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"The role of frames in the public diesel ban policy debate in the city of Essen"

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Abstract

Climate change and environmental quality have been a dominant topic of discussion over a long period of time. With the discovery of fraud software used in Diesel-powered cars, it has become ever more important on the political agenda as well as a result also for the society. Newly introduced public policies prohibit diesel cars in certain streets, where limits set up within the "Luftreinheitsplan", a plan to regulate air quality, are exceeded. With the introduction of such a policy in the summer of 2019, the A40 highway as well as its surrounding city areas will be the first large low emission zone, where diesel cars will be largely banned.

The research will show two dominant frames that interact with each other and are the contributors for the public debate. Although all respondents but one shares the opinion that the environment is an important good and must be protected, a diesel ban policy does not reach a unanimous support. On the one hand, environmental frames dominate the debate for those who are not directly affected by the policy nor is their close social environment.

Since the diesel-ban enforced by law is a new concept, not much has been researched yet. This exploratory paper will try to give an insight of the frames and uncover what influences them.

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1. **Introduction**

1.1. Background

Environmental quality has been an important political and public topic over the past years in Germany. The public has become aware of negative consequences such as climate change as well as possible effects on health and living quality. Daily discussions focus on climate change and its possible solutions to it. Since cities are growing bigger and traffic is increasing, great differences between areas with high levels of population and those with lower levels of population have led to the conclusion that industry and traffic are some of the main contributors to air pollution. Data shows that where consumption of energy has increased by traffic, the emission levels have increased as well (Banister, 2011). Whereas in 2005, 60% of the contributors were wealthy countries, this number will shift towards the developing world by 2070. Richer countries can invest in protection against effects of climate change but developing countries and cities will struggle to do so.

Especially the Ruhr-Area, which was a highly industrialized area in the past, is affected by pollution. The Area is world famous for its coal mining industry, where the last mine was closed recently in December 2018. The mining brought along industry for further production such as steel mills, power plants and other coal related industry.

One might assume that the biggest contributor to pollution is the heavy industry, and this is true when only taking certain emission materials into account such as CO_2 (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2009), but the so called "Luftreinheitsplan", a framework to provide air quality guidelines introduced in 2008, identified traffic as the biggest contributor for pollution in most cities when looking at the overall emission (Luftreinheitsplan, 2008).

The traffic, which has increased by 8% (cars) respectively by 10% (trucks above 3,5 tons) has led to an ever-growing discussion for solutions of the traffic problem (Strassen NRW, 2018). Estimates by the Ministry for traffic show that the heavy-duty traffic can increase by another 39% by 2030 (RP-Online, 2017). While some might welcome approaches such as low emission zones and value air quality as an important good, others might see negative externalities such as financial problems for companies which rely on transportation.

As one of the early measures introduced were the so called "Umweltzonen". A policy that made it mandatory for all cars, busses and trucks to have a sticker indicating the level of pollution the car produces by the colours red (bad), yellow (intermediate) to green (good). Some vehicles were not able to obtain any of those stickers at all, meaning they could not enter such zones at

all ("Umweltzonen", 2012). As from the summer 2014 on, the rules were made stricter, allowing only those vehicles with green stickers of the "Umweltzone".

Critique however quickly arose since the zones included cities but mostly excluded highways. Since the Ruhr-Area has many highways passing right through a city, the effects of such zones were questioned by the public.

Low emissions zones are one approach to increase air quality and decrease traffic at the same time. Cities create additional plans to decrease traffic and make people shift towards more environmentally friendly means of transport. The city of Bonn has introduced a 365-Euro-ticket which has started 1st January 2019 and allows buyers to use busses and trains in the city of Bonn 365 days a year at the cost of 1 Euro per day. Additionally, of offers other benefits such as 30-minute free rental bikes per day to travel from the station to work and back. However, the approaches take are limited and the seriousness of the problem seems still to be not considered properly. Luxembourg is the first country to make public transportation entirely free of charge, hoping to decrease road traffic and increase the use of public transportation.

Huge awareness suddenly was raised when the German car manufacturer Volkswagen (VW) was accused for software fraud. The cars in question, those power with a diesel engine, provided different, lower emission data when tested for admission. When those cars were used daily, however, the emission levels increased due to the software simply not turning on.

As this was the start of the "diesel crisis", the topic of diesel pollution become a dominant topic over time, both in political and public discussions (Spiegel Online, 2017), often raising questions such as "in how far the combustion materials are unhealthy?" or "how can the situation be improved?". In order to track levels of pollution, data measure points where set up monitoring air quality. They have shown that limits are exceeded frequently in various parts in Germany including the Ruhr Area.

Quickly discussions came up to prohibit diesel-cars in certain areas with Hamburg being the first city introducing such policy. After the DUH (Deutsch Umwelt Hilfe - German environmental help), a non-governmental organization aiming at a better environmental quality throughout Germany, requested a policy for the city of Essen based on the measured data. In November 2018 the court of Gelsenkirchen ruled to ban diesel-cars in certain areas of Essen including the A40 highway going right through the city.

„Diese Fahrverbote hält die zuständige Kammer (...) für unverzichtbar, um die Gesundheit der Anwohner, Besucher und Verkehrsteilnehmer zu schützen" – „The ruling court (...) takes the ban of diesel-cars as indespensable, in order to protect the health of citizens, visitors and road users"

Although there is a certain level of consensus when it comes to the knowledge on pollution and its negative health effects, which have been researched in the 1970s (Pope the 3rd, 2000), people still do take up different position when it comes to debating the necessity and usefulness of the policy in question. The area being studied is especially dependent on the use of highways, from both business as well as leisure point of view. The highway is used for both transporting goods and services, commuting to work as well as transit for holiday and travel purposes (RP-Online, 2018).

Frames play an important role when people make up their mind on any given topic. Frames are always a part of opinion building. When researching opinion on the topic of the diesel ban policy, we can therefore be sure that those opinions are determined by certain frames, too. Those frames in place might be of a political nature, an environmental nature or any other nature the policy might affect such as financial aspects. Politically left wing or green attitudes might welcome the policy while those with a more conservative attitude will rather favour a less drastic policy. Using cars as a means for transportation, in the private as well as business sphere, has been established over decades and is nowadays surely a standard in everyday life. A decision that goes as far as prohibiting people from using parts of the road because they own a diesel-powered car comes along with a controversial debate in civil society. The full scale of such decision is yet unknown as no city has ever been told to take such measures. So far only single roads are closed such as in Hamburg, but no city has ever closed off a whole highway. Despite the implications on transport itself, such a decision also brings along the loss of value of such cars causing economic problems for some.

The approach on what shapes the discussion leads us to the main research question:

"What is the public debate on the A40 diesel ban policy and how do frames affect it?"

Analysing the frames analysis brought forward what factors do play a major role in in the opinion of people and what factors do play a less dominant role. In order to answer the main question, I can derive two sub questions. The first of the two sub questions does provide an answer on the debate while the second one helps to differentiate between more and less important frames.

"What is the public debate on the policy?"

"What is the difference in the dominance of frames present?"

To investigate the different opinions people are likely to have when it comes to the policy, the research was based on interviews with people who are in any way concerned with the topic. Those might be people involved since they do use the highway to get to work and back, businesses who need to transport goods and services as well as businesses and schools who might benefit from banning diesel cars because they are situated right next to the highway. A frame analysis was conducted with the data provided by the respondents to draw a conclusion.

Frames within a debate are a set of links to the topic. Since everyone values things on a different level, frames are therefore different towards each other, too. Some people might associate diesel with environmental issues, others might rather associate it with cheaper long-distance transport. All these associations can be grouped into frames.

To show the frames present, I analysed the debate by what is said during the interviews. In strong relation to the pure content of the debate stands the different positioning of frames. I can draw conclusions on the dominance of frames by how they are used within the interviews. Certain aspects are mentioned more often than others making those more important to the interviewee than other aspects of the policy.

The research insofar is socially relevant as it showed whether the frames do indeed play a significant role within the opinion on such a policy or whether other factors are more dominant that might not be as clear forward for now. As mentioned, driving a car is one of the few standards people have got used to. Depending on the different effects of policy for people, very different positions can be expected since some might see it as a right step to a better climate policy while others saw the economic issues as the main factor. For people with a safe financial situation the policy might cause less trouble as for those who might have difficulties to afford a new car.

To get a better understanding of the debate and the frames that are present, the upcoming part will shortly outline the case of the city of Essen and what makes it special compared to the ones that are already in existence. I draw a significant difference between two policies that are useful for the distinction later.

