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**Master's Thesis**

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**Fortress Europe?**  
**Evaluation of Ideas for the Future of the EU**

*Master's Thesis*

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**Year of the defense:** 2019

## **Declaration**

1. I hereby declare that I have compiled this thesis using the listed literature and resources only.
2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.
3. I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes.

In Prague on 31 July 2019

Jan Putensen

## **Bibliographic note**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis explores the use of the symbolic term Fortress Europe by political parties and movements in Austria, Germany, and Italy who are in favor of establishing a Fortress Europe and their ideas for what a Fortress Europe should look like. While the use of the term by left-wing critics of European immigration policies has been well covered in the literature, no author has yet analyzed the use of the term by political parties and movements that have started to demand a Fortress Europe since 2015. Based on an analysis of the appearance of the term Fortress Europe in European media coverage conducted via the Factiva database, three countries with a relatively high use of the term in their media were selected for in-depth case studies. In particular, the ideas of the following three extreme right groups were analyzed and compared: the Identitarian Movement Austria (IBÖ), the National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD), and Fortezza Europa (literal translation from Italian: Fortress Europe). It was found that their visions of a Fortress Europe are very similar and aim to prevent any type of foreign immigration on a large scale in order to preserve the ethnic and cultural identities of European nations. The extreme right vision of Fortress Europe is still far away from the status quo of current EU immigration and border protection policies, which on the other hand are already labeled by left-wing critics as being Fortress Europe. This discrepancy is potentially dangerous and calls for a more sensitive use of the term because it could mislead parts of the electorate into sympathizing with the symbolic term Fortress Europe without realizing the extreme right vision that is hidden behind it.

## **Keywords**

European Union, immigration, border-hardening, Fortress Europe, Austria, Germany, Italy

**Length of the thesis:** 124,796 characters with spaces

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# Master Thesis Proposal



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Date: 25.05.2018

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## Proposed Topic:

**Fortress Europe – A Realistic Vision for the Future of the EU?**

**Registered in SIS: Yes**

**Date of registration: 25.05.2018**

## Topic characteristics / Research Question(s):

My thesis will focus on the following general research question: Are there coherent plans or concepts of a “Fortress Europe” that are compatible with the values of the European Union? Since the height of the refugee crisis in 2015 the topic of migration control and border protection has become one of the most debated topics in European politics. Hardened borders and anti-migration measures are often associated with a “Fortress Europe”. I want to analyze how that term is defined or could be defined. Next, I want to analyze to what extent official demands and ideas from EU member states governments for the protection of EU external borders and control of migration are aiming for establishing a “Fortress Europe”. Finally, I want to know if these demands are compatible with the values of the European Union as stated in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) in order to determine if they could be realistically implemented from an ethical point of view.

## Working hypotheses:

1. The term “Fortress Europe” is used by various actors without being clearly defined.
2. A definition of the term “Fortress Europe” can be derived from statements of relevant political actors.
3. Governments of EU member states that were newly elected after 2015 have pushed for hardening of EU external borders.
4. Preventing irregular immigration is the key reason for demands for hardening of EU external borders.
5. Official current demands by EU member states’ governments for the protection of the external borders of the EU are aiming for establishing a “Fortress Europe”.
6. Realizing a “Fortress Europe” is not compatible with EU values.

## **Methodology:**

In order to answer the research question and to assess the hypotheses, I will start with a review of literature / theory in border studies to identify reasons for border hardening and different types of hardened borders / border regimes. Next, I will analyze the values of the European Union as stated in Article 2 in the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and their relation to ethics of migration. Then, I want to analyze official demands and ideas from governments of EU member states about increased protection of EU external borders and anti-migration measures. In this part, the scope will be limited to official statements of governments that were newly elected since the height of the refugee / migration crisis in 2015 and to demands / measures to prevent irregular immigration from non-OECD countries. Finally, I will assess which types of border regime are implied by these demands and compare their ethical implications to the official values of the EU in order to determine if the implementation of these border regimes is compatible with EU values and, therefore, realistic or not.

## **Outline:**

1. Introduction
2. Theory of Border Studies
  - a. Reasons for Border Hardening
  - b. Types of Hardened Borders
3. EU Values and Migration
  - a. Ethics of Migration
  - b. EU Values based on Article 2 TEU
4. Fortress Europe
  - a. Historical Meaning
  - b. Current use of the term / concept
5. Current Situation of EU External Borders
6. Analysis of Governmental Demands Regarding EU Borders
7. Discussion of Demands and EU Values
  - a. Implications of Demands for Hardened EU Borders
  - b. Compatibility with EU Values
8. Conclusion
9. References / Bibliography

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## Abbreviations

AfD	=	Alternative für Deutschland (English: Alternative for Germany)
CEAS	=	Common European Asylum System
EC	=	European Community
EES	=	Entry/Exit System
EU	=	European Union
EUROSUR	=	European Border Surveillance System
FPÖ	=	Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (English: Freedom Party of Austria)
Frontex	=	European Border and Coast Guard Agency
IBD	=	Identitäre Bewegung Deutschland (English: Identitarian Movement Germany)
IBM	=	Integrated Border Management
IBÖ	=	Identitäre Bewegung Österreich (English: Identitarian Movement Austria)
IOM	=	International Organization for Migration
NPD	=	Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (English: National Democratic Party of Germany)
OLS	=	Ordinary Least Squares
SAR	=	Search and Rescue
SBC	=	Schengen Borders Code
SEA	=	Single European Act
TFEU	=	Treaty on Functioning of the European Union

## Introduction

The chaotic and disorderly mass movement of more than one million immigrants towards and across Europe in 2015, which was labelled as the European immigration or refugee crisis, has profoundly shaped European debates about immigration.<sup>1</sup> Especially, the issue of how to handle irregular immigration has been fiercely discussed and received a top priority on the political agenda of the European Union (EU).<sup>2</sup> Irregular immigration is immigration “outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries”<sup>3</sup> by “using irregular or illegal means without valid documents.”<sup>4</sup> Compared to the peak values of 2015, irregular immigration has already strongly decreased. Detected illegal border-crossings are down to 150,114 in 2018, “92% below the peak of the migratory crisis in 2015.”<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, the general immigration pressure to Europe is still strong and demographic trends as well as political instability in the EU’s neighborhood are likely to keep it on a very high level for decades to come.<sup>6</sup> Dealing with this immigration pressure will remain an important priority for the EU.

In the eyes of many citizens, “the temporary loss of control at external borders” in 2015 strongly undermined “the legitimacy of the EU.”<sup>7</sup> Thus, it has contributed to the rise of populist political parties and nationalist movements who champion an anti-immigration approach.<sup>8</sup> These actors influence the debate on immigration with demands for stricter control of irregular immigration and better protection of borders. Such policy demands are often associated with the symbolic term “Fortress Europe.”<sup>9</sup> That term used to be a symbol which was only applied

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<sup>1</sup> Geddes and Scholten 2016, pp.1-2.

<sup>2</sup> Duta et al. 2018, p.7.

<sup>3</sup> IOM 2011.

<sup>4</sup> European Commission 2019a.

<sup>5</sup> Frontex 2019, p.6. See also chapter 3.2.1 on irregular immigration to the EU.

<sup>6</sup> Frontex 2019, p.38; Smith 2018, p.18-21.

<sup>7</sup> Bossong and Etzold 2018, p.1.

<sup>8</sup> Eatwell and Goodwin 2018.

<sup>9</sup> Alternatively, the term could be written in English as “Fortress of Europe.” However, this notation is very uncommon compared to “Fortress Europe” as search results from various databases show. Therefore, throughout this thesis only the notation “Fortress Europe” is used and all analyses focus on that term. Search results for the notations “Fortress Europe” vs. “Fortress of Europe:” EBSCOhost (272 vs. 14), JSTOR (971 vs. 20), Web of Science (121 vs. 1) [checked 3 June 2019].

in a dismissive sense by pro-immigration activists, left-wing politicians, and journalists in media coverage without much definition as to what exactly constitutes a Fortress Europe.<sup>10</sup> However, since the immigration crisis the term seems to have acquired another connotation when it was adopted by some right-wing political movements with an anti-immigration position who use it in a favorable sense to label their political demands.<sup>11</sup> Regarding the use of the term Fortress Europe in public and political discourse on immigration, this has created the paradoxical situation that while some actors complain that Europe is a fortress, others at the same time demand that Europe should become a fortress, by which they imply that it is not yet a fortress in their view. The basic law of noncontradiction states that it is not possible that one thing (here a Fortress Europe) exists and does not exist at the same time.<sup>12</sup> Consequently, apart from the metaphorical level, where Fortress Europe represents some sort of access denial for both sides, on a specific policy level the term Fortress Europe must have a different meaning for opponents and supporters of a Fortress Europe. However, the difference is not clear in the discourse on borders and immigration. As Harari notes, the “discussion about immigration often degenerates into a shouting match in which neither side hears the other” nor understands what the others really mean beyond the buzzwords and slogans.<sup>13</sup> Yet, to engage in serious political debates requires an understanding of what the positions of the different sides really are. Currently, there seems to be a definition deficit regarding the term Fortress Europe and a lack of understanding what constitutes a Fortress Europe for the supporters of such an idea. This deficit of definition and understanding fuels superficial shouting matches and impedes constructive debates about EU immigration and border protection policies because opponents and supporters use the same symbolic term but mean different things.

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<sup>10</sup> Zandonella 2009.

<sup>11</sup> Brown 2017, p.8. E.g., various extreme-right movements from different EU countries signed a common declaration against immigration in 2016 under the motto of Fortress Europe (Vorländer et al. 2018, p.67).

<sup>12</sup> Horn 2018.

<sup>13</sup> Harari 2018, p.140.

The goal of this thesis is to provide a better understanding of the term Fortress Europe, of its use and of what a Fortress Europe might look like regarding EU external border and immigration policies based on the ideas of political parties and movements who are in favor of establishing a Fortress Europe. By aiming to clarify the meaning of the term Fortress Europe, this thesis hopefully contributes to facilitating the discussion about EU external borders and immigration policies. The general research question for this thesis is the following: What kind of external border regime and immigration policies do political parties and movements in the EU want who are in favor of establishing a Fortress Europe?

The nature of the research question and the fact that the phenomenon under consideration is quite new and unexplored suggest that an exploratory qualitative research design is suitable for this thesis. A qualitative approach offers a flexible structure and the choice from a wide range of methods.<sup>14</sup> It also enables the breakdown of the general research question into further sub-questions.<sup>15</sup> Thus, the structure of the thesis is guided by the following sub-questions:

- Sub-question 1:       What is the origin of the term Fortress Europe and in what contexts has the term been used?
- Sub-question 2:       How often has the term Fortress Europe been used in the media in the EU since the immigration crisis of 2015 compared to before the crisis?
- Sub-question 3:       In which EU countries has the term been used most since 2015?
- Sub-question 4:       Do political parties and movements from different EU countries who are in favor of a Fortress Europe have the same ideas about what a Fortress Europe should look like?
- Sub-question 5:       Are some aspects of a demanded Fortress Europe already in existence?

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<sup>14</sup> Creswell 2009, p.18.

<sup>15</sup> Creswell 2009, p.129-142.

The thesis is divided into six major parts. The first part contains a theoretical background for this thesis. It presents a theoretical perspective on the importance of symbols in political discourses and the problems of their ambiguity. In addition, the theory of teichopolitics is introduced because it forms a background for understanding developments related to border hardening. The second part explains the procedure and methodology that is used throughout this thesis. It includes a media analysis to assess the quantity of media articles using the term Fortress Europe in different EU countries and a methodology for conducting case studies. Part three is a literature review which explores the ways and contexts in which the term Fortress Europe has been used to answer sub-question 1. In addition, the literature review presents information on immigration to the EU and current EU external border protection. This is important for understanding the topic under consideration. It will also be used to select appropriate countries for the case studies and to answer sub-question 5 in the end. Part four presents the findings of the analysis of the media coverage in various EU countries which should provide answers for sub-questions 2 and 3. These results will also form a basis for selecting suitable countries for the case studies in part five. In the case studies, selected political parties or movements, that are in favor of establishing a Fortress Europe, from selected EU countries will be analyzed to explore what they mean exactly when they demand a Fortress Europe. In the last part, the results from these case studies will be compared and evaluated to assess sub-questions 4. Moreover, the demands for a Fortress Europe will be compared to actual EU border protection and immigration control measures to answer sub-question 5.



# 1 Theoretical Background

## 1.1 Symbols in Political Discourses

The use of symbols “is a fundamental part of all discourse” and especially important in political discourses.<sup>16</sup> In the literature, there is no uniform definition of what exactly a discourse is.<sup>17</sup> However, discourses in general can be understood as collections of interrelated speech and language acts which are normally available in written form and constitute “larger meaning structures”<sup>18</sup> on certain topics.<sup>19</sup> For a most basic definition, a discourse is simply a “spoken or written discussion” on “a particular...subject.”<sup>20</sup> Thus, a political discourse can be seen as the sum of all statements and texts produced by political actors (e.g., politicians, parties, political movements etc.) on a certain, politically relevant topic (such as border protection or immigration control). In this thesis, the term discourse will be used in that simple sense.

Political actors use symbols in political discourses for many different purposes. Stone defines a symbol as being “anything that stands for something else.”<sup>21</sup> The range of possible symbols is very diverse: an object, an image, a person, a place, a single word, or a symbolic term (e.g., Fortress Europe) can all serve as a symbol. They can stand for an organization, a certain quality, an abstract idea, or a set of ideas. The meaning of a symbol strongly “depends on how people interpret it, use it, or respond to it.”<sup>22</sup> Usually, symbols tell a certain story that is attached to them or involve metaphors. Metaphors are “implied comparisons” which suggest a likeness between two objects or ideas.<sup>23</sup>

An important function of symbols in political discourses is to attract attention to certain topics or ideas. Moreover, “They enable leaders to assemble broad bases of support,” form

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<sup>16</sup> Stone 2012, p.159.

<sup>17</sup> Lindekilde 2014, p.197.

<sup>18</sup> Lindekilde 2014, p.198.

<sup>19</sup> Vollmer 2014, pp.31-32.

<sup>20</sup> Cambridge University Press 2019a.

<sup>21</sup> Stone 2012, p.157.

<sup>22</sup> Stone 2012, p.157; Doerr and Milman 2014, pp.419-425.

<sup>23</sup> Stone 2012, p.159.

coalitions, and “unite people around ideals” or broad goals.<sup>24</sup> In the form of metaphors, symbols can frame how political issues are understood “by eliminating alternative points of view.”<sup>25</sup> Since they “usually imply a larger narrative story and a prescription for action...they are also a form of advocating particular solutions.”<sup>26</sup> In the form of symbolic terms or words, symbols can also function as slogans or buzzwords. Slogans are phrases which “describe the character of...a political idea” and can be easily remembered.<sup>27</sup> Buzzwords are “expressions from a particular subject area” with a high recognition factor due to their frequent use. They are used to draw attention to a certain topic or idea and often appear in media communication.<sup>28</sup> Due to their advantages in creating attention and support, symbols are also useful tools for influencing the setting of an agenda.<sup>29</sup> According to Birkland, “An agenda is a collection of problems... solutions, and other elements of public problems that come to the attention” of politicians and the public.<sup>30</sup> If an issue has not yet advanced to the formal political agenda, politicians will not address it.

However, the use of symbols in politics can also be very problematic. In general, there is the inherent danger of oversimplification. Symbols enable the simplification of complex issues and, thereby, facilitate the illusion of easy solutions. In addition, the emotional appeal of symbols “can make it harder for audiences to recognize and question the underlying factual assumptions” of a position.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, the ambiguity of symbols can be a problematic factor. Ambiguity is an important characteristic of symbols because they are often open to different interpretations and can have different meanings depending on the context.<sup>32</sup> On the one hand, ambiguity contributes to some functions of symbols. For example, ambiguity can facilitate the

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<sup>24</sup> Stone 2012, p.181; Doerr and Milman 2014, p.419.

<sup>25</sup> Charteris-Black 2011, p.32.

<sup>26</sup> Stone 2012, p.171.

<sup>27</sup> Cambridge University Press 2019b.

<sup>28</sup> Cambridge University Press 2019c.

<sup>29</sup> Birkland 2007, p.72.

<sup>30</sup> Birkland 2007, p.63.

<sup>31</sup> Stone 2012, p.177.

<sup>32</sup> Stone 2012, pp.178-180; Doerr and Milman 2014, p.422.

creation of broad alliances “by blurring disagreements over more specific meanings” or offering different interpretations of the same symbol to different groups of an alliance.<sup>33</sup> Yet, on the other hand, ambiguity can be deliberately exploited to conceal the true intentions of a political actor. Moreover, if the same symbol is used by various actors who interpret it differently, the ambiguity of the commonly used symbol makes it more likely that these actors talk at cross-purposes without really understanding each other’s positions.

In conclusion, while symbols do serve important functions in political discourses, they can also facilitate misunderstandings or be abused by politicians to mislead voters and conceal their real policy intentions. Thus, it is important to clarify the meaning and interpretations of important symbols or symbolic terms in political discourses to prevent misunderstandings or deception and to enable constructive debates.

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<sup>33</sup> Stone 2012, p.181.

## 1.2 Theory of Teichopolitics

Borders are an important part of what constitutes a state because they demarcate the territory over which a state exercises jurisdiction.<sup>34</sup> Contrary to the common assumption that globalization would lead to a world of free flowing goods and people without borders, the importance of borders is increasing rather than decreasing. This is characterized by an increase of barrier construction on state borders.<sup>35</sup> Carter and Poast identified 62 constructions of border barriers between 1800 and 2014, of which 50% were built after the Cold War.<sup>36</sup> Jones states that in 1990 just 15 states had erected border barriers while by 2016 almost 70 possessed barriers at their borders.<sup>37</sup> This confirms the trend that “unilateral and aggressive border management strategies are on the rise in the ‘age of globalization.’”<sup>38</sup> To explain the phenomenon of increased barrier building, Ballif and Rosière introduced the term teichopolitics which was derived from the Greek term for city wall (τειχος (teichos)).<sup>39</sup> “Teichopolitics is...the politics of building barriers on borders for various security purposes.”<sup>40</sup>

There are two main reasons that lead states to construct border barriers: classic military or security concerns and an economic rationale.<sup>41</sup> In the first case, border barriers are directed against a threat by a foreign army or the infiltration by hostile fighters. Yet, since interstate wars have become rare, the second reason has become more important to explain the increase in border barrier construction.<sup>42</sup> According to Carter and Poast, “Walls are nearly always built because at least one of the states perceives its border as unstable.” This perception of border instability is caused by unwanted flows of goods or people across the border. Large inequalities between the economic prosperity of two countries induce these flows by creating “incentives

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<sup>34</sup> Carter and Poast 2017, p.240.

<sup>35</sup> Rosière and Jones 2012, pp.217-218.

<sup>36</sup> Carter and Poast 2017, p.240 and p.263.

<sup>37</sup> Jones 2016, p.88.

<sup>38</sup> Carter and Poast 2017, p.263.

<sup>39</sup> Ballif and Rosière 2009, p.194.

<sup>40</sup> Rosière and Jones 2012, p.219.

<sup>41</sup> Carter and Poast 2017, p.261; Jones 2016, p.92.

<sup>42</sup> Rosière and Jones 2012, p.221; Carter and Poast 2017, pp.261-263.

for illegal immigration” and smuggling. The destination country of these unwanted flows is then likely to respond by erecting border barriers.<sup>43</sup> However, the hardening of borders through *teichopolitics* does not seek to prevent all cross-border flows but rather “to direct them to appropriate check-points.”<sup>44</sup> There, states have a better chance of “allowing ‘good’ movements while preventing ‘bad’ movements.”<sup>45</sup> On top of the hierarchy of unwanted movements are usually irregular immigrants and refugees. Rosière and Jones claim that “most of the new border barriers are erected to fight against illegal migrations” and “are built on borders that mark major wealth discontinuities.”<sup>46</sup> This is supported by Carter and Poast who found cross-border economic inequalities to be “the most robust predictor of border walls.”<sup>47</sup> Paz argues that the creation of border barriers is “a predictable strategic response by states that seek to regain exclusion capabilities.”<sup>48</sup> Today, much irregular immigration happens in the context of asylum laws because under the existing human rights regime states are obliged to grant protection to any foreign citizen present on its territory who applies for asylum, at least until the claim has been evaluated. In practice, many former asylum seekers stay in their host country even after their asylum claim has been rejected because enforcing remigration has proven very difficult for states. Therefore, the best way to avoid having to tolerate unwanted foreigners on one’s territory is “to prevent would-be immigrants and asylum seekers from getting close enough to trigger territory-based human rights protections” in the first place by erecting border barriers.<sup>49</sup>

Rosière and Jones propose a distinction between four different types of border barriers: frontlines, fences, walls, and closed maritime straights. All of them are nowadays usually accompanied by sophisticated surveillance and information technology under the label of “smart borders” to monitor any movement in the border region and manage cross-border flows

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<sup>43</sup> Carter and Poast 2017, pp.240-244.

