

“To what extent do the European Union’s crisis reactions in the Euro crisis, Refugee crisis and Corona crisis show a pattern of the European solidarity deficit?”

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Abstract

Through an increasingly globalised world, the EU is confronted with a variety of crises in the past few years. Although different in their thematic focus, the Euro crisis, refugee crisis and Corona crisis equally challenge(d) European solidarity and thus create obstacles for European cohesion. As such, they are compared to identify patterns of European solidarity deficits in crisis responses and to evaluate the influence of power structures therein. The findings see the main limitations for European solidarity in the unwillingness of single member states to put national interests back behind European visions on the one hand, and in the attachment of conditions to financial support on the other hand. It is argued, that these patterns create the necessity to change the foundation of economic and monetary cooperation in the EU.

Table of Contents

I. Introduction.....	5
II. Theoretical Framework- Patterns of solidarity deficits	9
1. The concept of solidarity	9
2. European solidarity	11
3. Deficit patterns of European solidarity.....	16
4. Theoretical guiding lines for analysis.....	19
III. Research Design and Methodology.....	22
1. Case selection and description	22
2. Methods of data collection.....	23
3. Methods of data analysis.....	25
4. Coding scheme.....	28
5. Implications for answering the sub-questions.....	34
IV. Analysis.....	36
1. European solidarity deficits in crisis response.....	36
a. Euro crisis	36
b. Refugee crisis	39
c. Corona crisis	41
2. Similarities and differences of European solidarity deficits	43
3. Explanatory power of power structures	48
4. European solidarity deficit patterns in the Euro crisis, Refugee crisis and Corona crisis...	50
V. Conclusion	55
Bibliography	59
References.....	66

List of Abbreviations

CEAS	Common Asylum System
EFSF	European Financial Stability Facility
ESFS	European System of Financial Supervision
ESM	European Stability Mechanism
EU	European Union
Frontex	European Border and Coast Guard
SGP	Stability and Growth Pact
SSM	Single Supervisory Mechanism
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

List of Figures

Diagram 1: European solidarity deficit patterns

Diagram 2: European solidarity deficit patterns in the Euro crisis, Refugee crisis and Corona crisis

I. Introduction

Closed borders, struggle for financial commitments and delays in the supply of protective clothing for other countries in need as an expression of a “national before European level” attitude - if the founding fathers of the EU knew about what was currently happening in the European Union, they would not recognise the European idea in too many details any longer. European solidarity has been a founding principle of the EU and has been an important pillar of European Integration since. Its importance was strengthened further through Article 222 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), when it was included into European treaties. Nowadays, European solidarity plays an important role in the regular everyday life of EU politics to ensure a functioning internal market, Schengen area and cohesion among member states. Its true significance and value for cohesion in the EU, however, becomes visible in times of crisis. Not every particular case is regulated beforehand in treaties or regulations. Therefore, member states must negotiate about the type and amount of collaborative measures when new problems occur and they have to do so with due respect to the principle of solidarity.

Populist movements and claims to recall national solutions give a hint that a considerable number of citizens no longer appreciate European answers to European problems. Power structures are another important factor in that regard, as they link the willingness to supply (financial) support and the factual level of provided support with the balance of power in the EU. The self-interests of those member states that have a better bargaining position thus seem to find expression in the level of solidarity among member states in general, but in times of crises in particular. Over the last years, the connection between the two formerly closely linked concepts of European solidarity and European integration has thus faded and a certain Euroscepticism has taken its place (Gerhards, 2020, p. 4).

In times of need European solidarity could put a light on its special value. The recent so-called “Corona crisis”, a pandemic caused by the SARS COV 2 virus, however unveils fundamental deficits in crisis reactions based on European solidarity. Instead of searching for European solutions to meet the enormous challenges arising from the pandemic in terms of health protection and stabilisation of the European economy and internal market, early political decisions were mainly led by national interests. Solutions consisted in closing borders and isolations of the European Union’s member states. It becomes visible here, that the difficulties