1.2 The Case of Essen

For a better understanding of what the makes the case of Essen special compared to other diesel policies that are already in existence in Germany, I will shortly discuss and visualize the case. Whereas the city of Hamburg for comparison, being the first city to have introduced a diesel policy voluntarily, has banned diesel combustion vehicles on only two roads, the city of the Essen is the first city to introduce a ban that is affecting a larger area but not just a few roads.
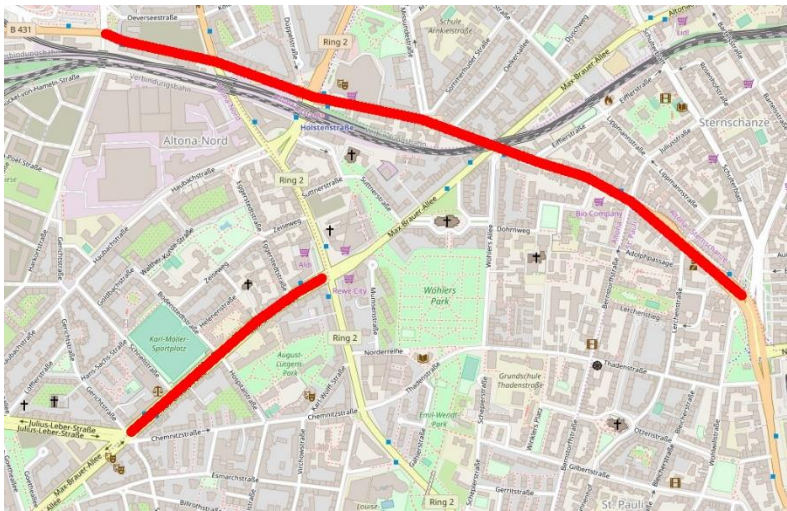

Figure 1- Diesel ban area in Hamburg

For a better picture, Figure 1 shows the diesel ban area in the city of Hamburg while Figure 2 shows the area in the city of Essen. Undoubtedly, and without comparing area data, we can see an immediate difference. At the heart of the area in Essen lies one of the busiest highways in the Ruhr Area, the A40. Counting the traffic has shown that more than 100.000 vehicles use the highway every day, for different purposes. Measured data has shown numerous transgressions of emissions limits resulting in the court's ruling to ban diesel cars. The policy which came into action on 1st July 2019 therefore blocks traffic using the frequented route Dortmund – Antwerpen as well as it does limit traffic users entering the city of Essen from the north side on the B224. It is important to keep in mind to what makes the case of Essen special compared to any other diesel ban policy in place up to now. Whereas in other cities, just using another road was a solution, this is possibly going to be a different story in the city of Essen. I show whether the content of the policy makes a difference in support or rejection and thus which kind of approach is favourited.

Figure 2- Diesel ban area in Essen

Before I turn to the analysis, the next section concentrates on the theoretical framework used to analyse the interviews, which can be found in the data appendix.

2. __Theoretical Framework – Frames within Public Debates__

Frames are usually associated with a topic. Within the case of the diesel-ban policy, people associate a certain amount of them with the policy. Ultimately, those frames lead to position that is taken up within debate.

Within all the discussions focussing on what should be done to tackle climate change, frames play an important role in opinion-making process, for people as well as for companies and public organizations. Latest European elections have shown that the society values environment as an important good. The frames are used to shape debates within private and public arenas as well as within decision-making processes justifying those. The theory of framing plays thus an essential role in the field of social scientific research and especially within policy making processes.

Over the past decades, scientists have specified 'framing' approaching it from various perspectives. Gregory Bateson is seen as the first to have researched framing in 1954 (1972) describing the term 'framing' while researching the behaviour of monkeys, who seemed to understand the 'metacommunicative messages' while playing (G. Bateson, 1972). According to Bateson "this phenomenon play, could only occur if the participant organisms were capable of some degree of metacommunication". In other words, the social interaction, in this case the interaction between animals, require the understanding of what is play and what is fight in order to understand the messages being send to one another. In other words, understanding each other's standpoint is an important factor that makes debates possible.

Various authors have picked up the idea of Bateson and developed it further an develop the concept of framing as it can described today. Abolafia (2004) argues that framing occurs as a result of previously organized and interpreted 'data' in the context of policymaking. He furthermore stresses the importance of the so-called 'framing moves' as a strategic tool to either alter or maintain existing frames. Frames and the shift of those are of great importance for policymaking and involves different steps starting usually with a "external shock or internal contradiction that focuses attention on the situation" followed by defining the situation at stake. Hereby different actors might interpret the situation in different ways, making it difficult to move the frames in alignment. Frames that have been present for the past years and are the basis for the line of argumentation for people cannot be easily replaced without challenge. In the case of the policy in question this can be a very important point. People are used to travel with private cars for decades. It is one of the luxurious habits people do not want to lose. The problem that arises within such discussion is the creation of the support for status quo due to a position they

have taken over a longer period. The opinion has been strengthened and it make people unwilling to change their identity within a debate process. Those frames, compared to frames that alter, are described as static frames (Van Hulst, Yanow, 2014).

In order to adopt new policy and accept them as necessary, though sometimes coming along with sacrifices, actors involved must discuss their views. By interacting with other people involved, new frames can be shaped moving away from the old static situation. Breaking up those old frames is an important "social as well as cognitive activity" (Abolafia, 2004).

To avoid the danger of sticking to the status quo within such an important policy with a wide-reaching effect, reframing, at an early stage in the progress of the policy process, must then show the importance of fast action as well as the persuasion of the existing frames connected to the situation. In the following stages of the policy process framing helps actors to do two things: organizing prior knowledge as well as guiding the actions (Van Hulst, Yanow, 2014). The "how something is said" questions becomes clearly an important factor within any debate. People are more likely to be believed when they can adequately outline their position, whatever standpoint they do take according to their frames. "How something is said" is therefore not only an important factor for the policy making process itself, but also for the debate that followed up on the decision to ban diesel cars.

The process of framing is divided into three components: naming, selecting and storytelling (Van Hulst, Yanow, 2014). Naming defines the action of making the situation understandable for any debate. If involved actors, may them be private persons, companies or anyone else, are not able to understand the problem, a barrier for any further debate is created. Naming is followed by selecting, where relevant factors are pointed out and other are left aside. Depending on the position of the actor, the selection can go into very different directions if the topic of debate is diverse as this one is. At last the situation is presented to other actors as a coherent story helping actors to be able to grasp the situation. People who have strong language skills are therefore more likely to take a superior position in any debate than those with less good language skills. Language skills can therefore be an important factor of "defending" the own standpoint while rejecting others.

Strongly connected to the three components mentioned previously is the questions of "What does Framing frame? (Van Hulst, Yanow, 2014). Policy issues, thus the content of the policy, is one of the important points that frame. With respect to the diesel ban, respondents can use different aspects of the policy to shape their opinion. Those might be of economic nature, environmental aspects or other aspects people judge the policy to improve the situation or make

worse. Connected to the policy content is the actor's identity within the debate. People identify themselves with their personal view which in turn creates an identity that stand in connection with the relationship towards other actors. Groups are formed within a debate. People that value the same aspects as important group up whereas on the other hand this creates conflicts within a debate when another group values other aspects more. Finally, the policy process is the last factor described by Van Hulst and Yanow (2014). The process the policy was discussed on political levels must be differentiated from the content itself. While some might value a policy such as the diesel-ban, the process itself is a different aspect. Some might wish for a policy process that involves the civil society while some others are happy with the fact that policies rely exclusively on data. All the points mentioned above play a role within framing and the related debate to it.

To further distinguish frames, Dewulf (2009) has mapped the role of frames and subdivided those into two broad categories. The first group are cognitive frames, where people only grasp a small part of the real-world problem. The use the gathered information is processed to create frames on any topic at stake. These frames, that might have been established over a long period of time, are used within a discussion process. Cognitive frames a likely to make a debate difficult since they are usually of a static nature. The parts of the big puzzle usually do not fit together well.

The second category, compared to the cognitive frames, describes the so-called interactional frames. Social interaction is an important aspect within those frames. It makes it possible to amend the frames participants have. This simplifies the process of debate as frames are not of a too static nature.

For studying the debate, I concentrated on the cognitive frames. The number of total cars is constantly increasing in Germany. From 2013 to 2018 the number of total cars has increased by 7%, trucks have increased by even 17,6% over the same period (Kraftfahrzeugbundesamt, 2019). Whereas it was common to have a family car, nowadays a lot of family members have their own care. People have longer ways to commute to work making it feasible to use a car instead of public transport. Additionally, where only one family member was working some time ago, it is now the case that more ned to work now making a second car necessary. It has become a standard comfort to travel whenever its needed wherever its needed without relying on anyone. I therefore assume that most people have created their own (cognitive) frames on the topic of a diesel ban.

As I have discovered earlier, language does play an important role. I can say that especially within cognitive frames, the language for the presentation of the own and other one's frames becomes a critical factor for any debate. It can influence the view and might ultimately result in actors accepting a standpoint while rejecting another which they see as less convincing.

Drawing a line back to the approach that Bateson has taken when he first conceptualized frames and stressed the importance of metacommunication, I also want connect it to debates that are held today. Whereas the monkeys were thought to understand and distinguish between "playing and fighting", within a debate the understanding of each other's messages plays a significant role. The cognitive frames, that are present in everyone's mindset are presented to other people taking part in the debate. It is vital for the rest of the people to understand the standpoint in order to possibly alter the own standpoint in any way. Miscommunication thus can make a debate difficult if not impossible.

In a certain way we can compare it to people of which all speak different languages. If they won't be able to understand each other, there won't be any discussion possible. If metacommunication thus fails, people do not understand what the other actor has said, making a discussion on sensitive topics with a variety of opinions difficult if not impossible.

When concentrating on the cognitive frames and the possible overlaps with interactional frames, I can investigate whether people, in the process of debate, have changed their standpoint towards to topic, thus altered their own frames, and if so, what has caused them to do so. This did also help to investigate the presence of metacommunication, whether for example the policy decision has been communicated in a way people understand or whether the metacommunication fails in such debates. As people are unlikely to inform themselves directly about the court decisions, media such as radio, television, newspaper and social media are likely the sources people use to gather the information. When researching the frames of people, I can divide those into three types of frames: risky choice frames, where people evaluate the risk of choices leading to choices based on risk preference, attribute frames, where people tend to focus on the attribute of the debate and base their preference on those, and finally goal frames, where people evaluate the effects of choices and create their standpoint accordingly (Dewulf, 2009).

To investigate the frames of people, it is important to question those who are involved with the topic. In the upcoming part I discuss the methodology of data collection, sampling technique as well as other important key aspects of the research.

3. Methods

3.1 Data Generation

The case of the diesel-ban on the A40 and a large part of the city of Essen is a controversial measure to increase environmental and air quality. Not much is known about the public debate within civil society yet. Since I am aiming at explaining the reasons for a phenomenon, the type of research can be categorized as interpretative research (Haverland, 2012).