<sup>44</sup> Rosière and Jones 2012, p.218.

<sup>45</sup> Jones 2016, p.166.

<sup>46</sup> Rosière and Jones 2012, p.221 and p.230.

<sup>47</sup> Carter and Poast 2017, p.263.

<sup>48</sup> Paz 2016, p.7.

<sup>49</sup> Paz 2016, pp.7-10.

of goods and people.<sup>50</sup> Frontlines separate “two zones of military installations” but have “become increasingly rare” with the decline of interstate wars. Instead, fences and walls now constitute most land border barriers. They are similar to each other but have some differences. Fences “do not completely block the vision of the other side,” appear “more temporary as they can be erected quicker...and are less expensive.” Walls on the other hand “seem more finalised, eliminate the line of sight across the border...and are more expensive.” However, when fences are built in multiple layers and combined with "smart border" technology, they become "comparable to a wall."<sup>51</sup> Lastly, there are closed maritime straits which aim to prevent the arrival of unauthorized boats at the coast of a state, usually in the context of irregular immigration. Closed maritime straits feature the use of interconnected surveillance and alarm systems “to detect the arrival of unauthorised boats and allow police vessels to be deployed to intercept them before they make landfall.”<sup>52</sup> Further, there is a trend of border militarization despite the absence of military conflict by an increased use of military technology, strategies, and even personnel in addition to barriers to prevent unwanted cross-border flows.<sup>53</sup>

To sum up, theory on teichopolitics suggests that the recent trend to hardened borders is largely driven by an economic logic and concerns about irregular immigration. Economic inequalities between states compel people to migrate. States that worry about these unwanted flows of immigrants are more likely to build border barriers. Jones notes that "Constructing barriers...is now seen as a key function of the state" to prevent irregular border crossings.<sup>54</sup> However, it remains controversial whether teichopolitics actually helps to reduce and better manage irregular immigration or just serves as a theater for domestic audiences while diverting immigration flows to more clandestine routes as Brown claims.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Rosière and Jones 2012, p.226; Jones 2016, pp.36-37.

<sup>51</sup> Rosière and Jones 2012, pp.222-225.

<sup>52</sup> Rosière and Jones 2012, p.227.

<sup>53</sup> Jones 2016, p.39.

<sup>54</sup> Jones 2016, p.48.

<sup>55</sup> Brown 2017, pp.9-13.

## **2 Procedure and Methodology**

The research sub-questions listed in the introduction structure the content of this thesis. Sub-question 1 on the origin and use of the term Fortress Europe will be answered by means of an extensive literature review of books and articles containing the term Fortress Europe. Sub-questions 2 and 3 will be addressed by performing a media analysis. The methodology and procedure for that analysis will be explained in the following chapter 2.1. Answering sub-question 4 as thoroughly as possible would require an analysis of the demands and ideas of all political parties and movements who are in favor of a Fortress Europe from all EU countries. Unfortunately, that is beyond the limited scope of this thesis. Therefore, the question can only be dealt with based on a few selected cases. The procedure of that multiple case study will be explained in the following chapter 2.2. Since sub-question 5 relies on the results of the case study, the methodology for answering those questions will also be explained in chapter 2.2.

### **2.1 Media Analysis**

Media coverage plays an important role for public and political debates. It can be seen as a data source from which inferences about public and political discourses in a country can be drawn.<sup>56</sup> The rationale behind sub-questions 2 and 3 about how often the term Fortress Europe has been used in European media coverage is to obtain some hints on the importance of this symbolic term in political discourse in EU countries. To answer both questions some type of quantitative analysis is required.

#### **2.1.1 Methodology and Database Introduction**

For every EU member country, a descriptive analysis of media coverage should be done to assess the quantity of how often the term Fortress Europe appears in the national media. Counted will be the number of articles using the term at least once, not the total appearance of

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<sup>56</sup> McCombs and Shaw 1972, p.176; Lawlor and Tolley 2017, pp.968-989.

the term because articles in which the term appears very often could distort the overall count. Counting just the number of articles using the term at least once is seen to give a better reflection of how widely the term is used in media coverage in general. This data can be compared in a historical trend to explore if the quantitative use of the term changed in the wake of the immigration crisis. It also allows a comparison among countries to determine where the term has been used most.

The quantitative analysis proposed here is not to be confused with a basic quantitative content analysis, which is characterized by the systematic categorization of content according to prior specified rules and the analysis of relationships among the categorized content by statistical procedures.<sup>57</sup> Such an analysis and categorization of the content of each article that uses the term Fortress Europe across all EU countries in their respective languages is not feasible within the limited scope of this explorative thesis.<sup>58</sup> Yet, for the purpose of determining the general quantity of articles using the term, such detailed content analysis is not even necessary. However, the procedure used in this thesis can be compared to the first step of a content analysis, which consists of identifying relevant articles for future analysis based on certain qualities (here the appearance of the term Fortress Europe in the article).<sup>59</sup> Further, the comparison of the number of articles per year using the term can be considered a descriptive trend study.<sup>60</sup>

To conduct the research of this thesis, the Factiva database will be used, which is provided by Dow Jones & Company, a major publishing company and one of the world's leading providers of business and financial information. Factiva is a comprehensive database offering access to international news and business information from around the world. The sources covered

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<sup>57</sup> Riffe et al. 2014, p.19; Drisko and Maschi 2016, pp.21-22.

<sup>58</sup> For counting the articles that use the term Fortress Europe the Factiva database is used. The only possibility in that database to conduct some type of content analysis would be using additional search terms to roughly categorize the content of the articles. However, given that the search is conducted across various languages that approach poses major difficulties (see chapter 2.1.2). For systematic quantitative content analysis all articles found in Factiva would have to be exported separately for each country/language to some software for natural language processing and statistical analysis (e.g., Natural Language Toolkit, MAXQDA or WordStat).

<sup>59</sup> Krippendorff 2004, pp.83-87. (The number of counted articles using the term Fortress Europe in each country could serve as a sample base for detailed quantitative content analysis in future research.)

<sup>60</sup> Krippendorff 2004, p.49.



by Factiva comprise free and premium content from major national and regional newspapers, newswires, journals, magazines, industry publications, company reports, and websites. In total 35,000 sources from 200 countries in 26 languages are covered.<sup>61</sup> Factiva is perfectly suited for the task at hand because it offers sophisticated search functions that enable precise research across the wide range of sources in the database. Therefore, the database is often used by researchers to find article samples for content analysis projects.<sup>62</sup>

Unfortunately, Factiva does not support all official EU languages despite being the best database available for the task at hand. Sources in Croatian, Estonian, Greek, Latvian, Lithuanian, Romanian, and Slovenian are not available. Therefore, eight EU countries (Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, and Slovenia) have to be excluded from the research and only the remaining 20 countries will be analyzed. However, for determining a general trend in the use of the term Fortress Europe in European media, the exclusion of these countries can be accepted as they make up less than 9% of the overall EU population.<sup>63</sup> Also for the selection of countries for the case studies, which should be based on the results of the media analysis, the exclusion of these countries is not very problematic. Most of the eight countries are relatively small and / or were not strongly affected directly by the immigration crisis, so they were unlikely to be selected for the case studies in this thesis anyway (see chapter 2.2 for selection criteria). Only the exclusion of Greece is regrettable because it would have been an interesting case given its important role as transit country on the Eastern Mediterranean route.

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<sup>61</sup> Dow Jones 2012.

<sup>62</sup> Riffe et al. 2014, p.163.

<sup>63</sup> Calculated based on population statistics by Eurostat 2018.

## 2.1.2 Search Configuration and Result Processing

To search in how many articles the term Fortress Europe appeared in each country, the source filter is limited to search only sources from the specific country under analysis. For each country, the search term “Fortress Europe” is entered in the search mask in English and in a translation to the official languages of the country (e.g., for Austria “festung europa” and “fortress europa” are entered).<sup>64</sup> The English term is added because sometimes the term is not translated in foreign articles and because there are also English speaking media in countries where English is not the official language. The time frame for the search is set to the last 20 years (1 January 1999 to 31 December 2018) because the term Fortress Europe started to be used in the context of immigration since the 1990s and there are sources covered by Factiva since 1999 for most countries. Based on this timeframe it is possible to analyze if the immigration crisis marks a change in the quantitative use of the term in a historic trend. Factiva is set to search full articles and to exclude duplicate articles. All results will be aggregated on a yearly basis.<sup>65</sup>

A minor limitation is that articles cannot be filtered for the context in which the term Fortress Europe is used. Neither manual filtering (because of the large number of articles) nor use of additional search terms is possible.<sup>66</sup> All articles in which the term appears will be counted regardless of context. Yet, this is not problematic because the use of the term Fortress Europe

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<sup>64</sup> All translations and search terms for the term “fortress europa” in Romance languages (Catalan, French, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish), in Germanic languages (Danish, Dutch, German, Swedish) and in Maltese were generated by the author himself, partially with the help of translation software. For Irish, no translation could be obtained. Yet, since English is the dominant language in Irish media anyway, Irish can be omitted from the search. For all other languages (Bulgarian, Czech, Finnish, Hungarian, Polish, Slovak) the translations and search terms were obtained by consulting native speakers of those languages. For languages in which the ending of words changes in different grammatical cases, native speakers provided several search terms, e.g., in Czech “pevnost evropa” and “pevnosti evropa” were provided. (Usually, the \*-function is used to search for words with changing endings automatically, e.g., searching for europ\* gives results including the words Europe and European. Unfortunately, this function cannot be combined with the “...” quote function that is used to search for a specific combination of words or a term composed by more than one word, e.g. “Fortress Europe.” Thus, in some languages several search terms are necessary to capture all relevant results.)

<sup>65</sup> See annex for the full search configuration of Factiva based on an exemplary search.

<sup>66</sup> The use of additional search terms (e.g., refugees) is not suitable for two reasons: First, it would be difficult to decide which and how many additional search terms are necessary. Second, the correct translation of additional search terms, especially into languages with changing grammatical word endings, poses major problems. Thus, adding additional search terms would most likely lead to missing relevant articles.

in contexts other than immigration is limited to other time spans than the one selected for the database search (as the literature review shows in chapter 3.1). Therefore, it can be assumed that the majority of the articles found use the term in the context of immigration.<sup>67</sup> Furthermore, sub-questions 2 and 3 actually do not demand a distinction of the contexts in which the term Fortress Europe is used but deal with the overall use of the term in the media in the EU.

The results for each country will be downloaded as a csv-file via the export function offered by Factiva for further analysis. First, the results for all analyzed countries will be aggregated to determine whether the use of the term Fortress Europe in EU media changed in general in a historical trend. That should provide an answer for sub-question 2.

Second, in order to answer sub-question 3 and to have a basis for selecting appropriate countries for the case studies, a ranking will be created regarding the use of the term in the media of each country since 2015. Since EU countries differ significantly in size, a ranking by the total number of results is not appropriate because that would not adequately reflect the relative importance of the term Fortress Europe in each country. Therefore, the results will be adjusted by the size of the countries. As a measure for the country size the population size will be used.<sup>68</sup> Such an adjusted ranking should enable a better comparison to show in which country the term is used relatively more often.

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<sup>67</sup> A manual check of three samples shows the following distribution of contexts in which the term is used:

- Austria 2017: in all 27 results the term Fortress Europe was used in the context of immigration.
- Ireland 2016: in 13 out of 15 articles the term was used in context of immigration (the other two used it in an economic context).
- Spain 2013: out of 57 results, in 53 the term Fortress Europe was used in the context of immigration and refugees.

<sup>68</sup> An alternative way to rank the countries would be by adjusting for the size of the media market. That method would take into consideration that some countries have a more developed/bigger market of newspapers and news magazines in relation to its population than other countries. Results could be portrayed as the percentage of articles or texts that include the search term as percentage of all articles and texts published in a certain country. This approach would require data about the total number of all articles published in all sources that are listed in the Factiva database for each country. However, this data could not be obtained in Factiva.

In addition, for each country a linear OLS-regression analysis will be performed. The slope coefficient of the regression line will serve as a trend indicator of the development of the quantity of media articles using the term Fortress Europe in the respective country.<sup>69</sup>

It must be pointed out that the results of the media analysis can only hint at the relative importance of the term Fortress Europe in public and political discourse compared to other countries or to different years. For example, if the term Fortress Europe is used more often in country A than in country B, it is probable that the term is more important in the political discourse of country A than in country B; thus, country A might be better suited for an in-depth case study about the use of the term Fortress Europe. However, the results do not enable conclusions about the real importance of the term in political discourse. For that, additional case studies will be conducted for selected countries.

## 2.2 Conducting the Multiple Case Study

Answering sub-question 4 about the ideas of political parties and movements, who favor the establishment of a Fortress Europe, from different EU countries requires a qualitative case study approach. According to Creswell, "Qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem."<sup>70</sup> It is used when a phenomenon is relatively new or has not yet been studied much because it offers a very flexible approach. Common characteristics of qualitative research are the important role of the researcher in collecting data and a focus on the perspective of the studied objects. Data is often obtained by examining different text-based sources. Usually, an interpretation of the sources is required.<sup>71</sup> For this thesis, a qualitative approach is suitable for exploring the meaning

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<sup>69</sup> A linear regression analysis calculates a straight line of the type  $y = mx + b$  that best fits the given data. The coefficient  $m$  determines the slope of the line. A common method for estimating a linear regression line is the ordinary least squares (OLS) technique. The OLS technique tries to minimize the sum of the squares of the distance of all data points to the regression line. How well the regression line fits the actual data is indicated by the coefficient of determination  $r^2$ .  $r^2$  can have any value between 0 and 1. The higher the value of  $r^2$ , the better the fit of the regression line. (For a detailed explanation of the OLS regression technique see: Studenmund 2014, pp.35-59.)

<sup>70</sup> Creswell 2009, p.4.

<sup>71</sup> Creswell 2009, pp.175-176.

certain political parties or movements ascribe to the term Fortress Europe and the phenomena to which they relate the term. The research will be done in the form of a multiple case study. A case study focuses on “developing an in-depth understanding and analysis of a case”<sup>72</sup> or a bounded system “through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information.”<sup>73</sup> To compare different perspectives on the same issue, several cases can be selected for a multiple case study which will then be subjected to a comparative analysis. This approach requires the replication of the same procedures for each case.<sup>74</sup>

In conducting the multiple case study, a four-step process will be followed. The first step is to select appropriate countries for the study. The most important selection criterium is that the term Fortress Europe is used more often in media coverage compared to other countries and that the use of the term has increased in the wake of the immigration crisis. Both factors indicate a relative importance of the term in public and political discourses and are seen to increase the likelihood that there are right-wing political parties or movements in the country who have adopted the term with a positive connotation. Moreover, preference should be given to countries that were stronger affected by the immigration crisis, either as a destination or transit country, as the crisis probably had a bigger effect there on the discourse about border protection and immigration. Lastly, the size of the country could be considered because smaller members are less likely to affect actual policies of the EU. To keep the scope of this thesis feasible, the selection will be limited to three countries. The second step is to identify parties and movements in the selected countries that use the term Fortress Europe with a positive connotation. To do so, parliamentary records, party publications, web presences, and media articles from the selected countries since 2015 will be searched.

Third, for each country one party or movement will be chosen for an in-depth analysis. Since the focus of the thesis is on the use of the term Fortress Europe, the party or movement

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<sup>72</sup> Creswell 2007, p.78.

<sup>73</sup> Creswell 2007, p.73.

<sup>74</sup> Yin 2002, pp.46-53.

should be chosen which uses the term the most or more prominently. If there are several parties and movements with roughly equal use of the term, preference should be given to the party or movement with bigger influence on political and public discourse about irregular immigration and border protection. Criteria for determining the influence could be representation in national parliaments, the size of the parties or movements, and the media coverage they receive.

The last step consists of a detailed case study of each selected party or movement to explore their ideas about Fortress Europe. Sources for the case studies will be the following: speeches given in parliament, publications by the party or movement (e.g., election programs, press statements), interviews of leading members of the party or movement, and media articles available via Factiva. The findings will be roughly grouped around four topics: 1. Protection of external land borders; 2. Protection of external sea borders because they require a different approach than land borders;<sup>75</sup> 3. Treatment of asylum seekers because they constitute a major part of irregular immigration flows;<sup>76</sup> 4. General attitude towards currently legal immigration compared to irregular immigration. This organization of the case study findings should facilitate the comparison of the ideas and demands regarding a Fortress Europe by the different parties and movements which will be done in chapter 6. Furthermore, in chapter 6 the demands and ideas for establishing a Fortress Europe will be subjected to a comparative analysis with the current state of EU border protection and immigration policies as presented in the literature review (see chapter 3.2) to answer sub-question 5.

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<sup>75</sup> See chapter 3.2.3 about EU external border protection.

<sup>76</sup> See chapter 3.2.1 about irregular immigration to the EU.

## 3 Literature Review

### 3.1 The Term Fortress Europe

#### 3.1.1 Origin and Use Not Related to Immigration

The term Fortress Europe was originally introduced by the propaganda of the German Nazi regime during WWII.<sup>77</sup> It was used as a metaphor to describe national-socialism as an invincible stronghold.<sup>78</sup> The metaphor of the fortress played with the idea of a safe inside that is protected against threats from the outside. The Nazis used the term to emphasize the distinction between “us,” the Germans, and “the others,” the allied powers besieging Europe, in order to strengthen German moral and resolve, especially in the later phase of the war. Continental Europe was supposed to be a fortress defended by Germany and immune to the threat of an allied invasion, just like medieval fortresses were immune to outside aggression and offered a safe space behind their walls.<sup>79</sup> With the metaphor of Fortress Europe, the universal, abstract idea of Europe, that stood for a common civilization and certain values, was reduced to a geographically enclosed territory.<sup>80</sup> The Nazis themselves stopped using the term in the later years of the war when the threat of an Allied invasion became real.<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, in a practical sense the term Fortress Europe was also used to describe the specific fortifications built by the Nazis along the Atlantic coast of occupied Europe.<sup>82</sup>

In the 1980s, the term Fortress Europe reappeared in an economic context as “an expression of worries about European isolationism.”<sup>83</sup> With the ratification of the Single European Act (SEA) in 1986, the European Community (EC) decided to create a single Euro-pean market by 1992. This project sparked fears, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, in Japan, and in

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<sup>77</sup> Schmitz-Berning 2010, p.232.

<sup>78</sup> Spitra 2018.

<sup>79</sup> Klemperer 1947, pp.185-186.

<sup>80</sup> Spitra 2018.

<sup>81</sup> Schmitz-Berning 2010, p.233.

<sup>82</sup> Kaufmann and Jurga 1999; Forty 2002.

<sup>83</sup> Black et al. 2017.

developing countries, about the growing protectionism and isolationism of the EC with regards to international trade.<sup>84</sup> Hanson notes that “Analysts widely predicted that the completion of the internal market in the EU would lead to the creation of a ‘fortress Europe.’”<sup>85</sup> Already in 1988, the EC state leaders reacted to these fears with a statement that the EU would be a partner for the world and not a Fortress Europe.<sup>86</sup> Nevertheless, British and American politicians were particularly worried that the plans of the SEA could endanger the international trade negotiations in the Uruguay round.<sup>87</sup> In a famous speech in 1990, Margaret Thatcher, the then-British Prime Minister, even directly accused France and Germany of wanting to turn the EC into “a Fortress Europe and a protectionist club.”<sup>88</sup> Yet, the EC managed to calm the worries of its partners and the “Fortress Europe criticism in relation to the EU’s...Internal Market” ceased in the early 1990s.<sup>89</sup> In the end, the fears were exaggerated, and there was no economic “fortress Europe...built.”<sup>90</sup> In an economic context, Fortress Europe is a myth.<sup>91</sup> Interestingly, the Nazi history of the term played no role in its use in the economic context.<sup>92</sup>

After the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, the term Fortress Europe was also used by British politicians to criticize an EU reluctant to taking in new member countries. They saw the risk of the EU becoming a “Fortress Europe” that fails “to spread the benefits of EU enlargement beyond the current borders to the countries on Europe’s periphery” which “would be a missed opportunity to increase stability and prosperity within the European neighbourhood.”<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Baneth 1993, p.9.

