



The Conditionality of Moral Evaluation

Analysing Discursive Legitimation in the
Dutch Response to the Moria Camp Fires

A MSc Thesis

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Abstract

This thesis unravels the interplay between discourses on refugee groups and policy actions in the context of a case study on the Dutch response to the Moria camp fires in September 2020. It contributes to filling the under-researched analytical gap between discourse and policy. In addition, it builds on the theoretical insights and analytical strategies of variety of discourse scholars, to come to a comprehensive operationalisation for the purpose of analysing the interplay between discursive group constructions and policy actions. The research shows the manifestation of vulnerability and deservingness in the Dutch discourse on refugee groups. It demonstrates how these constructs combined determine who is deserving, therewith latently excluding the deserving from the undeserving. Furthermore, the research demonstrates a varying contribution of discursive group constructions in the legitimisation of the Dutch policy response to the Moria fires. It is shown how in some policy contexts, the narrative of vulnerability contributes to legitimisation through moral evaluation. Yet in different policy contexts, this moralisation becomes conditional on a narrative of exceptionality and a rationale on selectiveness.

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1. Introduction

In September 2020 the Moria Reception and Identification Centre on the Greek island of Lesbos was almost completely destroyed by a series of fires, leaving approximately 11.500 asylum seekers without shelter (UNHCR, 2020). This crisis unfolded simultaneously with concerns about the spread of COVID-19 in the facility, as the first infection of COVID-19 in the camp was confirmed only days before the outbreak of the fires (Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid, 2020).¹ In response to the deteriorating situation on the Greek island, ten EU member states made commitments to relocation plans, which aimed to relocate *'the most vulnerable'* people from the island (European Commission, 2020). Being one of these ten member states, The Netherlands committed to the relocation of a total of 100 asylum seekers consisting of 50 unaccompanied minors and 50 minors and their family members (Rijksoverheid, 2020).

Various scholars have analysed developments in the field of migration and asylum from a constructivist perspective. Examples are the works of Smith and Waite (2019) who have analysed the narrative of vulnerability in the UK's response to the 2015 refugee crisis, or the analysis of Holzberg, Kolbe and Zaborowski (2018) on the construction of frames of deservingness in the German discourse on refugees. These constructivist approaches offer something distinctive to our understanding of, and reflection on, discursive group constructions. However, as is argued in this work, these approaches still leave questions unanswered about how these discourses interrelate with the actual policy outcomes. This research aims to address this analytical gap by analysing the relation between discourse and policy within the context of a case study on the Dutch response to the Moria camp fires. The research is centred around the following research question; *How did discursive group constructions on refugee groups in the official discourse of The Netherlands in response to the Moria camp fires in September 2020 interrelate with the subsequent policy actions?* The analysis is conducted within a fixed timeframe ranging from September 2020 to February 2021.

The academic relevance of this research is threefold. Firstly, the research aims to advance existing literature, as it bridges the existing and under-researched analytical gap between discourse and policy outcome. By focussing on how discourses and policy outcomes interrelate, the research aims to gain further insight into what Van Ostaïjen calls "*...the discursive black-box of discourse analysis...*" (2017a, p.69). Secondly, the research aims to

¹ The fires in the camp were allegedly started by some of the residents of the camp themselves, as riots following the confirmation of a COVID-19 infection in the camp may have resulted in arson (NOS, 2020)

contribute to existing attempts to overcome “...*the general under-operationalisation in discourse analysis...*” (Van Ostaijen, 2017a, p. 65), in which discourse research is wanting of more established operationalisation and less intuitive based strategies. This is achieved by providing a refined and theoretically substantiated operationalisation comprising all conceptual levels of the research. In addition, this research specifically focusses on discursive group constructions, or the subjectives of the discourse. This narrow analytical focus allows for an in-depth operationalisation of the discourse analysis. Thirdly, the research sheds light on the Dutch response to the Moria Camp fires, creating a better understanding of how this response has been constructed discursively as well as in terms of policies. Much attention in discursive case study research has been devoted to the migratory developments in the context of the 2015 refugee crisis (e.g. Hagelund, 2020, Holzberg et al., 2018, Smith & Waite, 2019). The case study selected for this research represents a more recent and so far under-studied case, and thus provides new empirical findings to the research field.

Besides these academic contributions, this research aims to make contributions on a societal and policy level. Despite the commitments to relocation efforts made by the Dutch government, the fulfilment of these commitments have received criticism by the media, NGOs, as well as political opposition (Kuiper & Poel, 2021, VluchtelingenWerk Nederland, 2020, Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid, 2021a). It was claimed that the amount of children actually relocated did not fill up to the commitment made (Kuiper & Poel, 2021), that the relocated people were not actually victims of the Moria fires (Kuiper & Poel, 2021), and that these relocation agreements were made at the expense of already existent resettlement agreements (VluchtelingenWerk Nederland, 2020). On this last point, a Dutch NGO accused the Dutch government to be bargaining with human lives, and called the policy a shameless exchange of refugee groups (VluchtelingenWerk Nederland, 2020). This research provides a better understanding of the construction of the Dutch response to the Moria fires, and in doing so it aims to shed more light on the controversies regarding these policies.

In terms of structure this thesis unfolds as follows; Firstly, in the theoretical framework the existing theories on discursive group constructions are discussed. Furthermore, the theoretical framework addresses and conceptualises the relation between discourse and policy. Secondly, in the methodological framework and elaboration is provided on the research design, methods, data selection and operationalisation of the research. In addition, the limitations and ethical considerations relevant to the study are addressed. Thirdly, the results of the analysis are presented and discussed. Lastly, the concluding chapter reviews the main conclusions of the

analysis, provides and answer to the research question central to this study, and reflects on the relevance of the research.

2. Theoretical Framework

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a theoretical framework for the analysis of the interplay between discursive group constructions and policies in the case study on the Dutch response to the Moria camp fires. Firstly, in section 2.1 existing theories and frameworks on discursive group constructions are explored. This is followed by a theoretical reflection in section 2.2 on the relevance of analysing language, especially in relation to policies. Thirdly, in section 2.3 the conceptual relation between discourse and policy is discussed. Thereafter, in section 2.4 the concepts of performativity and discursive legitimisation are presented as ways to study this relationship. Lastly, section 2.5 reflects on the performativity of discursive group constructions.

2.1 Discursive Group Constructions

A useful starting point for theorising discursive group constructions is Schneider and Ingram's (1993) theory on the social construction of target populations. Schneider and Ingram (1993) describe how groups are socially constructed, by distinguishing between shared characteristics of groups and attributing positive and negative values to these characteristics. Schneider and Ingram (1993) distinguish two axes of differentiation between target groups; strong versus weak power and positive versus negative constructions. These distinctions result in four ideal types of target groups constructions (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Given that the refugees in the case study under analysis stand both outside the territory as well as the democracy of The Netherlands, only groups of weak power are deemed applicable to this research. This leaves two typologies of target groups, dependents representing politically weak groups which are positively constructed, and deviants representing politically weak, negatively constructed groups (Schneider & Ingram, 1993).

Schneider and Ingram provide several examples of positive and negative constructions; *"Positive constructions include images such as "deserving," "intelligent," "honest," "public-spirited," and so forth. Negative constructions include images such as "undeserving," "stupid," "dishonest," and "selfish." "* (1993, p. 335). Besides these examples, according to Schneider and Ingram (1993) a wide variety of positive and negative evaluations can be used to construct groups. Securitisation research represents a strand of research analysing negatively constructed groups. In general, the study of securitisation focusses on the process in which political topics are moved into the realm of security policies through the act of speech (Buzan, Weaver, de Wilde, 1998). Securitisation research is also concerned with group constructions, given that not

only political topics but also identities can be securitised (Croft, 2012). An example is the research by Baker-Beall (2016) who points to the discursively constructed image of a ‘migrant other’ as a potential security threat.

According to Schneider and Ingram (1993) positive constructions can include the image of deservingness. Scholars such as Holzberg et al. (2018) engage further in these specific values by analysing frames of deservingness and undeservingness. According to Holzberg et al. (2018) these frames are based on the perceived advantages and disadvantages certain refugee groups can bring to a host country. In a case study on the response of the German media to the 2015 refugee crisis, Holzberg et al. (2018) distinguish three key themes which are relevant in constructing notions of (un)deservingness; “... *economic productivity; state security; and gender relations.*” (Holzberg et al., 2018, p. 539). Besides economic and security narratives, Holzberg et al. (2018) observe that gender is an important factor in debates on deservingness, as male refugees are more often constructed as “...*dominant and threatening...*” (p. 540) and female refugees are more often constructed as “...*without a voice or as passive victims in need of saving.*” (p. 540). This last finding of Holzberg et al. (2018) shows how perceived advantages and disadvantages of certain groups to a host society can be based on individual or group characteristics such as gender. Inherent in these constructs of deservingness, is a conditional logic in which the perceived benefits and burdens a refugee brings to the host country partly determine who is viewed as worthy of protection and who is not (Holzberg et al., 2018).

Another way to approach the deservingness of groups is to look at narratives of vulnerability in relation to the figure of refugee groups (Smith & Waite, 2019). The construction of vulnerability is based on moral categories and can be emotionally charged (Smith & Waite, 2019). Examples of values which support the narrative of vulnerability are compassion, showing solidarity towards refugees and their emphasising need for assistance (Smith & Waite, 2019). According to Smith and Waite “... *narratives of vulnerability are increasingly used to highlight distinctions between refugees who are deemed to deserve protection and those who do not.*” (2019, p. 2290). Where deservingness frames include characteristics or conditions which are based on perceived burdens and benefits, the narrative of vulnerability seems to manifest itself more in certain values or sentiments reflecting upon the figure of the refugee. Both thus determine deservingness, yet the grounds on which these constructs are based differ.

Schneider and Ingram (1993) point to the relation between discursive group constructions and the process of subcategorisation, in which finer and finer distinctions are made within a particular group along the lines of deservingness. Although, Holzberg et al.

(2018) and Smith and Waite (2019) describe different types of discursive group constructions, in both constructs categorisation seems to play a role. Discursive group constructions categorise, and categorisations results in the inclusion of some, and the exclusion of others. The categorisation of refugees and migrants and the subsequent inclusion and exclusion is also observed and discussed in a case study by Goodman, Sirriyeh and McMahon (2016) on the UK's media discourse on the 2015 refugee crisis. They analyse the impact of categorisation on the treatment of refugee groups (Goodman et al., 2016).

The process of inclusion and exclusion can further develop into the construction of two opposing images of groups which are positioned against each other. For example, Goodman et al. (2016) point the distinction between genuine and bogus asylum seekers. In addition, they conclude that different representations exist of refugees either being deserving or threatening. Similarly, Holzberg et al. (2018) point to a split between a humanitarian and a securitising narrative. They argue that these discourses combined are reinforcing frames of deservingness and undeservingness. In doing so, they argue that discourses on the deservingness and undeservingness of refugees reinforce the humanitarian securitisation of borders (Holzberg et al., 2018). This represents the phenomenon in which the protection of some groups results in the deterrence of other groups (Vaughan-Williams, 2015). In the case study of Smith and Waite it is concluded that the narrative of vulnerability creates a division between the image of “...*the deserving Syrian refugee and the undeserving asylum seeker.*” (2019, p. 2302). There thus seems to be an interaction between positively and negatively constructed groups. Inherent in this trend is a logic of conditionality. The deservingness of some is contingent upon the undeservingness of others. Holzberg et al. conclude that this interplay between discourses point to “...*the cruel conditionality that underlies current humanitarian responses within European border regimes.*” (2018, p. 536).

In the introduction of this work it was stated that the discourse on refugees in response to the Moria fires was centred around an aim to relocate ‘*the most vulnerable*’ from the island (European Commission, 2020). This notion already creates the expectation that the narrative of vulnerability plays a relevant role in the Dutch discourse in response to the Moria camp fires. In addition, the commitment made by The Netherlands to relocate 50 unaccompanied minors and 50 minors and their family members (Rijksoverheid, 2020), indicates that conditions of deservingness play a role in the case study as well. In the case study by Holzberg et al. (2018) gender plays a role in the construction of deservingness. In this case study the focus on minors in the relocation offer creates the expectation that age is to play a role in constructing deservingness. It is further expected that this categorisation based on vulnerability and

deservingness results in the process of inclusion and exclusion. Furthermore, the construction of a positively constructed vulnerable group is expected to be complemented by the construction of a negatively constructed group. All in all, these processes are expected to result in a conditional logic cumulating from the construction of frames of deservingness and the narrative of vulnerability.

By analysing the discursive group constructions, and distinguishing between perceived deservingness based on host state advantages (Holzberg et al., 2018) and the narrative of vulnerability (Smith & Waite, 2019) it is mapped how these discursive frames manifest themselves in the official discourse of The Netherlands in response to the Moria camp fires. However, the aim of this research goes beyond analysing these discourses, as it seeks to unravel the interplay between these discourses and policies. The subsequent section responds to the question why it is relevant to do so.

2.2 Why Language Matters

Schneider and Ingram (1993) point out that group constructions have significant influence on policy outcome. Their theory responds to the question “*Who gets what, when and how?*” in politics (Lasswell in Schneider & Ingram, 1993, p. 334). Schneider and Sidney (2009) as well emphasise the importance of social constructions of target groups for the impact of policies. Theories on discursive group constructions thus already point out that there is a link between discourse and policy. In other words, it is pointed out that language has policy consequences. The consequences of language are a recurrent theme in many discursive studies. For example, Smith and Waite (2019) argue that divisions made between refugee groups based on deservingness frames result in different in entitlements and rights between these groups. In the field of discursive psychology Goodman et al. (2016) argues that discursive constructions of refugees have consequences for the perception on how they should be treated. However, these studies solely rest on analysing the linguistic constructions. The actual consequences of these discourses are not included as a unit of analysis. Merely the study of language thus leaves several questions unanswered such as; how does language relate to policy? In which ways can language have policy consequences? How does this work and importantly, how can this be analysed?

These questions are addressed in a dissertation by Van Ostaijen, who points to the existence of a “... *general under-operationalization in discourse analysis...*” (2017a, p. 68). According to Van Ostaijen (2017b) discursive studies have been relying on inadequate

operationalisations, which are sometimes based on interpretation and leave assumptions implicit. As a result of this under-operationalisation, these studies have failed to explain how the interplay between these concepts works (Van Ostaijen, 2017b). Van Ostaijen (2017a,b) is not the only scholar pointing at this analytical gap. In the field of securitisation studies, Neal (2009) similarly argues that there is an assumed link between linguistic discourse and policy outcomes. Even though in securitisation research securitising discourses are identified, it is not clear what this means for the actual policy outcomes (Neal, 2009). It can thus be concluded that the relationship between discourses and the legitimisation and actualisation of policies is unclear and under-researched.