and challenges the EU is frequently confronted with in everyday politics, are reflected in the recent Corona crisis. The pandemic has been challenging the EU since the beginning of 2020 in many ways, of which health protection and securing economic stability are central objectives. The Corona pandemic is hereby just the latest crisis in a series of crises, which hit the EU in the last years. The first one since 2008 was the financial and Euro crisis, which started as a banking crisis and developed into a debt crisis of single member states of the Eurozone. In 2015 the so-called “refugee crisis” posed a challenge to the EU as an association of states without internal borders. It initiated negotiations about a reformation of the Dublin III regulation on how to handle migration to the EU. Although these three crises refer to different policy areas at first sight, they share the necessity for European solidarity in crisis management. Despite that, the concept contains fundamental deficits in practice in each of the three crises. Previous research in that regard has dealt with shortcomings of EU Solidarity in the Euro crisis and refugee crisis respectively. Both crises have for instance been analysed with regard to reasons why burden-sharing failed and still fails (Thielemann, 2018) and why member states were hesitant to pass motions to financially support other member states in need (Ferrera & Burelli, 2019). While both crises have been analysed separately to identify deficits of European solidarity in the particular crisis constellation, a comparison of deficits across crises has been missing so far.

However, such comparison allows to identify, if particular deficits differ according to the type and main burden of the respective crisis, and to locate clusters of deficits on different political levels. This is elementary in order to develop new measures that limit those influences in further crises response and to approach European challenges with European solidarity. Hence it is indispensable to find out, which obstacles stand in the way of a smoothly functioning European solidarity mechanism. Is it a structural solidarity deficit in which difficulties within European institutions prevent an effective implementation of European solidarity? Or is it due to national interests and remaining national sovereignty in several policy areas? As the search for a pattern in the lack of European solidarity was paid little attention to so far, the Corona crisis now constitutes a good starting point to compare lacking solidarity structures in three different types of crisis. Including the recent Corona crisis into the analysis allows to compare three different (main) policy areas, which increases the significance of located deficit patterns. As crisis management is an important aspect of the EU’s range of tasks, the form or pattern of its solidarity deficit can give an outlook on the future of the EU and its ability to act. In the light

of an expectable increase in the frequency, diversity and effects with which crises will hit the European Union in the upcoming years, it is relevant to know, whether the European solidarity deficit is caused by a recurring pattern, in order to approach it appropriately. The research question of this work will accordingly be:

“To what extent do the European Union’s crisis reactions in the Euro crisis, Refugee crisis and Corona crisis show a pattern of the European solidarity deficit?”

Three sub-questions support the analysis of the research question and provide an answer to the research question. The first question refers to the EU’s crisis responses in the Euro crisis in 2008, in the refugee crisis in 2015 and in the Corona crisis in 2020: “How does the European solidarity deficit manifest itself in the Euro crisis, Refugee crisis and Corona crisis?”. The second sub-question asks for a pattern in the manifestations of the solidarity deficit in each of the three crises under analysis: “To what extent do the solidarity deficits of the three crises differ?”. The influence of hegemony and power structures on the willingness to support other member states finds expression in the third sub-question: “How can similarities and differences of the European solidarity deficit be explained in terms of power structures?”. As such, the sub-questions generate a deeper understanding about connections between different deficits of solidarity in the EU and the influence of dominant member states in that process, and provide substantial starting points to improve European crisis reactions based on solidarity in the long-term. This in consequence serves to maintain cohesion in the EU not only in times of crisis, but beyond that.

Hereby it has to be taken into account, that European solidarity is not only characterised by financial support in times of crisis, but also strongly connected with a European identity. A shared set of values, which underlies a European identity, helps to create and maintain an understanding about the importance of European solidarity for the EU as a community. It furthermore evokes a willingness on side of member states and its population to act in accordance with the principle of solidarity as laid down in European treaties. On an institutional level, European identity can for instance contribute to increase political solidarity in the EU, or finds expression in a certain expectation of the member states, how the EU as a community should behave and handle crises. Solidarity in the EU is hence conveyed by definite measures on the one hand, and the manner of how the EU institutions and individual member states position themselves with regard to the importance of (financial) help and solidarity for

cohesion in the EU on the other hand. The lack of solidarity becomes obvious through the absence of such measures and absence of commitment to support European solutions. Due to the outstanding importance of language in that regard, the analysis will be conducted in the form of a content analysis.