<sup>85</sup> Hanson 1998, p.57.

<sup>86</sup> Wengeler and Stötzel 1995, p.112.

<sup>87</sup> Burghardt 2006, p.9.

<sup>88</sup> Thatcher 1990.

<sup>89</sup> Burghardt 2006, p.12.

<sup>90</sup> Hanson 1998, p.56.

<sup>91</sup> Wagener and Eger 2009, p.445.

<sup>92</sup> Wengeler and Stötzel 1995, p.111.

<sup>93</sup> House of Lords 2006, p.184.



### 3.1.2 Use in the Context of Immigration to the EU

#### 3.1.2.1 Origin

When the SEA caused fears about a protectionist, economic Fortress Europe, some authors already stated that the metaphor might be better used with regards to immigration as the project of European integration would also strongly effect immigration policy.<sup>94</sup> Indeed in the 1990s, immigration and asylum policies increased in importance in EU politics as the single market was accompanied by attempts to create an area of free internal movement, which required harmonized and stricter controls on that area's external borders.<sup>95</sup> Noll states that in this context "the metaphor of 'Fortress Europe' has been introduced to denote the exclusion of protection seekers from access to the territories of European States."<sup>96</sup> The metaphor draws upon the idea of a fortress as a building that protects its inhabitants from outside threats. Only those people are allowed into a fortress who are deemed worthy and welcome.<sup>97</sup> According to Rumford, a Fortress Europe would be characterized by a combination of "a high degree of internal mobility with an impermeable external shell."<sup>98</sup> The term gained popularity among authors with the 2004 EU enlargement eastwards, which extended the scope of the EU's immigration and asylum policies to the new member states, and again with the 2015 immigration crisis.<sup>99</sup>

#### 3.1.2.2 Positions and Use

Literature primarily suggests two different positions towards the term Fortress Europe. On the one hand, the term is used with a negative connotation in a dismissive way to criticize restrictive EU immigration policies. On the other hand, the term itself is criticized for being misleading and not reflecting reality.<sup>100</sup> The first position is taken mainly by left-wing parties,

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<sup>94</sup> E.g., Ireland 1991.

<sup>95</sup> Geddes 2000, p.16 and p.29.

<sup>96</sup> Noll 1997, p.405.

<sup>97</sup> Mayrhofer 2014, p.307.

<sup>98</sup> Rumford 2006, p.160.

<sup>99</sup> Geddes and Scholten 2016, pp.200-201.

<sup>100</sup> Zaragoza-Cristiani 2017, pp.60-62.

human rights activists, and NGOs for which the term has become a "popular way of stigmatizing the increasingly restrictive and often exclusionary migration and citizenship policies adopted by EU countries."<sup>101</sup> Frequently, references to the border fences around the Spanish exclaves of Ceuta and Melilla are made to visualize the metaphor of Fortress Europe.<sup>102</sup> By using the term in this dismissive way, authors assert and denounce the existence of a Fortress Europe and often assume that EU states actively aim for strengthening this fortress.<sup>103</sup> From this position, Fortress Europe is defined as the total sum of all "policies and practices, within, at and outside the EU's borders" designed to impede "irregular migration to Europe."<sup>104</sup> This includes the construction of fences, use of sophisticated surveillance systems, increased deployment of security forces along the border (e.g., national border guards and Frontex), restrictive visa and asylum regulations, and international treaties hampering the movements of migrants.<sup>105</sup> In addition, there are racism and xenophobia as mental walls of Fortress Europe supporting violence at the EU's borders.<sup>106</sup>

The derogative use of the term Fortress Europe is criticized by various authors. They claim that it is misleading and inappropriate for talking about EU border management and immigration because it implies an assumed aim for total restriction and zero immigration. According to the Zaragoza-Cristiani, "the image of Fortress Europe is altogether too simplistic and naïve to express the complex dynamics" of immigration and border management.<sup>107</sup> Given the numbers of illegal immigrants still arriving in Europe, the EU cannot be called a fortress in the eyes of Laitinen.<sup>108</sup> Geddes prefers "to talk of a 'net'" at the border while Pinos suggests that the comparison to "a gated community" is better than talking about a fortress.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Sicurella 2018, p.70.

<sup>102</sup> Walters 2004, p.692; Mayrhofer 2014, p.316.

<sup>103</sup> E.g., Hayes 2004; Hess 2012; Roos 2013; Akkerman 2016; Jüneman et al. 2017; Benedicto and Brunet 2018.

<sup>104</sup> Amnesty International 2014, p.6.

<sup>105</sup> Amnesty International 2014, p.5; Engelbert et al. 2019, p.138.

<sup>106</sup> Jüneman et al. 2017, p.7; Benedicto and Brunet 2018, p.8.

<sup>107</sup> Zaragoza-Cristiani 2016.

<sup>108</sup> Laitinen 2016, p.137.

<sup>109</sup> Geddes 2000, p.6; Pinos 2009, p.18.

A third position towards Fortress Europe has emerged since the immigration crisis of 2015 when the extreme right adopted the term.<sup>110</sup> Thus, the term Fortress Europe also acquired a positive connotation in the sense that it (or whatever is labeled with it) is seen as something worth striving for in the eyes of these parties. However, literature does not provide details on the ideas and demands that supporters of a Fortress Europe associate with the term.

A fourth, but rather rare, way of how the term is used by authors is in scenario building as a label for a possible scenario for the future of the EU. Such scenarios are characterized by restrictive immigration policies and heavily controlled external borders. However, the authors do not explain what specific immigration and border protection policies these scenarios entail. The exact specifications of Fortress Europe remain undefined.<sup>111</sup>

### *3.1.2.3 Summary on the Use of the Term*

To sum up, what all the different uses of the term Fortress Europe have in common is that they refer to some sort of access denial. In the context of immigration, the term was originally used only with a negative attitude towards the denial or restriction of access for immigrants to the EU. Yet, since 2015, a positive use of the term was also established by supporters of a Fortress Europe. However, with regards to EU immigration and border protection policies, there is no agreement or definition among critics and supporters of Fortress Europe as to what policies, between a complete access denial for any type of immigration and completely open borders, qualify as having established Fortress Europe. The general definition of a negatively connotated Fortress Europe (as being made up of all policies and practices that impede irregular immigration to the EU) is quite vague and does not state when a Fortress Europe comes into existence. It even allows for the reverse interpretation that as long as there are no completely open borders and everybody who wishes to immigrate to the EU can do so without any problems

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<sup>110</sup> Brown 2017, p.8; Börzel and Risse 2018, p.83.

An example is the pan-European platform under the motto of Fortress Europe that right-wing parties and movements from various EU countries tried to establish in early 2016 when they signed the so-called Prague Declaration (Vorländer et al. 2018, pp.67-68).

<sup>111</sup> E.g., Smith 2018, pp.218-220; Rosenbaum et al. 2015, p.20.

or risks, it is possible to complain about a Fortress Europe. Consequently, Fortress Europe is mostly situationally defined by the current state of EU border protection and immigration restriction that the respective author criticizes. On the other hand, the literature does not even provide a general definition of what a Fortress Europe would be in the eyes of supporters of the term. It can only be inferred that the current state (or the state of 2015) of EU border protection and immigration policy is not seen as being the Fortress Europe that its supporters want. However, in contrast to the fluid definition of the term in its negatively connotated use, it could be possible to give a more specific definition of what constitutes a positively connotated Fortress Europe by analyzing the demands that supporters of it associate with the term. That will be the aim of the case studies in chapter 5 of this thesis.

## 3.2 EU – Irregular Immigration and External Border Protection

This sub-chapter presents the developments in the areas of irregular immigration to the EU and external border protection since the immigration crisis of 2015. This information forms the context for the discourse about immigration control and border protection. The data on irregular immigration to the EU will be factored in the selection of countries for the case studies. Furthermore, the ideas for establishing a Fortress Europe by supporters of such a project will be compared later to the current status of EU external border protection as presented here.

### 3.2.1 Irregular Immigration to the EU

#### 3.2.1.1 *Definition of Irregular Immigration*

The European Commission defines irregular immigration as “the immigration of a person to a new place of residence using irregular or illegal means, without valid documents or carrying false documents.”<sup>112</sup> Irregular immigration is also often synonymously referred to as illegal or undocumented immigration.<sup>113</sup> When talking about irregular immigration, it is important to distinguish between the concepts of irregular immigration “as a flow of people who enter a country without the country’s legal permission” and irregular migrants as “the stock of migrants in a country who are not entitled to reside there.”<sup>114</sup> The flow and the stock of irregular immigrants are linked but differ from each other. The stock of irregular immigrants in a country can change not just through the irregular inflow of immigrants “but also due to changes in the status of migrants already in the country,” either because laws and policies are changed or, for example, because the legal entry visa of an immigrant expires which makes his further stay in the country irregular.<sup>115</sup> Respectively, refugees who enter a country without valid documents or not via an official border crossing point “may be counted as irregular immigrants at the moment of

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<sup>112</sup> European Commission 2019a.

<sup>113</sup> European Commission 2019b.

<sup>114</sup> Vollmer 2011.

<sup>115</sup> Migration Data Portal 2019.

crossing the border, but their status may become regular once they apply for asylum” because then they are officially registered as asylum seekers.<sup>116</sup> Thus, irregular immigration “may be used to enter a country in order to acquire a legitimate status” without increasing the irregular migrant stock.<sup>117</sup> In general, “the idea of irregularity should not be interpreted as an immutable characteristic of persons but is a label that depends on contingent administrative and legislative frameworks of the receiving countries.”<sup>118</sup>

### *3.2.1.2 Data on Irregular Immigration to the EU*

Due to its nature, irregular immigration is difficult to measure “as it occurs outside the regulatory norms of countries and usually with the aim of avoiding detection.”<sup>119</sup> There are no reliable statistics available about real flows or stocks of irregular immigrants. However, by looking at data on irregular border crossings, arrival flows, and asylum statistics, it is possible to get at least an indirect indication of the general trend of irregular immigration flows.<sup>120</sup>

Illegal border crossings at external EU borders as detected by Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, skyrocketed during the refugee crisis. In 2015, there were 1.82 million illegal border crossings detected. That was an increase by six times compared to 2014 (282,962) which already saw a massive increase in comparison to 2013 (107,365). 90% of the detections happened along the Eastern Mediterranean and the Western Balkan route.<sup>121</sup> After the immediate immigration crisis in 2015, the numbers of detected illegal border crossings declined continuously to 511,371 in 2016, 204,750 in 2017, and 150,114 in 2018, but these numbers are still higher than in the years prior to 2014. The biggest reductions happened on the Western Balkan route (from 764,038 in 2015 to 5,869 in 2018) and on the Eastern Mediterranean route (from 885,386 in 2015 to 56,561 in 2018). While the Central Mediterranean route

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<sup>116</sup> Migration Data Portal 2019.

<sup>117</sup> Vespe et al. 2017, p.33.

<sup>118</sup> Vespe et al. 2017, p.26.

<sup>119</sup> Migration Data Portal 2019.

<sup>120</sup> Vespe et al. 2017, p.27.

<sup>121</sup> Frontex 2016, pp.16-17. For a map of the different immigration routes to the EU see annex.

experienced an increase in detected illegal border crossings from 153,946 in 2015 to 181,459 in 2016, but it then saw a strong decline to 23,485 in 2018. The Western Mediterranean route on the other hand has seen a steady increase from 7,164 detected illegal border crossings in 2015 to 57,034 in 2018.<sup>122</sup> Regarding these Frontex numbers, it is important to recognize that they differ from real flows because, first, they do not include undetected illegal border crossings and, second, they can include multiple crossings by the same person. Especially on the Eastern Mediterranean and Western Balkan route, many irregular immigrants were likely counted twice, once in Greece and again when entering the EU after crossing the Balkan. Thus, Frontex estimates that at least for 2015 the real number of irregular immigrants was probably around one million.<sup>123</sup> That estimate corresponds well with the numbers from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) which monitors the flow of displaced persons. According to the IOM, 1,046,599 migrants arrived to Europe in the Mediterranean region in 2015, the majority in Greece by sea.<sup>124</sup> For the following years the IOM reports strong declines in arrival numbers via Mediterranean routes to 387,739 in 2016, 186,786 in 2017, and 144,166 in 2018. The strongest decline happened in Greece from 857,363 arrivals in 2015 to 50,215 in 2018. For Italy, the IOM also reports a large decline from 181,436 arrivals in 2016 to 23,370 in 2018. Yet, for Spain IOM numbers show a massive increase in arrivals from 3,845 in 2015 to 65,325 in 2018.<sup>125</sup>

Since many irregular immigrants apply for asylum after entering the EU, asylum statistics can also give a hint at irregular immigration flows and destination countries. The statistics show that there has been a continuous increase in asylum applications in the EU since a low point in 2006 with less than 200,000.<sup>126</sup> Until 2012, there was a gradual increase which became stronger to about 431,000 applications in 2013 and 627,000 in 2014. The immigration crisis then brought record numbers of 1.32 million asylum applications in the EU in 2015 and another 1.26 million

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<sup>122</sup> Frontex 2017, p.19; Frontex 2019, p.43. See annex for a table of the data and graphical overview.

<sup>123</sup> Frontex 2016, p.5.

<sup>124</sup> IOM 2016, p.5.

<sup>125</sup> IOM 2017; IOM 2018; IOM 2019. See annex for a table of the data and graphical overview. For reasons in the change of migration numbers see chapter 3.2.3 on EU external border protection.

<sup>126</sup> Eurostat 2018.

in 2016. In these two years, Germany received almost half of the 2.58 million asylum applications (47%). Other countries with major application numbers were Italy (8%), Hungary (8%), Sweden (7.4%), France (6.2%), and Austria (5%). After 2016, applications fell to about 712,000 in 2017 and 639,000 in 2018, which was still significantly higher than the asylum applications prior to 2014.<sup>127</sup>

The data indicates that after the massive increase in 2015 irregular immigration to the EU has constantly declined again. Nevertheless, the irregular immigration pressure remains high with levels of asylum applications and detected illegal border crossings still above the years prior to 2013. However, it should be noted that regular immigration to the EU far exceeds irregular immigration, e.g., in 2016, EU countries issued 2.3 million first residence permits to non-EU citizens for reasons of employment, family reunion, or education compared to 1.26 million asylum applications that year.<sup>128</sup>

### *3.2.1.3 Future Immigration Pressure*

Despite the reductions in arrival numbers since 2015, the general migration pressure to Europe will probably continue to be very high in the future and keep the attention of the EU for decades to come. Demographic developments in the Middle East and especially in Africa are characterized by high birth rates and young populations. In Africa, 40% of the population are currently younger than 15 years old. The total population of the continent is supposed to double from now roughly 1.3 billion to more than 2.5 billion by 2050 with the bulk of the population growth happening in Sub-Saharan countries.<sup>129</sup> According to a survey by Gallup from 2016, about 30% of all adults in Sub-Saharan Africa would like to leave their country permanently.<sup>130</sup> A recent report by the Pew Research Center suggests that the percentage of people who “would go to live in another country, if they had the means and opportunity” is significantly higher.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Eurostat 2019a; Eurostat 2019b.

<sup>128</sup> Münz 2018, p.12.

<sup>129</sup> UN 2017, pp.3-5.

<sup>130</sup> Esipova et al. 2017.

<sup>131</sup> Connor 2018.



Since 2010, already one million people from Sub-Saharan countries have moved to Europe. Demographic developments in many countries in Africa combined with political instability and insufficient economic growth will ensure that many people from those countries will want to emigrate.<sup>132</sup> Considering these demographic and socio-economic factors, Smith concludes that the immigration from Africa will jump to a whole new scale once more people in Sub-Saharan Africa acquire the means to migrate.<sup>133</sup> While the population in Africa will grow rapidly, without immigration the EU (including the UK) will face a decline in its population from now 510 million to around 466 million in 2050 with a massive increase in the percentage of old people.<sup>134</sup> Therefore, some scholars suggest that the EU should welcome young immigrants to remedy its labor shortage and stabilize the social security systems.<sup>135</sup> However, migration on a large scale will not be without problems and there are doubts that immigration from Africa can solve Europe's demographic imbalances and improve the ratio of working people to dependent people.<sup>136</sup> Yet, regardless of whether massive immigration can actually solve all problems related to Europe's aging and declining population, the number of people willing and trying to move to Europe will most likely be very high.<sup>137</sup> Currently, the EU is not prepared for migration on a much bigger scale than happening today.<sup>138</sup> Thus, the EU must decide how to handle future immigration flows. That will involve extensive debates in all EU countries which should keep the issue of how to deal with irregular immigration among the top priorities of the European political agenda.

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<sup>132</sup> Connor 2018.

<sup>133</sup> Smith 2018, p.215.

<sup>134</sup> Sievert et al. 2017, p.12.

<sup>135</sup> Werding 2018.

<sup>136</sup> Smith 2018, p.30.

<sup>137</sup> Duta et al. 2018, p.7.

<sup>138</sup> Smith 2018, p.170-171.

### 3.2.2 EU Policies on Irregular Immigration and Asylum

The freedom of movement within the EU and the absence of internal border controls within the Schengen Area<sup>139</sup> make it necessary that the EU frames “a common policy on asylum, immigration and external border control.”<sup>140</sup> Regarding regular immigration, the EU has established general “conditions governing entry into and legal residence in” member countries, while each state retains “the right to determine volumes of admission for people coming from third countries.”<sup>141</sup> With respect to irregular immigration, the EU has the clear responsibility to combat and prevent it.<sup>142</sup> In addition to coordinating and supporting external border control, the main instrument for this task is ensuring “an effective return policy” to reduce incentives for irregular immigration.<sup>143</sup> The EU negotiates readmission agreements with third countries, sets standards for return procedures, and can coordinate return operations via Frontex.<sup>144</sup>

Regarding the treatment of asylum seekers, who often enter the EU irregularly before applying for asylum, the EU is required to develop “a common European asylum system” (CEAS) with a common status of asylum and standardized asylum procedures that comply with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the Geneva Convention, and the principle of non-refoulement.<sup>145</sup> The EU has started to do so by specifying common rules and standards for asylum procedures.<sup>146</sup> A very important part of the CEAS is the Dublin system for determining responsibility for asylum seekers. The Dublin III Regulation states that in general the country

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<sup>139</sup> The Schengen Area was originally established separately from the European Economic Community (the later EU) in 1985. With the Treaty of Amsterdam, Schengen was incorporated into the legal framework of the EU in 1999. Nevertheless, member countries of EU and Schengen are not identical. The Schengen Area consists of 22 EU countries plus Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, and Lichtenstein. Ireland and the UK (who opted out), and Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, and Cyprus (who have not yet been allowed to join) are members of the EU but not of Schengen. (Source: European Commission 2019c).

<sup>140</sup> Treaty on Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), Article 67.

<sup>141</sup> Schmidt-Drüner 2018a, p.1.

<sup>142</sup> TFEU, Article 79.

<sup>143</sup> Schmidt-Drüner 2018a, pp.1-3.

<sup>144</sup> Schmidt-Drüner 2018a, pp.5-6.

<sup>145</sup> TFEU, Article 78. The principle of non-refoulement states that asylum applicants should not be “sent to countries where their life or freedom would be threatened on account of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion or where they would be at real risk of suffering serious harm.” (Source: European Asylum Support Office 2018, p.26).