This work recognizes the importance of discursive approaches. However, it also acknowledges the importance of explaining how discourses interrelate with policy reality. Therefore, the focus of this research is to provide further insight into the interplay between discourses and policy reality. In doing so, it does not only aim at answering the question *why language matters*, it also responds to the question *how language matters*. The continuation of this chapter firstly theorises the conceptual relation between discourse and policy. Subsequently, it introduces the concepts of performativity and discursive legitimisation to answer the question of how discourse and policy interrelate.

2.3 The Relation Between Discourse and Policy

The aim of this research is to unravel the interplay between discourses on refugee groups and the policy response of the Dutch government to the Moria camp fires. Discourse on the one hand, and policy on the other, are thus the two central concepts which stand at the basis of this research. This section separately addresses both concepts and subsequently goes into the relation between these concepts.

Firstly, it is addressed how the concept of discourse is understood in this research. Hajer (1993) defines discourse as “...an ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categories through which meaning is given to phenomena..” (p.45). Discourses constitute “...attempts to make sense of the world through words and language...” (Baker-Beall, 2016, p. 31). The words, concepts and categories within a discourse are referred to as discursive spaces (Doty, 1993). An important characteristic of discourses is that they are not understood to be fixed, they are always in the process of changing (Doty, 1993). Van Ostaijen explains the purpose of conceptualising the linguistic element of this research as discourse; “By approaching language as discourse I refer to language and its potential power to structure, highlight and silence specific elements, next

to its potential to discipline what can and cannot be thought and serve as precursors to particular outcomes.” (2017b, p. 34). Language thus does not only describe the social world, it also constitutes the social world. Thus, conceptualising language as discourse means recognizing the power of language to do more than just describe (Van Ostaïjen, 2017b).

Discourses are located in the realm of linguistics. This raises the question how discourses relate to social realities or practices. In the context of the proposed research the social practices under consideration are policies. The process in which policies come into being can be represented in the policy cycle, a deconstruction of the policy process developed by Laswell, constituting different phases ranging from problem definition, policy proposal, implementation and evaluation (Howlett, McConell & Perl, 2017). Concretely in the context of this case study the relevant policies include emergency funding for the purpose of humanitarian needs on the Island of Lesbos after the Moria fires, and the offer to relocate people from the island.

The second step in this theoretical section is to address the relation between discourses and the policy process. Van Ostaïjen (2017b) describes that it has to be acknowledged that making the distinction between the concepts of discourse and social practices is inherently complex. This complexity lies in the understanding of the relation between discourse and social practice. The two concepts are “...*mutually co-constitutive*...” (Baker-Beall, 2016, p. 29). Meaning that “...*discourse constitutes social practice and is at the same time constituted by it.*” (Van Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999, p. 92). This constitutive understanding of discourse thus links language and practice closely together (Van Ostaïjen, 2017b). In the context of this research this means that policies in response to the Moria fires are adopted based on discourses, yet discourses are at the same time produced and reproduced by the creation of these policies.

The complexity of the relationship between discourse and policy has important consequences on an analytical level. As is described by Baker-Beall (2016); “*I do not view discourses as causative. Discourses are constitutive, they are contingent, they are performative, they produce interpretive possibilities but they are not in any way causative or deterministic.*” (p. 41). This thus means that the relationship between discourse and policy should not be seen as causative or as one directional. Instead there is an interplay between these conceptual levels. This relates to the understanding of discourses as ever-changing structures of meaning. For this specific research this means that the relevance of the research lies less in its predictive quality. Instead, the research takes an analytical approach, meaning that the focus of the research is less about the causative relationships and more about the mechanism at play. It is about interpreting and understanding the phenomenon rather than explaining its causality.

Another analytical consequence of the constitutive understanding of discourse is that it distinguishes the research from research using concepts such as framing or strategic narratives. Discourses are not to be seen as strategic practices by certain actors. This distinction is explained by Baker-Beall (2016), who argues that seeing language as an instrument that can be employed by actors assumes a causal effect of discourse on social practice. Meaning would then not be constituted by the discourse but it would be identifiable through the discourse (Baker-Beall, 2016). This is not to say that in the conceptual understanding adopted in this research actors are not seen as having agency to influence the social world by means of language. They do have this agency, but in contrast to a instrumental understanding of discourse, discourses also structure the social world and the actors within it (Baker-Beall, 2016).

Having established the existence of an analytical gap between discourse and policies, and having discussed the relation between these concept, the question of how this relation can be analysed is still left unanswered. The next section discusses the concepts of performativity and discursive legitimisation as ways to access this complex relationship.

2.4 Performativity & Discursive Legitimation

The final question to be answered in this theoretical framework is how the constitutive relation between discourses on refugee groups and policies in response to the Moria fires can be conceptually accessed. For this purpose this section discusses the concepts of performativity and discursive legitimisation.

Performativity was first introduced into language theory by Austin in 1962 in the context of gender relation studies (in Pennycook, 2004). Austin was concerned with several questions such as how language can achieve effects, and cause people to act and react (Pennycook, 2004). In other words, Pennycook wondered “...*how we do things with words* [...] *and how words do things to us...*” (2004, p.10). The concept of performativity captures and recognizes the performative role of language. As has been described earlier, conceptualising language as discourse assumes that language does not only describe but it actually does something, it constitutes (Van Ostaijen, 2017b). It is this function of language that can be conceptualised as performativity. Language has a performative effect, linguistic descriptions come along with possibilities for action, which in turn can have consequences (Hacking, 2002). Feldman describes performativity as; “*Performativity* [...] *is not simply about the social construction of subjects, but* [...] *about the discursively regulated practices that inscribe boundaries between subjects and reify them in that very process.*” (2005, p.222). In this

description of performativity it also is apparent that a performative effect is not a causal effect, as there is a mutually co-constitutive relation between social constructions and discursively regulated practices. The concept of performativity can thus be seen as a bridge between social constructions, or discourses, and social practices. Therefore, analysing performativity can be seen as a way to access the relation between discourse and reality.

The continuation of this section seeks to provide a concrete way in which the link between discourse and policy can be theorised. This step in the theoretical framework is especially relevant as it serves as a basis for operationalisation. As has been described earlier, the interplay between discourse and policy is complex, as the two are closely linked due to their constitutive relation (Van Ostaïjen, 2017b). However, for analytical purposes it is still relevant to separate the linguistics from the materialized (Fairclough, 2012), or the value-laden components from the instrumental components of policies (Schneider & Sidney, 2009). Section 2.1 has already provided a framework for analysing discursive group constructions, which represents the linguistic element of the analysis. The question still remains how the materialized part of the analysis, the policies, can be more concretely conceptualised. For this purpose, Van Ostaïjen (2017b) dissects Hajer's (1997) definition of discourse and distinguishes between institutional discourses and institutional actions. Where institutional discourses refer to ideas, concepts and categorisations, institutional actions refer to a "*set of practices*" in a certain policy domain (Van Ostaïjen, 2017b, p.39). Both concepts are located within the discursive field (Van Ostaïjen, 2017b). Van Ostaïjen's (2017b) interpretation of Hajer's definition of discourse and the separation between institutional discourses and actions makes it possible to analyse how discourses exist next to actions. Both elements can now be conceptualised and operationalised separately. In this research, the discursive element has been conceptualised as discursive group constructions. Van Ostaïjen conceptualises institutional actions as; "*...collective or individual acts or non-acts*" which refer to "*...policies, laws, legislation, collaborative venues and networks.*" (2017b, p. 47). This research adopts this approach and thus conceptualises the material part of this analysis as institutional acts and non-acts. The relevance of this separate conceptualisation responds to the aim of this research to overcome the earlier discussed under-operationalisation in discursive studies (Van Ostaïjen, 2017a). By explicitly operationalising all conceptual levels it becomes possible to explain how the interplay between these concepts and levels works.

The last step in this theoretical framework is to find a concrete way to analytically access the performativity of discourses. Van Ostaïjen (2017c) brings forward the notion of discursive legitimisation as a way to analyse performativity. Van Ostaïjen (2017a) describes how the

performative potential of discourses shows how discourses can contribute to courses of action and how discourses can legitimise these courses of action. Discursive legitimisation is presented by Van Ostaïjen (2017c) as a means to connect discourses and institutional actions. Van Ostaïjen (2017c) draws on the framework of Van Leeuwen (2007) to analyse discursive legitimisation. Van Leeuwen (2007) distinguishes between four categories or grounds of discursive legitimisation which are authorisation, moral evaluation, rationalisation and mythopoesis. According to Van Leeuwen (2007) authority based legitimisation draws on different types of authority which vary from personal authorisation to institutional authorisation. Legitimisations based on moral evaluation are founded on value systems (Van Leeuwen, 2007). Legitimisation by rationalisation is subcategorised in instrumental and theoretical rationalisation (Van Leeuwen, 2007). Instrumental rationalisation relies on a rationale based on the goals or uses of the legitimised act, theoretical rationalisation relies on references to a natural order of things or the way things are (Van Leeuwen, 2007). Lastly, legitimisation based on a mythopoesis relies on a certain narrative or on storytelling (Van Leeuwen, 2007). The focus on this type of legitimisation lies on narratives that either reward or punish certain actions (Van Leeuwen, 2007). All in all, Van Leeuwen (2007) provides a concrete and usable framework for analysing discursive legitimisation. In doing so Van Leeuwen (2007) provides a way to access the performativity of discourses in relation to institutional actions.

2.5 The Performativity of Discursive Group Constructions

This section reflects upon the expected performativity of the narrative of vulnerability and frames of deservingness. In the previous section, discursive legitimisation is presented as a means to analyse the performativity of discourses. Several expectations on how legitimisation based on discursive group constructions can manifest itself are discussed.

A first consideration is that constructs of vulnerable or deserving refugees can be expected to play a role in legitimising subsequent policy actions. Based on the framework of Van Leeuwen (2007) it has been established that moral evaluation, based on value systems, can form a basis for discursive legitimisation. Especially the narrative of vulnerability, which is based on sentiments and values (Smith & Waite, 2019), can be expected to manifest itself in this type of legitimisation. Frames of deservingness are based on the perceived advantages refugees can bring to a host country (Holzberg et al., 2018). The foundation of this construct thus differs from the narrative of vulnerability. In contrast to the sentiment based narrative of

vulnerability, frames of deservingness are founded on a rationale regarding the perceived benefits and burdens of refugees. Frames of deservingness are thus expected to be manifested in legitimisation by rationalisation.

However, as has been discussed in section 2.1, the categorisation of some groups as vulnerable or deserving is expected to result in a process of exclusion. Exclusion can in turn lead to a logic of conditionality or even the construction of an opposing, undeserving group. It can thus be expected that these constructs opposing deservingness and vulnerability have a complementary legitimising role on policies in response to the Moria fires.

To unravel further the interplay between positive and negative constructs and their expected legitimising roles, one must consider the case study at hand. What distinguishes the Moria case study from existent research on the performativity of discourses, is that on the first instance this case study seems to be centred around positive constructs of refugees. The Moria fires represent a humanitarian emergency. The deteriorating situation on the island of Lesbos after the fires gained much Media attention. It is therefore expected that compassion is to play a significant role on the discourse on refugees in Moria.

The works of Van Ostaijen (2017a,b,c) shows several ways in which performativity works. For example, it is shown how elements of the discourse entailing concepts, metaphors, myths and numbers problematize certain objectives which in turn is followed by a course of action (Van Ostaijen, 2017a). This finding creates the expectation that discursively constructed problematisation can be a bases for discursive legitimisation. A work more specifically focussing on discursive group constructions is that of discourse scholar Baker-Beall (2016) in the field of securitisation and counter terrorism studies. Baker-Beall (2016) reveals that the construction of ‘the migrant other’ and its conflation with ‘the terrorist other’ plays an important role in the legitimisation of security policies at the EU border. What these case studies have in common is that problematization and securitisation regard negative constructs. This however, raises the question whether performativity in the case study on the Moria fires can be expected to function in a similar way.

To summarize, on the one hand positive constructions can be expected to play a relevant role in legitimisation of the Dutch policy response to the Moria camp fires. On the other hand, the theories create the expectation of exclusion and the construction of an opposing group, which could create a supplementary line of legitimisation. This research distinguishes itself from existent works on the performativity of discourses, given that the events of the fires are expected to result in discourses constructing compassion. Although problematisation or securitisation may occur in this case study, it is expected that positive constructions also play

an important role given the characteristics of the case study. It is therefore yet to be unravelled how this interplay between positive and negative constructions manifests itself in de-legitimisation of the policy response. As is suggested by Van Ostaïjen an interesting line of research would be to analyse “...to what extent elements have prescriptive values for policies actions and why not...” (2017a, p. 86). In doing so, one would contribute to “...disentangling the conditions of discursive illegitimacy.” (2017a, pp. 86-87). This study aims to contribute to this disentanglement by analysing the case study on the Moria fires, which distinguishes itself from existent research on the performativity of discourses.

3. Methodological Framework

This chapter describes the methodological framework of this research. The first section discusses the design of the research and the methods selected for the analysis. The second section describes the processes of the data collection and selection. Thereafter, the theoretical and conceptual insights provided in chapter 2 are used to come to an operationalisation to analyse the interplay between discursive group constructions and the Dutch policy acts and non-acts in response to the Moria fires. Finally, a reflection follows on the limitations and ethical considerations relevant for the research.

3.1 Design and Methods

The aim of this research is to analyse the interplay between discursive group constructions and Dutch policy actions in response to the Moria camp fires. The research is designed as a single case study on the Dutch response on the Moria camp fires. The timeframe of the case study ranges from September 1st 2020 tot February 28th 2021, which makes the outbreak of the fires in Moria camp in the beginning of September 2020 the starting point of the analysis. The research takes a descriptive and analytical approach. As has been described in the previous chapter, this design serves the aim of the research to create an understanding of a phenomenon, being the interplay between discourse and policies, within the context of the case study. This means that the focus of the research is on the mechanisms at play rather than on causative relationships. The analysis is qualitative in nature and provides empirical data on, and understanding of, the case study at hand. In addition, the research provides insights into the wider phenomenon of discursive legitimisation.