Compared to the testing of a causal relation described as positivist research, I try to explain why the debate is shaped the way it is, making it an interpretative research. In order to be able to interpret the debate and what shapes it, a series of qualitative interviews is conducted.

Schwartz and Shea (2012) argue, in addition to Haverland, that interpretative research includes the possibilities for various views and perspectives. It is not only important what is said within the interviews but to the same degree what is not said during the interview. The personal opinions of the respondents can't be controlled but the importance lies within the correct interpretation of all dimensions of the interview and not simply what has been said is important and what has not been set does not matter.

To collect the data a series of interviews was conducted with people from the public society. These semi structured interviews provided the basis for the analysis of the data in order to draw conclusions and answer the main research question on what are the main frames that play a role in the public debate.

When having a look at what I wanted to research and the kind of research that is been done, I paid careful attention how to sample the people that were interviewed. Representativeness, variety on all dimensions and background cases do are three important factors that have to be considered when sampling the people for the interviews (Jason Seawright, Gerring, 2008). Representativeness includes that the sample represents a larger group and not just a small part of the overall present opinions. Closely connected with the importance of representation is the variety on all dimensions. Coming come across various frames, all the dimensions should be included in the study. Finally, the background cases must be taken into consideration. "The distinction between the case and the population that surrounds it is never as clear in a case study work…" (Seawright, Gerring, 2008).

The interviewees were randomly selected in a café in the city of Essen after seeking permission by the staff to randomly ask people to take part in the interview. All the interview respondents are ordinary citizens that either live in the area, commute frequently or brought forward their

interest to take part in the interview. They vary in their professions, family status, age, and other aspects to get a wider and more objective view. I am going to come back to the topic of sample selection when talking about the strength and weaknesses of the study.

Throughout the interviews that took place in May and June 2019, different questions were asked to the respondents focussing on the general environmental situation in order to get a broad understanding of their position in respect to the environment. Following those, detailed questions were then asked in order to uncover frames that are present in the debate.

The set of questions can be found in the data appendix. They give an outline on what was asked during the interviews. In the upcoming part I will have a closer look on the step that follows the data generation, namely how the data was analysed.

3.2 Data Analysis

To analyse the interview in depth, I needed to make sure to look for within what is said by the respondents. As I investigated on what frames are present, looking for certain words, terms and expressions that were used to answer the questions posed in the interview was a crucial factor to pay attention to. Coding did help to draw lines between different frames and showed the connections between them. As the diesel ban policy is a diverse topic and I expected many different positions being present in the discussions, I therefore grouped similar terms to get a better understanding and help to get an overall view on the discussion.

At first it is therefore important that the interviews that were conducted are transcribed, as no notes were taken during the interview itself but only audio records were done. As all interviews were conducted in German, the parts necessary, for example when looking at the use of language, were translated into English.

After the transcription of all the interviews, printed versions were than used to mark significant codes that were mentioned in the interviews. Those codes, that can be found collected in the code start list in the data appendix, marked the basis for the categories, which are described in the next section. Although I had some codes in mind prior to reading through the interviews, others were added to the code start list after the interviews.

The first category to mention is the one containing all codes that have been used in relation to the environmental frames. Everything that has been mentioned in the context of environmental, whether in a positive or negative sense, is summed up within this group.

The second groups contain all codes that have been mentioned falling in the category of economic frames. Surely some things are mentioned that can be grouped into more than one of the categories. Nevertheless, I have tried to sort the codes to the group it fits best.

The third category contains all things mentioned in relation to health frames. Finally, the sources of information play a significant role in categorizing as all interviewees surely have sources to gather information. The category is closely related to the social environment, another factor that might influence the process of framing to a significant extend.

3.3 Research quality

This part focusses on the quality of the research that I conducted. By conducting a qualitative interpretive study by systematically analysing interviews conducted, I cannot apply the core concepts of validity, replicability and reliability in a way it is done within positivist methodology. Schwartz and Shea (2012) instead describe three counterpart concepts for interpretative research. Those three concepts are trustworthiness, systematicity and reflexivity.

Within qualitative studies, the researcher must conduct research in way that can be trusted by the reader. Relying on participants answers as a point top mention plays a significant role when it comes trustworthiness as it avoids a biased view on a topic that the researcher might have. Systematicity explains the focus and step by step conduction of the research. As the term already suggests, it explains the systematic approach to conduct the research to avoid errors. By systematically conducting the research trustworthiness in increased as the research is transparent and easy to trace back for the reader.

Finally, reflexivity is described as a set of things to be considered throughout the research process (Schwartz, Shea, 2012). An important aspect for interpretive research is the chosen setting and location. It can stimulate or block answers depending on the choices made by the researcher. Other mentioned points explain the role of the researchers own characteristics that might also affect the research. All the aspects mentioned in relation to reflexivity promote trustworthiness in the research if respected. The researcher is required to self-control him or herself in order to maintain the research quality at the highest possible level.

Paying attention to these three aspects is thus an important task in interpretative qualitative research. I have Therefore made the research as transparent as possible by explaining the data generation and the methods as detailed as possible without providing information that make it possible to identify the respondent. It follows as systematic approach with a clear structure,

developing a broader understanding before going into detail. Finally, people were interviewed in a familiar environment such as public places or their homes to ensure that possible discomfort is kept as low as possible.

To maintain a broad variety of answers the data generation is not an easy task. Since the topic of a diesel-ban policy is a very controversial one, I picked cases that are as extreme as possible. Surely, I cannot determine to what extend a case is on each side, so how extreme the respondents view is, but it can nevertheless be shown how far the interviewees are apart from each other. Although Seawright and Gerring (2008) describe extreme choices only if comparable to a larger sample, I argue, given what is mentioned above, that the choice is still extreme though it does not fit the definition at a whole.

When speaking of extreme choices, I discovered, that most views are indeed of quite some extreme sort, however some are also somewhat in settled the middle of the two sides. Kuzmanic (2009) describes qualitative research as a form of one truth being out there. She points out that qualitative research and especially qualitative interviews are therefore rejected by many researchers as the validity is not given, both internal and external, as Schwartz and Shea argue, too. However, it is argued that depending on the concept of truth and knowing, there can ultimately also be more than one truth and more than one 'right' type of knowledge. Summing up what is important within qualitative research to achieve a high quality "qualitative research is about credibly representing different social worlds or different interpretations to the reader" (Kuzmanic, 2009). She furthermore argues that the quality of the research cannot be defined at one specific point within the interview but within qualitative research it is a process throughout the research at large. I want to argue that even though the number of respondents N=11 is small compared to quantitative research, quality is nevertheless given if I do take for granted that there are more 'right and true' views and not only one. Even though a small number, some might argue, is not a representative figure to draw conclusions for the population at large, it nevertheless possibly presents as many different views as there are respondents. When keeping in mind that all the respondents can be right and all answers can be trusted to the same extend, I can draw a distinct picture of what dominates the debate in terms of present frames.

In the upcoming part I will describe the responses given throughout the interview to draw an abstract picture of the debate. I tried to point out directional links between the different groups to show what might affect frames and where these frames might come from.

4. <u>Analysis</u>

The upcoming part provides an in-depth analysis of the statements given throughout the interviews. Since questions have been asked over a range of topics, the part is subdivided into smaller sections. The first section introduces the respondents view on the general environmental. Respondents will demonstrate according to their view how the situation is, what can be done to improve the situation and who is involved. The general environmental view is followed by the more specific one on the diesel ban policy itself, which will form the second section of the analytical part of the paper. The next three parts deals with the distinction into the three components policy process, policy content and the actor's identity (Van Hulst, Yanow, 2014), as previously outlined in the theoretical concept.

4.1 General Views of the Environment

In this section I will analyse the different interviews in depth, make frames visible that are present in the discussion on the diesel-ban policy as well as show how people have experienced the process, judge the content and whether they see such a policy as a necessary measurement or not. I will use the five groups that have been outline in the previous part to help to understand the lines between the different views.

Throughout the interview, I have discovered to a certain degree similar opinions when it comes to basic questions about the environment but the analysis will also show a very diverse opinion on how people to think about the policy at question as well as how people position the different actors roles. Just one respondent has given answers that do not fit the general opinion at all. I will pay attention to that as well in a separate part.

To begin with the analysis, let's have a look at the opinions on environmental quality in general as well as the Ruhr Area. As one might expect, the environment should play a role with significant importance to everyone. Not only should one be concerned with local issues but also get a broader overview of global climate issues, to which every country must participate in order to fight global climate change and its partly severe consequences.

As the diesel-ban policy is a result of a plan how to improve environmental quality, the first questions of the interview are dealing with general environmental questions about the present situation as well as what actors' people do see involved and to what extent.

As climate change is a present topic for most of the people, it might not be of any surprise that all respondents take the position that the environmental quality as an important good one should

not disregard. However, it becomes clear at the very early stages of responses that people do have a different perception of the environmental situation. Where the large part of respondents agrees that the environmental quality is an important good, few people seem to be aware of the critical situation every one of us is facing now and in the future. If I compare given answers, a certain degree of difference within what is said is visible. For comparing the different attitudes, I will take the following two examples from the interview answers.

"...climate change does not just affect us, but the whole world has to contribute to prove the basis for a healthy future"

"For me, the environment is very important [...] we are living on this planet and we must not pointlessly destroy the planet"

"...we want to breath air that does not kill us, we want to eat food that does not kill us, [...], so that means to me that the environment is very important"

While some people do use a moderate description of how important the environment is, other do tend to use a more dramatic set of words to emphasize the importance and underline that the environmental quality might have 'catastrophic effects' when its not taken care of enough. In other words, for most people it does not come straight to their mind that climate change might have drastic effects.

If the more specific background of the environmental quality in the Ruhr Area is added, answers strikingly tend to go into another direction. The "catastrophic frame" disappears when people compare the environmental quality of the Ruhr Area with the quality elsewhere. Some respondents do still admit that the environmental quality is not the best.