<sup>146</sup> Eurostat 2019a.

where an asylum seeker first entered EU territory is responsible for examining the asylum claim. With this rule the EU wants to prevent the secondary movement of asylum seekers and simultaneous applications in various countries. When they do move, they can be returned to the EU country responsible for them.<sup>147</sup> This system puts a disproportionately high burden on EU states with external borders and during the immigration crisis in 2015 it partially broke down as some EU states were overwhelmed by the inflow of irregular immigrants.<sup>148</sup> To support those states, the EU introduced the establishment of so-called hotspots in member states facing a strong immigration pressure. Hotspots are centers in which various EU agencies work directly together “to swiftly identify, register and fingerprint incoming migrants.”<sup>149</sup> In addition, there were plans for a relocation of refugees within the EU, which failed, however, due to lack of commitment and outright opposition by member states. Recent reform proposals for addressing the shortcomings of the Dublin system are unlikely to be agreed upon given the division of member states on the issue.<sup>150</sup> Also, the harmonization of asylum procedures has not been fully achieved yet as strong differences in asylum approval rates among EU countries show.<sup>151</sup> Thus, the CEAS remains a work in progress that has not been fully realized yet.

### **3.2.3 EU External Border Protection**

The management and protection of external borders has become a joint task for the EU and individual member states in order to guarantee the functioning of an area without internal border controls. Schengen members are required to maintain effective control of their external borders on behalf of all Schengen countries and the EU is required to “frame a common policy...on external border control” and support member states in that area.<sup>152</sup> For that purpose, the EU has established common standards for controls at external borders and has implemented

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<sup>147</sup> European Asylum Support Office 2016, pp.34-38.

<sup>148</sup> Jones 2016, pp.20-21.

<sup>149</sup> Schmidt-Drüner 2018b, p.3.

<sup>150</sup> Zalan 2016.

<sup>151</sup> European Council on Refugees and Exiles 2019.

<sup>152</sup> TFEU, Article 67; European Commission 2019c, p.5.

an integrated border management (IBM) system. Important pillars of this system are the Schengen Borders Code (SBC), which contains the rules regarding external border controls, and the “centralized databases for the purposes of migration and border management: the Schengen Information System (SIS), the Visa Information System (VIS), and Eurodac,” a fingerprint database for asylum seekers.<sup>153</sup> As part of the EU’s Smart Border strategy, the IBM is to be complemented until 2020 by a new Entry/Exit System (EES) for automated border checks of non-EU nationals.<sup>154</sup> The EES shall close any remaining information gaps about the presence of foreigners in the EU. These databases and accompanying surveillance technologies can be seen as a virtual wall for controlling and restricting movements to the EU.<sup>155</sup> In addition to providing this technical infrastructure, the EU also supports external border protection through the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex). The agency was established in 2004 with the mission of facilitating coordination, information exchange, and training among EU member’s national border authorities. After the immigration crisis, Frontex was relaunched in 2016 with an extended mandate. Now, it actively shares responsibility with national authorities in the establishment of an effective border management system. In addition to monitoring migration flows and conducting risk analyses, Frontex coordinates joint activities with EU states or third countries to improve border protection and combat border-related crimes like smuggling or human trafficking. In the case of emergencies, rapid response teams and Frontex equipment can be sent to support member states. For all these tasks Frontex can draw upon “a pool of at least 1,500 border guards.”<sup>156</sup> With the new mandate “Frontex has effectively become a law enforcement agency.”<sup>157</sup> It’s growing importance is reflected in the strong rise of its budget, from only 6 million € in 2005 to over 320 million € in 2018, and in plans to further expand it to a “standing corps of 10,000 operational staff with executive powers.”<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> Bux 2018, pp.1-2.

<sup>154</sup> European Parliament 2019.

<sup>155</sup> Benedicto and Brunet 2018, pp.34-36.

<sup>156</sup> Frontex 2019.

<sup>157</sup> Nielsen 2018.

<sup>158</sup> Akkerman 2018, p.22; European Commission 2018.

### 3.2.3.1 EU External Border Barriers

Prior to the immigration crisis of 2015 only three EU states had built barriers on their borders, all with the aim of preventing irregular immigration to their territory. In the 1990s, Spain had started to fence off its enclaves Melilla and Ceuta on the African continent which have direct land borders with Morocco. The fences were completed in 2005 and extended a few years later by additional second or third layers. On the European continent Greece built a fence in 2012 along the part of its border with Turkey that is not marked by the Evros river. This fence diverted Syrian war refugees towards Bulgaria which responded in 2013 by fencing 200 km of its border with Turkey. In 2015, the immigration crisis sparked a boom in further barrier building. To reduce irregular immigration on the Balkan route Hungary erected fences along 450 km on its borders with Serbia and Croatia. After Austria had built a short fence in 2015 around a border crossing point with Slovenia, an EU and Schengen member, Slovenia reacted by fencing 200 km of its external Schengen border with Croatia. Also, Norway and the Baltic states have started to build various fences on their external Schengen borders due to concerns over irregular immigration across the eastern Schengen borders and for security reasons vis-à-vis Russia.<sup>159</sup> In sum, 10 countries have erected border barriers at either external EU or Schengen borders with an estimated total length of more than 950 km, all of which are accompanied by extensive surveillance systems.<sup>160</sup> There are no explicit EU rules which prevent or govern the construction of fences at external borders. As Article 14(2) of the SBC states that “entry may only be refused by a substantiated decision stating the precise reasons for the refusal,”<sup>161</sup> it could be argued that “indiscriminately preventing migrants and asylum seekers from accessing” EU territory through border barriers violates the SBC.<sup>162</sup> However, if the

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<sup>159</sup> Benedicto and Brunet 2018, pp.23-30; Jones 2016, pp.15-24; UNHCR 2017.

<sup>160</sup> Benedicto and Brunet 2018, p.29.

<sup>161</sup> Schengen Borders Code (SBC), Article 14(2).

<sup>162</sup> Bux 2018, p.3.

border barriers contain official border crossing points where regular entry or application for asylum is possible there would be no such violation.

### 3.2.3.2 *EU External Maritime Borders*

The EU's external maritime borders in the Mediterranean pose a major challenge as they are the scene of the biggest irregular immigrations flows to the EU. To monitor those, borders the EU has set up the European Border Surveillance system (EUROSUR) in 2013. Originally intended just for monitoring maritime zones, EUROSUR quickly evolved to include surveillance of most EU external borders.<sup>163</sup> The system enables real-time monitoring and quick information exchange so that Frontex and national coast guards are aware of most boats departing from the African coast and moving towards EU shores.<sup>164</sup> This contributes to the two important goals of preventing cross-border crimes and reducing the number of undetected irregular migrants entering via maritime routes as it enables the interception of unauthorized vessels.<sup>165</sup> To support national coast guards in controlling the Mediterranean, Frontex organizes joint operations which involve ships and personnel from all EU countries. Current operations are Operations Indalo and Minerva along the Spanish coast, Operation Themis in the Central Mediterranean, and Operation Poseidon in the Aegean Sea. In addition, there is Operation Sophia (EUNAVFOR MED) in cooperation with NATO patrols in the Mediterranean.<sup>166</sup> The official mandate of the operations is to combat human trafficking, which is a crime but also a service that most irregular immigrants make use of.<sup>167</sup> Yet, with "increasing illegal crossings on board of unseaworthy and overcrowded boats triggered by the Arab Spring...and resulting in thousands of migrants drowning in the Mediterranean" sea rescue became another, although rather secondary aim of maritime control operations.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Bellanova and Duez 2016, pp.23-24.

<sup>164</sup> Jones 2016, p.24.

<sup>165</sup> Bellanova and Duez 2016, p.28.

<sup>166</sup> Benedicto and Brunet 2018, pp.30-34.

<sup>167</sup> Frontex 2019, p.28.

<sup>168</sup> Bellanova and Duez 2016, pp.28-29.

According to international law, all ships are obliged to provide “assistance to any person found at sea in danger of being lost” and “to proceed with all possible speed” to their rescue “if informed of their need of assistance.”<sup>169</sup> In order to facilitate search and rescue (SAR) operations, the open seas are divided into SAR zones and coastal states are required to maintain a SAR service that coordinates rescue operations within their SAR zone. “Persons rescued at sea are to be taken to a place of safety” with countries in whose SAR zone the rescue occurred having a primary responsibility for accepting the disembarkation of the rescued persons.<sup>170</sup> In the context of irregular immigration across the Mediterranean, this means that migrants rescued at sea should usually be brought to European harbors. That is the basis for an intrinsic contradiction of extensive SAR missions in the Mediterranean. While they do save lives, they also make it cheaper for people-smugglers to offer a passage to Europe. Thereby, they encourage more migrants to make the trip in the hope of being picked up by a rescue ship and brought to a European harbor.<sup>171</sup> Thus, the issue of rescue missions became highly contested in the wake of the immigration crisis as they were criticized of being a pull factor for immigration.<sup>172</sup> The EU has yet to find a solution to this dilemma of rescue missions.

In 2018, the newly elected Italian government took a unilateral approach by closing Italian ports for private rescue ships.<sup>173</sup> Although this measure is legally controversial, it most likely contributed to the sharp decline in arrival numbers to Italy in 2018. However, people-smugglers appear to have adapted to the new situation and deliver irregular immigrants again directly to Italian shores where they enter the country undetected.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) 1982, Art. 98.

<sup>170</sup> Aalberts and Gammeltoft-Hansen 2014, pp.446-447 and p.451.

<sup>171</sup> Betts and Collier 2017, p.74.

<sup>172</sup> Jones 2016, p.24.

<sup>173</sup> Scherer 2018.

<sup>174</sup> Klingst, Lau, and Polke-Majewski 2019.

### 3.2.3.3 Externalization of Border Protection

In addition to strengthening its own border protection, the EU strongly relies on a strategy of externalization of border protection in order to prevent irregular immigrants from reaching the EU.<sup>175</sup> The massive irregular immigration flow on the Eastern Mediterranean route during the immigration crisis was primarily reduced by the EU-Turkey Deal signed in March 2016. In that deal, Turkey promised to take back all refugees who entered the EU via Turkey, to shelter Syrian refugees in Turkey, and to strengthen its own border protection. In return, the EU promised to support sheltering refugees in Turkey with 6 billion € and to resettle Syrian refugees from Turkish refugee camps.<sup>176</sup> The deal was designed after a similar agreement between the EU and Morocco from 2013 according to which the EU “provides funding in exchange for help from the Moroccan authorities in preventing migrants from reaching the Melilla fence.”<sup>177</sup> Since 2016, the EU has concluded further deals with various African countries (e.g., Mali, Niger, Sudan) in which the EU delegates responsibility for controlling migration flows to other countries in its neighborhood.<sup>178</sup> Effectively, the EU has built a “wall of money” along its southern border by financing governments in Africa to control and reduce migration.<sup>179</sup> Although this strategy has helped so far to reduce immigration pressure to Europe, it makes the EU dependent on problematic and unpredictable allies. Someday, the partners might not be willing or able to control migration on behalf of the EU or exploit their leverage to blackmail the EU. Yet, even until then the cooperation with authoritarian regimes using questionable measure in stopping migration flows severely undermines the EU’s commitment to upholding human right.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Frontex 2019, p.38.

<sup>176</sup> European Council 2016.

<sup>177</sup> Jones 2016, p.15.

<sup>178</sup> Akkerman 2018, pp.40-66.

<sup>179</sup> Smith 2018, p.166.

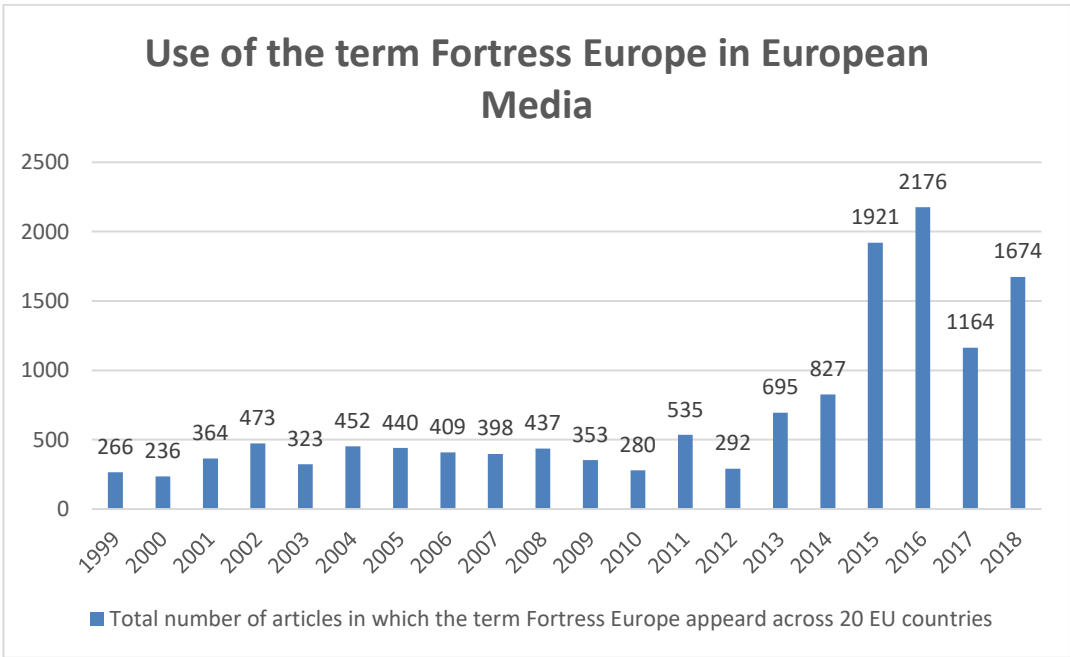
<sup>180</sup> Akkerman 2018, pp.3-5.



## 4 Quantitative Media Analysis

According to the procedure described in chapter 2.1, the use of the term Fortress Europe in the media of the following 20 EU countries was quantitatively analyzed: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Slovakia, and the United Kingdom. For all countries, the number of articles or texts was counted in which the term appeared at least once, either in an official language of the country or in English.<sup>181</sup> The following graph shows the aggregated results from 1999 to 2018 for the 20 analyzed countries, which represent 91% of the EU population.

Figure 1: Aggregated Results of the Media Analysis (1999-2018)



This graph provides an answer for sub-question 2. The data shows a clear increase in the use of the term Fortress Europe in European media in 2015 and 2016 in the wake of the immigration crisis. Although the use of the term peaked in 2016, afterwards it was still used more than in the 16 years before the immigration crisis. However, the aggregated statistic is heavily influenced by the results from Germany, which accounts for 38.5% of the use of the term in

<sup>181</sup> See annex for detailed results of the media analysis.

European media in the last 20 years. Moreover, the total use of the term differs widely from country to country. To determine in which country the term was relatively more used in media coverage since 2015, an indicator was created which adjusted the total search results by the population of the respective country. The following table ranks the 20 analyzed countries by population adjusted search results to provide an answer for sub-question 3. In addition, the table contains data for a linear regression analyses which gives some indication of the changing use of the term in each country's media from 2011 to 2018.

**Table 1: Country ranking by adjusted search results per million of inhabitants**

Rank	Country	Total Search Results (2015-2018)	Population in million (Source: Eurostat 2018)	Adjusted Rank Indicator - Total results per million of Inhabitants (2015-2018)	Linear regression (2011-2018)	
					Slope coefficient	r <sup>2</sup> (coefficient of determination)
1	Luxembourg	91	0,60	151,67	4,00	0,690
2	Austria	344	8,82	39,00	8,27	0,212
3	Germany	3146	82,85	37,97	88,21	0,289
4	Spain	962	46,66	20,62	46,24	0,830
5	Italy	780	60,48	12,90	27,94	0,764
6	Malta	6	0,48	12,50	0,10	0,027
7	Netherlands	187	17,12	10,92	2,64	0,069
8	Portugal	110	10,29	10,69	2,19	0,085
9	Denmark	58	5,78	10,03	1,06	0,065
10	Ireland	48	4,84	9,92	1,21	0,230
11	Belgium	97	11,41	8,50	3,13	0,494
12	United Kingdom	488	66,19	7,37	13,48	0,427
13	France	467	67,22	6,95	8,40	0,144
14	Czech Republic	58	10,61	5,47	1,90	0,344
15	Bulgaria	27	7,05	3,83	0,71	0,198
16	Sweden	27	10,12	2,67	1,61	0,617
17	Slovakia	12	5,44	2,21	0,65	0,603
18	Finland	5	5,51	0,91	0,23	0,218
19	Hungary	6	9,78	0,61	0,32	0,489
20	Poland	16	37,98	0,42	0,43	0,227

Luxembourg, Germany, and Austria show the highest use of the term Fortress Europe in media since 2015 with respect to their population size. Spain, Italy and Malta also exhibit a comparatively high use of the term. The Netherlands, Portugal, Denmark, and Ireland rank in the middle regarding the media appearance of the term Fortress Europe. Belgium, the UK, and

France have a slightly smaller use of the term and rank a little bit lower than the previous group. In the lower section of the ranking, the Czech Republic exhibits a relatively low use of the term and in Bulgaria, Sweden, and Slovakia the term was used even less. Finally, for Finland, Hungary, and Poland the search results were extremely low. This could indicate problems with the search, but since all search terms for these countries were obtained from native speakers and provided in different versions to take grammatical changes into account, it can be assumed that the term was indeed barely used in the media of those countries.<sup>182</sup>

Interesting is also the pattern of the use of the term Fortress Europe. The regression analysis was performed with the assumption that it could help describe the expected increase in the use of the term from 2015 on compared to the four years before the immigration crisis. However, the quite low  $r^2$  values show that for most countries the regression line does not fit the given data. Only for Luxembourg, Sweden, and Slovakia as well as, to a better extent, for Italy and Spain can the linear regression line describe the development of the media appearance of Fortress Europe reasonably well. The reason is that only in these countries the peak values for the use of the term in media coverage were in 2017 or 2018. In the other countries, the use of the term did not increase after peak values in 2015 or 2016 but often declined, even if it still continued to be higher than before the immigration crisis.

To sum up, Austria and Germany are the most interesting cases for further study given the comparatively very high use of the term Fortress Europe in their media. Moreover, Spain and Italy also seem very interesting for further study because they show a comparatively high use of the term as well and have a relatively constant increase in the media appearance of the term with a higher use after the immigration crisis than during the crisis itself. Luxembourg, despite having the highest use of the term in relation to its population and a relatively constant increase, is not interesting because of its very small size.

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<sup>182</sup> The results confirm initial assessments by the native speakers who provided the search terms for those countries. They claimed that in all three countries the term Fortress Europe was barely used in media.

## 5 Case Studies

Based on the results of the media analysis Austria, Germany, Spain and Italy seem to be the most interesting cases for further in-depth studies about the use of the term Fortress Europe. However, because the scope of this thesis is limited, only three of these countries can be considered in this case study. Since Austria and Germany show the highest use of the term Fortress Europe and were most strongly affected by the immigration crisis, they will be considered in this case study. Among the other two countries, Spain shows a higher use of the term Fortress Europe. Yet, Italy was significantly more affected by the immigration as it had to deal with much higher arrival numbers than Spain. In addition, Italy is bigger and, thus, more influential in the EU, and the use of the term Fortress Europe is still relatively high. Therefore, Italy is selected for the third case study. In total, the country selection seems very suitable for a case study because Austria, Germany, and Italy were all strongly affected by the immigration crisis as major destination, while Austria and Italy were also affected as transit countries. In addition, Italy is responsible for controlling an important external maritime border of the EU.

In the following, for each of the three countries political parties and movements will be identified who are in favor of establishing a Fortress Europe. The demands and ideas of one of the identified parties or movements in each country will be explored in more detail.