The second chapter sheds light on the concept of European solidarity, its deficits and correlation to power structures. The third chapter sets out the methodological approach of this paper and elaborates on the value of a content analysis in the context of the outlined topic. The following analysis deals with answering the sub-questions by examining political and policy documents with respect to structures in the European solidarity deficit. The final section provides an answer to the overall research question, whether the European solidarity deficit follows a certain pattern in crisis management, or whether it differs in each of the three crises under analysis. It further elaborates on the question, which implications can be derived from determining such similarities and differences of the European solidarity deficit in terms of the European Union's factual capacity.

II. Theoretical Framework- Patterns of solidarity deficits

This section addresses the meaning of the term solidarity in general, and “European solidarity” in particular by elaborating on its report in European founding treaties, as well as outlining its close connection with the process of European integration. It is presented, which characteristics are identified as crucial to speak of European solidarity by leading scholars. This is followed by putting forward deficits of European solidarity as seen in relation to its particular historical context. Subsequently, the connection between power structures and European solidarity, as well as between a European identity and European solidarity is depicted. Finally, some conclusions and expectations are formulated with regard to the usage of the theoretical framework of solidarity deficit patterns in the course of the analysis.

1. The concept of solidarity

As a first step, the term solidarity shall be outlined with regard to its fundamental characteristics, before details of its particular meaning in the area of politics are presented in the subsequent section.

One of the first understandings of solidarity can be traced back to Latin roots and referred to joint debtors under private law (Gussone, 2006, p. 22). The reference to interests and obligations of a collective (Stjernø, 2005) or community (Scholz, 2015, p. 725) has largely been obtained, while the concept is otherwise understood in a variety of ways. Solidarity appears to be a heterogeneous term, which has to be seen and interpreted in context (Gussone, 2006; Scholz, 2015). As Scholz (2015) points out, the “nature and goals of the specific relationship determine the obligations”, which are deemed as a precondition to speak of solidarity within a certain group. At the same time, solidarity can also refer to a reconciliation of interests between individual interests and those of a group (Gussone, 2006, p. 29; Scholz, 2011, p. 1022). Hereby solidarity aims to reach a balance between individual and collective needs (Scholz, 2015, p. 725), rather than favouring one side over the other. An equally important characteristic of solidarity is the aspect of reciprocity between members of the group (Bayertz, 1999, p. 19). While the European Commission (2018c) categorises solidarity hence primarily as a value, and Gussone (2006, p. 47) attests it an obligation to preserve the common good, Scholz (2015) questions, whether solidarity is “a motive to act, an affect, or a relation per se” (p. 725). At the same time, she emphasises that solidarity requires specific action to realise its

meaning. The need for a dissociation from social capital in that context is seen by Lahusen and Grasso (2018, p. 9). According to them social capital does not equal solidarity, but serves as a precondition for solidary action.

The significance of solidarity contains a moral component, which constitutes another central element of solidarity (Scholz, 2011, 2015). This morality is based on a certain level of liability within the group showing solidarity, often caused by mutual interdependences or shared values (Scholz, 2011). As such, the level of solidarity can give a hint at the cohesiveness of a society or group (Scholz, 2011, p. 1023). This aspect in turn is closely connected to the concept of identity. Understood as the way how a subject, for instance an individual or a state, perceives itself with regard to its environment, which could be other individuals or other states, identity is crucial to create affiliation to a certain group by identifying with similar values or through a territorial dimension (Gerhards, 2003). Being based on a comparable self-understanding and social cohesion, for instance grounded in this shared set of values, identity thereby initiates solidarity among subjects within one group. In that context Zürn (2000) formulates that “a collective sense of identity provides the basis for (re)-distributive processes within a political community” (p. 199). Simultaneously, the relationship works in both ways, as solidarity is then one mechanism to create, stabilize and increase the interconnectedness and cohesion of subjects within this group, and finally supports the identification with the group (Verhaegen, 2018, p. 874).