"...In cities [...] with all the traffic and industry, you realize that it the air is sometimes smelly"

However, on the other hand I can also see statements that the air quality seems to be quite good. It seems that a pattern is present that people who have seen other highly populated and industrialized areas in Germany and other parts of the world tend to describe the air quality in the Ruhr Area better than those who might have less possibilities for comparison.

"I must admit that I am a bit unsensitive for such things, if I go out of the door, I don't have the feeling that I am breathing polluted air compared to when being somewhere where its more rural..."

"I can remember going to China for a vacation. I could feel the issues at first-hand. Due to pollution the visibility was about 200 meters [...]"

When having a look at how these statements are given, I can see a difference especially in terms of naming and storytelling. As mentioned earlier, some people use rather extreme language when asked about the environment in general and therefore the storytelling, as described by Van Hulst and Yanow, is different from those people who use a more moderate set of words. What is striking, however, is the difference in naming and storytelling when it comes to the environmental quality in the Ruhr Area. Where people described the environment as a very important good, they nevertheless seem to have the opinion that the local pollution levels are better than in some other parts. In other words, the Ruhr Areas' environmental quality is judged good in comparison to other industrial high population areas. The more extreme language is than used when describing other countries.

"[...] there are extreme examples such as China, where you can virtually cut the air, so we are moving in the right direction in Germany"

The actor's identity becomes a visible attribute when some respondents state that the area in question is better off compared to some other parts in the world. They put forward that something should be done to improve the environmental quality but other regions around the globe should do more. Since climate change is a global and not a local phenomenon, the interviewees 'blame' other parts of the world to put the Ruhr Area in a better light. It thus seems that economic frames have a different set of perspectives. Where people use a more extreme language when asked about the role of the environment in general, the actors identity becomes a dominant factor when specifying the area in question. Respondents do want to live a healthy life but judge the possibilities to do so as good.

Strikingly, although it was mentioned in the media quite often, very few respondents assigned any health issue to the environmental problems related to traffic pollution. When the respondents did mention health issues know to them, it was due to the media coverage but none of the respondents, although some of them live and work very close to the area, did mention personal complaints or health effects combined with the pollution level.

When the interviewees were asked about whether there is enough done to protect the environment and which actors are involved, politics was often blamed to be too cautious about the topic. Some respondents mentioned some measures that have been taken over the past years, such as the 'Luftreinheitsplann' with the stickers for each car, but it is far from enough. Concerns were raised that these kinds of measures are just an immediate action shifting the problem from one to another area, since most highways were excluded from those low emission zones. People bought new cars when additional money was offered but the cars were not taken

out of service but transported to other parts of the world where operation is continued. Instead of polluting the air in Germany the sources of pollution were just moved to poorer parts of the world.

When having a look at the actor's identity concerning what has been done and what should be done, I can draw a diverse picture. All respondents state that more has be done on the political level with the politics intervening on the different basis.

Some respondents to state that the political agenda is not focussed on the issue enough. Although the environment is an ever-ongoing topic, it seems that the respondents require a much stronger political influence. It was mentioned that not enough is been done to influence the industry.

The car industry is not been pushed hard enough to bring new technologies forward fast enough as well as the heavy industry is not regulated enough. The respondents do compare Germany with other countries, mentioning a bureaucratic dilemma. The overall opinion is thus that political parties should interfere much more, even when this means higher costs for the civil society as well as for businesses.

When having a look at the personal behaviour, the respondents thought that it can be improved in order to do a step to the direction of a better environment. While some did think of environmental improvement by reducing the use of plastic products, certainly another highly discussed issue in the past, other respondents immediately mentioned their personal car use. Many of the answers created the impression that the use of an own car has become a standard for most people, even though it could be easily reduced by walking, using the bike or even public transport. Comfort was mentioned as a factor why the use of the own car is stimulated compared to the use of other means of transport.

By having a brief look at the general environmental situation and opinion of the respondents I have shown that the quality of air and environment plays an important role for all respondents. No answer was given that either the political actors are doing enough to improve the environmental quality nor was anybody mentioning that he or she is doing enough to preserve the environment. Having this in mind, drawing the attention to the opinions regarding the diesel-policy is the next step in line, the one I was the most interested in to find out.

4.2 The Diesel Ban Policy

As the diesel-ban policy has been a topic over the past years with Hamburg being the first city to introduce such a ban, the civil society is aware of such policy. When being asked whether they think such a measure is a good step into the right direction, I come across a different set of opinions - a differentiation between the existing policies regulating only minor roads and the policy being introduced in summer 2019, regulating large part of the city of Essen.

While previous answers tended to go into the same direction as I have shown, the diesel policy is a very different story. To understand the answers provided by the interviewees, I differentiated the things that have been mentioned between the diesel policy that are already in existence, the case description given at the beginning of the paper should be kept in mind. When the people were asked about their opinion on the policies in existence, the opinion varies between support and rejection.

As so far policies only banned diesel cars from very small parts of a city, Essen is the first city to introduce a large zone, where diesel cars will be banned. The policy content thus plays a significant role when comparing such policies. Looking at the content of the policies respondents stated that a ban such as in the city of Hamburg is useless. By May 2019 the policy was in place for 1 year. In the short analysis of the first questions I have already described that people see a shift in problems from one to another area. When asked about policies banning cars in such small zones, the answers are inevitably connected to the first ones that this, too, is just a shift from one to another road which does not improve the environmental quality but is only a fast action plan to show that the topic is a point on the political agenda.

Surprisingly, when comparing the policies of the city of Hamburg and the city of Essen, which is a much larger interference in the traffic, people are more likely to be in favour of banning diesel cars in larger zones compared to small zones. The content of the policy itself thus seems to play an important role in the debate. I have shown the cases at the beginning of the paper to highlight the differences between those two. Where small area policies are likely to be rejected by the respondents, a larger area gets more support since it potentially avoids the claim that it just shifts the problem rather than fighting it, which has been brought forward by a number of respondents and is not a valid argument against the policy in Essen.

Furthermore, the line of argument indeed links back to the shift of problems from one zone to another zone. This kind of shift seems to be less likely to happen when a policy is in place as the city of Essen plans to do, at least according to what the interviewees think. Those who are

in favour of such a large area policy are dominated by environmental frames. That however does not mean that other frames are not present at all, but the environmental gains outweigh the possible sacrifices in other areas that might be influenced. Although the respondents are aware that such policy to improve environmental quality on the other hand comes with sacrifices, only a minor part of the respondents rejects a policy. Let's have a closer look at why the majority supports the policy while a small part rejects it instead in the next part of the paper focussing on the policy content.

In the previous section I have shown general similarities as well as differences regarding the environmental opinion and the diesel policy in question. The question now remains what makes people create such opinions and frames to give their opinions in the way they did. In the upcoming part an in-depth analyse the content of the policy is presented, thus what people take off the policy and see as important factors for improvement. Furthermore, looking at the policy process itself and finally at the actors' involvement according to the respondents summarizes this part. These three factors together create specific frames. It is therefore important what kind of information the respondents us of all that are given in order to understand the frames that are present.

4.3 Policy content

As I have shown a different set of attitudes in the previous parts, I focussed in-depth on policy content in the upcoming part. Since the respondents take different positions, the content of the policy should be viewed different by the people, too.

Although the policy is aimed at improving the environmental quality, people do not just see the positive sides of such a policy. On the other hand, namely, it means that citizens might not be able to drive their slightly older diesel car in the city anymore but must take long detours or even buy a new car to avoid being directly affected by the policy.

When having a look at the answer of the different respondents, I can see a pattern in what people see as a dominant factor for supporting the policy or rejecting it. Generally, it seems that people who are living in the affected area or do indeed drive a diesel-powered car are less likely to be in favour than those who are not directly affected. This is something I have expected given that that those people need to make more financial sacrifices or spend more time in the car than they were so far used to compared to people who are not affected. Even if family members are for some reason affected by the policy, respondents are somewhat more likely to reject such a

policy to ban diesel cars. This in turn means that the cognitive frames can be assumed to be influenced by the social environment to a larger extend than by media or politics.

For those who are in favour of the policy it seems that media and expert testimony has a stronger influence on the frames. The respondents bring forward other core ideas and critics than those who are against the policy. The two dominant frames hereby are the environmental frames. AS mentioned earlier the environmental improvement is connected to a healthy life and a healthy environment but none of the respondents sees a direct improvement for the health. The rejection on the other hand is dominated by a sort of unfairness towards the civil society. It is claimed that people have bought a car according to the regulation in place and are now punished by not being able to drive it anymore.

The narrowness of cognitive frames might also count as an explanation why none of the respondents has put health concerns forward as a major point in favour or against the policy, although it is clear to everyone that the court ruling explicitly emphasises the protection of health of citizens, visitors and road users. This can be due to a lack of information on why the court has ruled the way it did or simply that people have noticed it but compare it to their own health situation and neglect the information as less important than others.

One has to say that those who reject the policy as such are not generally against a policy that bans diesel cars but claim that the decision that has been taken came too fast without enough thoughts about the topic itself and therefore a possible oblivion of other solutions which are maybe effective in the same way but do not require such drastic measures as denying people to use their own car in the city. It can be thus seen as a dominance of economic frames since the rejection is connected to the fact that people might have to buy a new car in order to avoid fines. The content of the policy is thus a diverse matter. Where all people agree that the environment must be saved and more must be done, the policy itself does not convince all participants to be a necessary step for the environment.

Additionally, I can find a pattern when it comes to the use of language between those in favour and those against the policy. The respondents in favour use a moderate description and even state negative effects of such a policy. During their answers the visible line can be drawn where negative and positive aspects are weighed to build an opinion. The cognitive frames as described by Dewulf (2009) are somewhat broader. Since these respondents are not directly affected by the policy, they seem to have gathered more information and build up a wider attitude. 'Naming' about the support to the policy is very moderate with only one respondent using a rather extreme set of language.