The research question central in this work is; *How did discursive group constructions on refugee groups in the official discourse of The Netherlands in response to the Moria camp fires in September 2020 interrelate with the subsequent policy actions?* This research question constitutes three conceptual levels and analytical elements. Firstly, it is analysed which discursive constructions on refugee groups can be distinguished in the Dutch discourse in response to the Moria fires. Secondly, all institutional actions relevant to the case study are distinguished. Thirdly, the interplay between these elements is analysed through the framework of discursive legitimisation. The method selected to respond to these analytical aims is discourse analysis. There are various forms of discourse analysis. It can be argued that the type of discourse analysis should be mainly based on the adopted understanding of the concept

discourse itself. The type of discourse analysis adopted in this research is based on the discursive practices approach as described by Doty (1993). This type of discourse analysis is most in line with the constitutive understanding of discourse as adopted in this research. In contrast to, for example critical discourse analysis, which focusses more on the role of power and adopts an instrumental understanding of language (Baker-Beall, 2016). A more concrete explanation of the analytical strategies adopted in the discourse analysis and a plan for operationalisation are described in section 3.3.

3.2 Data Collection & Selection

This research aims at analysing the discursive, as well as the policy response of the Dutch government to the Moria camp fires. Given the focus of the research on the policy response, the Dutch government is specified as the Cabinet of The Netherlands, which consists of all Ministers and State Secretaries and represents the main executive body of The Netherlands. The focus of the analysis is thus on the official discourse of the Dutch Cabinet in response to the Moria camp fires. The texts selected for the discourse analysis are seen as representative of the common language of the Cabinet of The Netherlands on the events in Moria. All data is selected within the timeframe ranging from September 1st 2020 to February 28th 2021 and consists of both documents produced by the Cabinet as well as speeches by members of the Cabinet in debates.

The data has been collected by conducting a variety of search queries in three different online governmental archives. The first entails an archive storing all official governmental documents², the second stores all governmental press releases³, the third stores all debates⁴ that have taken place in the Dutch parliament and results in documents in video material. Data has been collected by entering different search words in the search option available in all three archives within the selected timeframe. Each round of entering new words resulted in less new results and more overlap between already collected data. This process has continued until there was saturation of the data collection. The words searched in order are ‘Moria’, ‘Lesbos’, the Dutch word for refugee camps [Vluchtelingenkampen], the Dutch abbreviation for unaccompanied minor [amv], the Dutch word for Greek Islands [Griekse eilanden], and finally the Dutch word for shelter camps [Opvangkampen]. Subsequently, all the documents resulting from this initial collection have been subjected to a second selection in which their relevance

² www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten

³ www.rijksoverheid.nl/actueel/nieuws

⁴ www.debatgemist.tweedekamer.nl

for the case study has been assessed. In this process non-relevant documents have been filtered out.

In total the process of data selection has resulted in 54 documents of which 16 are answers to questions from parliament, 11 are debates, 10 are letters to parliament, 9 are reports, and 8 are press releases. The total number of pages of the textual documents add up to 351 pages. The total amount of video material constitutes approximately 27 hours and 30 minutes. However, as is explained at the beginning of this section the analysis has been demarcated to the official discourse of the Dutch Cabinet. Therefore, not all texts and parts of the debates have been analysed, given that part of the texts or debates represent the language of other actors such as members of parliament. Only texts written by the Cabinet, relevant Ministries, Ministers or State Secretaries have been analysed. For debates only the parts in which members of the Cabinet, that is Ministers or State Secretaries, are speaking are subjected to the analysis. The total number of pages analysed add up to 158 pages. The amount of video material actually analysed is approximately 4 hours and 7 minutes. The substantive aspects of this are elaborated on further in the next section.

3.3 Operationalisation

The research question central in this work is; *How did discursive group constructions on refugee groups in the official discourse of The Netherlands in response to the Moria camp fires in September 2020 interrelate with the subsequent policy actions?* As has been distinguished in section 3.1, this question entails three conceptual components. Each of these components are addressed at a different element of the analysis and are operationalised separately. Firstly, discursive group constructions are operationalised which are situated on the linguistic level. Secondly, institutional actions are distinguished which are located on the materialized level. Thirdly, the performative level which unravels the interplay between the linguistic and the materialized focusses on discursive legitimisation.

For the purpose of this operationalisation a coding scheme is created which is presented in table 1. However, the analysis consist of an abductive, mixed strategy in which “...*the researcher goes back and forth between theoretical concepts (the deductive grid) and the empirical findings.*” (Van Ostaijen, 2017a, p. 74). Meaning that the theory driven part which is based on the theoretical framework introduced in chapter 2, is complemented by a data-driven part which allows for further sub-categorisation during the data analysis. This means that the

coding scheme in table 1 represents the theoretical foundation for the analysis but is not to be seen as fixed.

The first conceptual level in this research is the linguistic level which aims at mapping the discursive group constructions on refugee groups in Moria. Based on the theoretical insights from section 2.1, two main conceptual attributes were distinguished through which discursive group constructions can be observed and distinguished in the texts. Firstly, the analysis focusses on frames of deservingness and undeservingness. Based on the insights of Holzberg et al. (2018) these frames are based on advantages or disadvantages that refugees are assumed to offer the host society. Based on the works of Holzberg et al. (2018) indicators pointing at these frames can be references to economic productivity, state security, or individual characteristics of refugees influencing the perceived advantages or disadvantages to the host society. Secondly, the linguistic level of the analysis focusses on narratives of vulnerability based on the works of Smith and Waite (2019). Possible indicators pointing at these concepts can be references to compassion or solidarity with refugees, or the needs of refugees. As has been established in section 2.1, where frames of deservingness are mostly based on characteristics and conditions regarding refugees which reflect benefits and burdens to the host societies, the narrative of vulnerability seems to be build on values and sentiments.

The second conceptual level encompasses the materialized level consisting of institutional actions. Such actions are indicated by either acts or non-acts which refer to “...*policies, laws, legislation, collaborative venues and networks.*” (Van Ostaijen, 2017b, p. 47). Institutional acts relevant to the case study mostly consists of policies or proposals of policies such as funding or relocation. Institutional non-acts manifest themselves in proposals, questions or requests from members of parliament which are rejected by the Cabinet.

The third, performative level of the analysis, aims at identifying the process of discursive legitimisation with a specific focus on the role of discursive group constructions. The purpose of this analytical step is to identify the performative potential of discursive group constructions. In this analytical step the conceptualisation of discursive legitimisation by Van Leeuwen (2007) is used to distinguish different ways of discursive legitimisation. This theorisation results in four indicators, or types of discursive legitimisation which are authorisation, moral evaluation, rationalisation and mythopoesis (Van Leeuwen, 2007).

Conceptual Level	Conceptual attributes	Indicators
Linguistic Level: Discursive Group Constructions	Frames of (un)deservingness based on (dis)advantages to the host society (Holzberg et al., 2019) Narratives of vulnerability based on the subjects themselves (Smith & Waite, 2019)	Economic productivity State security Individual characteristics Compassion Solidarity Need
Materialised level	Institutional actions (Van Ostaijen, 2017b)	Acts Non-acts
Performative level	Discursive legitimisation (Van Leeuwen, 2007)	Authorisation Moral evaluation Rationalisation Mythopoesis

Table 1: *Theory based coding scheme.*

The discourse analysis is conducted by analysing all selected texts focussing on the indicators represented in table 1 and abductively adding further sub-categorisations. To conduct this analysis the software program NVivo is used. NVivo is seen as a suitable tool for discourse analysis because it enables the researcher to categorise different discursive spaces (or references) into categories representing different discursive strands by the usage of codes. In addition, it gives the number of references per category, providing the researcher with an indication of which discourses are dominant and which are minor. This enables the researcher not only to create categories of discourses while coding, but also displays the dominance of the different discursive strands. In addition, NVivo is especially a suitable tool for this analysis as it enables the researcher to make notes on relationships between different codes. To be more concrete, it enables the researcher to draw connections between a certain institutional act or non-acts and a type of discursive legitimisation.

3.4 Limitations & Ethical Considerations

There are several limitations to this research that have to be acknowledged and taken into account. The first limitation concerns the selection of the Dutch Cabinet as the actor under

analysis. It is debatable if the Dutch Cabinet can be viewed as an unified or homogeneous actor. In reality, the data selected as being representative for the common language of the Cabinet is produced by individual civil servants and or governmental officials, of whom the latter also fulfil a political role. However, Baker-Beall (2016) provides a line of reasoning that attenuates this limitation. Encountering similar uncertainties in the context of a research on the EU, Baker-Beall (2016) adopts a constructivist perception of actorness. This means that an actor can be analysed as a unified actor if it constructs itself as such. In other words, given that the Dutch Cabinet constructs itself as a unified actor, their language can be perceived as a common language for the purpose of analysis, despite a possible contradicting reality.

A second limitation regards the scope of the analysis of the policy response of the Dutch Cabinet. This unit of analysis is centred around institutional actions within the fixed timeframe of the case study. This means that the policy component does not entail all stages of the policy cycle, which also includes processes of discussion, implementation and evaluation (Howlett et al., 2017). The completeness and thoroughness of the analysis could thus be enhanced by broadening the scope of the research to include the full policy cycle. This can be achieved by for example tracing and analysing one single policy. However, the aim of this research is to interpret and understand the interplay between discourse and policy against a particular contextual setting, that is a case study. Therefore, analysing multiple acts and non-acts within a fixed timeframe is the most suitable approach to achieve this aim whilst maintaining the feasibility of the study.

To conclude this section, the ethical considerations relevant to this research must be reflected on. The research does not include human participants or discuss individual cases. The research relies on secondary data, which is derived from publicly accessible documents created by the Dutch Government. Therefore, it can be concluded that the research does not contain any risk in relation to consent or anonymity. There are thus no relevant ethical considerations that apply to the research.

4. Analysis

This chapter describes and discusses the findings of the analysis of this thesis. It is divided into two sections. Firstly, the discursive group constructions based on narratives of vulnerability and frames of deservingness are mapped and explained. Secondly, by describing the main acts and non-acts relevant in the case study, different strands of discursive legitimisation that were found are discussed. Furthermore, it is discussed how these discursive legitimisations relate to the discursive group constructions.

4.1 Discursive Group Constructions

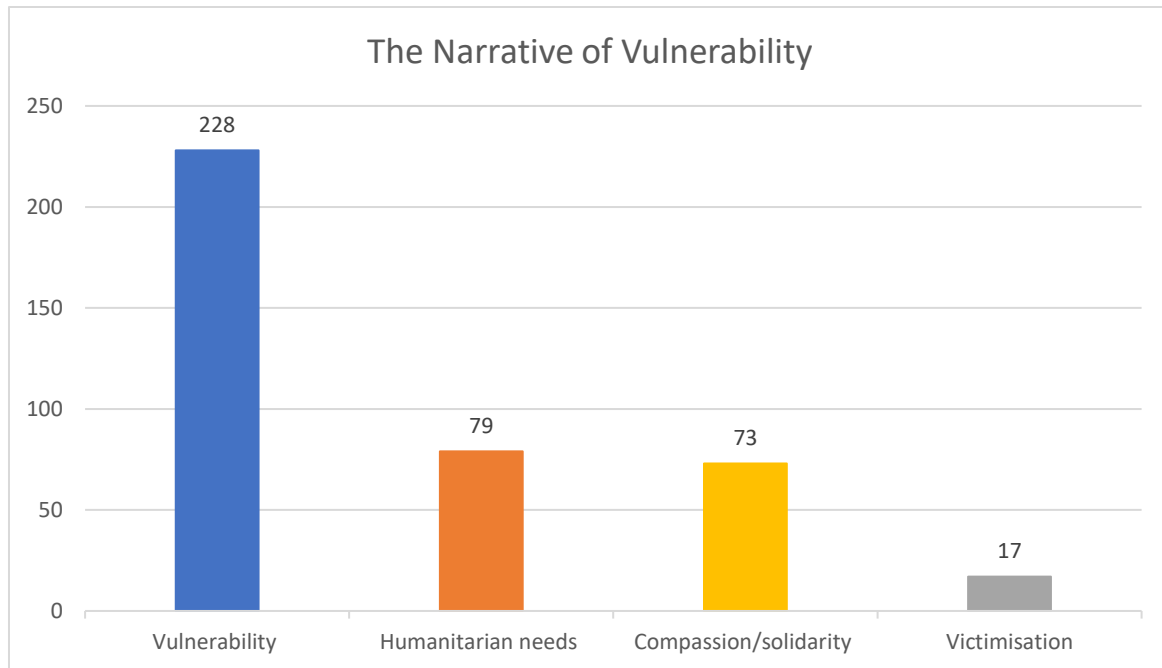
The first part of the analysis maps the discursive constructions of refugees in the official discourse of The Netherlands in response to the Moria Camp fires in September 2020. Both narratives of vulnerability (Smith & Waite, 2019) as well as frames of (un)deservingness (Holzberg et al., 2018) have turned out to be relevant themes around which refugee groups are constructed. The findings are first discussed along the lines of these two conceptual strands, thereafter the interplay between frames of deservingness and narratives of vulnerability is discussed.

4.1.1 The Narrative of Vulnerability

Narratives of vulnerability in relation to refugee groups are conceptualised by Smith and Waite (2019). The construction of vulnerability is based on moral categories and sentiments reflecting the image of the refugee and supported by values such as compassion, showing solidarity towards refugees and their need for assistance (Smith & Waite, 2019). In this analysis, a strong vulnerability discourse is identified in which refugee groups are described as vulnerable and emphasis is placed on vulnerable groups. In addition, three discursive strands are distinguished which support the vulnerability discourse. These supportive strands consist of discourses on compassion and solidarity, humanitarian needs and victimisation. Each strand is addressed accordingly. The number of references found in the discourse analysis and categorised to each of these discursive strands is visualised in figure 1.

Figure 1:

References made to different discursive themes constructing the narrative of vulnerability.