However, the element of morality does not mean that solidarity can be equated with justice, as Habermas (1990, p. 47) points out. In his interpretation, solidarity refers to the achievement of certain aims within a defined group, instead of aiming to reach equal rights and freedoms for everybody. He entitles solidarity thus as the “reverse side of justice” (ibid.). Stjernø (2005, p. 2) on the contrary moderates this point of view by emphasising the compatibility of justice and solidarity. He thus defines “solidarity as the preparedness to share one’s own resources with others, be that directly by donating money or time in support of others or indirectly by supporting the state to reallocate and redistribute some of the funds gathered through taxes or contributions”. The understanding of solidarity is furthermore influenced by the political orientation of the group using the concept (Likki & Staerklé, 2014), but it is not the term of a specific political camp (Scholz, 2015). Nevertheless, solidarity appears to be a political principle without a consistent legal formulation (Gussone, 2006). The overall understanding

of solidarity thus differs widely, but some traits can be identified as central elements: solidarity as a concept is contextual, based on morality and reciprocity, aims to balance individual and common interests and contains an active element.

2. European solidarity

After outlining what solidarity means in general terms, this section sets the concept in relation to the European Union and depicts, what characterises European solidarity. In relation to politics, solidarity traditionally refers to the national level rather than to international relationships. This can be traced back to a shared set of values, obligations and rights, which are linked to citizenship and a national identity. In equal terms, solidarity is often interpreted as entering into force within the context of nationality (Gussone, 2006, p. 32). It therefore does not come as a surprise, that similar to the lack of a general concept of solidarity, a definition under international law is also missing (Gussone, 2006, p. 44). Some scholars attribute solidarity on a global scale with a moral responsibility to support people and countries in need (Scholz, 2011, p. 1023). In addition, many states devote their sovereignty to the service of public welfare and interests (Gussone, 2006).

As an alliance of sovereign states, which voluntarily give up parts of their sovereignty to cooperate more closely in certain policy areas, the EU classifies as a special case under international law. The EU faces a difficult consideration here, to ensure a balance between sovereignty and solidarity among the member states as a combine of sovereign nation states (European Commission, 2018c). Here, opposition to war has been a driving force behind European solidarity (Delanty, 2018). It has then itself become one of the founding principles of the EU and is now included in treaties of the Union. Furthermore, it has been fundamental in the creation of the internal market (Marin, Penasa, & Romeo, 2020). By granting residents of European member states rights as EU-citizens and developing the EU from a mainly economic association to a political Union, a European sense of belonging has developed, which increases the importance of solidarity in a European context (Gussone, 2006, p. 61). As such, solidarity is a goal in itself and an instrument to achieve other, collaborative aims at the same time. Although solidarity is often brought up as an argument and appeal on the governmental level, solidarity on the European level can equally refer to the individual level. In both understandings, solidarity proves to be essential for the EU's resilience, by contributing

to cohesion inside the EU, as well as by lowering levels of inequality within the association of states (European Commission, 2018c).

Solidarity in a European context gains even more importance in view of the concept's close connection with the establishment and maintenance of a European identity. Due to, in comparison to the national level, arguably fewer uniting elements such as culture and values, solidarity can help to create a European identity by focussing on similarities with other member states and their citizens. On the other hand, a European identity can help to maintain and increase the willingness to show solidarity with other European states or individuals respectively and to invest in the public interest of the EU. A European identity can hereby be assumed as given, if a positive emotional value is attached to the affiliation of being a citizen of the EU (Verhaegen, 2018, p. 873). This can then support the prioritisation of European needs over national or individual interests (Klandermans, 2014; Turner, 1982). The creation and promotion of a European identity thus also seems to be indispensable to legitimate redistributive policies among EU countries (Scharpf, 2015, p. 43, in Verhaegen, 2018, p. 874) and to maintain public support for continued crises responses (Ciornei & Recchi, 2017; Kaina & Karolewski, 2013, in Verhaegen, 2018, p. 874). European identity could hence function as the unifying element, which holds the EU together in times of crises (Kaina & Karolewski, 2013, in Verhaegen, 2018, p. 877). Seen in that context, solidarity is crucial for the maintenance of the reached level of European Integration and its reinforcing continuation (Demetriou, 2015; Gussone, 2006). The value of solidarity hereby works as a motor for further collaboration at the level of transnational politics (Dickson, 2019, p. 684). Furthermore, solidarity can help to legitimise such further integration and to maintain the so far reached level of integration. In that way, it can function as the glue, which stabilises European attachments (Delanty, 2018, p. 4). In fact, solidarity only shows its true meaning in times of crisis, when collective problems demand a joint approach. However, solidarity is not necessarily a driving force of European integration, it can also function as a correction mechanism to offset unintended side-effects of political decisions and not-working integration steps (Marin et al., 2020, p. 2).