When I compare the people rejecting the policy I am dealing with a different story. Their frames are somewhat narrower and influenced by the fact that they are affected by the policy or people closely related are affected. Respondents who are not in favour of the policy for different reasons use a more extreme set of language and a different line of argumentation. While those in favour also mention negative points but nevertheless conclude that such a policy can be effective and is a good measure to improve the environment, those rejecting the policy on the other hand do not mention any positive aspect. The line of argumentation is negatively driven and does not include any positive environmental or health effects.

The cognitive frames are dominated by personal as well as societal experience and are unlikely to be influenced by other opinions, media or any other news sources. If I sum up what I have analysed so far, I argue that a move in frames is highly unlikely when people feel themselves as a 'victim' of the policy whereas people who are not influenced are more likely to have flexible frames. This is maybe nothing that I could not have expected, but when taking a look at where people gather information about their policy content, one could think at least that positive aspects should be in every one's mind and not just mentioned by those who also favour the policy.

The group of younger respondents uses social media channels to get information on various topics one of which being political decisions and regulations such as the diesel policy. Nevertheless, they do not exclusively rely on social media information but also take traditional media into account such as television news, radio and newspapers. The group of somewhat older people rely less on social media but exclusively on television, newspaper and radio news.

Respondents answered that the policy was not just a topic within the local news but also a headline in nation-wide prime news showing the importance for the overall society. In traditional news it was however more unlike to find content of the policy that might have any negative effect for society. That is a different picture in social media where the news coverage seems to take more extreme aspects into account, too. Newspaper and other articles are linked on platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. What makes it different though is the function to comment on topics without any restrictions. Although it is the same article as for example printed in the local newspaper, the comments tend to shed a different light on the story.

In the next paragraph a figure displays the different influences on the policy content. I argue from what has been said in the interviews, that media in all its different forms has very little to no influence at all on the frames. I must therefore seek to explain the source elsewhere. Throughout the interview it becomes clear that the frames in the debate have much more to do

with habits and personal circumstances than media can ever shape. It weighs much stronger when one closely related person is affected by the policy than all media writing into the different direction.

To visualize the overall frames, that play a crucial role in the debate when it comes to the policy content, I have mapped the important points in the simplified Figure 3. It displays the relationship between the different frames that the respondents have outlined within the interviews. The thickness of the lines displays the importance of the aspects whereas the red line displays the lack of any relationship with the frames that have been brought forward. As I have mentioned earlier, health effects are not put in a strong correlation with the policy compared to environmental and economic frames, which as a result dominate the policy content
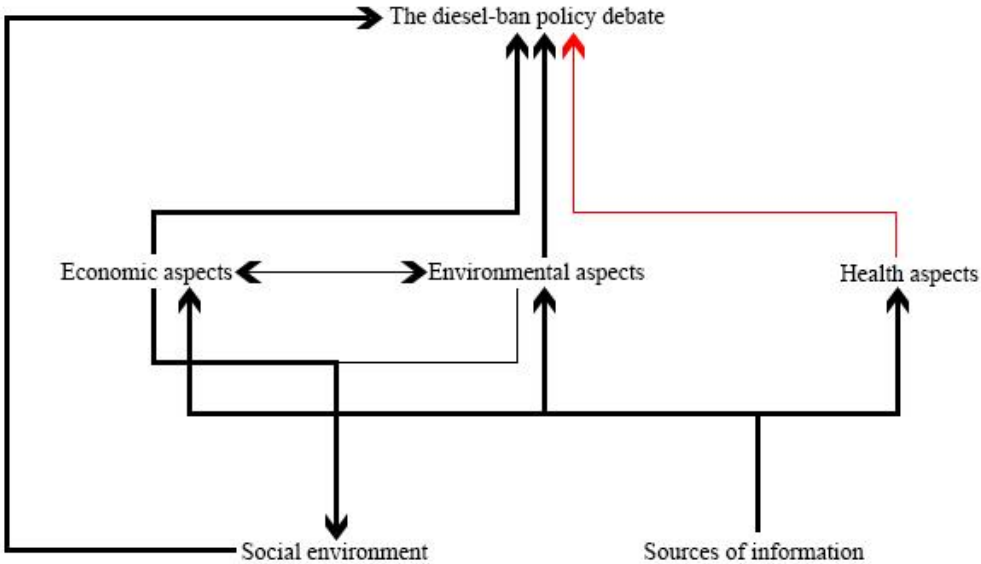

Figure 3- Policy content and its relationships towards each other

opinion. I also assume that the respondents all had prior frames concerning the environment, as I have made clear in the first few questions of the interview. Those frames have built up over a longer period as environmental safeguarding is an issue that has not just come along for everyone but is a topic since the founding of the Green Party in Germany.

According to the responses given in the interviews, people get their information in media as a primary source but also rely on friends, family and colleagues, as it is shown on the bottom of figure three. While media does inform on all the three aspects to the same extend, everyone mentioned medias as their primary source of information. The social environment considers, as the society does, environmental and economic effects and is likely to influence the respondents.

This means when the close social environment rejects the policy for the reason of being affected, the respondents are likely adopting the view and thus reject the policy, too. When family and friends support the policy, it is easy to say that the interviewees do, too. This, however, does not count when the respondent uses a diesel-powered car on his own, as I show later.

Those two sources are important when it comes to the general content of the policy. When having a look at the Figure 3, we can see that some frames influence each other as well as the frames that are dominant in the social environment.

Interviewees connect environmental frames with economic frames and vice versa. This means, they weigh economic costs and sacrifices with environmental benefits. As I have discovered earlier, all respondents have the opinion that more must be done to improve the environmental quality. The question they ask themselves is thus at what costs should be improve the environment. By doing so, one can judge for him or herself what dominates the opinion and thus serves as one factor to shape the frames in the public debate. People who are not affected at all by the policy have virtually no costs at all, which makes it highly unlikely not being in favour since it serves the environment, which they want to improve. People affected fear high personal costs no one will cover but they themselves and thus reject the policy.

Both these frames, the economic as well as the environmental, are also influenced by the social environment such as family members and friends, which in turn have their own frames that they share to one another. Although health effects are always mentioned in connection with traffic pollution and it was the reason why the court in Gelsenkirchen ruled in favour of a policy, respondents are unlikely to weigh it at the costs or benefits of any other of the frames which is surprising since it remains the main argument politics, environmentalists and media uses when talking about a diesel ban policy. But it seems that not only the respondents but also their friends and family seem to be not as convinced about the positive acts as one should think.

Since I have looked at the policy content itself, respondents were also asked about obvious alternatives such as new methods of transportation as well as the public transport. When the use of the car is regulated by a policy and politics have goals to push forward electric mobility or the use of public transport, the policy is not just about prohibition on one side but should also provide the necessary alternatives.

The respondents unanimously and unmistakeably stated that while cars are being regulated now, the alternatives are far from given. They see a one-sided policy aiming at reducing

emissions at the costs of the society but on the other hand don't see any alternatives or relief on the other hand. Bonusses for buying an electric or hybrid car were mentioned by some, but on the other hand some have never heard about it. Those who indeed heard about it mentioned that the funding to buy cars of this sort as well as the funding for research into these technologies is too low. It remains unattractive and still expensive to buy an electric car. People who commute longer distances to work or use their car extensively stated that there is by now no alternative to a diesel car in terms of practicality such as reach, costs and the feasibility of refuelling in minutes compared to hours of charging and electric car.

Public transport was often described as too inflexible and too expensive. Interestingly the economic issue of ticket prices that are too high holds people back more than the inflexible schedules and possible changes of busses and trains. A lot of respondents mentioned that they would use the public transport more often if prices are lowered or special tickets are offered to commute to work and back for a reasonable amount of money.

Apart from one respondent, all mentioned the longer travel times as another reason why they favour their own cars compared to public transport. It seems however when they times are just slightly longer to take the public transport than using the own car, people do use it indeed to avoid stressful traffic jams. I want to summarize that as the economic frames play an important role for using established engine cars or use the bus. People are simply not willing to pay the higher costs for something that for now even seems to be less practical than what they are used to.

When talking about the actor's identity I will have a closer look on the content of alternatives. In the next part I will first provide a look at the policy process. It will provide us with an impression of whether people are aware of why and how such policies is introduced and what kind of basis and information is used to make a court rule in favour or against a policy. The section is closely related as the process also influences the content in the sense that within the process coverage content is already mentioned so that people can prepare for possible personal consequences throughout the process and are not confronted with a 'sudden' policy.

4.4 Policy process

Whereas all people are aware of diesel ban policies and to some extend of the content, the policy process shows a very different picture. The respondents who are not affected in any way by the policy know little to nothing about the process but just informed themselves on the decision that was ruled by the court. However, they did not follow the process and the discussion that led to the policy simply because they were not interested in the policy. This leads to the assumption that they see a need to improve the environment, but it remains questionable whether they are really supporting such policy, or they do not mind either having the policy in action or not having the policy in action. Additionally, it also seems to be a question of technical interest. Respondents claim that they do not understand much of the sources and data used for the process and during the discussion making the topic uninteresting to them. The process of finding a solution to the pollution levels was also described as bureaucratic and obscure as it is simply not a level where society at large is able to understand and judge what is been talked about and thus the interest is simply not raised. Some respondents also mentioned that while the results and the content of the policy well covered in the media extensively after the court ruling, the process itself was given very little attention.