### 5.1 Austria

#### 5.1.1 Identification of Case Study Subjects

In Austria, the first demands by politicians for building a Fortress Europe (German: *Festung Europa*) appeared in the wake of the immigration crisis in 2015. Before, politicians and parties either did not use the term at all or just with a negative connotation (mostly the Greens).<sup>183</sup> The first demand for a Fortress Europe was probably the claim by Manfred

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<sup>183</sup> First, Election programs for national elections in 2002, 2006, 2008, and 2013 (*Nationalratswahl*) were checked via the database of the Manifesto Project ([www.manifesto-project.wzb.eu](http://www.manifesto-project.wzb.eu)). Result: only the

Haimbacher, then-chairman of the right-populist Freedom Party of Austria (German: *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*, FPÖ) in Upper Austria, who said in June 2015 that a Fortress Europe is necessary to stop the immigration chaos.<sup>184</sup> In September, then vice chancellor Mitterlehner from the conservative Austrian People's Party (German: *Österreichische Volkspartei*, ÖVP) demanded stricter control of the EU's external borders in an interview and admitted that the necessary measures would lead to Fortress Europe.<sup>185</sup> Yet, the most famous demand was made by Interior Minister Johanna Mikl-Leitner (ÖVP) in October 2015. Upon witnessing the chaotic inflow of refugees during a visit to the border with Slovenia, Mikl-Leitner demanded that a Fortress Europe be built.<sup>186</sup> Her claim was widely reported and brought the positive connotation of the term Fortress Europe to the attention of the broad public. Mikl-Leitner defended her use of the term and repeated her demand several times before she stepped down from her office in April 2016.<sup>187</sup> Yet, only two other ÖVP politicians repeated her demand, once each in 2015 and 2016.<sup>188</sup> Apart from that, neither the ÖVP nor any of its politicians used the term Fortress Europe, not even after the 2017 elections when the ÖVP formed a coalition government with the FPÖ under Chancellor Kurz.<sup>189</sup> Likewise, all other parties and politicians refrained from using Fortress Europe with a positive connotation, except for some FPÖ politicians. Heinz-Christian Strache, chairman of the FPÖ from 2005 to 2019, picked up the term in November 2015 and demanded the creation of a Fortress Europe several times in 2015 and 2016. He also

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Greens used the term (in a dismissive way) in the program for the 2013 elections. No other party used the term. Second, parliamentary records from 1999-2014 were checked via the advanced search function of the website of the Austrian parliament ([www.parlament.gv.at](http://www.parlament.gv.at)). Result: in those 16 years the term Fortress Europe was only used eight times in parliamentary speeches and debates by parliamentarians from different parties and always with a negative connotation. Third, media articles containing the term "Festung Europa" from Austrian sources covered by the Factiva database were reviewed for the years 2010 to 2014 without finding demands for building Fortress Europe.

<sup>184</sup> Austria Press Agency 2015a.

<sup>185</sup> Koller 2015.

<sup>186</sup> ORF 2015. (Original quote by Mikl-Leitner in German: "Wir müssen an einer Festung Europa bauen.")

<sup>187</sup> E.g., Mikl-Leitner 2015 and Pfarrhofer 2016.

<sup>188</sup> Austria Press Agency 2015b; Ertlschweiger 2016.

<sup>189</sup> The term Fortress Europe did not appear on the web presence of the ÖVP ([www.dieneuevolkspartei.at](http://www.dieneuevolkspartei.at)) nor in its election programs for national elections 2017 (checked via Manifesto Project) and European elections 2019 (<https://www.dieneuevolkspartei.at/download/Wahlprogramm.pdf>), and, according to parliamentary records, no ÖVP politician used the term in parliament after 2016. Also, Factiva contains no news articles which suggest demands for Fortress Europe by ÖVP politicians.

repeated this demand as vice chancellor 2018.<sup>190</sup> A few party officials also demanded Fortress Europe occasionally.<sup>191</sup> Yet, Strache did not repeat his demand in parliament. In fact, only once did an FPÖ politician demand Fortress Europe in parliament.<sup>192</sup> Furthermore, the term did not appear in the party's election programs for national elections 2017 and European elections 2019.<sup>193</sup> On the FPÖ's web presence, Fortress Europe appears only in articles referring to officials using the term, but not as a general party demand by itself. Thus, it is unclear if establishing Fortress Europe is an official demand or just the opinion of some party members, especially after Strache renounced all offices in May 2019 after a scandal.<sup>194</sup>

If the scope of research is broadened to include political movements, it becomes obvious that demands for Fortress Europe had already existed before the immigration crisis of 2015. The Identitarian Movement Austria (German: *Identitäre Bewegung Österreich*, IBÖ), an activist movement of the New Right has used the term since its establishment in 2012. The slogan "Fortress Europe - shut the borders" is a common demand of the IBÖ.<sup>195</sup> IBÖ boss Sellner even boasted that Mikl-Leitner adopted the ideas of the IBÖ when she used the term.<sup>196</sup> Although the IBÖ is rather small, its provocative and highly public activism could indeed have influenced, consciously or subconsciously, the politicians who adopted the term in the wake of the immigration crisis. Thus, since the demand for Fortress Europe originated from the IBÖ and since it is not clear whether Fortress Europe is an official demand of the FPÖ, this case study will focus on the IBÖ. Yet, in addition, the ideas of the FPÖ for EU border protection, especially those stated by politicians using the term Fortress Europe, will be compared to the demands by the IBÖ because there are supposed to be secret connections between the IBÖ and the FPÖ.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> FPÖ 2015a; Strache 2015; FPÖ 2015b; Die Presse 2016; FPÖ 2016; Stein 2018.

<sup>191</sup> FPÖ 2017a; Austrian Parliament 2018; FPÖ Oberösterreich 2019.

<sup>192</sup> Amesbauer 2019.

<sup>193</sup> The national election program was checked via the Manifesto Project database. As program for the European elections served the website [www.fpoe.eu](http://www.fpoe.eu).

<sup>194</sup> Groendahl 2019.

<sup>195</sup> Lichtmesz 2013; IBÖ 2016a.

<sup>196</sup> Sellner 2015a.

<sup>197</sup> Thalhammer 2016; Colette et al. 2019.

## 5.1.2 Fortress Europe According to the Identitarian Movement Austria

### 5.1.2.1 Introduction of the IBÖ

The Identitarian Movement Austria (IBÖ) is an extreme right political youth movement founded in 2012 which fascist features in its ideology, rhetoric, and style. It tries to obtain a widespread impact on public discourse through activist campaigns accompanied by intensive use of social media and public relations work.<sup>198</sup> The IBÖ is part of the New Right and has its roots in the French *Bloc Identitaire*. The New Right (German: *Neue Rechte*; French: *Nouvelle Droite*) is an intellectual stream which developed originally in France in the 1960s in opposition to the New Left and the 68 movement. Its aim was and is to make extreme right ideas socially acceptable and spread them into the conservative center of society by distancing itself from national socialist traditions and using a new terminology in its arguments (e.g., “cultures” instead of “races”). As part of this ideological stream, the *Bloc Identitaire* and its youth organization *Génération Identitaire* were founded in France in 2003 with the goal to create a pan-European network of activist movements. The resulting Identitarian movements in various European countries, including the IBÖ, all use the same symbol (the Greek letter lambda) and colors (black and yellow) and promote a similar xenophobic and anti-Islam ideology centered on the fear of an alleged Great Replacement. Identitarians claim that the mass immigration of people from foreign cultures will gradually replace the autochthonous populations in Europe and destroy their cultures by turning them into a minority in their own homeland. Therefore, Identitarians aim to stop foreign mass immigration and preserve European cultures and identities. Among each other, the Identitarian movements keep loose contact and sometimes organize transnational campaigns. Moreover, basically all maintain contacts with the extreme right scene in their respective countries.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance 2019.

<sup>199</sup> Austrian Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution and Counterterrorism 2016, pp.43-46.

In Austria, the IBÖ has increased its campaigns and activities since 2015. Towards the public the IBÖ tries to appear as concerned, patriotic citizens and to disguise its xenophobic and Islamophobic messages with phrases like “remigration,” “ethno-pluralism,” or “preserving European cultures.”<sup>200</sup> Yet, the IBÖ has so far failed to mobilize big masses and significantly expand its member base, which is estimated at around 550 people.<sup>201</sup> Nevertheless, its public activities, conducted with a small group of activists and ranging from poster campaigns, street theater, and squats to symbolic protests, have attracted much attention and contributed to polarizing public opinions on immigration.<sup>202</sup> Moreover, it is assumed that the IBÖ also spreads its ideology through its influence on and interconnections with parts of the FPÖ. Many leading figures of the IBÖ were previously active in the FPÖ and keep close relations with the party while some FPÖ officials have attended IBÖ demonstrations.<sup>203</sup>

#### *5.1.2.2 Ideas for Fortress Europe*

According to IBÖ chairman Martin Sellner, the use of sharpened terminology is a deliberate strategy by the IBÖ to promote its ideas and demands. One example of this strategy is the symbolic term Fortress Europe. Demands for Fortress Europe are commonly shouted at IBÖ events and appear on IBÖ merchandise.<sup>204</sup> The term combines all IBÖ demands and ideas for border protection and reducing immigration in order to stop the feared Great Replacement.

Regarding the protection of the Europe’s external land borders, the IBÖ demands a closure based on the model of the Hungarian border fence. External maritime borders should be closed in the same way that Australia closed its maritime borders.<sup>205</sup> Since 2013, Australia has been implementing Operation Sovereign Borders, according to which all irregular immigrants trying to reach Australia by boat are intercepted at sea and brought to detention camps outside

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<sup>200</sup> Austrian Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution and Counterterrorism 2016, p.43.

<sup>201</sup> ORF 2019.

<sup>202</sup> Austrian Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution and Counterterrorism 2017, p.53.

<sup>203</sup> Thalhammer 2016; Colette et al. 2019.

<sup>204</sup> Sellner 2015a; Lichtmesz 2013; IBÖ 2016a. IBÖ merchandise with the slogan Fortress Europe can be found in the IBÖ affiliated online shops [www.ibladen.de](http://www.ibladen.de) and [www.phalanx-europa.com](http://www.phalanx-europa.com).

<sup>205</sup> IBÖ 2017.



Australia from where they are returned to their home countries or resettled to third countries. The operation is accompanied by an information campaign in various Asian countries informing potential migrants about the policy.<sup>206</sup> Despite violating international law and facing severe criticism, the Australian government maintains the position that “no-one who travels illegally to Australia by boat will be allowed to remain in Australia.”<sup>207</sup> In the European context such a policy would mean that every boat with irregular immigrants has to be intercepted and detention camps must be established outside Europe (e.g., in North Africa) from where irregular immigrants can be deported or resettled to non-European countries. This policy must be accompanied with respective information campaigns in Arab and African countries.

The overarching goal of a Fortress Europe with such border protection policies is to stop the inflow of more foreign “settlers.”<sup>208</sup> This implies that irregular immigrants who have reached the external European borders would not be allowed to enter or stay even if they claim asylum. The IBÖ does not explicitly propose abolishing the asylum system. Yet, it does so implicitly by rejecting the “asylum madness,” complaining that tightening asylum laws would not be enough to solve the problem of foreign mass immigration, and suggesting that refugees should receive help only in their countries of origin or neighboring countries.<sup>209</sup> The only logical conclusion of these statements is to abolish the asylum system and reject all asylum seekers at the border. Moreover, the IBÖ wants to significantly reduce the inflow of foreign immigrants, especially Muslims, in general to stop the Great Replacement. According to Sellner, a Fortress Europe would entail a reversal of migration flows meaning that all illegal immigrants already present in European countries must return to their homelands.<sup>210</sup> However, it is not clear how the term illegal is defined here. In order to reach the aspired level of ethnic homogeneity, most people with foreign roots would have to leave even if they are currently legal residents. The

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<sup>206</sup> Berlo 2015, pp.76-77.

<sup>207</sup> Australian Government 2019.

<sup>208</sup> Sellner 2015a.

<sup>209</sup> IBÖ 2016b, p.4.

<sup>210</sup> Sellner 2015a; Sellner 2015b.

vision of the IBÖ would probably require a drastic change of laws and massive use of brute force to expel unwanted persons.<sup>211</sup> The IBÖ tries to downplay such conclusions by emphasizing its rejection of violence or claiming that Fortress Europe would not lead to global apartheid but allows intercultural exchange and small scale migration.<sup>212</sup> Yet, these relativizations do not seem compatible with the realization of core demands of the IBÖ.

Furthermore, the role of the EU remains unclear in the IBÖ's vision of Fortress Europe. All ideas and demands only refer to Europe in general, without further defining the political or geographic scope of Europe, while the EU is not mentioned directly. However, the IBÖ neither demands an end of the EU nor proposes an alternative organization or framework for cooperation of Europe states. Therefore, it can be assumed that a realization of the demanded Fortress Europe within the institutional framework of the EU would be acceptable to the IBÖ.

To sum up, the Fortress Europe envisioned by the IBÖ denies entry to all asylum seekers and other irregular immigrants by rejecting them directly at the fenced off and heavily guarded external land and sea borders without any chance of getting asylum. If necessary, they will be detained in camps outside Europe from where they will be returned to their homeland or point of departure. Legal immigration for labor or other purposes will be reduced to a minimum. Internally, Fortress Europe would most likely see pressure against people with an immigration background to emigrate or completely assimilate to whatever would be defined as the dominant culture. Whether this Fortress Europe should be realized in the institutional framework of the EU or by a different form of cooperation between European states, is not entirely clear.

### *5.1.2.3 Comparison to FPÖ Demands for EU Border Protection & Asylum Policies*

The FPÖ claims that the EU is still not better prepared to stop a massive immigration wave than it was in 2015. To change that, the FPÖ proposes two important measures. First, it demands a reform of current legal regulations (e.g., Dublin Regulation, Geneva Refugee Convention) to

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<sup>211</sup> Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance 2019.

<sup>212</sup> E.g., Sellner 2016.

allow individual and collective rejections of refugees directly at a state border when it is obvious that they try to enter a state via a state in which they would be safe as well. The aim is to keep refugees in the region of their homeland, preferably in the first safe country accessible. Second, the FPÖ demands that refugees are only allowed to enter the EU after their asylum claim has been validated. That requires the creation of special camps outside the EU where asylum seekers and irregular immigrants will be detained until their claims are evaluated.<sup>213</sup> The aim is to stop foreign immigration to the EU and especially to Austria to protect the culture of the autochthonous Austrian population.<sup>214</sup> Details about how the external EU borders should be controlled to enable the detection and detention of every irregular immigrant are not given in the official FPÖ program. However, the analysis of statements by FPÖ officials who use the term Fortress Europe, especially by Strache (chairman from 2005 to 2019), provide additional details. According to Strache, land borders should be closed the same way Hungary did and irregular immigrants coming across the sea should be treated based on the Australian model.<sup>215</sup>

In conclusion, the Fortress Europe demanded by some FPÖ officials seems very similar to the fortress demanded by the IBÖ in the area of border protection with fences, surveillance technology, strict interception of irregular migrant boats, and detention camps outside the EU. Further, the FPÖ also wants to stop foreign immigration in general although it does not put an emphasis on reversing the immigration that happened in the past apart from consequently deporting foreigners whose residence is already illegal or who committed severe crimes. Regarding asylum, it seems to be that some form of asylum system should be kept although a reform of the legal regulations will reduce asylum and protection rights compared to today.

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<sup>213</sup> FPÖ 2019.

<sup>214</sup> FPÖ 2017b, pp.4-5.

<sup>215</sup> Die Presse 2016.

## 5.2 Germany

### 5.2.1 Identification of Case Study Subjects

In Germany, demands for establishing a Fortress Europe were very scarce before the immigration crisis. The very small, extreme right party The 3<sup>rd</sup> Way (German: *Der III. Weg*) demanded a Fortress Europe once on its website in 2013.<sup>216</sup> In 2014, the extreme right National Democratic Party of Germany (German: *Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, NPD) selected Fortress Europe as the motto for its national party congress.<sup>217</sup> Further, the Identitarian Movement Germany (German: *Identitäre Bewegung Deutschland*, IBD) established in 2012 also uses the Identitarian demand of Fortress Europe as a slogan, but it was not very active in Germany before the immigration crisis.<sup>218</sup>

In the wake of the immigration crisis, demands for Fortress Europe became increasingly popular among the extreme right.<sup>219</sup> To a broader public, these demands became especially known through PEGIDA. PEGIDA was a protest movement against Muslim immigration whose Monday demonstrations in Dresden received nationwide media coverage.<sup>220</sup> PEGIDA even tried to form an alliance called Fortress Europe with extreme right movements and parties from other European countries by signing the so-called Prague Declaration against Muslim immigration. Yet, this alliance and its planned Fortress Europe demonstrations in February 2016 failed.<sup>221</sup> In Germany, PEGIDA massively lost influence in 2016 after internal conflicts and a decline of refugee arrival numbers.<sup>222</sup> However, some politicians of the Alternative for Germany (German: *Alternative für Deutschland*, AfD), who were sympathizing with PEGIDA, adopted the term in 2015 and also started to demand the Fortress Europe.<sup>223</sup> The AfD was

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<sup>216</sup> Der III. Weg 2013.

<sup>217</sup> NPD Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania 2014.

<sup>218</sup> German Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution 2019a.

<sup>219</sup> E.g., Voigt 2015; Zasowk 2015; IBD 2016.

<sup>220</sup> Heim 2017, pp.1-4.

<sup>221</sup> Vorländer et al. 2018, pp.67-68.

<sup>222</sup> Vorländer et al. 2018, p.197.

<sup>223</sup> E.g., Kubitschek 2015; AfD Bavaria 2015; Alexe 2015.

founded in 2013 as a Eurosceptic and liberal right party but turned into an anti-immigration populist right party after the liberal wing split away in 2015.<sup>224</sup> After the immigration crisis, the demand for Fortress Europe was occasionally repeated by various AfD politicians from the right wing of the party.<sup>225</sup> Most notable were the demands by party chairman Jörg Meuthen, who praised a Fortress Europe on the 2018 party congress and continued to demand it.<sup>226</sup> Nevertheless, the demand for Fortress Europe never became an official AfD position. It did not appear in the party's manifesto from 2016 nor in any of its official election programs.<sup>227</sup> Also, the official web presences of the AfD on the federal level and in the 16 German states contain no official demand for Fortress Europe.<sup>228</sup> Furthermore, since the AfD entered the German Parliament in 2017, the *Bundestag*, no AfD politician demanded a Fortress Europe in an official speech there either.<sup>229</sup> Thus, for the purpose of this thesis, the AfD cannot be considered demanding a Fortress Europe.

Yet, while the AfD does not officially demand a Fortress Europe, the three small, extreme right parties NPD, The 3<sup>rd</sup> Way, and The Right (German: *Die Rechte*) do so, as their elections programs for European elections 2019 reveal. The NPD even demanded Fortress Europe already in its program for the national elections 2017.<sup>230</sup> This seems a logical consequence given the consistent use of the term by the NPD in the last years.<sup>231</sup> Since the NPD is the biggest

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<sup>224</sup> Plehwe 2017, pp.249-251.

<sup>225</sup> E.g., AfD 2017; Tobler 2017; AfD Bavaria 2018; Reichmuth 2018.

<sup>226</sup> AfD Brandenburg 2018; Meuthen 2018; AfD Kompakt 2019.

<sup>227</sup> The AfD party manifesto (in English) can be found here: [www.afd.de/grundsatzprogramm/#englisch](http://www.afd.de/grundsatzprogramm/#englisch).

The elections programs for German federal elections 2013 and 2017 can be found in the database of the Manifesto project ([www.manifesto-project.wzb.eu](http://www.manifesto-project.wzb.eu)). The program for the European elections of 2019 can be found here: <https://www.afd.de/europawahlprogramm/>.

<sup>228</sup> A search for the term Fortress Europe on the AfD homepage ([www.afd.de](http://www.afd.de)), the homepage of the AfD parliamentary group ([www.afdbundestag.de](http://www.afdbundestag.de)), and the AfD regional groups (which can be accessed via the main AfD homepage) returns only very few results, all of which are articles or press statements referring to individual AfD politicians who demanded a Fortress Europe.

<sup>229</sup> Access to German parliamentary records can be found here: <http://pdok.bundestag.de/>

In the ongoing 19. election period, which started on 24 October 2017, no AfD politician used the term Fortress Europe. Politicians of other parties used the term only in a critical manner or to distance themselves from it. Also, in the 18. election period from 2013 to 2017, in which the immigration crisis happened, no politician used the term with a positive connotation.

<sup>230</sup> Election programs for all German parties who participated in national elections 2017 and European elections 2019 are collected by the NGO Parlamentwatch e.V.: [www.abgeordnetenwatch.de](http://www.abgeordnetenwatch.de).