In order to further define European solidarity, different approaches exist, which try to grasp the core elements of the seemingly blurred concept of European solidarity. The first approach as represented by Lahusen and Grasso (2018, p. 7) differentiates between solidarity in terms of the level (micro, meso, macro), on which actions take place. Micro hereby refers to mutual

support on the individual level, while the meso level discusses solidarity through social movements, and the macro level focuses on the state institutions. This approach can be useful to visualise, on which levels European solidarity can take place and can later on help to classify and evaluate European actions in the light of further theoretical conceptualisation. However, it does not enlighten the concept of European solidarity content wise.

More fruitful in that regard does appear the classification of European solidarity on the basis of obligated actors. Andrea Sangiovanni (2013, p. 217) argues, that European solidarity consists of national solidarity, member state solidarity and transnational solidarity. Each of the components then has to include fixed obligations between the respective actors. In the case of national solidarity this refers to the mutual duties of citizens within a particular member state, while member state solidarity describes commitments among the same. Transnational solidarity bases on the concept of European citizenship and defines responsibilities between citizens of the EU regardless of their nationality. Especially member state solidarity is seen as a central element of European integration and an important measure to increase internal cohesion (Baute, Abts, & Meuleman, 2019). In a similar understanding, Ciornei and Recchi (2017) distinguish between international and transnational solidarity. International solidarity here corresponds to a comparable meaning as member state solidarity, while the definition of transnational solidarity equals the one of Sangiovanni (2013) and Baute et al. (2019). Without entitling the categories concretely, Gussone (2006) agrees, that European solidarity can take place on the individual level or between nation states, so on the European level among member states of the EU. He points out, that both elements of solidarity complement each other, and that especially the (transnational) solidarity among European citizens is essential to legitimise further international (member state) solidarity.

Independent from the respective actor and level of action, European solidarity can have different content-related directions. A commonly used form to distinguish between the concept's different aspects is thus a differentiation between immaterial and material solidarity. While financial support for other EU member states or European citizens is perceived as an important part of European solidarity, a set of common values is an equally valuable component. The distinction between both aspects enables a categorisation of fundamental elements of solidarity, which are certainly interconnected, but still different enough to prevent the existence of solidarity in the case that group members do not comply

with one of them. Gussone (2006) entitles the distinction between those two poles as respecting and performing solidarity. Hereby he subsumes mostly immaterial values such as a certain readiness to follow rules and the priority and promotion of public welfare under respecting solidarity (p. 104). Performing solidarity is meanwhile characterised by definite help for group members in need, which in the EU most commonly finds expression in the form of financial support or liability for other member states' obligations. Reciprocity is hereby a decisive element of European solidarity, as it distinguishes solidarity from unilateral help (Hunt & Benford, 2004).

The European Commission (2018c) further differentiates the aspect of performing solidarity further in welfare solidarity, territorial solidarity and fiscal solidarity. As such, welfare solidarity entitles support for people in need, while territorial solidarity refers to a decrease in social inequalities between member states. Fiscal solidarity in a way combines respecting and performing solidarity by referring to the willingness to provide financial help to other member states. Gerhards, Lengfeld, Ignácz, Kley, and Priem (2018) offer a similar categorisation in their study on the development of citizens' understanding of European solidarity. Lahusen and Grasso (2018) distinguish between charitable and political solidarity, whereby charitable solidarity equals performing solidarity (Gussone, 2006) and welfare solidarity (European Commission, 2018c). The concept of political solidarity meanwhile resembles respecting solidarity (Gussone, 2006). However, when Scholz (2011) takes up on the categorisation of political solidarity, its meaning is interpreted more narrowly. According to her definition, political solidarity is exercised by individuals, who stand up against social injustice (p. 1024).

Another approach to contribute to the overall picture of European solidarity and a decisive element to influence European solidarity in politics is the overall European vision. Scholz (2011, pp. 1022-1023) for instance conceptualises European solidarity as one specification of a global solidarity among humans to reach global justice. That way, European solidarity is only one piece in the bigger picture of a universalist or cosmopolitan world view (Lahusen & Grasso, 2018, p. 5). Whether the material or immaterial aspects predominate in European projects arguably depends on the current European vision and its political and economic goals of European integration. The direction and defining elements of European solidarity have thus to be seen in the context of European integration (Böckenförde, 2005, pp. 30-31).