Apart from a very small part of the respondents all knew that data from the measurement stations is used to get information on the air quality in the area in question. Some also stated that the European Union has regulations counting for all member states. When these limits are exceeded measures must be taken. However, none knew the actual limits and if is enough if they are exceeded once or it requires more than one day of exceeding those limits. The German Environmental Help (DUH – Deutsch Umwelthilfe) was never mentioned, although they are responsible for courts acting in various cities across Germany. This is another indicator for that people do use media as a source for information but not in detail, as the DUH is mostly mentioned in connection with such policy when it comes to media quotations.

For those people who are affected by the policy, whether direct or indirect, answers tell a somewhat different story. They tried to inform themselves about the status of the policy as well as over the content before it was decided in court. This is a result of the fact that it has direct implications on the everyday life of car owners, commuters etc. and thus it has been of more interest to them. Those respondents were also more likely to know about the emission levels and how they are measured. But again, as it seems to be a very technical subject to many people, the interest and understanding requires a certain affinity with cars and technology. I want to point out that the process if made public is difficult to understand for people who are not familiar

with the different technical subjects. People also claimed that the information besides being to little is also too complicated to understand.

Since all the interviewees wailed about the lack of possibilities to get a good understanding of what the policy is about, at least during the process of decision making and very little information was actually given, it is an interesting thing of find out what could be improved within the process in order to make it more interesting. Though a contribution by individuals seems a time consuming and expensive process, various respondents prefer a vote in policies that are directly affecting them. It was brought forward that relying on data and thus experts who have set the data is not enough, but such policy would also require asking people who live in the area for a longer time on how they think about air quality and other related issues. Companies should be involved in order to also shed light on the economic situation since the respondents' fear that after all it will just come back to them in forms of higher costs for deliveries, services and other business services that rely on diesel cars. Respondents communicate a kind of mistrust in the policy as most of them are well in favour but on the other hand due to the fact they are unsure of the basis it is built upon, are unsure whether they policy will be effective.

The lack of information and the mistrust brings is seamlessly to the next paragraph. The actor's identity serves as the third point which makes up a frame, in combination with the two points discussed previously. I will therefore have a look at how the actor's involvement is seen by the respondents and try to draw lines to demonstrate the relationship between the actors and how they influence, if so, the frames.

4.5 Actors identity

Within a decision-making process for a policy, a lot of actors are involved before an idea is turned into a policy. Naturally, politics are involved as the main body for regulations. Within a fundamental environmental question, other actors however play a role as well. General answers from the interview have shown that even the respondents themselves see themselves as part of the whole. The respondents came up with many actors they see as involved to different levels in the process. That ranges from the just mentioned politic actors, on the national and international basis, to the industry as well as other countries. Media must be considered as an actor, too, largely because people do use standard media to get the information. It is the source where people do take information on other countries, political decisions and other related topics.

I have shown in the previous section that the policy process, compared to the outcome, remained largely unnoticed, although some coverage was given. Respondents mentioned that information was given but as one can expect reporting on the outcome of such a policy decision is far more interesting that reporting on the decision-making process. Respondents see many actors involved in the process, with the involvement being present within the different parts of the process.

When having a look at the following Figure 4, a kind of circle can be see, where only the individual responsibility is on another level. All respondents have mentioned a responsibility each one has for him or herself to improve the environment quality by different measures.

It ranges from general reduction of materials that contribute to pollution but also the use of the own car was mentioned by various people. But they do not just see themselves as being responsible for the environment, but also name other involved parties as shown in the Figure. I can see that the information on the actors involved are taken from media sources, as respondents are unlikely to have a first-hand insight. Individuals than use the information to draw conclusive lines on the involvement and relationships of actors as they see it.
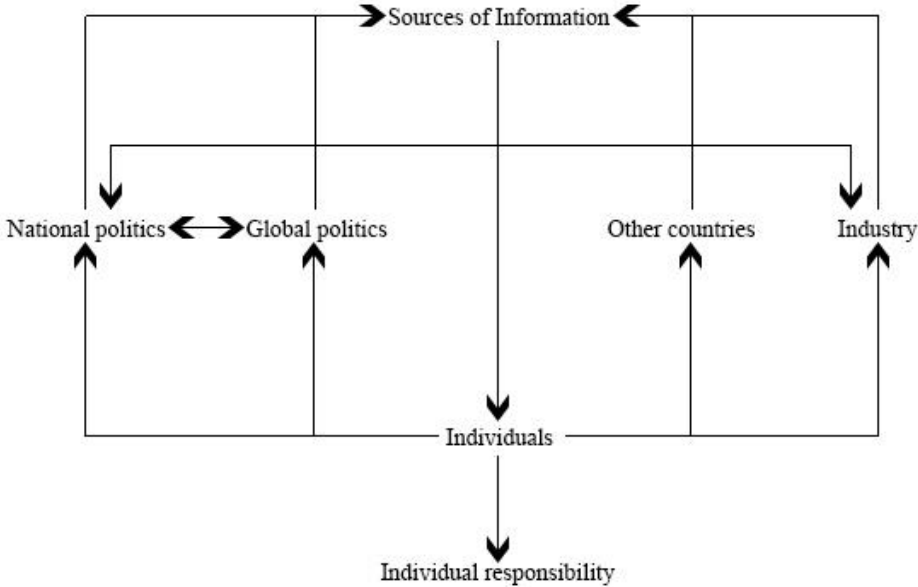

Figure 4- Actor's identity and its relationships

As already mentioned, politics do play a significant role according to the respondents. Interestingly, they see politics strongly interconnected with the industry and global politics influencing each other. One respondent mentioned that high political positions and industry

board members are frequently exchanged making an independent work between those two actors impossible as the actors are biased.

The claimed that comes along with such view is that politics has done too little to push the industry towards other means of transport, meaning not enough research has been done in the sector. Vice versa, respondents argue that politics is dominated by the industry when board members get political positions and politicians obtain board member positions. The industry in other words dictates politics when it comes to car technology and therefore politics does push forward such bans only when they industry is ready to sell new cars generating more money for themselves at the costs of each individual citizen who is affected by such policy. Though this is a very drastic claim, there is a consensus that politics are indeed not putting enough effort into solutions for environmental problems.

Mentioned earlier, alternatives, that must to a large extend be developed by the industry and the market, are missing in Germany. Bus lines are closed, or the timing is lowered to cut costs while on the other hand more is required if politics wants individuals to consider public transportation as a serious alternative to using the own car.

Politics, aside of the relation to the industry, is also seen as too complex on a global scale. Environmental safeguarding must be done by all nations not just by a few since Germany is a small player in a big system. It is argued that while Germany spend a lot of money, other countries continue as they did over the past years continuously polluting the air. Diesel cars that might be sold in Germany to buy an alternative are transported to other countries and operation continues. Pollution does not stop at national borders and it therefore does not matter where those cars are operated. Thus, global politics needs to act according to the respondents in order not to disadvantage one country compared to others. National politics should push other countries to do more themselves in order to even out the costs and benefits.

Let's ask ourselves where the respondents take their knowledge from. I assume that if than only very few have access to first-hand information, especially when it comes to industry and other countries. People, too, take their information from media when it comes to the frames on actors that are involved in the process. Media is likely to take the information from reports, first-hand information and researchers. I want to argue that media when it comes to the actor's identity has the chance to influence people's frames. If media puts for example the industry into a good light and stresses how much spending is been done to research modern engines, people as a result might stress that industry is doing a good job compared to politics. This also counts the other way around depending on media opinion. Comparing it to the policy content, media has

surely a higher influence on people's frames. The social environment plays no significant role as it also takes the same information from the same sources.

When other actors are put aside, it is interesting to have a look at the own identity within the topic. Most respondents admit that they are not doing enough for the environment. Trash can be reduced, using the car for short distances can be replaced with using the bike or walking. Respondents thus do not just try to push the responsibility away to other more powerful actors but also see a part of action that can be done as their own turn to improve the environmental quality. Respondents often refer to the laziness and habits they have got used to as an explanation though not excuse for not doing more for the environment as they would like to do. As a result, they pass the ball of play to the politics who oversees what can be done and what should be done. According to the respondents, politics should regulate more in order to further increase the environmental quality.

Therefore, it is interesting to have a look at the political agenda and which parties the respondents are most likely to trust having the policy in mind. It is important to say that the European Parliament elections were held during the time of the interview. Due to that fact people might have been more aware of the fact which political parties are the winners and which parties are the losers within the election process. As it was covered extensively in the media, I argue that outcomes of the elections as well as prognoses were hard to miss so every respondent had the chance to at least get some insight of political agendas while watching news or reading the newspaper.

Interestingly, when looking at the political party range in Germany, those who do favour the policy trust the green party as having the highest competences to solve the environmental problems and improve the situation. But not all of them do. While some did not answer the question due to a lack of interest in political parties, some others argued that it's not exclusively a topic for an environmental party, but other political fields must be connected as well. While some respondents stated that the CDU (Christian democratic union) is the party to have the most chances to solve the problem, others are convinced that one party alone won't have enough competences to provide a wide-reaching solution for emission and pollution. I can argue that they people who also put more emphasize on the economic externalities of such a policy are also more likely to not favour the green party. Even some who do favour the policy do not share the opinion that the green party has enough knowledge and competences to solve all the related problems apart from just the environmental ones. The trust in politics to solve the issue is thus not given for every person interviewed.

4.6 An opposing view

In the previous parts I have shown that many respondents are in favour of improving the environmental quality, although it has some costs to it. However, throughout the interviews was one contrasting opposite view to all the other. As it was not just contrasting in one or two points but in all points, I have decided to devote a short part of the work to it.

One respondent outlined his frames that the environment is not as important as it is claimed and far too much is done in order to improve it, both by politics and by individuals. The respondent shows a clear aversion towards environmental efforts. Even though the person was aware of the content and was even informed about the process itself, so it can be argued that the information level is above average, the opinion seemed to be formed by other factors rather than medial influence. Television news and newspaper article, as the same for the other respondents, did not play any role in the process of framing.