<sup>231</sup> E.g., NPD 2014; Voigt 2015; Zasowk 2015; NPD Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania 2016; Zasowk 2017a; Zasowk 2017b.

of the small extreme right parties, it will be selected as the focus for this case study.<sup>232</sup> The IBD will not be considered because its demands for Fortress Europe are basically identical with the demands by the IBÖ analyzed in the previous chapter. Although the NPD has suffered a massive decline in votes since the rise of the AfD (it is not represented in any German parliament anymore and even lost its one seat in the European Parliament in 2019), it is still an interesting case to study because of its informal influence on the extreme right wing of the AfD.<sup>233</sup>

## **5.2.2 Fortress Europe According to the National Democratic Party of Germany**

### *5.2.2.1 Introduction of the NPD*

The National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD) is the oldest extreme right party in Germany founded in 1964. Since its establishment, the NPD experienced different phases of rise and decline. In the 1960s, the NPD was elected into the parliaments of seven of the eleven West German federal states. However, after not clearing the 5% threshold in the federal elections in 1969, the fate of the NPD changed. It gradually lost all parliamentary mandates in the following years, probably because the conservative CDU moved more to the right as opposition party on the federal level in the 1970s. The decline of the NPD was characterized by internal conflict between conservative and radical wings of the party. In the early 1990s, the NPD underwent a process of internal reform and radicalization after welcoming new members from the militant extreme right scene, which experienced a boom after German reunification. The NPD defined itself as a revolutionary party with a focus on social justice in addition to its nationalistic agenda and adopted many ideas of the New Right. It also decided to concentrate its work on eastern Germany. After avoiding an official ban through the German constitutional court in 2001, the NPD experienced a new phase of success by entering the state parliaments of Saxony in 2004 and of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania in 2006. In addition, it managed to consolidate

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<sup>232</sup> The NPD has about 4.500 members, compared to just 650 of The Right and 500 of The 3<sup>rd</sup> Way, and is the only of the three extreme right parties that was ever represented in German state parliaments and in the European Parliament (German Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution 2019b).

<sup>233</sup> Pfahl-Traughber 2019, pp.27-28.

various strongholds on a municipal level in rural areas of Eastern Germany and even won a seat in the European Parliament in 2014.<sup>234</sup> Yet, with the rise of the populist AfD, the NPD experienced a new phase of decline and by 2016 had lost all seats in regional parliaments. On the federal level, its election results dropped to 0.4% in 2017 compared to 1.3% in 2013. In another closure case in 2017, the German constitutional court decided against banning the NPD despite confirming its anti-constitutional attitude because it was too powerless to realize its ambitions.<sup>235</sup> Nevertheless, the NPD maintains strong regional powerbases in some East-German municipalities.<sup>236</sup> Moreover, it exerts some influence on the extreme right wing of the AfD. Although the AfD has officially distanced itself from the NPD and both parties compete for the same voters, there are informal contacts and sympathies between some AfD officials and the NPD.<sup>237</sup> While in 2017 the NPD still criticized the AfD for being too soft on immigration matters, in 2018 it actually boasted that the AfD started to adopt NPD positions.<sup>238</sup> At the moment, the AfD is shaken by internal struggles between its extreme right wing and its conservative wing.<sup>239</sup> If the right wing prevails, ideas currently represented solely by the NPD could gain more prominence in German politics. On the other hand, if the conservatives manage to force the extreme right out, they could join the NPD and give the party new strength.

#### *5.2.2.2 Ideas for Fortress Europe*

The NPD's key concern is the issue of immigration which it believes to decide the future survival of the European peoples and their cultures.<sup>240</sup> The NPD's rejection of immigration is reflected in the term Fortress Europe, which made its first appearance in the motto of a party congress in 2014.<sup>241</sup> The subsequent use of the term by leading party officials like Udo Voigt,

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<sup>234</sup> Staud 2016.

<sup>235</sup> German Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution 2019c.

<sup>236</sup> Staud 2016.

<sup>237</sup> Pfahl-Traughber 2019, pp.27-28.

<sup>238</sup> NPD 2017, p.9; Richter 2018.

<sup>239</sup> Pfahl-Traughber 2019, pp.41-42.

<sup>240</sup> NPD 2019a, pp.2-4.

<sup>241</sup> NPD Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania 2014.

the ex-chairman and only NPD delegate in the European Parliament (2014-2019), and Ronny Zasowk, vice chairman since 2014, have established Fortress Europe in the vocabulary of the NPD.<sup>242</sup> In the introduction of its program for the German federal election 2017, the NPD officially demanded a Fortress Europe while by 2019 the term was promoted to form the title of the NPD program for the European election.<sup>243</sup> Thus, all demands related to border protection and immigration policy found in the two recent election programs or voiced by the leading party officials who established the term in the party's vocabulary can be assumed to form part of the NPD's vision of a Fortress Europe.

An analysis of the party's positions leads to the paradoxical observation that the NPD simultaneously advocates a Fortress Europe and an end of the EU. Yet, the NPD specifically calls upon Europe or the European nation states to build Fortress Europe and not on the EU. The NPD's traditional hostility towards the EU, which it denounces as a "left-liberal prison of nations," was further intensified by the immigration crisis of 2015. It blames the EU for forcing open borders upon its member and stripping them of their sovereignty with the aim of completely abolishing the existing European nation states.<sup>244</sup> Since it doubts that a proper reform of the EU is possible, the NPD wants Germany to leave the EU and suggests all other member states to do the same. As an alternative, it envisions a "Europe of fatherlands" which is a community of sovereign European states not dominated by a centralistic bureaucracy. These sovereign European states should create a Fortress Europe together.<sup>245</sup> Isolated demands related to the current EU, like strengthening Frontex, must be seen as a mere instrumentalization of the EU, while it still exists, to reduce foreign immigration. They should not distract from the NPD's goal of dismantling the EU and creating a separate Fortress Europe.

Regarding border protection, the NPD promotes a twofold strategy. First, all European states should return to controlling their own state borders how they seem fit to prevent irregular

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<sup>242</sup> E.g., Voigt 2015; Voigt 2018; Zasowk 2015; Zasowk 2017a; Zasowk 2018a.

<sup>243</sup> NPD 2017, p.4; NPD 2019, p.1.

<sup>244</sup> Voigt 2015; Zasowk 2017b; NPD 2017, p.26; NPD 2019, p.6.

<sup>245</sup> NPD 2019a, pp.4-6.



immigration within Europe. For that, the Schengen area should be abolished together with the EU.<sup>246</sup> Second, the community of European nations must organize a coordinated “line of defense” to protect itself against uncontrolled mass immigration. This is seen as a priority task that apparently cannot wait until the EU is replaced by the envisioned “Europe of fatherlands,” which is probably why the NPD suggests that, in addition to the Mediterranean, this “line of defense” runs along current EU land borders on the Balkan and in Central Eastern Europe.<sup>247</sup> Further, the NPD wants European states to deploy their armies to protect this line.<sup>248</sup> Although there are no direct demands for the construction of walls or fences, the specific terminology of a “line of defense” together with demands for a militarization of border protection make it very likely that there will be barriers at the borders of the NPD’s Fortress Europe. For the Mediterranean, the NPD demands an end of all public and private rescue missions.<sup>249</sup> Further, it proposes that European navies create a “wall of ships” to intercept all unauthorized boats like Australia does. All irregular immigrants trying to come to Europe by boat should be brought back to the point of their departure in order to destroy the business of people smugglers.<sup>250</sup>

To allow the instant rejection and refoulement of refugees, the NPD wants to leave the Geneva Convention on Refugees.<sup>251</sup> Further, it suggests a coordinated management of refugees on a European level “based on strictly tightened asylum and immigration policies.” Applying for asylum should be possible only outside Europe in special transit zones built in Turkey and North Africa. Asylum claims should be processed there to avoid unnecessary entries of asylum seekers into Europe.<sup>252</sup> However, it remains unclear according to which criteria asylum applications should be assessed and to which European countries accepted asylum seekers be

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<sup>246</sup> NPD 2019a, p.17; NPD 2017, p.15.

<sup>247</sup> The NPD is not clear about the scope of its envisioned community of sovereign European states and whether European in this context is defined culturally or geographically. Yet, given the Islamophobic attitude of the NPD, cooperation in a “Europe of fatherlands” might be mostly limited to current member states of the EU and not extend to countries on the Balkan with large Muslim populations, which would explain the proposed course of the “line of defense” along the path of the current EU land border.

<sup>248</sup> NPD 2019a, p.22; NPD 2017, p.15; Zasowk 2018a.

<sup>249</sup> NPD 2019a, p.17.

<sup>250</sup> Zasowk 2017c; Voigt 2018; Zasowk 2018a.

<sup>251</sup> NPD 2017, p.15.

<sup>252</sup> NPD 2017, p.22; NPD 2019a, p.17.

transferred from the transit zones. Given that the NPD rejects any current proposal for a resettlement or distribution of refugees within the EU, its Fortress Europe is unlikely to have any binding mechanism for taking in refugees from the transit zones.<sup>253</sup> Thus, the plan of the NPD would probably mean a de facto abolishment of the right to asylum and replace it, if at all, with some protection status granted only to few selected individuals by the goodwill of states.<sup>254</sup> Any other way that allowed “mass immigration through the asylum system,” as the current asylum policies in the EU allegedly do, would be unacceptable to the NPD.<sup>255</sup>

In general, the NPD rejects any form of mass foreign immigration to Europe. It complains about the replacement of the autochthonous European population through immigrants that is currently being tolerated or even fostered by the EU and most state governments. In fact, the NPD wants to stop all types of immigration to Europe including the recruitment of foreign laborers. The reason for that can be found in the NPD’s openly racist goal of preserving Europe as the “home of white European people.”<sup>256</sup> It sees Europe as the exclusive “lebensraum for Europeans.”<sup>257</sup> The European peoples and their cultures should be preserved and not dissolve into multi-cultural, ethnically heterogenous societies like the USA.<sup>258</sup> However, this aim includes preventing a mixing between the European peoples as well. Therefore, the NPD wants to abolish the freedom of movement in the current EU and plans to reintroduce controls at all state borders in addition to its envisioned “line of defense” around Fortress Europe.

To sum up, the NPD envisions a Fortress Europe in opposition to the current EU. Instead of a union with free internal mobility, Europe is characterized by independent nation states that focus on keeping foreign immigration to a minimum in order to maintain ethnically homogenous societies. Besides controlling their own national borders, these sovereign European states

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<sup>253</sup> NPD 2019a, p.16.

<sup>254</sup> In 2010, the NPD already openly demanded an abolishment of the right to asylum in its general party program (NPD 2010, p.13).

<sup>255</sup> NPD 2017, p.20.

<sup>256</sup> NPD 2019a, p.3.

<sup>257</sup> NPD 2019a, p.16. With the term lebensraum (English: habitat or living space) the NPD makes direct use of national-socialist terminology in its election program.

<sup>258</sup> NPD 2017, p.9; Zasowk 2017a.

cooperate in maintaining a militarized “line of defense” guarding their collective territories against irregular immigrants coming from outside Europe. Refugees are denied access at the border and the maritime routes to Europe are blocked through instant return of migrant boats to the coast of their departure. Asylum seekers must hold out in transit zones outside of Europe hoping that some European country shows pity and deliberately grants them entry. Most likely that will not happen; the asylum system is de facto abolished. Any way to immigrate to Europe through legal means, like obtaining a working visa, is not available either.

## 5.3 Italy

### 5.3.1 Identification of Case Study Subjects

In Italy, the use of the term Fortress Europe (Italian: *Fortezza Europa*) in the media has had an increasing trend in recent years, and it is used relatively more than in other EU countries. However, this use of the term in the media is not accompanied by a corresponding use in politics. An analysis of the election programs of Italian parties participating in the last two European elections in 2019 and 2014 and in the last two national elections in 2018 and 2013 reveals that no party used the term in any election program.<sup>259</sup> An additional review of the web presences of Italian parties shows that the term Fortress Europe is only used occasionally by some parties from the left who use the term in a dismissive or criticizing manner. Italian parties from the right seem to make no use of the term.<sup>260</sup> These findings are supported by a search of the stenographic reports of debates in both chambers of the Italian parliament since 2006. In the records for the Senate of the Italian Republic, the term Fortress Europe appears only three times in Italian and seven times in English. In the records for the Chamber of Deputies, the term appears

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<sup>259</sup> See annex for a list of links to the election programs of Italian parties for the European elections in 2019 and 2014. The election programs for the most recent Italian national election in 2018 are all published for transparency reasons on the webpage of the Italian Ministry of the Interior (<https://dait.interno.gov.it/elezioni/trasparenza/politiche2018>). The programs for the national election in 2013 can be found in the database of the Manifesto Project ([www.manifesto-project.wzb.eu](http://www.manifesto-project.wzb.eu)).

<sup>260</sup> See annex for a list of Italian parties and links to their web presence.

just seven times in Italian and four times in English.<sup>261</sup> In every case, the term was used by left-wing parliamentarians. In Italian, it was usually used in a dismissive or criticizing manner, except once when it was a direct reference to an extreme right organization with the literal name of Fortezza Europa. The use of the English term was always a reference to an NGO with the literal name Fortress Europe, which observes migrant deaths in the Mediterranean. Parliamentarians from right-wing parties made no use of the term.

The total absence of the term Fortress Europe from the vocabulary of Italian right-wing parties is a bit surprising. The right-populist Lega Nord (English: Northern League; sometimes just referred to as Lega), for example, was a signatory to the so-called Prague Declaration against Muslim immigration initiated by the German PEGIDA movement in early 2016 under the motto Fortress Europe.<sup>262</sup> Yet, apparently the Lega did not adopt the term. Moreover, Matteo Salvini, Lega chairman and current Italian Minister of the Interior, is often associated in media with the term Fortress Europe because of his anti-immigration positions.<sup>263</sup> However, there is no proof on the Lega's web presence, on Salvini's twitter accounts, nor in media articles available in Factiva that he uses the term himself.<sup>264</sup> Regarding other right-wing parties, a further analysis of party programs shows that the two parties CasaPound (literal translation: House of Pound) and Forza Nuova (English: New Force) share a similar extreme right, neofascist worldview as the German extreme right parties which make frequent use of the term Fortress Europe.<sup>265</sup> Yet, contrary to their German counterparts, none of them have adopted the term.

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<sup>261</sup> Stenographic records for the Senate of the Italian Republic (Italian: *Senato della Repubblica*) can be found via the search function of the Senate's website: <http://www.senato.it/ric/generale/nuovaricerca.do>. Databases with records for the Chamber of Deputies (Italian: *Camera dei deputati*) for the current and the three prior legislative periods since 2006 can be accessed here: <https://www.camera.it/leg18/221>.

<sup>262</sup> Vorländer et al. 2018, pp.67-68.

<sup>263</sup> E.g., Pelosi 2018; Geddes et al. 2018; Arnold 2019.

<sup>264</sup> The following three twitter accounts associated with Salvini were searched for the term "Fortezza Europa" via the search function of the twitter webpage: <https://twitter.com/legasalvini>, <https://twitter.com/salvinimi>, <https://twitter.com/matteosalvinimi>.

<sup>265</sup> CasaPound Italia 2019; Forza Nuova 2019a; Forza Nuova 2019b. Both parties inter alia want a complete stop of all immigration flows to prevent the replacement of the autochthonous population in Italia and Europe. Moreover, just like the German NPD, Forza Nuova is a member of the pan-European party Alliance for Peace and Freedom (Forza Nuova 2019c; NPD 2019b).

In order to have a more complete picture of the use or absence of the term Fortress Europe, the scope of analysis is broadened to the whole, quite strong extreme right scene in Italy. In addition to the two already mentioned parties, CasaPound and Forza Nuova, the scene currently comprises thirteen movements. Basically all focus on some regional stronghold but they share informal connections, participate in common events (e.g., protests or concerts), and influence each other's ideology to some extent.<sup>266</sup> A review of their web presences and a search in Factiva show no sign that any of them use the term Fortress Europe, except one: the group Fortezza Europa, which literally calls itself Fortress Europe. Although being the youngest extreme right movement in Italy, founded just recently in 2017, Fortezza Europa already dominates the extreme right scene in the region around the north Italian city of Verona, a city with a long and infamous history of shaping right extremism and neofascism in Italy.<sup>267</sup> For the purpose of analyzing the ideas of supporters of a Fortress Europe, who use the term themselves, Fortezza Europa seems to be the only suitable study object in Italy. However, given its recent rise in a historic stronghold of Italian right extremism and the potential ideological influence on other extreme right movements that goes along with it, it is also an interesting case in its own right.

### **5.3.2 Fortress Europe According to Fortezza Europa**

#### *5.3.2.1 Introduction of Fortezza Europa*

Fortezza Europa was founded in January 2017 in the city of Verona after a split in the local section of the extreme right Forza Nuova party over disagreements about the elections for mayor of Verona. While the party leadership wanted to stay out of the elections, a group led by Yari Chiavenato, the provincial party secretary of Forza Nuova, opted for supporting the candidate proposed by the Lega, Federico Sboarina, who subsequently became the new mayor of Verona. Prior to the elections, Chiavenato and his followers broke away from the Forza Nuova

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<sup>266</sup> Adnkronos 2017.

<sup>267</sup> Siviero 2018.

and founded Fortezza Europa. Officially, it is registered as a cultural association with an unknown number of members. An arrow cross originating from the symbol of the Hungarian fascist party of the 1930s serves as its logo.<sup>268</sup> The guiding values of the association are cultural identity, a traditional family model, national autarchy, and aristocracy (in the sense of rule by the best in rejection of egalitarian ideas). In practice, the focus is on the first aspect. According to Emanuele Tesauro, president of Fortezza Europa and a former national leader of Forza Nuova, the association defines itself as an Identitarian group.<sup>269</sup> It advocates the preservation of national identities and objects to multiculturalism and immigration. Shortly after its establishment, Fortezza Europa absorbed most of the local Forza Nuova party and attracted many other right militants. It soon turned into the most active extreme right movement in the region around Verona.<sup>270</sup> Its activities range from rallies and activist protests to concerts and student parties. In addition, Fortezza Europa organizes discussions and conventions, *inter alia* on the topic of Fortress Europe, which are often attended by some officials from the municipal government, including the mayor, and from the local section of the Lega.<sup>271</sup> Even Lorenzo Fontana, a Lega politician with origins in Verona who later became Italian Minister of Family Affairs after the national elections in 2018, was seen at an event organized by Fortezza Europa.<sup>272</sup> In general, Fortezza Europa tries to build informal ties to various local politicians from the Lega, e.g., by openly supporting the local candidate of the Lega in the European elections in 2019.<sup>273</sup> This pragmatic strategy of seeking informal ties to the Lega distinguishes it from other extreme right movements in Italy. Allegedly, Fortezza Europa aspires to become an alternative to Forza Nuova and CasaPound in the extreme right scene.<sup>274</sup> If it manages to gain some real political

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<sup>268</sup> Berizzi 2017; L'Arena 2017; Siviero 2018.

<sup>269</sup> L'Arena 2017. However, Fortezza Europa has no official links to the pan-European Identitarian network. The official Identitarian movement in Italy is called *Generazione Identitaria*, which, surprisingly, seems to make use of the Identitarian slogan *Fortress Europe* ([www.generazione-identitaria.com](http://www.generazione-identitaria.com)).

<sup>270</sup> Siviero 2018.

<sup>271</sup> L'Arena 2017; Marconi e Testi 2019.

<sup>272</sup> *Giornalettismo* 2018.

<sup>273</sup> Zanutto 2019; Marconi e Testi 2019.

<sup>274</sup> Berizzi 2017.

influence on a regional level with its strategy, this could serve as a model for other extreme right movements in Italy to also establish better connections with the Lega in their regions and, thereby, gradually draw the Lega closer to the extreme right.

### *5.3.2.2 Ideas for Fortress Europe*

Given the fact that Fortezza Europa literally named itself Fortress Europe, it can be assumed that all its opinions and demands regarding immigration and border control form part of its vision of a Fortress Europe. Like most other Italian extreme right movements, Fortezza Europa uses its Facebook page as an official web presence instead of having an own website. Thus, the analysis of its opinions and demands rely primarily on the information available there.

In an official brochure published on its Facebook page, Fortezza Europa reveals its anti-immigration stance by advancing several prejudices about the economic burden as well as health and security risks of immigrants. The biggest concern is seen in the gradual replacement of the original population. The constant arrival of irregular immigrants and the increase in the total number of foreigners living in Italy are taken as proof of an ongoing “invasion.”<sup>275</sup> As a counter measure, Fortezza Europa emphasizes the importance of borders and the sovereign right of self-determination of peoples. If necessary, this right must be “defended from the top of walls” in order to stop the “annihilation” of national identities by mass immigration.<sup>276</sup> On its Facebook page, Fortezza Europa calls for an international attempt to curb migration.<sup>277</sup> Furthermore, it praises the Hungarian border fence as a positive example how to stop unwanted immigration on land borders.<sup>278</sup> Regarding maritime borders, the group voices no specific idea for its protection. Yet, it calls for a stop of irregular immigration across the sea and believes

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<sup>275</sup> Fortezza Europa 2018a, pp.3-5.

