the introduction of new arrivals entered into force on 1 December 2010 - regulating for the first time reception activities and responsibilities in a single Act and gives the national level the responsibility for introduction of refugees, other people in need of protection who have a residence permit and their close relatives between the ages of 20 and 64 who have applied for a residence permit within two years. Before, municipalities have been responsible and the introduction has been designed differently across the country. > The reform entails, among other things: • the Swedish Public Employment Service will have a coordinating responsibility for introduction activities;

• the Swedish Public Employment Service and the newly arrived immigrant will together draw up an introduction plan including activities to facilitate and speed up the introduction of the newly arrived immigrant into working and community life. As a general rule, the activities contained in the introduction plan should correspond to a full-time programme and contain, at minimum, Swedish for immigrants, civic orientation and employment preparation activities.
• a new benefit will be introduced that is the same for all newly arrived immigrants regardless of where in the country they live and is paid in connection with active participation in introduction activities
• a new service provider – an 'introduction guide' – is to assist the newly arrived immigrant during the introduction period. The guide is an independent actor working for the Swedish Public Employment Service to support newly arrived immigrants in their search for work. Mmunicipalities however continue to be responsible for offering civic orientation courses. Housing provision and initiatives for children in schools and pre-schools, for example, continue to be the responsibility of municipalities. The municipalities receive compensation from the state for these initiatives. "

Less Restrictive

Source: (DEMIG, 2015)

2011	Students from outside the EU will have to pay for university studies in Sweden More Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
2012	„EU "Return Directive" was transposed into Swedish law, which took effect on 1 May 2012 - introducing "re-entry bans". > Anybody who is refused entry into Sweden or ordered to leave and does not leave the country within a set period of time can be forbidden to enter the country again." More Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
January 2012	"In January 2012, the Swedish Migration Board introduced stricter requirements for employers recruiting workers from non-EU countries, in order to prevent abuse - Employers in certain sectors, for example, must now demonstrate their ability to pay the offered wages before a work permit is granted. > This applies for employers in sectors such as cleaning, hotel and restaurants, construction, trade, agriculture and forestry." More Restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015)
September 2013	„In September 2013, Sweden decided to grant all Syrian refugees staying or arriving in Sweden permanent residency" Less restrictive Source: (DEMIG, 2015), (Migrationsverket, 2019)

2015	A decision to relocate "people who applied for asylum in Greece or Italy were relocated to Sweden" in 2017 More Restrictive Source: (Ministry of Justice, 2018, p. 1)
November 12th 2015	Temporary border controls; "the decision has been extended several times and currently applies until 11 November 2019" Border controls on the Öresund bridge in order to reduce the number of persons applying for asylum. More Restrictive Source: (Ministry of Justice, 2019, p. 1), (Migrationsverket, 2019), (Parusel, 2017)
October and November 2015	Government announced measures that should reduce the amount of people coming to Sweden: First, access to the Swedish territory with the purpose of seeking refuge; second, the granting of refuge and its legal consequences; third, the promotion and support of voluntary returns as well as the implementation of deportations of declined asylum seekers. More Restrictive Source: (Parusel, 2017)
First half of 2016	Implementation of these changes from 2015 More Restrictive Source: (Parusel, 2017)
January 2016	"bus, train and ferry companies are no longer allowed to carry passengers without identity documents from neighbouring Denmark or Germany to Sweden" More Restrictive Source: (Parusel, 2016c)
January 4th 2016	Temporary ID checks; no longer since May 2017 More Restrictive Source: (Ministry of Justice, 2018, p. 1), (Migrationsverket, 2019), (Regeringen och Regeringskansliet, 2017)
March 2016	"In March 2016, weekly arrivals were only about 5% of those recorded in early November 2015" More Restrictive Source: (Parusel, 2016c)
March 1st 2016	"A joint responsibility for receiving newcomers to the country, draft legislation 2015:33. All municipalities are compelled to receive a portion of the refugees. More Restrictive Source: (Migrationsverket, 2019)
June 1st 2016	"Change in the Reception of Asylum Seekers Act (LMA), etc. An asylum seeker who has received a negative response to his/her asylum application loses the right to aid if he/she does not leave the country voluntarily.

An asylum seeker who has received a definitive decision stating that he/she is to be expelled or deported loses the right to a daily allowance, and to asylum accommodation paid for by the Swedish Migration Agency. Families with children under 18 will still have the right to aid until they leave Sweden."

More Restrictive

Source: (Migrationsverket, 2019)

July 20th 2016	„A temporary act was introduced bringing Sweden's asylum rules in line with minimum standards under EU law" More Restrictive Source: (Ministry of Justice, 2018, p. 1), (Migrationsverket, 2019), (Parusel, 2017)
July 20th 2016	"Persons eligible for subsidiary protection are given a 13-month permit. Those who receive a 13-month residence permit as persons eligible for subsidiary protection do not have the right of family reunification. If the reasons for the person's protection remain valid when the residence permit expires, he or she may apply for an extended residence permit. *(This change is temporary.)*" More Restrictive Source: (Migrationsverket, 2019)
July 20th 2016	"In previous legislation, all persons in need of protection generally received a permanent residence permit. Now, everyone who applies for and is given asylum receives a temporary residence permit" Valid until July 2019 More Restrictive Source: (Migrationsverket, 2019)
July 20th 2016	Possibility of family reunions has also been reduced. Only for people with refugee status, they receive a three-year permit "it is also necessary for the family to have a residence of sufficient size and of adequate standard. However, the maintenance requirement does not apply if the person with the connection is a child" More Restrictive Source: (Migrationsverket, 2019)
2016	1900 people were resettled in 2016; in the next years, this number increased even further More Restrictive Source: (Ministry of Justice, 2018, p. 2)