

All for one and one for all? The EU, the V4 and the different understandings of solidarity and migration

Martina Vetrovcova

Heidelberg University, Germany

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Outline

1. Introduction: migration and refugee crisis in Europe

- Different reactions and lacking coherence of action
- Crisis of solidarity in Europe

2. Solidarity in the EU

- Solidarity: a fuzzy, nebulous concept
- Different forms of solidarity in the EU
- Member State solidarity in migration and asylum

3. Reasons for different understandings of solidarity

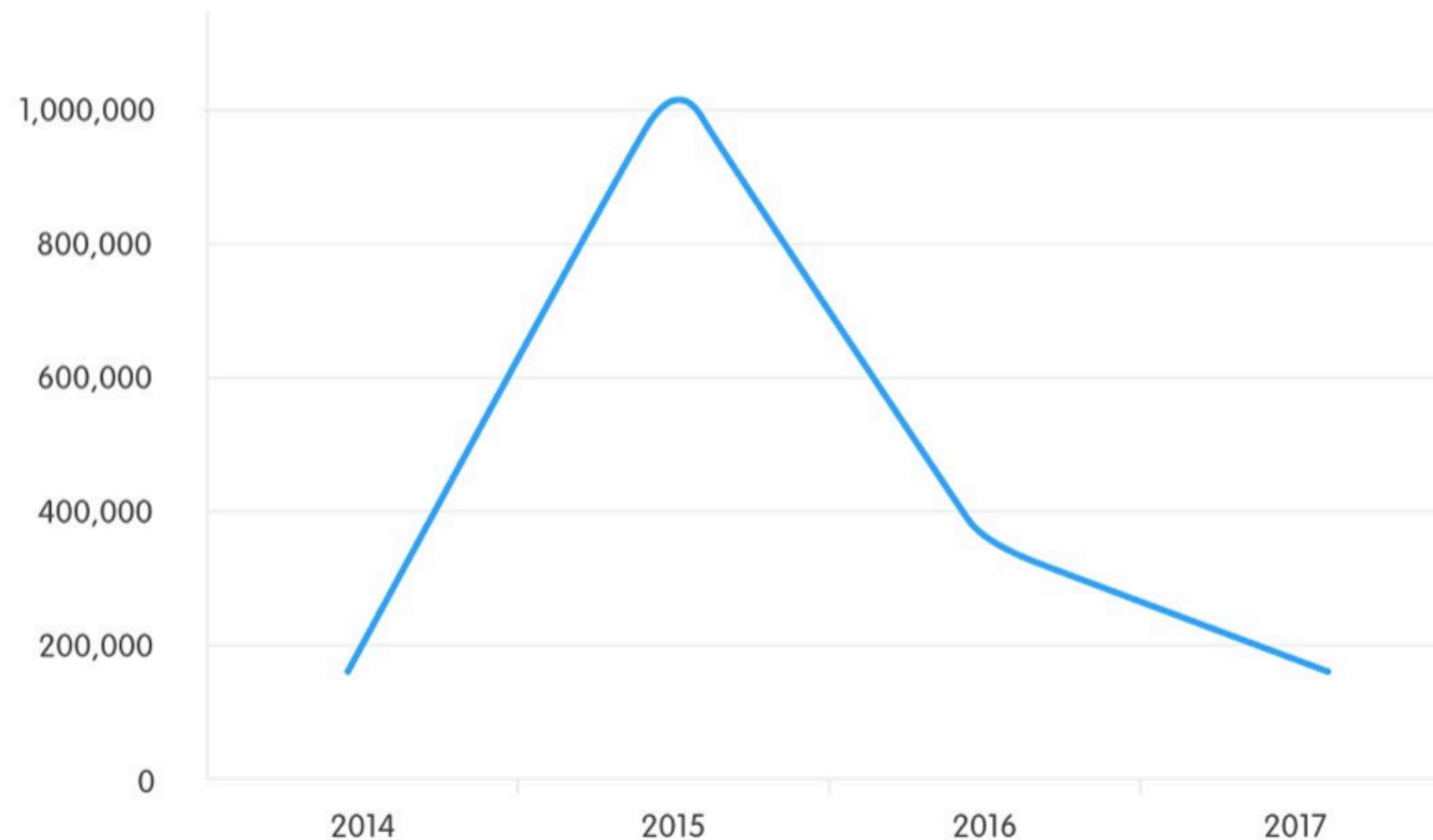
4. Outlook - Is EU-wide solidarity only a wishful thinking?

The background of the slide features a sunset scene with a large, bright sun in the center, casting a glow. In the foreground, there are dark silhouettes of a group of people, some standing and some sitting, looking towards the horizon. The overall color palette is dominated by warm sunset tones like orange, red, and purple, transitioning to a dark blue at the bottom.

Introduction

Migration and Refugee Crisis in Europe

Migration and refugee crisis in Europe: different reactions and lacking coherence of action



Source: UNHCR

- **Division lines in Europe:**

- Different level of exposure to the refugee inflow and asymmetrical impact of the crisis
- Uneven rise of xenophobic and anti-immigration sentiments across Europe

V4, the "bad boys" of Europe?