However, the willingness to act in solidarity is not only influenced by values and a shared vision. There are also interdependencies and national interests that play an important role. The level of European solidarity is hence also dependent on the conformity of transnational visions and national self-interests (Grabbe, 2005). In addition, EU member states have very different economic and political backgrounds, which exert influence on their negotiating position. Power structures inside the EU are consequently an influential factor for the functioning or malfunctioning of European solidarity. One aspect that has to be considered when dealing with power structures in the EU is the question if Germany adopts a hegemonic position in the European Union. As van Scherpenberg (2012) points out, German leadership in and after the financial and Euro crisis changed power structures in the EU. This hegemony mainly refers to economic affairs and can be traced back to Germany's outstanding bargaining position and its close cooperation with the European central bank. However, as this leadership does not spread out to other policy areas such as security, and as Germany does not give up on its hyper-competitiveness, the conclusion can be drawn, that German leadership does not equal hegemony (Bulmer & Paterson, 2013, pp. 1396-1397). This signifies, that interest groups in the EU remain rather fragmented and further integration is uncertain. Given that national (economic) interests are often stronger than joint visions in the end, the level of European solidarity is consequently dependent on the compatibility of national and European interests, and a balance of power between the member states (Dawson & de Witte, 2013). While inequality among member states holds a potential for conflict and thus creates the need for European solidarity, solidarity can balance diverging interests between member states only to a partial amount (Michalski, 2005, pp. 18-22). However, solidary responses itself can also be in the own interest of other EU member states, as they would also be confronted with severe negative consequences in the case of a member states bankruptcy or political instability (Verhaegen, 2018).

In sum, European solidarity can be conceptualised by taking into account two complementing aspects. First, the shape and content of European solidarity depend on the current European vision and find expression on different social and political levels. Second, central elements of European solidarity are a political dimension and a (financially) supportive dimension. Although the monetary dimension receives more media and scientific attention, both have a comparable significance for European integration and cohesion in the EU.

3. Deficit patterns of European solidarity

Due to the different interpretations of European solidarity as outlined in the previous section, deficits of European solidarity come into being on different levels. With regard to the social levels, on which European solidarity can be exercised, deficits on the individual level can be caused by a lack of feeling as Europeans (Wallaschek, 2019, p. 261). However, with respect to crisis management many scholars point to deficits on the level of European institutions. Others meanwhile identify the interpretation of European solidarity as primarily monetary support as problematical for the realisation of European solidarity. They hence locate deficits of European solidarity in the political spectrum.

As Delanty (2018) points out, nations cannot provide social justice alone, but need to cooperate, especially in times of crisis. A cosmopolitical worldview and transnational solidarity resulting thereof could hence serve to tackle international challenges by means of a joint approach. However, this hope is dimmed by other scholars, who oppose that “international solidarity is dead” (e.g. Habermas, 2017). In addition, one could argue that solidarity “cannot be extended beyond the bounds of one’s local community or nation-state” (Scholz, 2011, p. 1023). With regard to the EU as a cooperation model of a diversity of states, this implies that several obstacles are given for the realisation of European solidarity. On the political level, these problems can be summarised under two main issues. First, structural limitations to the realisation of European solidarity through treaties and regulations. Second, the unwillingness of EU member states to stand up for the responsibility, which they accepted with their accession to the EU.

Starting with structural limitations it becomes clear, that a variety of difficulties can cause a deficit to European solidarity. One important aspect to consider is that European solidarity is not only promoted through the treaty of Lisbon and other regulations, but also limited by other European law such as the No bailout clause in article 125 TFEU. This clause limits the amount and instruments, by which performing solidarity can support other member states financially. This is not a deficit to European solidarity in itself, but limits the available opportunities to tackle European crises and thus contributes to a structural limitation. Moreover, the legitimacy of aid packages in times of crisis could be questioned, if the European law does not foresee any significant support for other member states in this policy area so far. The legitimacy of redistributive policies is also questionable, if a European identity