What might thus explain such an extreme situation might have something to do with the development of the Ruhr Area in the past few years. I have shortly discussed the industrial influence in the Ruhr Area in the past decades. Heavy industry, which has been reduced to a large extend in the past years, was contributing to the dirty image of the Ruhr Area. However, for the respondent the industry and it negative effects on the environment on the other hand meant secured work, not just for one but for thousands of people. This has surely created the frame that the area was dirty, but the positive effects outweigh the negative ones, similarly as economic ones outweigh the environmental ones.

The interviewee mentions that the environmental quality in the Ruhr Area has improved far more than in other areas. The actor's identity thus has a strong influence on the frame. While all other respondents do see various actors in charge and claim it's the action of every one of these, the controversial frame rests on the fact that the person sees other countries and areas in place to act before Germany, or at least the Ruhr Area, has to take action again. Politics is thus intervening too much and should rather increase efforts for other areas and countries. Political parties, interested of setting new rules should rather act on a wider level, perhaps even worldwide level to stimulate climate targets such as the Paris agreement. On the other hand, the respondent blanks out that someone must take action. If everyone is waiting for others to act nothing will happen after all.

Summarizing the part of the research, the Ruhr Area has a reached a clean environment, surely because of the comparison to how it looked like decades ago. The increase in environmental

interest in society seems to have no influence at all. The cognitive frames that have been created a whole life long while living in the area, seem to be irreplaceable by any other information perhaps contributing to newer views regarding a topic such as environmental efforts. Since it is the only person who respondent in such a way, it remains questionable whether a lot of people share the view. One reason for such a view, or better to say, why no other respondent had the same view might be a lack of comparison. People who have grown up and worked in the area in peak industrial times, being the 1960s and 1970s surely have a total different view of how it was back than and how it is now than those who are born later or moved in after a lot of mines have been closed and related industry has moved elsewhere.

5. Discussion

5.1 What makes a frame a frame?

In the previous part I have analysed what has been said throughout the interview. But what frames can now be described as being present in the debate and how, if so, do they interact with one another in a discussion. A serious of interviews was conducted and then analysed to find out what frames are present and what can be a possible explanation for them.

Generally, I want to argue that frames that are shared by the respondents are a matter of time in the first place. One does not alter his or her frames just because someone else has said to do so. Especially on such a controversial topic, a debate is not an easy issue. Perhaps, some people are able to tell a convincing story why or why not such a policy is a good approach, but it always requires the other party first to understand the story and second it requires willingness to give up the own frames in order to adopt new ones. So, what are the main points that make up the basis for a frame?

Additionally, the policy process plays a less important role here since respondents do not know that much about the process itself but more about the content and the other actors being involved. Even though some respondents mentioned that they have read or heard about the policy process, influence cannot be proofed. This is different with the other two, the policy content as well as the policy process. The question is whether the two remaining contributors have any relationship to each other and if so, to what extent.

Looking at the actor's identity and the policy content, the relationship is difficult to judge. Respondents have mentioned various actors that they see involved in the process of a diesel ban, resulting in a difficult map, as it has been shown earlier.

Looking at Figure 5 for the demonstration of relationships in total, I have tried to visualize the overall picture as it was drawn by the respondents. Whereas figures two and three showed the actors and the content separated from each other, Figure 5 connects both previous Figures. This gives us a broader overview of the whole situation and I can find various aspects influencing society to shape a frame. Although, as said, the process does not play a significant role, I have coloured all three contributors, the policy content, the policy process and actor's identity. For better visibility, actors are boxed in yellow, the content is boxed in blue and the process in green. While the thickness of the lines shows the importance of the different aspects, the red lines in the figure display connections that play no significant role for the respondents or have not been set in relationship to the diesel pollution at all. It does not mean that they have not
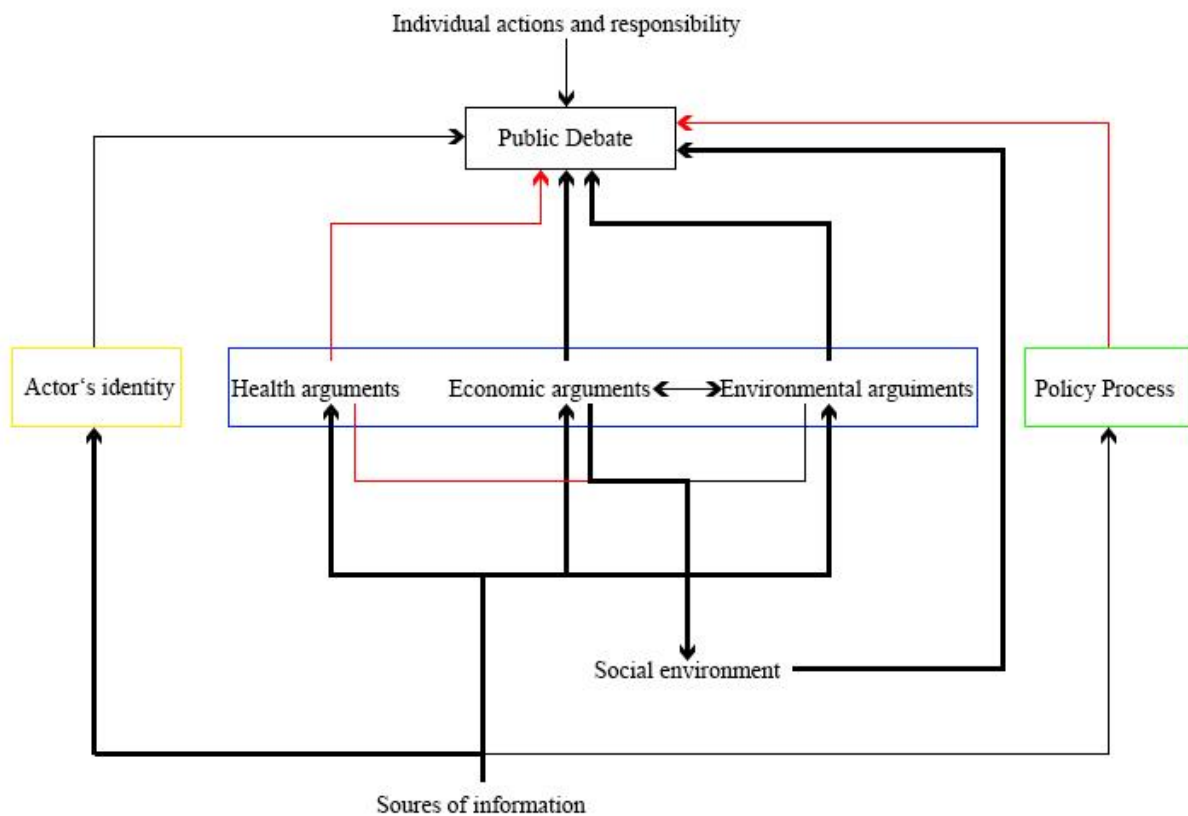
Figure 5- The influence of policy content, policy process and actor's identity on frames present in the diesel ban policy

been mentioned at all, and some do say that the air during hot summer days is not of the best quality, but generalize it immediately stating that it's the same case everywhere else. Respondents do not see a direct link between diesel cars and health nor does the process have any influence on their frames. Media is seen to have covered the content to the same extend as the actors involved but lacked reports on the policy process. Although one could argue that the lack of reporting on the process results in the lack of use for framing, this is not the case as health aspects were mentioned frequently but does not play a role in framing either.

The blue box with the content of the policy seems to be the source people use mostly for framing in the debate. Whereas the policy process is regarded the least, actor's identity is considered by all respondents and does, to some extent, influence the frame. The less people are in favour of the policy, the more the use other actors and their role to support their argumentation. The claim politics to have done too little in terms of industry influence. On the other side, people supporting the policy also use actor's identity for their frames but do blame politics rather for having done too little for the environment, not by pushing the industry, but by not pushing

society enough. Both sides within the debate thus see politics as a main actor but prefer different actions by it.

Self-consciousness is another factor every of the respondents does consider, however none gave the impression they would be willing to change and of their habits. Although interviewees are aware of ways for each single individual being able to improve the environmental quality, it does not influence the frames in the debate at all. People mentioned using the cars less could be an improvement, but comfort and habits hold them back from taking those steps. While some are showing a will to change their habits, the lack of alternatives seems to play a significant role why no changes are made yet which can therefore be traced back to lack of political efforts.

When having a look at the frames, I can clearly say that all frames present have a typical cognitive nature. Respondents judge the situation from their own personal view and no external sources are likely to have any influence at all. Although the debate has been going on for some time now, none of the people that are affected by the policy have been convinced that the step is necessary although there is no other choice according to law. On the other hand, none of the non-affected people has altered his or her view because someone convinced the respondent that the economic sacrifices are too large compared to the bargains. Surely, if I move away from a single answer and view it as and overall, I must ask myself the question "why would someone not be in favour of something that has exclusively positive effects?". No one would disagree if I argue that there is no real reason not to being favour of such a policy. Maybe the answers are somewhat limited though. Some respondents are aware that it will return on other ways for example costs for delivering goods and services are increased. But it seems that a rather small increase in costs is no reason for those respondents to not be in favour. In other words, large positive effects are worth comparably small financial sacrifices as a trade-off.

For those who reject the policy, a different question comes forward. "Why would someone be in favour of something that has both positive and negative effects?". This question is somewhat more difficult to answer. Within the analysis I have argued that the environmental and economic frames are the dominant ones. They are weighed against each other to pick sides in the debate. But how can one explain that one does not favour environmental issues over economic issues but only the other way around. I argue that this stands in close connection with the health issues or better to say the lack of emphasize on the health issues. If health problems would be a known negative effect of pollution to the respondents, which none has mentioned, the economic effects would possibly play a less important role since everyone wants to live in a healthy environment. Then one would have to connect positive health effects with positive environmental effects and

weigh it against negative effects which might have a different result as it turned out to be now. As there is hardly any significant data yet on the effects of pollution people do not consider it. Judgements from the own health are considered but none has mentioned that he or she feels ill due to heavy traffic.