<sup>276</sup> VeronaSera 2018.

<sup>277</sup> Fortezza Europa 2019a.

<sup>278</sup> Fortezza Europa 2018b.

that rescue missions only increase it.<sup>279</sup> Concerning the issue of asylum, apart from criticizing the current system as too generous, there is no mention of how to handle asylum claims.<sup>280</sup>

Due to the limited availability of sources on Fortezza Europa and a lack of specific, out-right demands it is not possible to describe its envisioned Fortress Europe with certainty. Yet, based its self-proclaimed Identitarian character, it is possible to draw some basic conclusions. Fortezza Europa most likely envisions a continent where nations preserve their ethnic and cultural identities by rigorously protecting their own borders to prevent unwanted immigration, if necessary, with border barriers and military means. At sea, unauthorized boats would have to be intercepted and pushed back by force from their coast of destination. The focus on preserving national identity leaves no room for an asylum system that grants protection to more than just a few selected individuals by arbitrary choice. Legal immigration would also have to be strongly restricted in order not to endanger the ethnic demography of states. However, it is not clear what the specific European character of the Fortress Europe would be compared to merely coexisting states guarding their own national borders independently, nor if there is any role for the EU, which receives no mention.

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<sup>279</sup> Fortezza Europa 2018a, p.1 and p.4.

<sup>280</sup> Fortezza Europa 2019b.



## 6 Discussion and Evaluation

### 6.1 Comparison of Case Study Results

After conducting the multiple case study, it is now possible to attempt an answer to the research sub-question 4 about whether political parties and movements from different EU countries who are in favor of a Fortress Europe have the same ideas about what a Fortress Europe should look like. Since the case studies had to be limited to three EU countries, the answer is given with the restriction of being valid only for Austria, Germany, and Italy.

All three analyzed supporters of a Fortress Europe (the IBÖ from Austria, the NPD from Germany, and Fortezza Europa from Italy) are parties or movements from the extreme right scene in their respective country. They are all driven by the same fear of an alleged replacement of the autochthonous European populations through mass immigration, which they label as foreign invasion. In order to stop this invasion and preserve the identity of the European peoples, each advocates the establishment of a Fortress Europe. The visions of a Fortress Europe are all very similar. Slight differences are just the result of a lack of specificity in the ideas rather than due to real disagreements and can be overcome by the logical interpretation of the given ideas and demands under consideration of the common underlying motives for building a Fortress Europe.

In accordance with the theory of teichopolitics, all analyzed supporters of Fortress Europe demand a thorough protection and hardening of borders, including the erection of border barriers and border militarization, to prevent any irregular border crossings and to stop all unwanted cross-border flows of immigrants. The border fence built by Hungary in the wake of the immigration crisis is referred to as a role model. Sea borders should be closely monitored and guarded by patrol ships that intercept all unauthorized immigrant boats. A key feature of the envisioned Fortress Europe is that unwanted immigrants, including asylum seekers, are rejected directly at the border. Irregular immigrants intercepted or rescued at sea will be instantly

returned to the coast of their departure or brought to camps outside Europe from where they are deported to their homeland or resettled to third countries but not to Europe, a practice for which Australia's Operation Sovereign Borders serves as a role model. If at all, asylum claims can only be made in transit zones outside of Europe. Yet, in the absence of a binding mechanism to transfer asylum seekers from the transit zones to Europe, the right to asylum and the duty to protect refugees are de facto abolished. These measures imply massive violations of current asylum and human rights laws, which the NPD openly addresses by proposing the abolishment of the Geneva Convention on Refugees as a solution. The other two supporters of a Fortress Europe remain silent on these obvious implications of their ideas.

Furthermore, regular immigration would also face severe restrictions in a Fortress Europe. Any type of foreign immigration is seen as a threat to the ethnic homogeneity and cultural identity of European nations. Thus, in addition to fully stopping all irregular immigration and refugee movements, regular immigration must also be strictly limited to a very low level.

The only major disagreement, or rather vagueness, among the three analyzed supporters of a Fortress Europe is the role that the EU or European cooperation should play in the realization of a Fortress Europe. The IBÖ only speaks of Europe in general without addressing the EU directly. However, it neither explicitly rejects the EU nor proposes a different form of cooperation for protecting European borders. Thus, it can be assumed that the EU would be an acceptable framework for realizing Fortress Europe, provided that the necessary reforms in immigration and asylum laws etc. are made. The NPD, on the other hand, openly rejects the EU and wants to replace it with a loose community of fully sovereign states that is not further defined. In addition to guarding their own national borders and allowing only very limited migration among each other, these states work closely together to defend the external borders of their common territory against any unwanted immigration from outside of Europe. Lastly, Fortezza Europa's ideas lack any reference to the EU or European cooperation. Its envisioned Fortress Europe seems to be more a result of the sum of individual actions by single states rather

than of coordinated cooperation among European countries. Yet, despite the lack of specificity on the framework and scope of European cooperation in building Fortress Europe, the envisioned result is basically the same for all three supporters of a Fortress Europe: a continent with heavily guarded borders in which states can preserve their cultural and ethnic identities by exercising complete control over immigration and denying protection to unwanted refugees and asylum seekers.

## **6.2 Is Fortress Europe Already in Existence?**

Research sub-question 5, which asks if some aspects of a demanded Fortress Europe are already in existence, can be assessed by comparing the previously described extreme right vision of Fortress Europe to the current status of EU immigration policies and external border protection (as described in chapter 3.2).

A major aspect of the demanded Fortress Europe is that European borders should be closely monitored and protected, inter alia with border barriers. The perceived instability of its borders during the immigration crisis encouraged many European countries to pursue teicho-politics. Border barriers have been erected along more than 950 km of either external Schengen or EU borders and there are plans for further extensions. In addition, there exists an extensive surveillance system to monitor movements on external EU borders. In the Mediterranean, the aim is to detect and intercept all unauthorized immigrant boats. Hence, considering purely the existing infrastructure at the borders, it could be assumed that the EU has set out on a path to turn into the extreme right vision of Fortress Europe.

However, more important than the actual existence of border barriers and extensive surveillance of external land and sea borders are the immigration and asylum policies which the border protection measures should help to enforce. From that perspective, the EU is currently far away from the Fortress Europe envisioned by the extreme right, as the NPD regretfully

notes.<sup>281</sup> Asylum seekers cannot be rejected at the border but must be granted entry and protection at least until their claim has been evaluated. The principle of non-refoulement is respected. Irregular immigrants intercepted or rescued in the Mediterranean are not brought back to African shores nor to camps run by the EU outside its territory (as the Australian model would have it) but to European harbors, despite attempts by the current Italian government to close Italian ports. Furthermore, there are no intentions to severely increase restrictions on regular immigration, which far exceeds irregular immigration to the EU.<sup>282</sup>

IBÖ chairman Sellner basically summed up the situation when he admitted that a Fortress Europe is theoretically possible from a financial and logistical perspective but politically impossible with current governments and the existing human rights regime.<sup>283</sup> Thus, considered how extreme right groups envision Fortress Europe, it seems justified that EU officials reject all accusations of the EU being or wanting to become Fortress Europe despite increasing measures to improve monitoring and control capacities at external borders.<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>281</sup> NPD 2019a, p.16.

<sup>282</sup> For example, in 2016, “there were 2.3 million first residence permits issued to non-EU citizens, either for employment reasons (853,000), family reunion (779,000), or education (695,000)” while asylum applications, which can be seen as one indicator to estimate irregular immigration flows (see chapter 3.2.1), numbered 1.2 million (Münz 2018, p.12).

<sup>283</sup> Sellner 2015b.

<sup>284</sup> European Commission 2019d, p.3; European Commission 2019e, p.8.

## Conclusion

The goal of this thesis was to provide a better understanding of the use of the symbolic term Fortress Europe by political parties and movements in the EU who are in favor of establishing a Fortress Europe and of the ideas and demands which they attach to the term. To achieve this goal, three case studies were conducted to identify all political parties and movements in Austria, Germany, and Italy which explicitly use the term to demand a Fortress Europe. For each country, the ideas and demands for establishing a Fortress Europe by one extreme right party or movement were analyzed in more detail.

The rationale behind this thesis was the perceived discrepancy in the use of the term by opponents and supporters of a Fortress Europe in the wake of the immigration crisis of 2015. Prior to 2015, the term Fortress Europe was used in the context of immigration only by left-wing political actors and journalists with a negative connotation as a symbolic critique of the respective immigration and border protection policies in the EU, which they considered as too restrictive. Yet, in the wake of the immigration crisis the term has been adopted by right-wing parties and movements with a positive connotation in the sense that they started to explicitly demand a Fortress Europe. In consequence, the same symbolic term was used simultaneously to criticize the alleged existence of a Fortress Europe and to demand the creation of a Fortress Europe, which implied a denial that it already existed. Thus, opponents and supporters of Fortress Europe must have different ideas of what constitutes a Fortress Europe, but the differences are not very clear in public and political discourses where symbolic terms are mostly used without further explanations.

The literature review in this thesis shows that the negatively connotated use of the term Fortress Europe has been well covered in the literature. However, the definition of the term remains vague. Fortress Europe is mostly situationally defined by each critic, and the term has been used to criticize basically any status of EU external border protection and immigration policies that differ somehow from the leftist vision of completely open borders which can be

crossed freely by any migrant who wishes to do so. On the other hand, no author has yet analyzed the use of the term by supporters of a Fortress Europe and the ideas they associate with it. This thesis aims to close that gap in the literature.

Before the case studies were conducted, the appearance of the term Fortress Europe in the media coverage of 20 EU countries was quantitatively analyzed by use of the Factiva database. The analysis showed that the use of the term in media coverage in the EU experienced a strong increase in the wake of the immigration crisis of 2015. Furthermore, a ranking was created to determine in which EU countries the term was relatively more important in the media since 2015. Based on that ranking, three countries with a relatively high use of the term Fortress Europe in their national media were selected for further study: Austria, Germany, and Italy. Media coverage is a data source from which inferences about public and political discourses in a country can be drawn.<sup>285</sup> Therefore, it was assumed that it is more likely to find political parties or movements which use the term Fortress Europe with a positive connotation in a country where the term appears more often in the media.

In the case studies of Austria, Germany, and Italy, it was first attempted to identify all political parties and movements in support of a Fortress Europe. A rather surprising result was that populist right parties, which tend to be associated with the term in the media, do not use the term themselves. Neither the Alternative for Germany (German: *Alternative für Deutschland*, AfD) nor the Freedom Party of Austria (German: *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*, FPÖ) officially demand a Fortress Europe, e.g., in election programs or party publications, although some of their party officials have used the term occasionally. In Italy, neither the populist right Northern League (Italian: *Lega Nord*) nor any of its politicians, including its chairman and current Italian Minister of the Interior Matteo Salvini, seem to use the term Fortress Europe. Therefore, the case studies focused subsequently for an in-depth analysis on the following extreme right parties or movements from the three countries: the Identitarian Movement Austria

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<sup>285</sup> McCombs and Shaw 1972, p.176; Lawlor and Tolley 2017, pp.968-989.

(German: *Identitäre Bewegung Österreich*, IBÖ), the National Democratic Party of Germany (German: *Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, NPD), and Fortezza Europa (literal translation from Italian: Fortress Europe). The ideas of the IBÖ, the NPD, and Fortezza Europa for a Fortress Europe were found to be very similar as all of them are driven by the same fear of a foreign invasion through mass immigration. Their vision of a Fortress Europe is a continent with heavily guarded, militarized borders in which states can preserve their cultural and ethnic identities by enforcing a strict limitation of any type of immigration and denying protection to unwanted refugees and asylum seekers.

In a last step, the extreme right vision of Fortress Europe was compared to the current status of EU immigration policies and external border protection. If only the existing infrastructure at the borders is considered, it could be assumed that the EU is on a path to realizing the extreme right vision of Fortress Europe. However, more important are the actual immigration and asylum policies which the border protection measures should contribute to enforce. From that perspective, it must be concluded that the EU is currently far away from the Fortress Europe which is envisioned by the extreme right.

The adoption of the term Fortress Europe by extreme right parties and movements as well as the discrepancy between their vision and the status quo of EU immigration, asylum, and border protection policies call for a more sensitive use of the term by journalists and, especially, by pro-immigration politicians or activists. An inflationary and indiscriminate use of the term in criticizing any status of border protection and immigration control that does not comply with the leftist vision of open borders is potentially dangerous. It could condition those parts of the electorate who do not agree with the idea of completely open borders and prefer a certain level of border and immigration control into sympathizing with the symbolic term Fortress Europe. Some members of this part of the electorate might then be tempted to support parties or movements that advocate a Fortress Europe, maybe without realizing what extreme right positions they hide behind that symbolic term.

This thesis offers various interesting possibilities and perspectives for further research on the topic of Fortress Europe. First, the potential danger related to the critical use of the term as described in the previous paragraph could be analyzed. To determine the scale of this danger, a representative survey among the electorate in various EU countries could be conducted in order to assess opinions and ideas of voters regarding the term Fortress Europe. Such a survey should also enquire about general political attitudes, so that the opinions and ideas can be analyzed for different parts of the electorate. In addition, this thesis could be extended by conducting similar case studies for other EU countries with a relatively high use of the term Fortress Europe in their media (e.g., Spain or the Netherlands) in order to identify more parties and movements that advocate a Fortress Europe and to compare their ideas with the results of the case studies presented here. Furthermore, the media analysis contained in this thesis could serve as a starting point for detailed quantitative or qualitative content analyses of media coverage on the topic of Fortress Europe. Such analyses could generate valuable insights on what ideas of a Fortress Europe dominate the media of different EU countries.



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- Zasowk, R., 2018a. *Statt Symptompfuscherei der EU – wir brauchen die Festung Europa!* [Instead of curing symptoms – We need the Fortress Europe]. [online] 29 June 2018. Available at: <https://npd.de/2018/06/statt-symptompfuscherei-der-eu-wir-brauchen-die-festung-europa/> [Accessed 27 June 2019]. [In German].
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Code	Country	Official languages	Search terms
AT	Austria	German	("festung europa" or "fortress europe")
BE	Belgium	Dutch, French, German	("fort europa" or "forteresse europe" or "europa forteresse" or "festung europa" or "fortress europe")
BG	Bulgaria	Bulgarian	("Крепостта Европа" or "крепост Европа" or "fortress europe")
CZ	Czech Republic	Czech	("pevnost evropa" or "pevnosti evropa" or "fortress europe")
DE	Germany	German	("festung europa" or "fortress europe")
DK	Denmark	Danish	("fort europa" or "fæstning europa" or "fortress europe")
ES	Spain	Spanish, Catalan	("fortaleza europa" or "fortaleza europea" or "europa fortaleza" or "fortalesa d'Europa" or "fortress europe")
FI	Finland	Finnish, Swedish	("linnake eurooppa" or "linnoitus eurooppa" or "Eurooppa-linnakkeen" or "euroopan linnoitus" or "linnoitetaan eurooppaa" or "fort europa" or "fästning europa" or "fortress europe")
FR	France	French	("forteresse europe" or "europe forteresse" or "fortress europe")
HU	Hungary	Hungarian	("Európa erőd" or "Európa erődje" or "Erőd Európa" or "Európai erőd" or "Európa védőbástyája" or "Európa védőbástyáját" or "Európa védőbástyájának" or "fortress europe")
IE	Ireland	English, (Irish)	("fortress europe")
IT	Italy	Italian	("fortezza europa" or "fortress europe")
LU	Luxembourg	French, German	("forteresse europe" or "europe forteresse" or "festung europa" or "fortress europe")
MT	Malta	Maltese, English	("fortizza ewropa" or "fortress europe")
NL	Netherlands	Dutch	("fort europa" or "fortress europe")
PL	Poland	Polish	("twierdza Europa" or "twierdżę europa" or "twierdzy europa" or "twierdze europa" or "twierdzą europa" or "fortress europe")
PT	Portugal	Portuguese	("fortaleza europa" or "europa fortaleza" or "fortress europe")
SE	Sweden	Swedish	("fästning europa" or "fort europa" or "fortress europe")
SK	Slovakia	Slovak	("pevnosť Európa" or "pevnosti europa" or "pevnosťou Európa" or "fortress europe")
UK	United Kingdom	English	("fortress europe")

**Figure 1: Example Configuration of Factiva Search**

Free Text Search

Search Form

Examples

Query Genius (i) ■ v

"festung europa" or "fortress europe"

37/2648

Include additional Blogs and Boards

Date Enter date range... 01 / 01 / 1999 to 31 / 12 / 2018 dd/mm/yyyy Duplicates Identical Search

Source Austria

Author All Authors

Company All Companies

Factiva Expert Search

Subject All Subjects

Industry All Industries

Region All Regions

Look up

Language All Languages

More Options

Search for free-text terms in: Full Article

Exclude:
 

- Republished news (i)
- Recurring pricing and market data (i)
- Obituaries, sports, calendars (i)

Sort results by: Relevance

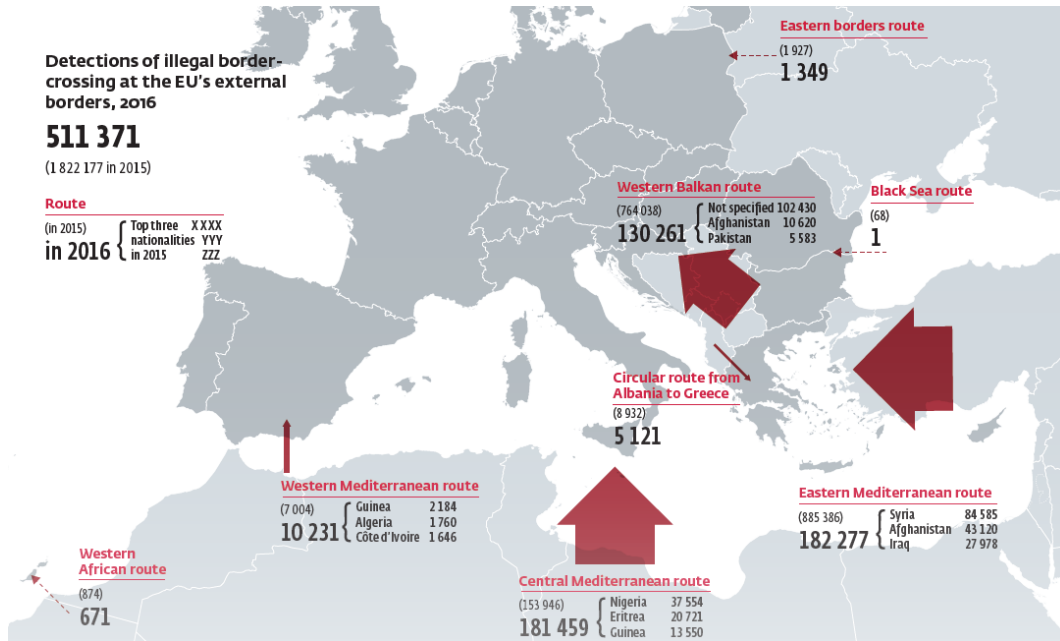
Source: Own screenshot from Factiva.

**Figure 2: Example Search Summary of Factiva Search**

Search Summary	
Text	"festung europa" or "fortress europe"
Date	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018
Source	Austria
Author	All Authors
Company	All Companies
Subject	All Subjects
Industry	All Industries
Region	All Regions
Language	All Languages
Results Found	790
Timestamp	12 May 2019 16:51

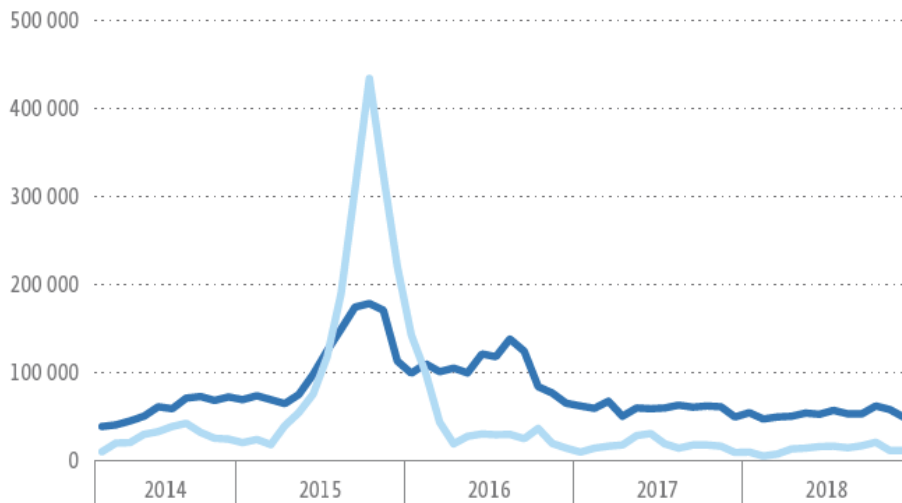
Source: Own screenshot from Factiva.