is missing and considerations regarding the usefulness of a measure rather oriented towards national instead of European interests (Scharpf, 2015, p. 43, in Verhaegen, 2018, p. 874). Furthermore, single crises show more specific deficits, such as the “political weakness of supranational institutions” (Marin et al., 2020) in the refugee crisis, which demonstrated the lack of enforceability of solidarity on the European level. While some countries were willing to accommodate refugees from overcrowded camps in Greece and Italy, other countries refused and referred to existing European regulations on the handling of migration to the EU, for instance the Dublin regulation, according to which they did not have to take in refugees on a voluntary basis. That way, crises lead the European Union to a crossroad, where solidarity is “either prioritized or sorted out” (Lahusen & Grasso, 2018, p. 6). What is more, this situation showed an additional problem, namely the clash of remaining national sovereignty in some policy areas and European solidarity (Lahusen & Grasso, 2018, p. 6). While European integration is based on devoting national sovereignty in the service of European interests, a re-nationalisation can be observed (Gerhards, 2020, p. 4). This insufficiently developed identification with the European Union hinders European solidarity by valuing national interests higher than European ones, which prevents an engagement for public welfare within the EU by means of European solidarity.

These aspects seem to stand in close connection to a misunderstanding of European solidarity as a purely performing support, which leads to an unwillingness on side of the net contributor member states (Gussone, 2006, p. 189) and presents an expression of the second main deficit of European solidarity on the political level. The uncertainty and a lack of consensus regarding the overall vision how the EU shall develop in the future make it difficult to agree on textual details of European solidarity (Lahusen & Grasso, 2018, p. 2). Different interpretations of European solidarity as such and its specific components impede and slow down uniform action even further and prevent strong European solidarity that way. In addition, internal issues are even more difficult to be solved than external (Lahusen & Grasso, 2018, p. 2). Moreover, it seems unsure, if solidary actions are capable to remove problems caused by crises permanently (European Commission, 2018c, p. 8). This reveals a deficit in the EU’s long-term view.

As measures lose their “solidary” character, when support is too much linked with conditions, severity is seen as another obstacle to realise European solidarity (Wallaschek, 2019). Here

again the interconnectedness of solidarity and power structures becomes obvious. While national or rather particularistic interests play an important role in constituting power relations, which influence the level of European solidarity, also external threats and risks change these power structures in the EU. As Ulrich Beck (2012) argues, cooperation based on reciprocity was widely replaced by hierarchies in the course of the Euro crisis. One central dividing line runs between EU-countries and Eurozone members. Within the latter group the balance of power is additionally dominated by financially strong “donor” countries, which somewhat rule over financially weaker member states (p. 44). In contrast to Bulmer and Paterson (2013) Beck hereby identifies a German hegemon, which aims to educate its fellow European member states by attaching conditions to granted loans. This seems to contradict the initial vision of an EU, in which equality is a core vision. The German hegemony rather leads to a loss of trust between member states and in cooperation based at eye level. This harms the maintenance of a European identity, as it creates the feeling of being infantilized by other member states instead of respecting each other on the basis of equality. Consequently, the German hegemony identified by Beck also has implications for European solidarity, which fundamentally bases on this European identity (Beck, 2012, p. 64). Next to its influence on the immaterial condition for solidarity, these changed power structures might as well cause a decreased willingness to exert solidarity in financial terms, as largely financially strong countries decide about the amount of support and conditions attached to it, while keeping national interests in mind.

As crisis situations require immediate reactions, also the power structures among European institutions change (Beck, 2012). Out of urgency and temporal considerations, other forms of negotiations aside the usual procedure were chosen, resulting in a postponement of the balance of power between the EU institutions (Dawson & de Witte, 2013, pp. 837-838). The ESM and similar mechanisms strengthen the role of the executive power in the EU and threaten to create a domination of richer and more powerful member states (Dawson & de Witte, 2013, pp. 838-839). Through the parliament’s proportional loss of power the identification with and legitimacy of decisions reached with regard to solidary crises responses is questionable (Dawson & de Witte, 2013, p. 834).