The vulnerability discourse describes refugees as vulnerable and places emphasis on vulnerable groups. This discursive strand encompasses 228 references⁵ and therewith represents a dominant discourse in comparison to the other discursive strands constructing the narrative of vulnerability. There are many references to either vulnerable refugees or the most vulnerable refugees. For example, in the context of the Dutch policy to relocate 100 vulnerable refugees from Greece to The Netherlands, a statement is made that “*The most important consideration for selection is the vulnerability of the refugees.*”ⁱ,⁶ and “*The wellbeing of the most vulnerable had priority in this relocation.*”ⁱⁱ. The discursive strand encompasses a relatively limited explanation of who exactly belongs within this category. Above all, children fall within this category given that much emphasis is put on either boys, girls and children in general. In addition, families with children fall within the category vulnerable. More concrete descriptions of who else is deemed vulnerable are lacking. Only one reference clearly specifies examples of other vulnerable profiles, these selections are based on agreements between the Greek authorities, the European Commission, the European Asylum Support Office, and the UN and include “*...victims of torture, persons with medical conditions, victims of SGBV (sexual and*

⁵ An overview of all numerical results of the discourse analysis can be found in Annex II

⁶ Please note that all references in the analysis chapters have been translated from Dutch to English. The original references and the sources from which these references are derived can be found in the footnotes. More information on the sources can be found in Annex I.

gender based violence) or persons who run the risk on such violence, single parents with children, *lgbtiq.*’ⁱⁱⁱ. In line with the findings by Smith and Waite (2019), there already is an indication that the vulnerability discourse creates distinctions, given that *the most vulnerable* are prioritized. However, what is also notable is that there is relatively limited emphasis on descriptions of ‘non vulnerable’ people.

In addition to the vulnerability discourse there are three discursive strands supporting the overall narrative of vulnerability. Even though, such expressions not explicitly describe refugees as vulnerable they do invoke and support the construct of vulnerability. The first concerns a discourse on humanitarian needs. This sub-category includes references that the situation on Lesbos is worrisome and that there are people in need. Altogether, this discursive strand invokes the idea that something needs to be done based on humanitarian considerations. As can be seen in figure 1, with 79 references the discursive strand represents a significant theme. Examples of references subscribed to this discursive strand are expressions that there is a need to respond to humanitarian need or describing the situation as a humanitarian emergency. Other references are expressions that the situation is worrisome, for example in the following statement; *“The Cabinet agrees with you that the circumstances of shelter on the Greek islands still is worrisome.”*^{iv}

The second supporting discourse concerns expression of compassion for, or solidarity with, refugee groups. Especially in the short term after the fires broke out in Moria camp many of such expressions were made. The total number of references to this discursive strand is 73. Examples are expressions by State Secretary Broekers-Knol in a debate on the 10th of September 2020 in which she states *“...the disaster in Lesbos is a horrible event.”*^v and *‘It really is heart breaking.’*^{vi}. A second example is a statement by Sigrid Kaag, the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation on the 9th of September 2020; *“We stand in solidarity with the refugees and migrants and with the Greek. It is horrible that so many in the refugee camp, where the circumstances were already dramatic, are affected by these fires.”*^{vii}.

The third supporting discourse concerns an emphasis on the aspect of refugees being affected or hit by the fires. In this discursive strand vulnerability frames are supported by a construction of victimisation. This discursive strand includes more implicit statements emphasising that people have been affected by these fires or are fleeing from the fires. In addition it includes explicit references stating that these people are not responsible for the fires, or as is stated by Prime Minister Mark Rutte *“...the majority are victim of such a fire.”*^{viii} This trend of victimisation represents only a minor discursive strand given that only 17 references are made to this sub-category.

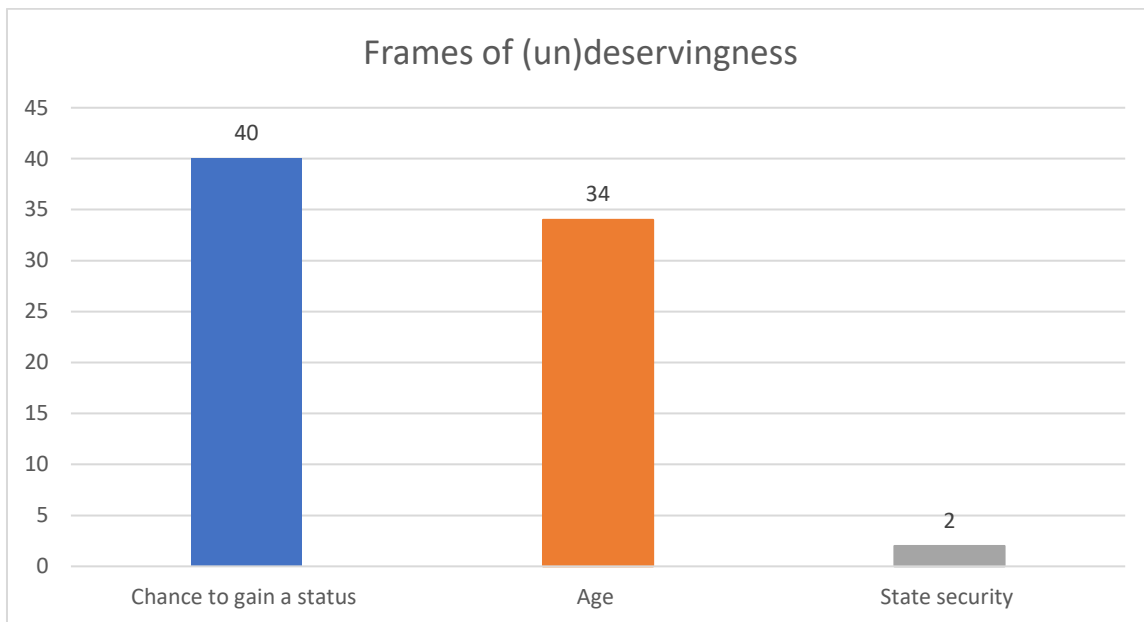
As a whole, these four discursive strands construct a strong discourse on the vulnerable refugee. The finding of a strong narrative invoking vulnerability is in line with the expectations culminating from the works of Smith and Waite (2019). In addition, there are indicators that the dividing and exclusionary function of the narrative of vulnerability also is existent in the case of the construction of refugees from Moria as vulnerable. However, contrary to these expectations there is little emphasis on non-vulnerable groups.

4.1.2 Frames of Deservingness

The previous section has established that a strong discourse exists which constructs the image of the vulnerable refugee in the official discourse of the Dutch government to the Moria fires. Where the narrative of vulnerability reflects a sentiment of vulnerability around the image of refugee groups (Smith & Waite, 2019), frames of (un)deservingness are based on the perceived advantages and disadvantages of certain refugee groups to a host state (Holzberg et al., 2018). They reflect certain characteristics or conditions on which deservingness and undeservingness are based. Within the context of this conceptualisation, three data-driven sub-categorisations were distinguished during the discourse analysis, which are refugee's chances to gain a status, their age, and the security of the state. Each sub-category represents a theme around which the deservingness or undeservingness of refugee groups are constructed and each is discussed accordingly. Figure 2 visualises the amount of references to these three themes in the analysed documents.

Figure 2:

References made to different discursive themes constructing frames of deservingness and undeservingness.



The first and the most reoccurring theme constructing deservingness is a person’s chance to gain a legal status. In a debate on the 10th of September 2020, the day after the outbreak of the fires in Moria camp, State Secretary for Justice and Security, Ankie Broekers-Knol said; “...we would like high potentials [kansrijke mensen], high potentials [kansrijke mensen] who in the Dutch asylum procedure have a very high chance to get a status here.’^{ix}. This emphasis on people who have a high chance to gain a legal status, in the context of relocation, is repeated 40 times. A persons chance to gain a status as a condition for deservingness is not direct in line with the findings by Holzberg et al. (2018). However, what is similar to the findings of Holzberg et al. (2018) is that deservingness is constructed based on an individual characteristic. Where in Holzberg et al. (2018) this characteristic is gender, here it is the chance to gain a status. There is an explicit preference stated by the Dutch Cabinet which is based on an individual’s chance to gain a status.

A notable finding concerns the line of reasoning on which the set conditions for deservingness are based. In a report by the Dutch government released in November 2020 it is stated that;

“In the Dutch [relocation] offer an estimation whether there is a chance on a (long term) stay in The Netherlands is taken into account. This is done to prevent that people are brought to The Netherlands of whom the chance is too big that they will not qualify for a residence permit after going through the asylum procedure, and they would have to return to their country of origin. Nobody would be helped with this.”^x

In the case study by Holzberg et al. (2018) conditions for deservingness are mostly reflected upon the perceived advantages and disadvantages to the host country. In his case study, Holzberg et al. (2018) describes how refugees have to prove that they are worthy of protection based on these conditions. In the case study at hand however, the set conditions are also partly related to the perceived interest of the refugees themselves rather than solely the interests of the host state.

It is thus concluded that an individual’s chance to gain a status plays an important role in their constructed deservingness. This link between the chance to gain a status and deservingness raises the questions what exactly stands opposite to this, who is seen as undeserving? This question is answered in the same debate on the 10th of September 2020, when State Secretary Broekers-Knol emphasises the importance to make the distinction between high potentials [kansrijke] and low potentials [kansarme] in order to ensure “...that high potentials [kansrijke asielzoekers] can enter the European Union and the low potentials [kansarme asielzoekers] and irregular economic migrants can not.”^{xi} Deservingness is thus based on one’s chance to gain a legal status, while undeservingness is based on a low chance to gain a legal status or being an irregular economic migrant. However, only very little attention is paid to this latter category of undeserving refugees. Out of all 40 references found in the discourse analysis which emphasise the importance of the chance to gain a status, only 4 references are made in the context of undeserving people, of which one is the example above.

A second individual characteristic constructing deservingness is age. Throughout the texts, 34 references are made to this discursive strand. Much of the discussion following the Moria fires is centred around relocating so called amv’s, which stands for unaccompanied minor aliens. For sheltering minors on the main land in Greece an emphasis is put on the categorisation of minors between the ages of 13 and 18 years. For the relocation of minors from Greece to The Netherlands minors of 14 years and younger are selected. This choice is explained in a report by the Ministry of Justice and security as; “For amv it has been estimated that they are least resilient under the age of 15 and therefore will benefit more from relocation than others.”^{xii} Both the chance to gain a status and age are thus reoccurring themes in the construction of

deservingness. Moreover, these two characteristics combined are mentioned as important characteristics for selection, in the phrasing “...*high potential* [kansrijke] *minors*...”^{xiii}.

In their study, Holzberg et al. (2018) identify three key themes relevant in constructing notions of (un)deservingness; “...*economic productivity; state security; and gender relations.*” (p. 539). As has been described previously, in the case study at hand, the specific aspect of gender does not seem to be an underlying theme determining deservingness. However, what Holzberg et al. (2018) do point out with this finding is how perceived advantages and disadvantages of certain groups to a host society can be based on individual or group characteristics. In this case study, it is not gender but the characteristics chance to gain a status and age around which deservingness is constructed. In regards to the other themes identified by Holzberg et al. (2018), economic productivity does not play a role in the case study on the Moria fires. State security only plays a role in two references in which security checks are represented as one of the conditions for relocation. In response to a point brought up by a member of parliament, that asylum seekers are not to form a security risk if they come to The Netherlands, Secretary of State Broekers-Knol confirms that “*Of course a security check will have to take place, because that is also a very important aspect that we should not miss.*”^{xiv} However, given the limited number of two references emphasising the aspect of security it is considered a very minor and insufficient theme in this analysis.

Overall, this section shows that two individual characteristics, age and chance to gain a status, represent the most important themes around which deservingness and undeservingness are constructed. The subsequent section reflects on the interplay between the frames of deservingness and the narrative of vulnerability.

4.1.3 The Latent Exclusion of Discursive Group Constructions

The previous paragraphs established that a strong narrative of vulnerability exists in the Dutch discourse in response to the Moria camp fires. In line with the theory by Smith and Waite (2019), this narrative invokes a sentiment based on morality surrounding the image of refugee groups. The narrative is supplemented by a discourse on deservingness, which is based on a person’s chance to gain a status and their age. In line with the expectations cumulating from the theories of Holzberg et al. (2018), the frame of deservingness mainly functions to demarcate certain conditions on which deservingness is based.

Although vulnerability and deservingness are manifested in constructs with different logics, they are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, combined the narrative of vulnerability

and frames of deservingness determine who is deemed as deserving of protection and who is not. The frames combined are reflected in the following statement “...*the selection of vulnerable persons and amv’s for relocation is linked to the estimation that they qualify for a asylum permit.*”^{xv}.

As has also been established in the previous sections, in both the narrative of vulnerability as well as the deservingness frames, the aspect of exclusion is manifested. Distinguishing the vulnerable, those with a high chance to gain a status, or those with a specific age, creates divisions in the overall group of refugees. In line with the theory, the representation of one group is contingent on another group. However, contrary to the expectations cumulating from the theories, little attention is paid to those who are excluded by the vulnerably or deservingness constructs. There is no explicit construction of an opposing, undeserving group.

For the purpose of going further into the aspect of exclusion, an analysis of descriptions of other groups was included in this part of the analysis. What is notable is that these groups are mentioned very scarcely. Only 15 references in total are made to other groups of people who are not considered to be vulnerable nor mentioned in the context of deservingness frames. This indicates that the strong emphasis on a discursively constructed vulnerable or deserving group leads to little attention being paid to other groups. It can thus be concluded that the selectiveness of frames of deservingness and vulnerability results not only in inclusion but also in exclusion. However, contrary to the expectations the construction of the other group is in this case study left quite implicit. Much attention is paid to the vulnerable and deserving, and those who do not fall within these categories are not often discussed. Therefore, in contrast to the securitised, threatening, undeserving constructs described by Holzberg et al. (2018) the exclusion found in the case study at hand manifests itself more latently. Part of the aim of the following analytical part is to go further into the consequences of this exclusion.