**Figure 3: Migration routes and illegal border-crossing detections in 2016**



Source: Frontex 2017, p.18.

**Figure 4: Monthly asylum applications in the EU+ and illegal border-crossing detections, March 2014 – December 2018**



Source: Frontex 2019, p.22.

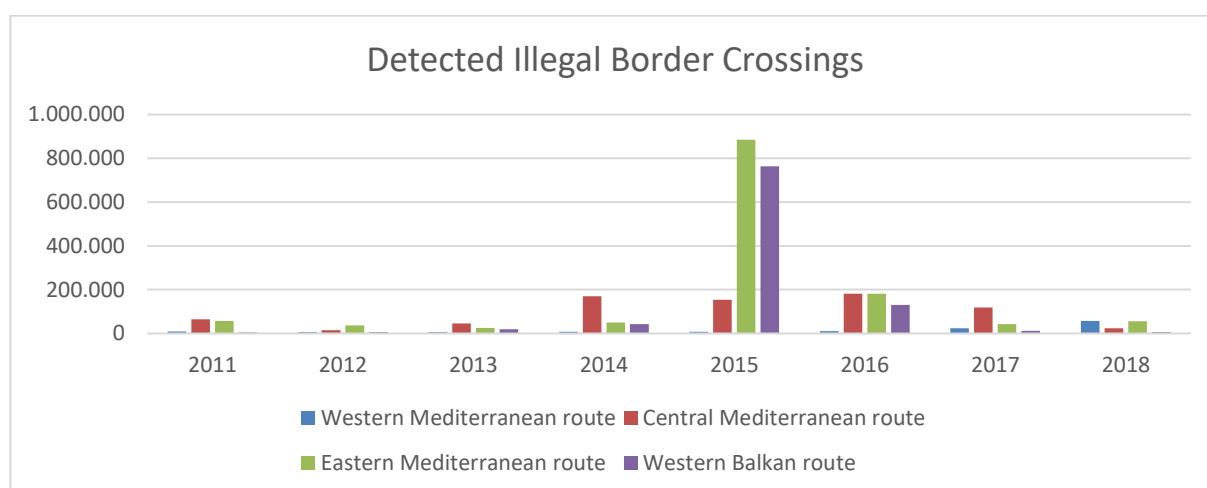


**Table 2: Detected Illegal Border Crossings**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Western Mediterranean route	8.448	6.397	6.838	7.272	7.164	10.231	23.063	57.034
Central Mediterranean route	64.261	15.151	45.298	170.664	153.946	181.459	118.962	23.485
Eastern Mediterranean route	57.025	37.224	24.799	50.834	885.386	182.277	42.319	56.561
Western Balkan route	4.658	6.391	19.951	43.357	764.038	130.261	12.179	5.869
<b>Total</b>	<b>141.051</b>	<b>72.437</b>	<b>107.365</b>	<b>282.962</b>	<b>1.822.337</b>	<b>511.371</b>	<b>204.750</b>	<b>150.114</b>

Source: Own table based on data from Frontex 2017, p.19 and Frontex 2019, p.43.

**Figure 5: Detected Illegal Border Crossings**



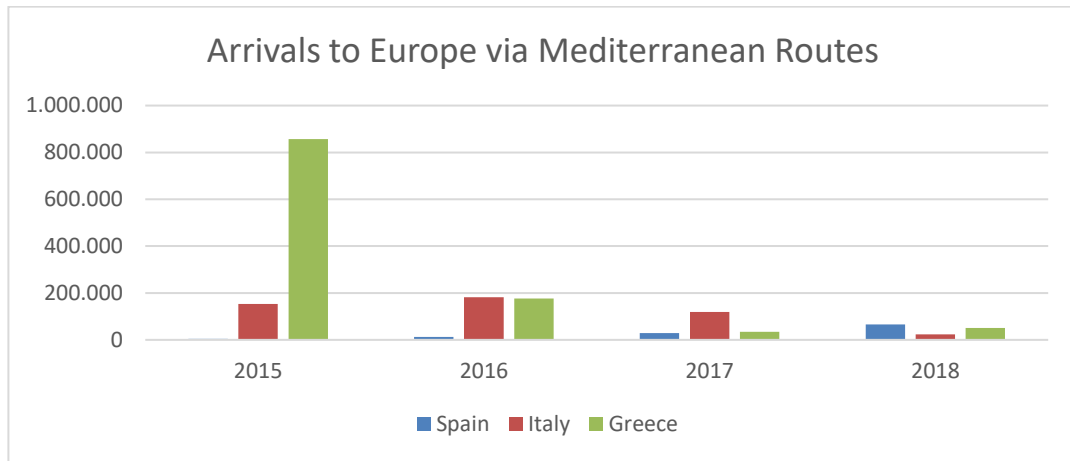
Source: Own graph based on data from Frontex 2017, p.19 and Frontex 2019, p.43.

**Table 3: Arrivals to Europe via Mediterranean Routes**

	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.046.599</b>	<b>387.739</b>	<b>186.768</b>	<b>144.166</b>
<b>Spain</b>	<b>3.845</b>	<b>13.246</b>	<b>28.707</b>	<b>65.325</b>
<b>Italy</b>	<b>153.842</b>	<b>181.436</b>	<b>119.369</b>	<b>23.370</b>
<b>Greece</b>	<b>857.363</b>	<b>176.906</b>	<b>35.052</b>	<b>50.215</b>

Source: Own table based on data from IOM 2017, IOM 2018, and IOM 2019.

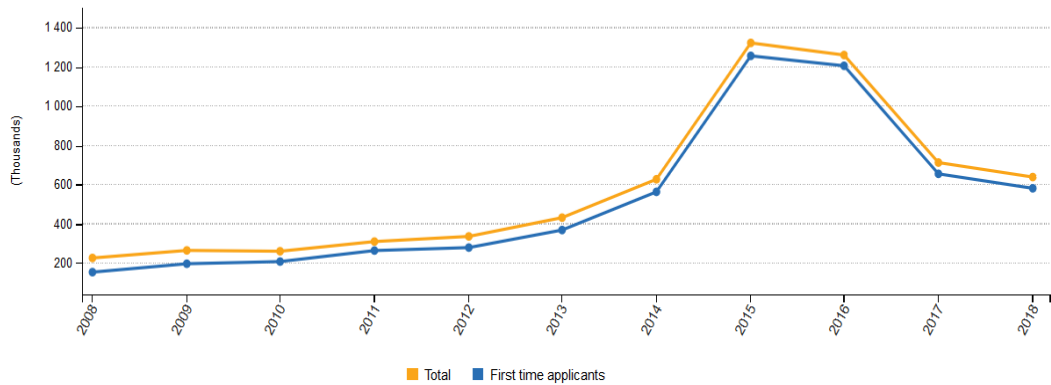
**Figure 6: Arrivals to Europe via Mediterranean Routes**



Source: Own graph based on data from IOM 2017, IOM 2018, and IOM 2019.

**Figure 7: Asylum Applications in the EU**

Asylum applications (non-EU) in the EU-28 Member States, 2008–2018



Source: Eurostat 2019a.

**Table 4: Results of the Quantitative Media Analysis**

Country Code	Country	Selected Search Options			Articles per year																			Total (1999-2018)	Linear regression (1999-2018)		Linear regression (2011-2018)		
		Text	Date	Source	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017		2018	Slope coefficient	r <sup>2</sup> (coefficient of determination)	Slope coefficient	r <sup>2</sup> (coefficient of determination)
AT	Austria	("festung europa" or "fortress europa")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	Austria	24	14	25	42	30	29	29	50	28	23	17	8	34	11	29	53	143	92	27	82	790	2,72	0,247	8,27	0,212
BE	Belgium	("fort europa" or "forteresse europa" or "europa fortresse" or "festung europa" or "fortress europa")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	Belgium	6	4	5	1	2	3	4	7	6	4	7	4	6	2	11	9	32	26	13	26	178	1,04	0,484	3,13	0,494
BG	Bulgaria	("Крепостта Европа" or "крепост Европа" or "fortress europa")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	Bulgaria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	2	6	10	10	5	2	39	0,37	0,452	0,71	0,198
CZ	Czech Republic	("pevnost europa" or "pevnosti europa" or "fortress europa")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	Czech Republic	6	8	10	7	18	10	10	5	3	4	1	4	4	1	3	8	13	26	7	12	160	0,13	0,017	1,90	0,344
DE	Germany	("festung europa" or "fortress europa")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	Germany	42	52	61	66	56	121	133	115	127	114	105	110	251	133	318	326	821	1340	312	673	5276	38,17	0,477	88,21	0,289
DK	Denmark	("fort europa" or "fæstning europa" or "fortress europa")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	Denmark	12	17	30	19	11	16	10	11	5	3	2	1	0	5	5	7	30	20	5	3	212	-0,47	0,098	1,06	0,065
ES	Spain	("fortaleza europa" or "fortaleza europea" or "europa fortaleza" or "fortaleza d'Europa" or "fortress europa")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	Spain	28	21	21	87	38	50	64	41	33	73	20	30	48	5	57	82	152	156	350	304	1660	10,39	0,439	46,24	0,830
FI	Finland	("linnake europa" or "linnoitus europa" or "Eurooppa-linnakkeen" or "euroopan linnoitus" or "linnoitetaan europaa" or "fort europa" or "fästning europa" or "fortress europa")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	Finland	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	13	0,00	0,000	0,23	0,218
FR	France	("forteresse europa" or "europa fortresse" or "fortress europa")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	France	18	8	36	38	43	53	67	47	50	114	70	26	56	28	73	88	194	122	36	115	1282	4,49	0,358	8,40	0,144

HU	Hungary	("Európa erőd" or "Európa erődje" or "Erőd Európa" or "Európai erőd" or "Európa védőbástyája" or "Európa védőbástyáját" or "Európa védőbástyájának" or "fortress europe")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	Hungary	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	3	10	0,07	0,234	0,32	0,489
IE	Ireland	("fortress europe")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	Ireland	13	6	16	12	8	33	10	8	8	8	5	2	4	1	4	5	19	15	5	9	191	-0,31	0,064	1,21	0,230	
IT	Italy	("forzezza europa" or "fortress europa")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	Italy	14	2	15	36	16	24	18	38	49	28	73	47	67	51	90	95	176	111	262	231	1443	10,29	0,701	27,94	0,764	
LU	Luxem-bourg	("forteresse europa" or "europa forteresse" or "festung europa" or "fortress europa")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	Luxem-bourg	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6	1	5	4	2	8	5	19	24	12	36	124	1,25	0,581	4,00	0,690	
MT	Malta	("fortizza ewropa" or "fortress europa")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	Malta	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	4	1	0	1	8	0,08	0,216	0,10	0,027		
NL	Netherlands	("fort europa" or "fortress europa")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	Netherlands	0	0	0	1	4	11	35	12	45	38	21	20	21	8	40	66	85	31	40	31	509	2,66	0,466	2,64	0,069	
PL	Poland	("twierdza Europa" or "twierdzę europa" or "twierdzy europa" or "twierdze europa" or "twierdzą europa" or "fortress europa")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	Poland	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	2	5	5	5	1	26	0,17	0,320	0,43	0,227	
PT	Portugal	("fortaleza europa" or "europa fortaleza" or "fortress europa")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	Portugal	0	7	2	10	5	2	0	5	4	4	3	1	4	7	10	9	60	26	10	14	183	1,11	0,242	2,19	0,085	
SE	Sweden	("fästning europa" or "fort europa" or "fortress europa")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	Sweden	0	0	1	12	3	3	4	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	5	11	55	0,13	0,039	1,61	0,617		
SK	Slovakia	("pevnost Európa" or "pevnosti europa" or "pevnostou Európa" or "fortress europa")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	Slovakia	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	1	2	6	14	0,15	0,371	0,65	0,603		
UK	United Kingdom	("fortress europa")	01/01/1999 to 31/12/2018	United Kingdom	100	97	141	141	89	95	52	62	35	17	25	22	33	38	42	65	154	154	66	114	1542	-0,69	0,008	13,48	0,427	
<b>Total number of articles:</b>					266	236	364	473	323	452	440	409	398	437	353	280	535	292	695	827	1921	2176	1164	1674	13715	71,74	0,533	212,74	0,568	

Source: Data retrieved in May 2019 from Factiva.

**Table 5: Programs of Italian Parties for European Elections in 2019**

<b>Party</b>	<b>English name / translation</b>	<b>Website</b>
+Europa	More Europe	<a href="https://piueuropa.eu/programma-elettorale/">https://piueuropa.eu/programma-elettorale/</a>
CasaPound - Destre Uniste	CasaPound - United Right	<a href="http://www.destreunite.it/">http://www.destreunite.it/</a>
Europa Verde	Green Europe	<a href="https://www.europaverde.it/programma/">https://www.europaverde.it/programma/</a>
Forza Italia	Forward Italy	<a href="https://italiasvegliati.it/programma/">https://italiasvegliati.it/programma/</a>
Forza Nuova	New Force	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=6&amp;v=f3U7cJxnG48">https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=6&amp;v=f3U7cJxnG48</a>
Fratelli d'Italia	Brothers of Italy	<a href="https://www.money.it/IMG/pdf/programma-fratelli-italia-europee-2019.pdf">https://www.money.it/IMG/pdf/programma-fratelli-italia-europee-2019.pdf</a>
La Sinistra	The Left	<a href="https://www.sinistraeuropea.eu/">https://www.sinistraeuropea.eu/</a>
Lega Nord	Northern League	<a href="https://www.leganord.org/il-movimento/europee-2019/217-notizie/16540-menl-programma-politico">https://www.leganord.org/il-movimento/europee-2019/217-notizie/16540-menl-programma-politico</a>
Movimento 5 Stelle (M5S)	Five Star Movement	<a href="https://continuarexcambiare.it/programma/">https://continuarexcambiare.it/programma/</a>
Partito Animalista	Animal Party	<a href="https://www.money.it/IMG/pdf/programma_partito_animalista_elezioni_europee_2019.pdf">https://www.money.it/IMG/pdf/programma_partito_animalista_elezioni_europee_2019.pdf</a>
Partito Democratico	Democratic Party	<a href="http://europa.partitodemocratico.it/">http://europa.partitodemocratico.it/</a>
Partito Pirata	Pirate Party	<a href="https://www.money.it/IMG/pdf/programma-partito-pirata-europee-2019.pdf">https://www.money.it/IMG/pdf/programma-partito-pirata-europee-2019.pdf</a>
Popolo della Famiglia	People of the Family	<a href="https://www.money.it/IMG/pdf/programma_popolo_della_famiglia_europee_2019.pdf">https://www.money.it/IMG/pdf/programma_popolo_della_famiglia_europee_2019.pdf</a>

Source: own research.

**Table 6: Programs of Italian Parties for European Elections in 2014**

<b>Party</b>	<b>English name / translation</b>	<b>Website</b>
Forza Italia	Forward Italy	<a href="https://stranieriinitalia.it/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/1811.pdf">https://stranieriinitalia.it/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/1811.pdf</a>
Lega Nord	Northern League	<a href="https://www.leganord.org/phocadownload/elezioni/europee/Programma%20elettorale%20europee%202014.pdf">https://www.leganord.org/phocadownload/elezioni/europee/Programma%20elettorale%20europee%202014.pdf</a>
Movimento 5 Stelle (M5S)	Five Star Movement	<a href="http://www.menfi5stelle.it/1719/politica-e-societa/programma-m5s-europee">http://www.menfi5stelle.it/1719/politica-e-societa/programma-m5s-europee</a>
Nuova Centro Destra	New Center Right	<a href="https://stranieriinitalia.it/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Europa_Programma_sintetico.pdf">https://stranieriinitalia.it/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Europa_Programma_sintetico.pdf</a>
Partito Democratico	Democratic Party	<a href="https://stranieriinitalia.it/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/programma%20pd%20europa_DEF_Layout%201_1.pdf">https://stranieriinitalia.it/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/programma%20pd%20europa_DEF_Layout%201_1.pdf</a>

Source: own research.

**Table 7: List of Italian Parties**

<b>Party</b>	<b>English name / translation</b>	<b>Website</b>
+Europa	More Europe	<a href="https://piueuropa.eu/">https://piueuropa.eu/</a>
10 Volte Meglio	10 Times Better	<a href="https://diecivoltmeglio.com">https://diecivoltmeglio.com</a>
CasaPound Italia (CPI)	CasaPound of Italy	<a href="https://www.casapounditalia.org/">https://www.casapounditalia.org/</a>
Federazione die Verdi	Green Federation	<a href="http://verdi.it/">http://verdi.it/</a>
Forza Italia (FI)	Forward Italy	<a href="http://www.forzaitalia.it/">http://www.forzaitalia.it/</a> , <a href="http://www.forza-italia.it/">http://www.forza-italia.it/</a>
Forza Nuova (NF)	New Force	<a href="http://www.forzanuova.eu/">http://www.forzanuova.eu/</a>
Fratelli d'Italia (Fdi)	Brothers of Italy	<a href="https://www.fratelli-italia.it/">https://www.fratelli-italia.it/</a>
La Democrazia Cristiana	Christian Democracy	<a href="http://www.lademocraziacristiana.it/">http://www.lademocraziacristiana.it/</a>
La Sinistra	The Left	<a href="https://www.sinistraeuropea.eu/">https://www.sinistraeuropea.eu/</a>
Lega Nord	Northern League	<a href="https://www.leganord.org/">https://www.leganord.org/</a>
Liberi e Uguali	Free and Equal	<a href="http://liberieuguali.it/">http://liberieuguali.it/</a>
Lista del Popolo	List of the People	<a href="https://www.listadelpopolo.it">https://www.listadelpopolo.it</a>
Movimento 5 Stelle (M5S)	Five Star Movement	<a href="https://movimento5stelle.it/">https://movimento5stelle.it/</a>
Noi con l'Italia (Nci)	Us with Italy	<a href="http://noiconlitalia.it/">http://noiconlitalia.it/</a>
Partito Comunista	Communist Party	<a href="http://ilpartitocomunista.it">http://ilpartitocomunista.it</a>
Partito della Rifondazione Comunista	Party for the Refoundation of Communism	<a href="http://www.rifondazione.it/">http://www.rifondazione.it/</a>
Partito Democratico (PD)	Democratic Party	<a href="https://www.partitodemocratico.it/">https://www.partitodemocratico.it/</a>
Partito Pirata	Pirate Party	<a href="https://www.partito-pirata.it/">https://www.partito-pirata.it/</a>
Partito Valore Umano	Human Value Part	<a href="https://partitovaloreumano.it/">https://partitovaloreumano.it/</a>
Popolo della Famiglia	People of the Family	<a href="http://ilpopolodellafamiglia.net">http://ilpopolodellafamiglia.net</a>
Potere al Popolo	Power to the People	<a href="https://poterealpopolo.org/">https://poterealpopolo.org/</a>
PPA - Partito Pensiero e Azione	Party Thoughts and Action	<a href="http://www.ppa-pensieroazione.it">http://www.ppa-pensieroazione.it</a>
Scelta Civica	Civic Choice	<a href="http://www.sceltacivica.it/">http://www.sceltacivica.it/</a>
Sinistra Ecologia Libertà	Left Ecology Freedom	<a href="http://www.sinistraecologia-liberta.it/">http://www.sinistraecologia-liberta.it/</a>
Sinistra Italiana	Italian Left	<a href="http://www.sinistraitaliana.si/">http://www.sinistraitaliana.si/</a>
Unione di centro	Union of the Center	<a href="http://www.udc-italia.it/">http://www.udc-italia.it/</a>

Source: own research.