The debate is thus shaped by the two only, leaving health issues aside. If I want to prioritize the frames, economic ones are number one followed by environmental ones being second. Let's now consider people with both frames debate on the topic. It is difficult to estimate whether any communication between the two dominating parties is possible. People not being affected by the policy will have a hard time understanding the opposing position. The other way around, people being affected will possibly also not understand why people favour such policy because the ever-present financial sacrifices obscure any more objective view. Again, this confirms that the frames are of cognitive nature and do not change for someone else telling a different story. Breaking up old frame seems to be a difficult challenge for all involved on the debate.

The social environment of the respondents is the only likely source to have influence on the frame and chances to break them up or support them. However, as these social surroundings seem to influence the frames of respondents only in connection with someone driving a diesel car, thus being against the policy, I cannot estimate whether it is also a factor that influences people into the other direction. This is shown in Figure 5 as the social environment was only mentioned in connection with the rejection of the diesel ban. I therefore conclude that environmental aspects are considered but if so its unlikely that it will change the respondents mind into supporting the policy if the respondents are affected.

I argue that for such a diverse case, media is only a source of information but cannot be described as having influence on the frames. It remains therefore questionable whether there is any possible altering of the frames as they seem to be as static as they could be. However, I cannot speak of any lack of metacommunication within the debate since it is clear what the arguments for and against such a policy are, but the distinct static frames are just unlikely to be changed through debate. No matter how media and other actors argue the situation won't change to either side. Even though naming and storytelling differs depending about the respondent, whether effected or not, does not change other one's frames.

After all, one can argue that, although lot of information on various aspects are available, frames rely strongly on the personal situation of each of the respondents. Summarizing it, people affected by the policy reject it whereas people not being affected by the policy support it. It seems thus that the market at the end will regulate the situation independent of what people

think. When prices of diesel cars and fuel are raised to a level which is not affordable anymore, everyone will automatically, though with sure complaints, look for alternatives in transportation. The political and industrial actions are therefore vital for a cleaner environment regardless of the debate in society. Those two actors are the ones who can regulate technology and policy leading to an improved environment.

I argue that involving people in such a discussion makes no sense at all. As I have pointed out, some respondents stated, that asking citizens personally about any effects of pollution or whether they favour such a policy is impractical as well as it leads to no change in views. I therefore assume when asking people living in the area and driving a diesel car, they will reject the policy, while those who do not drive a diesel car will favour it. The frames match those I have found to be present in the discussion. But as those limits for emissions are given by European law, even if all people would reject such a policy idea, the court has no chance but to rule in favour of it.

Naming, selecting and storytelling does play a role when society debates on the topic, where those who prefer such a policy use a more radical story when talking about the environmental quality and those who reject the policy use a more radical one when talking about the policy, this will after all have no influence on the policy itself. Communication is an important factor, also for policy, but it arguable whether the interviewees must be the source for communication or whether official bodies such as local politics, newspapers, the court and other involved actors have to improve communication in order to explain the policy in a way people are more likely to understand why it is important. I argue that as long as policy process communication is set on a level laymen are unlike to understand, the process itself will not gather more attention but it will keep the way it is now, namely that the content is the major factor for frames.

As a generalization for what I have found out throughout the research I can say that the environmental bargains that come along with such a policy have a certain price. For those who are not affected by the policy, the price is very low at first glance. For the people affected by the policy the price is very high in comparison. It therefore depends on whether the respondents are willing to pay the price for the bargain or not. That does not come as a big surprise as no one is willing to pay money in order to achieve very little. To achieve this, I argue, more awareness of the situation is needed. But how is this achievable. Possibly not throughout media as that did not play a significant role to the debate. It seems therefore likely that people themselves, no matter of profession, age, sex and other factors, must feel the consequences by themselves first in order to change their minds.

5.2 Strength and limitations

In the previous part I have discussed the findings and drawn conclusions between the different aspects that have been discovered. In this section I want to draw the attention to the possible strength and weaknesses of the research.

Since most research has strong and weak aspects, the possibly biggest strength is also its weakness, the respondents. Originally it was planned to conduct interviews with both civil society as well as people working for companies or organizations that are to some extend involved in the process or the content of the policy.

Nevertheless, the sample group is as diverse as possible representing members of society with very different backgrounds but as mentioned they are all member of civil society but not of any company or business. It therefore makes it possible to draw a picture on what society thinks but not what someone thinks who might be more biased due to the profession.

Although many invitations to contribute to the interview have been send out to different companies and NGOs, the city of Essen as well as the court of Gelsenkirchen, the only one to reply was Greenpeace Germany. Unfortunately, the city branch of Greenpeace Essen did not respond to emails and phone calls either, so subsequently no company was interview after all.

It is impossible to explain the reasons why, but it might have drawn a different picture as companies are those faced with the highest negative economic effects although some like RWE and EON (two large energy suppliers) are working on a better environment as one of their main goals which the always push forward in discussions. It would have been interesting to get a view of someone who is involved in the industrial or scientific process to improve the environmental quality and reduce.

5.3 Applicability to other policy situations

Can we argue from what we have found out throughout the research that such form of debate is also possible to by applied to other policy situations? To answer such a question, we must draw a distinction between different policy situations. On the one hand we have proposed and existent policies that are unlikely to raise any public debate as people are not showing enough interest. The introduction of a toll for road cars on highways is a prominent and very present example, as it was just rejected a by the European Court a few days ago. However, as there were no real sacrifices to be made by society, none was eager to engage in public debates though it was widely covered in the media.

This however looks very different when having a look at another topic, the coal energy policy regulating the coal mining for energy production. Negative effects as the destruction of villages, forests and the overall environment due to high emissions are obvious. On the other side is the rather cheap energy it produces. It is comparably the same issue as when the nuclear power plan policy was discussed, two opposing sides, those supporting the shut down and less waste compared to those fearing higher energy costs as renewable energy was far from being able to provide enough energy.

We can therefore argue that a controversial debate, where environment and economic frames do play the dominating role are likely to have the same tendencies as the debate related to the diesel ban policy. It does, however, not mean that it is always the economic frames that dominate the environment frames, but it can also be the other way around depending on the topic to be debated.

Additionally, we can therefore argue that the research is socially relevant due to its possibility to apply the findings to various other public debates, especially those ones that are of a very controversial nature raising a high public interest.

In the future it can be an interesting approach to finds out whether the frames do change if more is to be know on health effects. Up to the point now, there are no reliable long-term studies on health effects and

6. Conclusion

Although not much research has been done yet on the diesel ban policy and the debate it brings with it, the analysis shows a clear pattern when it comes to frames.

When returning to my research question posed at the beginning, a clear answer can be given by now. Taking the first sub question, the debate is a very diverse one as the policy is very controversial. There are, as in other interpretative research, no wrong or right answers.

A pattern can be seen within the answers that everyone picks sides. None of the respondents does state that he or she does not care about such policy, but everyone had an opinion. A debate insofar is very difficult as those frames that have been uncovered are very static. The have been created over a long period of time and even through discussion it seems that they cannot be changed.

Adding the second research question to the conclusion, I have shown strong evidence that if the economic frame is present for whatever reason, it always dominates the environmental ones. Everyone is aware of the climate change and that the environment must be improved, but that seems yet not be enough to change the attitude and put the environmental frames into the prior position in debate.

Summing up I want to point out that there is a constant ongoing debate, but this debate is far from having the chance to convince other people for one or the other side. The frames are used to point out the strong position every single respondent has taken within the debate that very much allows for communication but not for convincing other actors in the debate.

For future research it is thus possible to repeat such a study in a few years' time when people might have a deeper understanding of the health effects and more research has been done to provide more reliable information to society. Having a look at the third non-present frame could draw a different picture to what I have found out now. Additional research is also possible to find out at what costs people are willing to improve the environment. Since I have two extreme boarders, those paying very little and those who pay a lot for buying a new car, the boarder must be somewhere in between. The second follow up approach can be done as a follow up while the first one described requires some time in between to let those policy settle and make it possible to measure an effect on health more reliable.

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8. Data Appendix

8.1 Code Start List

- Air quality frames
- Alternative mobility
- Catastrophe frames
- Comparison with other countries
- Comparison with other regions
- Competitiveness with other countries
- Economic necessity
- Economic cost
- Economic personal cost frames
- Funding frames
- Habit and customs
- Health frames (media)
- Health frames (personal)
- Individual responsibility frames
- Industry involvement
- Information frames
- Media frames
- Policy involvement
- Political involvement
- Pollution frames
- Pollution frames (area related)
- Public transport
- Science Frames
- Social environment frames
- Trust frames

8.2 Interview Questions

- What role does the environment have for you?
- How would you describe the environmental quality in the Ruhr Area?
- Is there enough done to secure the environmental quality?
- How do you judge your own efforts?

- Some German cities do have an active diesel ban policy in place, are you familiar with it? How would you judge the measurement?
- Essen is going to introduce a diesel ban policy in summer 2019 and extended in autumn, have you heard about it?
- Where did you get the information from?
- How would you judge the policy compared to other cities you are familiar with?
- Are you familiar on which basis the policy is decided upon?
- How do you judge the policy process? What would you do different?

- Do you see the diesel now for economically necessary? If so, for how long do you think it will remain like this?
- How do or should alternatives look according to your opinion?
- Should civil society and businesses be pushed more to adopt alternatives?
- Can the problem be solved by politics alone? If so, which party would you trust with the most competences?
- Is public transport an alternative? IF not, what has to be done to make it to become an alternative?

- Diesel ban policy yes or no?