4.2 Discursive Legitimation of Institutional actions

The aim of this second part of the analysis is to distinguish the discursive legitimisation of institutional actions. In addition, the interplay between these actions and discursive group constructions are discussed. Discursive legitimisation is operationalised based on the framework by Van Leeuwen (2007), who distinguished between four types of legitimisation which are authorisation, moral evaluation, rationalisation and mythopoesis. Institutional actions are indicated by either acts or non-acts. In this case study, acts mainly consist of policies implemented by the Dutch Cabinet in response to the Moria fires. Non-acts are policies not

implemented, or proposed courses of action not adopted by the Cabinet. They are recognized by proposals, questions or suggestions by Dutch members of parliament which are dissuaded by the Cabinet. For the purpose of structuring the findings, all acts and non-acts which fall within the selected timeframe of the case study are divided into categories. This categorisation is also relevant given that the type of discursive legitimisation varies among different types of policies. The first category of policies includes the allocation of general types of support and budgetary support to Greece. The discursive legitimisation of these types of policies is discussed in section 4.2.1. The second type of policies includes the offer of the Dutch Cabinet to relocate 100 people from Lesbos to The Netherlands in response to the Moria fires. In addition to this relocation offer, the Dutch government repeatedly emphasises that they do not usually partake in ad-hoc relocations. Therefore, the discursive legitimisation as an act, and the refusal to partake in ad-hoc relocations as a non-act, are successively discussed in section 4.2.2. Section 4.2.3 addresses various aspects of the discussion between Dutch members of parliament and the Cabinet that followed the announcement of the relocation offer. This for example, includes the Cabinet's refusal to relocate either more or less people as a non-act, and the decision of the Cabinet to adjust the initial relocation criteria at a later point in the timeframe. Lastly, section 4.2.4 addresses the Dutch Cabinet's refusal to evacuate or relocate all asylum seekers rather than only vulnerable groups of asylum seekers. In addition, it discusses a call for the launch of a civil-military operation aiming to intervene on the island. Table 2 gives an overview of all acts and non-acts which were analysed and indicates the number of references made to these acts and non-acts in the documents. This number reflects the extent to which an act or non-act has been discussed in comparison to others. The overall numerical results of the discourse analysis can be found in Annex II.

Category	Description of act or non-act	Amount of References
General and	Act: General support	28
Budgetary Support	Act: 1 Million budgetary support	18
	Act: Commitment to making further budget available	11
The Relocation Offer	Act: Relocation of 100 people	58
	Non-act: Ad-hoc relocations	11
Discussing the Relocation Offer	Non-act: Relocate more children or people	35
	Non-act: UNHCR quota	12
	Act: Adjustment of relocation criteria	11
	Non-act : No relocation at all	4
Evacuating ‘others’	Non-Act: Evacuate all others	15
	Non-Act: Civil-Military Emergency Operation	7

Table 2: *Acts and non-acts relevant to the case study and amount of references made in the documents to each acts or non-act.*

4.2.1 General and Budgetary Support

This section discusses three institutional acts which concern the allocation of general and budgetary support to Greece. For the purpose of interpreting the findings of the discourse analysis, direct links were made between all acts and non-acts and the different types of discursive legitimisations. This indicates which discursive structures legitimise each specific act and non-act. These direct links are presented in a table at the beginning of each of the subsequent sections. For this section, which discusses the legitimisation of general and budgetary support, they are presented in table 3.

Act/non-act	Type of Discursive Legitimation	Amount of Direct Textual Links
Act: General support	Moral evaluation: Humanitarian considerations	16
	Rationale: Long term vs short term	5
	Mythopoesis: Exceptionality	1
Act: 1 million budgetary support	Moral evaluation: Humanitarian considerations	14
	Mythopoesis: Exceptionality	3
	Moral evaluation: Principles	1
Act: Commitment to making further budget available	Moral evaluation: Humanitarian considerations	8
	Moral evaluation: Principles	2
	Mythopoesis: Exceptionality	1

Table 3: *Direct textual links between institutional acts and types of discursive legitimisations which fall under the category of general and budgetary support.*

The first institutional act to be discussed in this section consists of commitments by the Cabinet to provide the Greek government with general forms of support in response to the Moria camp fires. These include non-specified means of support or material relief supplies such as pillows, tents and blankets. The majority of commitment to general support are legitimised based on humanitarian considerations. Legitimation based on humanitarian considerations is classified as a type of legitimisation based on moral evaluation (Van Leeuwen, 2007), as there is a clear reference to humanitarian values. 16 direct links between general support and legitimisation based on humanitarian considerations are found in the analysed documents. An example of such a construct is manifested in a press statement by Secretary of State Broekers-Knol on September 9th, shortly after the outbreak of the fires. The press release starts with the following statement; *“Horrible news from shelter camp Moria on Lesbos. Several fires raged there this night, forcing thousands of people to flee and now become even more displaced.”*^{xvi} This statement, which reflects compassion and solidarity with, and victimisation of, the refugee groups is preceded by the following commitment;

“I have informed my Greek colleague Koumoutsakos, also on behalf of my colleague Kaag who deals with humanitarian aid, that the Dutch Cabinet is prepared to provide further support to Greece. In addition The Netherlands will also contribute via the EU if this is desired.”^{xvii}

It is in this type of legitimisation that a link can be drawn between the type of legitimisation and frames of vulnerability.

In addition to discursive legitimisation based on humanitarian considerations, a recurrent theme in this context is that of long term versus short term help. Often repeated is the aim of the Dutch government to provide structural, long term support. Based on the classification of Van Leeuwen (2007), this emphasis on structural support is considered legitimisation by reference to rationalisation. To be more specific, it is seen as a type of instrumental rationalisation which is directed at the goals of a certain type of action. In total, 5 direct links between general support and this legitimisation based on rationalisation were found. In addition there is one link between general support and legitimisation based on exceptionality. However, given the minority of this type of legitimisation in relation to this act, it is discussed later in this section.

The second type of institutional act in the category general and budgetary support regards the allocation of 1 million budgetary support to Greece. On the 9th of September 2020 Sigrid Kaag, the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation announced that 1 million euros had been made available for emergency help in Greece (Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, 2020). Similarly to the previously discussed types of general support, the majority of direct legitimising links with this act are based on humanitarian considerations. A representative example of such a legitimisation manifests itself in the account of Minister Kaag on the decision to allocate 1 million of budgetary support to Greece in a debate on the 10th of September 2020. Minister Kaag starts her account with expressing her vision on the situation on Lesbos; *“As has been highlighted many times, the situation in Moria was already very distressing. Major humanitarian needs were already identified on the longer term. People were living in degrading conditions. The fires have only worsened this horrific humanitarian situation.”*^{xviii} After this statement Minister Kaag poses the question; *“Well, what have I done?”*^{xix} aiming at her response to the earlier described situation on Lesbos. Subsequently this question is followed by an explanation of the allocation of the 1 million euros. The first reference reflects compassion and solidarity with the refugees on the island and the recognition that there is a humanitarian need. These themes which play an important role in the vulnerability frame, thus legitimise the subsequent action in the form of 1 million budgetary support. Such constructions in which there is a clear link between humanitarian considerations and the subsequent policy response in the form of 1 million euros budgetary support are found 14 times in the analysed texts.

A similar trend is found in the third institutional act which also falls within the category general and budgetary support. In addition to the 1 million budgetary support, in December 2020 Minister Kaag expressed her willingness to explore if more funding can be made available for the situation on Lesbos (Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 2020). In the legitimisation of this commitment, 8 direct links with humanitarian considerations were found.

In both the allocation of 1 million budgetary support as the commitment for further support, two other types of legitimisation seem to play a minor role. Firstly, there are a few instances on which the legitimisation based on moral evaluation is complemented by an emphasis on the fact that budgetary support is exceptional to the situation at hand. An example is an expression by Minister Kaag in explaining her commitment to further budgetary support; *“I am, given the exceptionality of the situation that has occurred now, prepared to look further...”*^{xx}. Similar constructions are found 3 times in the context of the 1 million budgetary support and 1 time in the context of commitments to budgetary support. This type of legitimisation which is classified as the mythopoesis of exceptionality is a recurrent theme in the legitimisation of the relocation of asylum seekers. Given the minority of the theme in this context, it is further explained in the subsequent chapters where it is more common and relevant.

A second minor but peculiar type of legitimisation found in the context of the budgetary support represent legitimisation based on the adherence to certain principles. In the context of the announcement that 1 million euros has been made available Minister Kaag said; *“... Of course we wanted to make a gesture right away.”*^{xxi} In a later debate she again addressed the decision to make the 1 million available; *“1 million is of course in this case a drop in the ocean. I did it for reasons of principle.”*^{xxii} In the context of the consideration to make further budget available, Minister Kaag states; *“...the situation, the magnitude and the distressing nature, is as such that sending another half million will not change the situation...”*^{xxiii} This type of discursive legitimisation has been categorised as legitimisation based on moral evaluation. The principles which are adhered to can be seen as moral values, or the so called ‘gesture’ that is referred to by Minister Kaag is based on a moral value. References to this strand of legitimisation are minor, as they only occur on 3 occasions in total. They can however be seen as an extension or even a reinforcement of moral evaluation based on humanitarian considerations.

Reflecting upon the legitimisation of general and budgetary support as a whole, it can be concluded that they predominantly rely on moral evaluation based on humanitarian considerations. This type of discursive legitimisation is directly linked with the discourses constructing the narrative of vulnerability. Constructs invoking the idea of humanitarian needs and compassion with refugees in these constructions legitimise institutional actions. This

finding suggest that discourses on the vulnerable refugee have a performative role in the policies on general and budgetary support.

4.2.2 The Relocation Offer

On the 10th of September 2020 State Secretary Broekers-Knol announced that the Dutch government offers to relocate 100 people from Greece to The Netherlands, including 50 unaccompanied minors and 50 family members of families with minor children. This section mainly discusses the discursive legitimisation of this relocation offer as an institutional act. In addition to this relocation offer, throughout the timeframe there is a recurrent line of reasoning by the Dutch government emphasising that the government usually does not partake in ad-hoc relocations. This section discusses the legitimisation behind this institutional non-act as well. Non-acts translate themselves in this analysis as requests, questions or proposals by members of parliament that are rejected by the Dutch Cabinet. Table 4 gives an overview of all direct textual links which are found between the act and non-act included in this category and different types of discursive legitimisation.

Act/non-act	Type of Discursive Legitimation	Amount of Direct Textual Links
Act: Relocation of 100 people	Mythopoesis: Exceptionality	29
	Moral evaluation: Humanitarian considerations	28
	Rationale: Capacity	5
	Rationale: Selectiveness	5
	Authority: Institutional Authorisation	4
	Rationale: Adequacy	1
Non-act: Ad-hoc relocations	Authority: Institutional Authorisation	4
	Rationale: Adequacy	1
	Rationale: Effectivity	1
	Rationale: Long term vs short term	1

Table 4: *Direct textual links between institutional acts and non-acts and types of discursive legitimisations which fall under the category of the relocation offer.*

Table 2, which is represented in at the beginning of section 4.2, shows that the relocation offer has been mentioned or discussed on 58 occasions throughout the analysed texts. It thus is the most discussed institutional act in this case study. Several types of discursive legitimisation construct the logic behind the relocation offer. Firstly, 28 direct textual links are found between the relocation offer and legitimisation based on humanitarian considerations. The press release announcing the relocation plan states; “*The Cabinet of The Netherlands is open to the Greek request to, after the horrible events in the Greek refugee camp Moria, take on several minors and family members.*”^{xxiv} As has been determined in the previous section, legitimisation based on humanitarian considerations falls under the category moral evaluations, as it makes use of a reference to a value system (Van Leeuwen, 2007), and it is in this type of legitimisation that a direct link can be drawn between legitimisation and the narrative of vulnerability. As is emphasised in the reference above, it is compassion with the refugees that functions to legitimise the institutional action.

Another recurrent theme in the legitimisation of the decision of relocation is that of exceptionality. Time after time it is repeated that this decision is made based on the exceptionality of the situation. This becomes apparent in the following example;

“By exception and in response to the exceptional situation that originated after the fires on Lesbos, the Cabinet of The Netherlands decided for one time to offer the Greek authorities to shelter 50 amv of 14 years and younger and 50 family members with minor children in The Netherlands.”^{xxv}.

Direct links between this type of legitimisation and the relocation offer are found 29 times in the analysed texts.

As has been briefly mentioned in the previous section, legitimisation based on exceptionality has been classified as legitimisation through mythopoesis. This type of legitimisation manifests itself through narratives or by means of storytelling (Van Leeuwen, 2007). Van Leeuwen describes it as; *“...legitimation conveyed through narratives whose outcomes reward legitimate actions and punish non-legitimate actions...”* (2007, p. 92). In the context of the discourse analysis, the repeated emphasis on exceptionality is interpreted as a cautionary tale that legitimises that something needs to be done. There is however no explicit narrative on what would happen if no action is taken. Nevertheless, it is the notion of exceptionality that constructs a reason for action.

The repeated emphasis on the exceptionality of the situation is thus interpreted in this analysis as a narrative which legitimises a certain course of action, and is thus categorised as a mythopoesis. What is notable in the context of the relocation offer is that both legitimisation based on humanitarian considerations and legitimisation based on the mythopoesis of exceptionality are of frequent occurrence. With 28 links between the relocation offer and legitimisation based on humanitarian considerations, and 29 links between the act and legitimisation based on exceptionality, both represent dominant bases for legitimisation of the relocation offer. Moreover, these types of legitimisation are often combined in textual constructions. A representative example of such a construction is the following reference; *“...in response to this exceptional and tragic situation [the Cabinet of The Netherlands] decided to offer the Greek government...”^{xxvi}*. There seems to be a pattern in which most of the times when humanitarian considerations are given as a reason to relocate people, this is complemented by an emphasis that this decision is based on the high exceptionality of the situation.

An interesting aspect relevant in analysing the relocation offer is the repeated emphasis of the Dutch Cabinet on the fact that they do not usually partake in ad-hoc relocations. In analysing this as a non-act, another dimension to the functioning of discursive legitimisation through the mythopoesis of exceptionality is brought to light. The refusal to partake in ad-hoc

relocations is mostly based on legitimisation through authorisation. The discussion on ad-hoc relocations is of relatively limited presence in the documents. However, it is deemed relevant as it further reinforces the importance of the mythopoesis of exceptionality. This is clarified in the following statement by State Secretary Broekers-Knol, which is made in the context of the relocation offer;

“This acute emergency situation, which does not leave anyone untouched and which has made the Cabinet of The Netherlands decide that this is such an exceptional situation, with such acute emergency, and so terrible, that although the government’s policy remains, it should be possible to make an exception to that. We are making an exception this time.”^{xxvii}

The first important element in this reference is that it reflects how discursive legitimisation based on exceptionality and humanitarian considerations combined from the logic behind the relocation offer. A second element which is added to this is the statement that the government’s policy remains. This refers to the government’s policy not to partake in ad-hoc relocations. In this construct, the emphasis on not partaking in ad-hoc relocations, which is based on authorisation, reinforces the legitimisation based on exceptionality.