Milos Zeman, Czech President

"I am profoundly convinced that we are facing an organised invasion and not a spontaneous movement of refugees."

(26.12.2015)



Viktor Orbán, Hungarian Prime Minister

"We don't see these people as Muslim refugees. We see them as Muslim invaders."

(09.01.2018)



Robert Fico, (former) Slovak Prime Minister

"Slovakia is built for Slovaks, not for minorities."

(30.09..2015)



Jaroslaw Kaczynski, head of the Law and Justice party

"... various types of parasites, protozoas, which aren't dangerous in the organisms of these people [Middle East refugees], but which could be dangerous here."

(26.12.2015)

Crisis of solidarity in Europe

- Crisis of solidarity at the intergovernmental level
- Differences in the understanding of what solidarity means in practice
- Discussions about responsibility

The problem is not European, it's German. Nobody would like to stay in Hungary, neither Slovakia, Poland or Estonia.

Viktor Orbán, 03.09.2015

A photograph showing several hands in business attire (white shirts) stacked together in a circle, symbolizing solidarity and teamwork. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The text "Solidarity in the EU" is centered over the hands.

Solidarity in the EU

Solidarity: a fuzzy, nebulous concept

Why is the concept of solidarity often described as diffuse, fuzzy, nebulous, ambiguous, or controversial?

- **Reasons:**

- complexity of the concept
- difficulties related to proper measurement

- **Consequences:**

- varying (sometimes even contradictory) definitions and conceptualizations of solidarity
- lack of commonality in terms of what solidarity practically implies
- deceptive use of the term “solidarity” in political rhetoric

Different forms of solidarity in the EU

Conceptualizing solidarity within the multi-level system of the EU:

	horizontal	vertical
individual actors	transnational solidarity	supranational solidarity
collective actors	international solidarity	intergovernmental solidarity

Source: Knodt and Tews 2014

Solidarity in the EU law:

- Treaty constituting the European Coal and Steel Community (1951): *“Europe can be built only by concrete actions which create a real solidarity and by the establishment of common bases for economic development.”*
- Treaties of Maastricht (1993), Amsterdam (1999), and Nice (2003): include “solidarity” in their preambles

Member State solidarity in migration and asylum

Solidarity in the Treaty of Lisbon (2009)

- The TEU and TFEU link solidarity with policy areas more than 20 times.

Intergovernmental solidarity in migration and asylum:

- Article 67.2 TFEU: “[...] a common policy on asylum, immigration and external border control, based on **solidarity between Member States**, which is fair towards third-country nationals.”
- Article 80 TFEU: “[...] shall be governed by the principle of **solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility**, including its financial implications, between the Member States.”
- Common European Asylum System (CEAS) - Dublin regulation No. 604/2013



Different Understandings of Solidarity and Migration

Limitations of solidarity at the EU intergovernmental level

(1) Identity-solidarity nexus

- Responsibility argument
- Sovereignty argument
- Newcomers argument
- No history of admitting refugees argument

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Countries with former colonies are partially responsible for the situation and should therefore bear a bigger burden.

Limitations of solidarity at the EU intergovernmental level

(1) Identity-solidarity nexus

**Germany and the suspension of the solidarity
clause for Syrian refugees**

"We welcome this act of European solidarity"

(spokeswoman for the EU Commission)

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The mandatory quotas proposal contradicts the European Council's principle on sovereign action.

"Dictate" from Brussels

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Feeling of being treated like
“second-class citizens”

*“We don’t like it when the policy
is defined elsewhere and then
we are told to implement it.”*

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Unlike most of the Western European countries, the Visegrad states have not been exposed to immigration in the last decades.

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(2) Reciprocity

- Future reciprocity
- Historical reciprocity
- Cross-sectoral reciprocity

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failure of states to calculate their costs and benefits across different policy and issue areas

Limitations of solidarity at the EU intergovernmental level

(3) Political factors

- European intergovernmental solidarity is overarching national solidarity
- The role of national context (short-term political and electoral concerns)

(4) Other contextual factors

- The relocation mechanism as a pull factor for irregular migration
- Proposal of „flexible/effective solidarity“
- Unattractiveness as destination countries for migrants

**From the Refugee and
Migration Crisis to a
Crisis of Solidarity?**

Outlook



From the refugee and migration crisis to a crisis of solidarity?

“Refugees aren’t the problem. Europe’s identity crisis is.”

(The Guardian, 31.10.2016)

- Solidarity is one of the fundamental values and guiding principles of the EU, which is not always mirrored by corresponding practice.
- Main reasons:
 - lack of commonality in terms of what solidarity practically implies → conflicting interpretations
 - prevalence of short-term domestic calculations
 - failure to understand solidarity cross-sectorally
 - divergence between future and historical reciprocity

Contact

Martina Vetrovcova

PhD Candidate in Political Science at Heidelberg University

Founder and President of Momentum Novum

Telefon: +49 152 25888948

Email 1: martina.vetrovcova@ipw.uni-heidelberg.de

Email 2: vetrovcova@momentumnovum.com

Website: www.momentumnovum.com