In addition to the interplay between the three types of discursive legitimisation discussed so far, several other forms of discursive legitimisation were found in relation to the relocation offer. Firstly, legitimisation based in institutional authorisation which has been discussed in the context of ad-hoc takeovers also is found in relation to the relocation offer on 4 occasions. Secondly, there are two forms of legitimisation based on rationalisation which form the logic behind the relocation offer. A first line of reasoning behind the relocation offer is that there is capacity to relocate these people. This form of discursive legitimisation is manifested in the following example and is found 5 times in relation to the relocation offer; *“There now is room for the shelter of this group of people, because less people are relocated to The Netherlands as a result of the consequences of the Corona virus.”^{xxviii}*

The second is the rationale of selectiveness, in which certain selective criteria form a condition to relocate people. A first example of this rationale is found in a statement by State Secretary Broekers Knol in a debate on the 10th of September in which she says; *“We offer the Greeks [...] to take over 50 minors and we also offer the Greeks to relocate 50 persons with families with minor children. We also say: we want people with high potential [kansrijke mensen].”^{xxix}* The condition set in this last part of the reference, which is based on *high potential*

as a selective criteria, thus contributes to the legitimisation of the relocation offer. A second example is inherent in the following statement in a letter to parliament by State Secretary Broekers-Knol in which the relocation offer is explained. Following a statement on the Cabinet's preparedness to relocate 100 people of which 50 minors, it is declared that; *"This will have to concern unaccompanied minors under the age of 14."*^{xxx} In both these examples legitimisation based on selective criteria directly reflects the themes underlying the frames of deservingness. In the rationale of selectiveness both age and chance to gain a status are presented as selective criteria which legitimise the relocation offer. This type of legitimisation, in which deservingness frames are manifested, is linked on 5 occasions to the relocation offer.

In addition to the previously discussed types of legitimisation, there is one direct link between the rationale of adequacy and the relocation offer. However, given the minority of this type of legitimisation in this context it is discussed and explained later in this chapter.

Reflecting upon these findings it can be concluded that humanitarian considerations and the mythopoesis of exceptionality combined, form the most important basis for the legitimisation of the relocation offer. Moral evaluation, which rests upon the same values underlying the narrative of vulnerability, thus only partly legitimises this institutional act. In contrast to general and budgetary support policies, in the context of these acts the performative effect of the vulnerability narrative seems to be less clear. There seems to be a complementary relation between the mythopoesis of exceptionality and legitimisation based on moral evaluation. The role of the latter type of legitimisation is reinforced by the emphasis of the Cabinet on not usually partaking in ad-hoc relocations. It thus seems that humanitarian consideration do not form a standalone basis for legitimising the relocation offer. In addition, frames of deservingness seem to play a role in a minor form of legitimisation based on the rationale of selectiveness.

A reoccurring theme in both of these findings seems to be conditionality. It is manifested in the relation between moral evaluation and exceptionality, and legitimisation of the relocation offer based on the conditions of age and a chance to gain a status. By diving further into the discussion on the relocation offer in the following section, the role of conditionality, selectiveness and the role of discursive group constructions in legitimisation is further unravelled.

4.2.3 Discussing the Relocation Offer

This section goes into the discussion on the relocation offer between the Dutch Cabinet and the Dutch parliament. This discussion entails several aspects. The first and most extensive part of the discussion entails calls by members of parliament to relocate more children or people from the island, exceeding the established amount of 100. The second line of discussion regards the decision of the Dutch government to deduce the 100 people relocated from Greece from the established quota for relocation through UNHCR. Several members of parliament were opposed to this condition. Both of these points of discussion can be seen as an institutional non-acts, given that despite the debate they entail a refusal or dissuasion of the Cabinet to engage in these acts. The third aspect of the discussion concerns the decision of the Dutch Cabinet to adjust the initially set criteria for the relocation offer later in the timeframe. Given that this is a decision by the Dutch government, it is seen as an institutional act. The last, and minor aspect of the discussion concerns a call from a member of parliament not to engage in relocation at all. Table 5 gives an overview of all direct textual links which are found between the act and non-act included in this category and different types of discursive legitimisation.

Act/non-act	Type of Discursive Legitimation	Amount of Direct Textual Links
Non-act: Relocate more children or people	Rationale: Adequacy	17
	Authority: Institutional authorisation	10
	Mythopoesis: Exceptionality	6
	Rationale: Responsibility	5
	Rationale: Long term vs short term	3
	Rationale: Effectivity	3
Non-act: UNHCR quota	Rationale: Capacity	3
Non-act : No relocation at all	Authority: Institutional authorisation	3
	Mythopoesis: Exceptionality	2
	Moral evaluation: Humanitarian considerations	1
Act: Adjustment of relocation criteria	Moral evaluation: Humanitarian considerations	4
	Rationale: Responsibility	2
	Rationale: Selectiveness	2

Table 5: *Direct textual links between institutional acts and non-acts and types of discursive legitimisations which fall under the category of the discussion on the relocation offer.*

As is shown in table 2 at the beginning of section 4.2, the most extensively discussed institutional non-act in this case study concerns requests by members of parliament to increase the amount of people to be relocated. The most occurring type of discursive legitimisation in this context is that of the rationale of adequacy. 17 direct links were found between the rationale of adequacy and the Cabinet's dissuasion to relocate more people. Based on the classifications by Van Leeuwen (2007) the rationale of adequacy is seen as a type of theoretical rationalisation. Van Leeuwen describes legitimisation based on this type of rationalisation as "...*legitimation is grounded [...] in whether it is founded on some kind of truth, on 'the way things are'.*" (2007, p. 103). This explicit representation of 'the way things are' can be recognised in the rationale of adequacy. In the context of the case study at hand, requests to increase the relocation number are often answered with a summation of everything the Cabinet has done so far. Such an answer includes a message that what has been done is adequate, and therefore legitimises refraining from increasing the relocation number. A second construction in which the rationale of adequacy manifests itself is reflected in the following example; "... [...] *the Cabinet has put maximum effort in implementing the relocation offer in response to the humanitarian emergency situation caused by the fires in Moria. The Cabinet does not intend to make an additional relocation offer.*"^{xxxii} This reference inherits a rationale that the maximum effort the Cabinet has already allocated to the existing relocation offer is adequate, and therefore legitimises refraining from relocating more people. An important consideration in this type of legitimisation is that 'the way things are' is not to be interpreted as objective. Legitimation is founded in the truth, or the way things are, from the perspective of the Cabinet.

The rationale of adequacy is complemented by legitimisation based on institutional authorisation. In this line of reasoning the Cabinet's authority, or the authority of their decisions is used as a legitimisation to refrain from changing the relocation number. An example is the following statement in response to a request to increase the relocation number; "*The Cabinet has made a decision. We do this in a balanced way.*"^{xxxiii} In the context of this non-act, 10 direct links were found with legitimisation based on institutional authority.

As has been discussed in the previous section on the legitimisation of the relocation offer, the mythopoesis of exceptionality was a dominant form of legitimising the relocation offer. A third finding in the context of this non-act is that the mythopoesis of exceptionality is

now also used to legitimise not relocating more people. This becomes apparent in the following response of Secretary of State Broekers-Knol, to a request by a member of parliament to relocate 500 people from Greece to The Netherlands;

“Mrs Van Kooten [member of parliament] has asked if I can still heed the call for relocating 500. I’ve already said a few times tonight that the Cabinet has decided based on the very acute, horrible situation, to take the step that we have taken: the offer to the Greek to relocate 50 minors and 50 family members with minor children to The Netherlands. This was an exceptional step, which deviates from the Cabinets policies. The question if I will heed the call for the 500 anyway is thus answered.”^{xxxiii}

The mythopoesis of exceptionality is thus used in two different ways. It both legitimises the decision to relocate 100 people, and the decision not to relocate more people. However, in contrast to the legitimisation of the relocation offer in this context it is not linked to legitimisation based on moral evaluation. Direct links between this institutional non-act and the mythopoesis of exceptionality are found 6 times.

In addition to the three types of legitimisations discussed so far, there are a few instances in which different lines of rationalisation legitimise the non-act of not relocating more people. The earlier discussed rationale in which references are made to long term versus short term aims is linked to this non-act on 3 occasions. A comparable type of instrumental rationality is behind the rationale of effectivity. This line of reasoning contains a rationale that what the Cabinet is doing so far is already effective. Lastly, a type of theoretical rationality is found which refers to responsibility. In this line of reasoning not taking action is based on the rationale that it is not the responsibility of the Cabinet to take action, but of the Greek government.

Having extensively discussed the legitimisation of the dissuasion of the Cabinet to relocate more people, this section now goes briefly into two other types of institutional non-acts. The first concerns a discussion on the fact that the number of 100 people relocated by the Dutch government will be deduced from the established quota for relocation through UNHCR. Several objections by members of parliament are made to this aspect of the relocation offer. The legitimisation of this decision mostly rests on a theoretical rationality based on the capacity of the Dutch government to relocate people. Similar functioning of the rationale of capacity was found in the legitimisation of the relocation offer. In the following examples the rationale of capacity is also used to justify the choice to deduce the 100 people to be relocated from the UNHCR quota; *“Due to COVID-19 there now is more space in the resettlement quota and that*

is now being used.’^{xxxiv} and ‘*That capacity is now used to ensure that we can shelter the 100 people about which an offer has been made to the Greek.*’^{xxxv} A second line of reasoning that falls within this category of legitimisation is not based on the actual capacity to relocate according to the Dutch Cabinet, but it refers to capacity based on the support of the Dutch society for the relocation. The rationale of capacity legitimises this non-act on 3 occasions.

A third, but very minorly discussed, non-act in the context of the discussion on the relocation offer is that of a call by a member of parliament not to relocate people at all. The legitimisation of the Cabinet not to heed this call is mostly based on the rationale of authority simply restating that a decision has been made. In addition, it is based on the mythopoesis of exceptionality, repeating that given the exceptional situation it has been decided that 100 people will be relocated. Only one link can be made between humanitarian consideration and the legitimisation of not responding to this call.

A last aspect of the discussion on the relocation offer is the decision by the Cabinet to adjust the initially determined criteria for relocation. In November 2020, the Cabinet decided in consultation with the Greek government that they would no longer have to limit the selection of people for relocation to The Netherlands to people who were staying in Moria at the time of the fires (Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid, 2020). They could now also select people who had been relocated from Moria earlier (Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid, 2020). The objection to this decision mainly was that this decision undermined the aim of the initial relocation offer to shelter the victims of the Moria fires (Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid, 2021b). The legitimisation of this decision is mainly based on legitimisation through moral evaluation. In a press release in January 2021, the decision is restated followed by the statement that; ‘*The most important consideration for the selection [of people to be relocated] is the vulnerability of the refugees.*’^{xxxvi} and ‘*The wellbeing of the most vulnerable was paramount in this relocation.*’^{xxxvii} The narrative of vulnerability, which is reflected in this type of legitimisation, here functions to justify the choice of the cabinet to adjust the relocation criteria. In addition, the rationale of selectiveness plays a role in legitimising this institutional act. Here the decision to adjust the relocation criteria is made based on the wish of the Cabinet to select the vulnerable or the most vulnerable for relocation. In addition, on two occasions the rationale that selecting candidates for relocation is the responsibility of Greece legitimises the Cabinet’s choice to adjust the criteria.

In reflecting upon these findings one important difference between the institutional act and non-act must be considered. Moral evaluation is invoked to legitimise the decision by the Cabinet to agree with the adjustment of the relocation criteria. However, in the three non-acts

different types of legitimisation based on rationalisation form the basis of the discursive legitimisation. It thus seems that moral evaluation does legitimise the Cabinet’s decision to take specific actions, yet it moves to the background in legitimising decisions refraining from certain actions. This is in line with Van Leeuwen’s expectation that “...*moralization and rationalization keep each other at arm’s length...*” (2007, p. 100). The mythopoesis of exceptionality is both used to legitimise acts as well as non-acts. It functions in two ways.

4.2.4 Evacuating ‘Others’

In this section, the legitimisation of the last two non-acts relevant to the case study are discussed. The first non-acts regards a limited amount of calls by members of parliament to evacuate all or ‘the other’ refugees, rather than only those constructed as vulnerable or deserving. In addition, it discusses a call from a specific political party to launch a civil-military operation on Lesbos aiming at intervention for the sake of all refugees on the island (Bisschop, 2020). Table 6 provides the amount of direct link between this non-act and the different types of discursive legitimisation.

Act/non-act	Type of Legitimation	Amount of Direct Links
Non-Act: Evacuate all others	Rationale: Selectiveness	7
	Rationale: Adequacy	4
	Rationale: Authority	4
	Rationale: Responsibility	2
Non-Act: Civil-military emergency operation	Rationale: Adequacy	7
	Rationale: Responsibility	3

Table 6: *Direct textual links between institutional non-act and types of discursive legitimisations in regard to the evacuation of all other asylum seekers.*

In the context of the call to evacuate all other refugees from the island, the most occurring type of discursive legitimisation is that of the rationale of selectiveness. 7 direct links between this non-act and the rationale of selectiveness are found in the texts. Such requests by members of parliament are met by a statement that the current policy is to relocate the vulnerable from the island, and that “*The government does not intend to make an additional contribution in the field of relocation.*”^{xxxviii}. The discursive legitimisation of the dissuasion of the Cabinet to evacuate

other asylum seekers from the island is thus clearly based on deservingness. In addition, this dissuasion is based on 4 occasions on the rationale of adequacy and on 4 occasions on the rationale of responsibility. In addition, on 2 occasions the legitimisation of not evacuating all asylum seekers from Lesbos is based on the rationale that this is the responsibility of the Greek government.

The last institutional non-act to be discussed in this analysis is the request for the launch of a Civil-Military emergency operation by one particular political party (Bisschop, 2020). This operation would consist of a peacekeeping force directed by Frontex, realising a multitude of measures aiming at improving the situation for all asylum seekers (Bisschop, 2002). The dissuasion of this proposal by the Cabinet is mostly based on the rationale of adequacy. This legitimisation manifests itself in statements by the Cabinet that current policies are adequate and there is no need for a civil-military operation. 7 direct links are found between this non-act and the rationale of adequacy. On 3 occasions, the rationale of responsibility legitimises the dissuasion of the Cabinet in response to the proposal for a civil-military operation. The Cabinet points at the responsibility of Greece or the EU for these policies.

Reflecting upon these findings, it is again confirmed that moral evaluation, based on humanitarian considerations, does not play a role in the legitimisation of non-acts. Instead, rationality is dominant in the legitimisation of non-acts. What distinguishes these non-acts from other acts and non-acts so far, is that they are targeted at refugees as a whole. In contrast to, for example the relocation offer, which is specifically targeted as vulnerable refugees or those who fall within the frame of deservingness. However, as is shown in table 2 at the beginning of section 4.2, these non-acts are of less frequent occurrence in the overall discussion on the situation in Moria.

5. Conclusion

The main aim of this thesis was to unravel the interplay between discursive group constructions on refugee groups in the official discourse of The Netherlands in response to the Moria camp fires and the subsequent policy actions. To respond to this objective, the research draws on the insights of a variety of discourse scholars, in order to conceptualise and operationalise all elements relevant to the research. The discursive construction of refugee groups was analysed through the narrative of vulnerability (Smith & Waite, 2019) and frames of deservingness (Holzberg et al., 2018). The materialized element of the analysis has been conceptualised as institutional acts and non-acts (Van Ostaïjen, 2017b). Drawing on the insights by Van Ostaïjen (2017a,b,c) the concepts of performativity and discursive legitimisation (Van Leeuwen, 2007) were used to analyse the interplay between discursive group constructions and institutional actions.

The research question central in this work is; *How did discursive group constructions on refugee groups in the official discourse of The Netherlands in response to the Moria camp fires in September 2020 interrelate with the subsequent policy actions?* The case study on the Moria camp fires provides an in-depth understanding of the construction of the Dutch response to these events, and the way in which discourses on refugee groups contribute to this construction. A varying contribution of discursive group constructions is found in the discursive legitimisation of the Dutch policy response to the Moria fires. Most notably, the research shows the conditionality of moral evaluation in the legitimisation of the Dutch offer to relocate 100 people from Lesbos to the Netherlands.

Firstly, it is concluded that the narrative of vulnerability is indisputably manifested in the Dutch discourse in response to the Moria camp fires. The discourse contains much emphasis on the vulnerability of refugee groups. The narrative of vulnerability is further supported by expressions of compassion, an emphasis on humanitarian needs and victimisation of refugee groups. Alongside the narrative of vulnerability, the Dutch discourse in response to the Moria camp fires contains a construction of deservingness. Deservingness is mainly constructed around a person's chance to gain a status or on their age. Despite the different grounds on which these constructs are based, they are not mutually exclusive. Instead, combined they determine who is deemed as deserving of protection and who is not. Furthermore, it is concluded that division and exclusion is inherent in both the vulnerability as deservingness discourses. Constructing some refugee groups as vulnerable or deserving, discursively separates them from

the overall group of refugees. However, contrary to the theoretical expectations, this exclusion has not led to the explicit construction of an opposing, undeserving group. Instead, very little attention is paid to groups who do not fall within these categories of deservingness and vulnerability. It is therefore concluded that there is a latent exclusion manifested in these discursive group constructions.

A possible explanation for this latent exclusion might be ascribed to the characteristics of the case study. As was reflected on in the theoretical framework, the nature of the humanitarian emergency on Lesbos was expected to result in an initial positive construction of refugees. In line with these expectations, the discourse on the deteriorating situation on Lesbos after the fires constituted many references to compassion and humanitarian needs. This may have resulted in a more considerate discourse, in which distinct statements on the opposing groups were absent.

The second part of the analysis revealed the function of discursive group constructions in the discursive legitimisation of institutional actions. The legitimisation of general and budgetary support to Greece, is predominantly based on legitimisation by moralisation, in which the narrative of vulnerability is reflected. There thus is an interplay between the narrative of vulnerability and commitments to general and budgetary support. This indicates that the narrative of vulnerability has a performative role in the construction of these policies. In addition, deservingness is manifested in a rationale of selectiveness, in which conditions based on certain selective criteria legitimise the relocation offer. This type of legitimisation is of less frequent occurrence compared to legitimisation based on moralisation. The expected conditional logic behind the construction of deservingness, thus is existent, but to a lesser extent than expected.

In addition to the rationale of selectiveness, the logic of conditionality manifests itself in an additional construct. In contrast to the evident role of the narrative of vulnerability in the legitimisation of general and budgetary support, in the legitimisation of a different set of institutional acts, this interplay becomes more obscure. In the context of the Dutch offer to relocate 100 asylum seekers from Greece to The Netherlands, moralisation is contingent upon the mythopoesis of exceptionality. The mythopoesis of exceptionality is reinforced by a repeated emphasis by the Dutch Cabinet on the fact that they do not usually partake in ad-hoc relocations. The preeminent role of the mythopoesis of exceptionality indicates that moral evaluation does not function as a standalone basis for legitimisation for the relocation offer. Instead, it is conditioned upon the mythopoesis of exceptionality.

In delving further into the extensive discussion on the relocation offer, it is demonstrated that the legitimisation of institutional non-acts are based on various lines of rationalisation. The most frequently discussed non-act in the case study is the discussion on relocating more people from Greece to The Netherlands. The dominant line of rationalisation in this context is that of adequacy. This type of legitimisation is based on a line of reasoning that the current efforts of the Cabinet are already adequate. On some occasions, these rationalisations are supplemented by legitimisation based on institutional authorisation.

Notable about the analysis of several non-acts relevant to the case study, is that they are all mainly based on legitimisation by rationalisation. Where moral evaluations do constitute part of the legitimisation of the institutional acts in this case study, they move to the background in the legitimisation of institutional non-acts. This is in line with Van Leeuwen's expectation that '*...moralization and rationalization keep each other at arm's length...*' (2007, p. 100). On the contrary, the mythopoesis of exceptionality does work in both ways. It is used as a legitimisation to engage in relocation efforts, as well as in legitimising the decision not to increase these efforts. This finding further reinforces the role of the mythopoesis of exceptionality in discursive legitimisation, and obscures the role of moralisation in legitimisation.

Lastly, it is concluded that the consequences of the latent exclusion as a result of discursive group constructions is also manifested in the fact that little attention is paid to other groups in the policy discussion. Policies addressing groups who do not fall into the discursively created categories of the deserving and vulnerable refugee were discussed relatively limited in comparison to other acts and non-acts. In analysing the limited occasions in which the Cabinet is asked to relocate all asylum seekers, legitimisation based on selectiveness plays a dominant role. This constitutes again the conditional logic in the policy response which is constructed by frames of deservingness.

This thesis thus demonstrates that the performativity of vulnerability discourses functions differently in the legitimisation of varying policies. Where discursive group constructions do clearly contribute to the legitimisation of general and budgetary support, in the context of the relocation offer moralisation does not function as a stand-alone basis for the legitimisation. In reflecting upon these deviating legitimisations, a notable difference between general and budgetary support and the relocation offer must be taken into account. In comparison to the policies on general and budgetary support, the relocation offer is a more often discussed policy in the case study. The announcement of the relocation offer is followed by an extensive discussion, which goes along with a variety of institutional non-acts that are

connected to the relocation offer. In addition, the controversy regarding the Dutch policy response to the Moria fires was, as described in the introduction of this thesis, centred around the conditions of the relocation offer. This indicates that the performative potential of discursive group constructions obscures in a more contested policy context.

While this thesis has unravelled varying ways in which discourses contribute to legitimisation, it does entail some limitations. Contextual factors, such as the amount of the contestation surrounding a policy, seem to play a role in discursive legitimisation. This raises the question which other factors might be of relevance in the process of discursive legitimisation. To shed further light on the differences in discursive legitimisation in such contexts, it is argued that a comparative line of research could further dissect the legitimising role of discursive group constructions in policy responses. In addition, it is argued that there is a need to apply the analytical strategies on the performativity discourses in a broader range of case studies to test their applicability. This is in line with an argument by Van Ostaijen who argues that “...including more and different case studies would gain broader insights about the applicability of the research grid.” (2017a, p. 85).

Nevertheless, it is argued that the research provides valuable insights into both the discursive as well as policy response of the Dutch Cabinet to the Moria camp fires. Besides these case-specific contributions, the research has provided a comprehensive and theoretically informed operationalisation for analysing the interplay between policy and specifically discourses on group constructions. Therewith, it builds on attempts to overcome under-operationalisation in discourse analysis (Van Ostaijen, 2017a). In addition, the analytical strategies developed in this research contribute to filling the gap between discourse and policy outcome.

Besides these academic contributions, the research entails an important take-away point for all actors in the field of asylum policy. The research shows both *why* and *how* language matters for policies. Constructions of groups, and categorisations within groups, are discursively constructed. They are created by means of language. However, as the performative understanding of discourse in this research has shown, they do have real life consequences. This thesis demonstrates how discursive categories of deserving refugees create a logic of selectiveness which legitimises decisions not to partake in certain policies. In addition, it shows how the discursively constructed vulnerable group, latently draws attention away from those who do not fall into this group. The constitutive understanding of language in this research also shows how policies adhering to these discourses on refugees in turn reify the categorisations and divisions which they construct. The constitutive power of language thus calls for an

awareness for the social construction of group identities and their consequences. Especially in the context of events such as the Moria fires this awareness is of great relevance. Discourses are always in the process of changing. In the context of noteworthy events such as the Moria camp fires, which brings about many responses from both politics and media, new discourses are constructed. Awareness of the interplay between language and the policy process is relevant for all those responding to such events, be it in the realm of politics or not, for the purpose of understanding the consequences of this language.

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Annex I – List of Data Subjected to the Discourse Analysis

Document Number	Date	Type of Document	Title of document
1	2-9-2020	Letter to parliament	Kamerbrief over samenwerkingsverband Nederland en Griekenland opvang amv
2	2-9-2020	Press release	Nederlands-Grieks opvangproject vangt eind september aan
3	3-9-2020	Debate	Nederland en de wereldwijde aanpak van COVID-19
4	9-9-2020	Press release	Reactie van staatssecretaris Broekers-Knol op de branden in Moria
5	9-9-2020	Press release	Minister Kaag: 1 miljoen euro beschikbaar voor noodhulp Griekenland
6	10-9-2020	Letter to parliament	Kamerbrief over situatie brand vluchtelingenkamp Lesbos
7	10-9-2020	Press release	Nederland biedt Grieken overname van 100 minderjarigen en gezinsleden aan
8	10-9-2020	Debate	Brand vluchtelingenkamp Lesbos (voortzetting)
9	10-9-2020	Debate	Brand vluchtelingenkamp Lesbos
10	11-9-2020	Press release	Letterlijke tekst persconferentie na ministerraad 11 september 2020
11	14-9-2020	Debate	Raad Buitenlandse Zaken
12	24-9-2020	Debate	Vreemdelingen- en asielbeleid
13	1-10-2020	Answer to questions from parliament	Beantwoording Kamervragen over sluiten van COVID-19-kliniek op Lesbos
14	1-10-2020	Answer to questions from parliament	Beantwoording Kamervragen over financiering Grieks wanbeleid op Lesbos

15	1-10-2020	Answer to questions from parliament	Antwoorden Kamervragen over een door COVID getroffen vluchtelingenkampen
16	1-10-2020	Answer to questions from parliament	Antwoorden Kamervragen over het bericht over 1e coronabesmetting in Grieks vluchtelingenkamp Moria
17	1-10-2020	Answer to questions from parliament	Antwoorden Kamervragen over het bericht over branden in Grieks opvangkamp Moria
18	1-10-2020	Answer to questions from parliament	Antwoorden Kamervragen over het bericht over coronabesmetting in Grieks vluchtelingenkamp Moria D66
19	1-10-2020	Answer to questions from parliament	Antwoorden Kamervragen over het feit dat minder dan 50 kinderen op Lesbos voldoen aan de eisen om opgehaald te worden
20	1-10-2020	Answer to questions from parliament	Antwoorden Kamervragen over de optie om via UNHCR-hervestiging de noodsituatie op de Griekse eilanden te verlichten
21	1-10-2020	Press release	Opvanghuis voor alleenstaande minderjarige vreemdelingen in Griekenland klaar voor gebruik
22	1-10-2020	Letter to parliament	Kamerbrief over samenwerkingsverband Nederland en Griekenland opvang amv
23	6-10-2020	Debate	JBZ-Raad (asiel- en vreemdelingenbeleid) 8-9 oktober 2020
24	7-10-2020	Report	Afschrift antwoorden vragen over geannoteerde agenda JBZ Raad 8 oktober 2020 asiel en migratie deel 1
25	26-10-2020	Letter to parliament	Kamerbrief over sluiten opvangkampen Lesbos
26	27-10-2020	Report	Verslag van de informele JBZ raad van 8 en 9 oktober 2020

27	2-11-2020	Report	Antwoorden vragen naar aanleiding van het verslag van de informele JBZ Raad van 4 en 5 juni 2020
28	6-11-2020	Report	Afschrift antwoorden SO- JBZ Asiel en migratie
29	11-11-2020	Debate	JBZ-Raad op 13 november 2020 (behandelvoorbehoud migratie-pact)
30	11-11-2020	Debate	JBZ-Raad op 13 november 2020 (behandelvoorbehoud migratiepact)
31	23-11-2020	Report	Verslag van de informele bijeenkomst van de Raad van Justitie en Binnenlandse Zaken, 13 november2020
32	24-11-2020	Answer to questions from parliament	Antwoorden Kamervragen over de voortgang van de evacuatie van asielzoekers van het Griekse eiland Lesbos
33	24-11-2020	Letter to parliament	Kamerbrief over samenwerkingsverband Nederland-Griekenland en de uitwerking van het Nederlandse herplaatsingsaanbod
34	24-11-2020	Answer to questions from parliament	Beantwoording Lijst van vragen en antwoorden alleenstaande minderjarige asielzoekers
35	24-11-2020	Report	Afschrift reactie op brandbrief kinderartsen en jeugdartsen Veiligheid en gezondheid van kinderen in Griekse vluchtelingenkampen
36	26-11-2020	Report	Antwoorden schriftelijke vragen 1e termijn begroting JenV 2021
37	2-12-2020	Debate	Begroting Buitenlandse Handel en Ontwikkelingssamenwerking 2021
38	8-12-2020	Debate	Europese top van 10 en 11 december 2020
39	11-12-2020	Letter to parliament	Kamerbrief over additionele bijdragen uit noodhulpmiddelen 2020
40	11-12-2020	Report	Beantwoording vragen over geannoteerde agenda JBZ raad van 14 december 2020

41	15-12-2020	Other	Besluit op Wob-verzoek over hervestiging migranten op Griekse vasteland
42	18-12-2020	Press release	Eerste 25 vluchtelingen uit Griekenland in Nederland
43	18-12-2020	Letter to parliament	TK Samenwerkingsverband Nederland en Griekenland en de uitwerking van het Nederlandse herplaatsingsaanbod
44	14-1-2021	Letter to parliament	Kamerbrief over additionele bijdrage aan humanitaire respons op Griekse eilanden
45	19-1-2021	Letter to parliament	Kamerbrief over voortgang samenwerkingsverband Nederland Griekenland en herplaatsingsaanbod
46	19-1-2021	Press release	100 kwetsbare vluchtelingen vanuit Griekenland in Nederland
47	20-1-2021	Answer to questions from parliament	Antwoorden op Schriftelijk overleg Raad Algemene Zaken van 18 januari 2021 en Europese Raad van 21 januari 2021
48	26-1-2021	Answer to questions from parliament	TK VSO JBZ-Raad van 28-29 jan migratie deel
49	27-1-2021	Debate	Informeel JBZ-Raad d.d. 28 en 29 januari 2021 (vreemdelingen- en asielbeleid)
50	1-2-2021	Answer to questions from parliament	Antwoorden Kamervragen over het bericht over 3-jarig meisje gevonden in modder van Moria
51	1-2-2021	Answer to questions from parliament	Antwoorden Kamervragen over het bericht dat geen enkel alleenstaand kind uit kamp Moria in Nederland is aangekomen
52	1-2-2021	Answer to questions from parliament	Antwoorden Kamervragen over de situatie in Griekse vluchtelingenkampen

53	1-2-2021	Answer to questions from parliament	Antwoorden Kamervragen over het bericht over vluchtelingen die in Nederland aankwamen en al statushouders waren in Griekenland
54	11-2-2021	Letter to parliament	Kamerbrief motie over additionele hulp voor vluchtelingen en migranten op de Griekse eilanden

Annex II – Numerical Results Discourse Analysis

Conceptual Categorisation	Discursive Theme	Discursive Strands	Nr of referen ces	Nr of files in which strand occurred
Discursive group constructions	(un)deservingness	Age	34	17
		Chance to gain a Status	40	13
		State Security	2	1
	Vulnerability	Vulnerability	228	40
		Humanitarian needs	79	27
		Compassion/solidarity	73	23
		Victimisation	17	6
	Other groups		15	6
Discursive Legitimation	Moral Evaluation	Humanitarian Considerations	68	27
		Principle	6	3
	Authorisation	Institutional Authorisation	20	10
	Rationalisation	Adequacy	67	23
		Responsibility	49	24
		Long term vs short term	23	14
		Dependency	25	12
		Effectivity	7	3
		Capacity	10	4
	Mythopoesis	Selectiveness	13	4
		Exceptionality		56

Institutional Actions	Act	General support	28	7
		Allocation of 1 million euros	18	13
		Commitment to further budgetary support	11	5
		Relocation offer of 100 people	58	27
		Adjustment of the relocation criteria	11	7
	Non-Act	Frontex military Civilian operation	7	3
		Relocate more children or people	35	17
		Ad-hoc relocations	11	7
		No relocation at all	4	3
		Exchange UNHCR quota	12	7
		Evacuate all asylum seekers	15	8

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- ⁱ Source: Rijksoverheid, January 19th 2021, 100 kwetsbare vluchtelingen vanuit Griekenland in Nederland. Translated from: *‘De belangrijkste afweging voor selectie is de kwetsbaarheid van de vluchtelingen.’* (para. 2).
- ⁱⁱ Source: See endnote vi. Translated from: *‘Het welzijn van de meest kwetsbare stond voorop bij deze herplaatsing.’* (para. 3)
- ⁱⁱⁱ Source: Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid, January 19th 2021, Samenwerkingsverband Nederland-Griekenland en de uitwerking van het Nederlandse herplaatsingsaanbod. Translated from: *‘...slachtoffers van marteling, personen met medische aandoeningen, slachtoffers van SGBV (sexual and gender based violence) of personen die het risico lopen daarop, alleenstaande ouder met kinderen, lgbtiq.’* (p.5)
- ^{iv} Source: Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid, February 1st 2021, Antwoorden Kamervragen over het bericht Geen enkel alleenstaand kind uit kamp Moria is in Nederland aangekomen’. Translated from: *‘Het kabinet is het met u eens dat de omstandigheden van opvang op de Griekse eilanden nog altijd zorgelijk zijn.’* (p. 3)
- ^v Source: See endnote i. Translated from: *‘...de ramp in Lesbos is een verschrikkelijke gebeurtenis.’* (02:20:53)
- ^{vi} Source: See endnote i. Translated from: *‘Dat is echt hartverscheurend.’* (02:21:27)
- ^{vii} Source: Rijksoverheid, September 9th 2020, Minister Kaag: 1 miljoen euro beschikbaar voor noodhulp Griekenland. Translated from: *‘We zijn solidair met de vluchtelingen en migranten en met de Grieken. Het is vreselijk dat zovelen in het opvangkamp, waar de omstandigheden al zo dramatisch waren, zijn getroffen door de branden.’* (para. 2)
- ^{viii} Rijksoverheid, September 11th 2020, Letterlijke tekst persconferentie na ministerraad 11 september 2020. Translated from: *‘...het overgrote deel is slachtoffer nu van zo’n brand.’* (para. 58)
- ^{ix} Source: Vaste commissie voor Justitie en Veiligheid, Algemeen overleg, September 10th 2020, Brand vluchtelingenkamp Lesbos (voortzetting). Translated from: *‘...we willen graag kansrijke mensen hebben, kansrijke mensen die in de Nederlandse asielprocedure een hele grote kans hebben om hier een status te krijgen.’* (03:06:36).
- ^x Source: Rijksoverheid, November 26th 2020, Antwoorden schriftelijke vragen 1e termijn begroting JenV 2021. Translated from: *‘In het Nederlandse aanbod wordt rekening gehouden met een inschatting of een (lange termijn) verblijf in Nederland kansrijk is. Dit om te voorkomen dat mensen naar Nederland worden gehaald waarvan de kans groot is dat zij na het doorlopen van de asielprocedure niet in aanmerking komen voor een vergunning en moeten terugkeren naar hun herkomstland. Daar is niemand mee geholpen.’* (p. 33)
- ^{xi} Source: See endnote i. Translated from: *‘...zodat de kansrijke asielzoekers de Europese Unie in kunnen en de kansarme en de irreguliere economische migranten niet.’* (03:24:32).
- ^{xii} Source: Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid, November 26th 2020, Antwoorden schriftelijke vragen 1^e termijn begroting JenV 2021. Translated from: *‘Voor amv is de inschatting gemaakt dat zij onder de 15 jaar het minst weerbaar zijn en daarom meer dan anderen gebaat zijn bij herplaatsing.’* (p.33)
- ^{xiii} Source: Vaste commissie voor Justitie en Veiligheid, Vaste commissie voor Europese Zaken, Notaoverleg, October 6th 2020, JBZ-Raad (asiel- en vreemdelingenbeleid) 8-9 oktober 2020. Translated from: *‘...kansrijke minderjarigen...’* (01:54:35)
- ^{xiv} Source: See endnote i. Translated from: *‘Uiteraard zal er ook een veiligheidscheck moeten plaatsvinden, want dat is ook een heel belangrijk aspect dat we niet mogen overslaan.’* (03:00:20)
- ^{xv} Source: Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid, January 26th 2021, JBZ-Raad van 28-29 januari 2021, Verslag van een schriftelijk overleg. Translated from: *‘...heeft het kabinet de voordracht van*

kwetsbare personen en amv's voor herplaatsing gekoppeld aan de inschatting dat zij in Nederland in aanmerking komen voor een asiilvergunning.'' (p.11)

^{xvi} Source: Rijksoverheid, September 9th 2020, Reactie van staatssecretaris Broekers-Knol op de branden in Moria. Translated from: *''Verschrikkelijk nieuws uit opvangkamp Moria op Lesbos. Daar hebben vannacht meerder branden gewoed, waardoor duizenden mensen moesten vluchten en nu nog meer ontheemd zijn.''*

^{xvii} Source: See Endnote xvi. Translated from: *''Ik heb mijn Griekse collega Koumoutsakos, mede namens mijn collega Kaag die over humanitaire noodhulp gaat, laten weten dat het Nederlandse kabinet paraat staat om Griekenland verder te ondersteunen. Ook via de EU zal Nederland indien gewenst bijdragen.''* (par. 2)

^{xviii} Source: See endnote ix. Translated from: *''Zoals nu al veelvuldig is belicht, was de situatie in Moria natuurlijk zeer ernstig. Er waren al vastgestelde grote humanitaire noden op langere termijn. Mensen leefden in mensonterende omstandigheden. De branden hebben deze afschuwelijke humanitaire situatie eigenlijk alleen verslechterd.''* (03:31:25).

^{xix} Source: See endnote ix. Translated from: *''Nou, wat heb ik gedaan?''* (03:32:13).

^{xx} Source: See endnote i. Translated from: *''Ik ben, gelet op de uitzonderlijke situatie die zich nu heeft voorgedaan, bereid om nog verder te kijken...''* (03:33:41)

^{xxi} Source: See endnote i. Translated from: *''We hebben natuurlijk wel meteen een gebaar willen maken.''* (03:33:58).

^{xxii} Source: Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, Plenair Debat, December 2nd 2020, Begroting Buitenlandse Handel en Ontwikkelingssamenwerking 2021. Translated from: *''1 miljoen is natuurlijk in dit geval een druppel op een gloeiende plaat. Ik heb het ook gedaan uit principiële overwegingen.''* (01:45:43)

^{xxiii} Source: See endnote xiv. Translated from: *''...de situatie – de omvang en de schrijnende aard – is dusdanig dat nog een half miljoen daarnaartoe sturen die situatie niet zal veranderen.''* (01:27:01)

^{xxiv} Source: Rijksoverheid, September 10th 2020, Nederland biedt Grieken overname van 100 minderjarigen en gezinsleden aan. Translated from: *''Het Nederlandse kabinet staat open voor een Grieks verzoek om na de verschrikkelijke gebeurtenissen in het Griekse opvangkamp Moria, een aantal minderjarigen en gezinnen over te nemen.''* (para. 1)

^{xxv} Source: See endnote iii. Translated from: *''Bij uitzondering en in reactie op de uitzonderlijke situatie die is ontstaan na de branden op Lesbos, heeft het kabinet besloten om eenmalig de Griekse autoriteiten aan te bieden een vijftigtal amv van veertien jaar en jonger en een vijftigtal personen in gezinsverband met minderjarigen op te vangen in Nederland.''* (p. 42).

^{xxvi} Source: Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid, October 1st 2020, Antwoorden Kamervragen over het bericht Branden in Grieks opvangkamp Moria migranten gevlucht. Translated from: *''...het kabinet in reactie op deze uitzonderlijke en tragische situatie besloten de Griekse overheid aan te bieden...''* (p.3).

^{xxvii} Source: See endnote i. Translated from: *''Dat is deze acute noodsituatie, die niemand onberoerd kan laten en die het kabinet heeft doen besluiten dat dit zó'n bijzondere situatie is, met zó'n acute nood en toch wel zó verschrikkelijk, dat het kabinetsbeleid weliswaar blijft staan, maar dat het ook mogelijk moet zijn om daar een uitzondering op te maken. Wij maken deze keer een uitzondering.''* (02:36:44).

^{xxviii} Source: Rijksoverheid, September 10th 2020, Nederland Biedt Grieken overname van 100 minderjarigen en gezinsleden aan. Translated from: *''Er is ruimte voor de opvang van deze groep mensen, omdat er minder mensen via herplaatsing naar Nederland komen door de gevolgen van het coronavirus.''*

^{xxix} Source: See footnote ix. Translated from: *''Wij bieden de Grieken aan [...] om 50 minderjarigen over te nemen en we bieden de Grieken ook aan om 50 personen met gezinnen met minderjarige kinderen over te nemen. We zeggen ook: we willen kansrijke mensen.''*

^{xxx} Source: Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid, September 10th 2020, Kamerbrief Situatie brand Vluchtelingskamp Lesbos. Translated from: *“Daarbij zal het moeten gaan om alleenstaande minderjarigen jonger dan 14 jaar.”*

^{xxx}_{xi} Source: Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid, February 1st 2021, Antwoorden Kamervragen over het bericht Vluchtelingen die in Nederland aankwamen, waren al statushouders in Griekenland. Translated from: *“... [...] heeft het kabinet zich maximaal ingespannen om invulling te geven aan het herplaatsingsaanbod naar aanleiding van de humanitaire noodsituatie als gevolg van de branden in Moria. Het kabinet is niet voornemens om een additioneel herplaatsingsaanbod te doen.”* (p. 2)

^{xxx}_{xii} Source: Vaste commissie voor Justitie en Veiligheid, Algemeen overleg, September 24th 2020, Vreemdelingen- en asielbeleid. Translated from: *“Het kabinet heeft een besluit genomen. Dat doen wij op een gebalanceerde manier.”* (03:11:03)

^{xxx}_{xiii} Source: See endnote i. Translated from: *“Mevrouw Van Kooten heeft gevraagd of ik alsnog gehoor geef aan de oproep voor de 500. Ik heb vanavond al een paar keer gezegd dat het kabinet op basis van die hele acute, afschuwelijke situatie besloten heeft om de stap te nemen die we genomen hebben: het aanbod aan de Grieken om 50 minderjarigen en 50 personen in gezinsverband met minderjarige kinderen op te nemen in Nederland. Dat is een uitzonderlijke stap, een afwijking van het kabinetsbeleid. De vraag of ik alsnog gehoor geef aan de oproep voor de 500 is daarmee beantwoord.”* (02:25:10)

^{xxx}_{xiv} Source: See endnote ix. Translated from: *“Als gevolg van COVID-19 is er ruimte ontstaan in het hervestigingsquotum en die wordt nu gebruikt.”* (02:42:15)

^{xxx}_{xv} Source: See endnote ix. Translated from: *“Die capaciteit gebruiken we om te zorgen dat we deze mensen, die 100 waarover wij nu een aanbod doen aan e Grieken, kunnen opvangen.”* (02:48:13)

^{xxx}_{xvi} Source: See endnote i. Translated from: *“De belangrijkste afweging voor selectie is de kwetsbaarheid van de vluchtelingen.”* (par. 2)

^{xxx}_{xvii} Source: See endnote i. Translated from: *“Het welzijn van de meest kwetsbaren stond voorop bij deze herplaatsing.”* (par. 3)

^{xxx}_{xviii} Source: See endnote xv. Translated from: *“Het kabinet is niet voornemens een aanvullende bijdrage te doen op het gebied van herplaatsing.”* (p. 12)