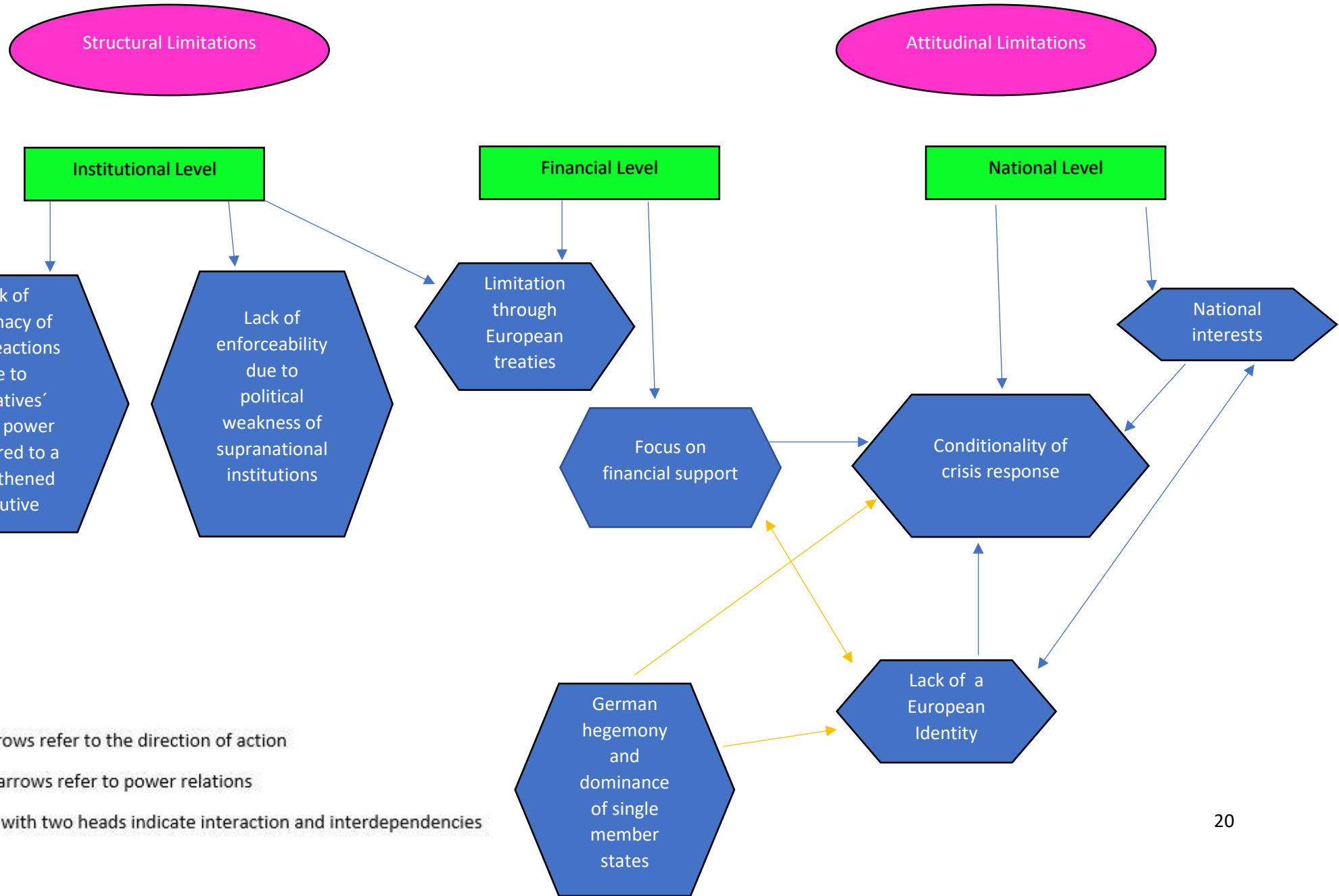
It can be observed, that many scholars identify problems within the political level, but with different emphasis on either structural deficits or attitudinal deficits towards the support of




other member states. With regard to past crises it emerges, that especially national sovereignty and interests enjoy high priority among member states. In this way the perceived importance of mutual commitments is reduced to a significant amount. As such, attitudinal deficits often manifest themselves through the focus on self-interests instead of the common good. The three central deficits of European solidarity on an institutional level are hence first the dominance of particular interests, and second the lack of a joint understanding and implementation of the concept as such. The lack of enforceability of European solidarity due to the lack of willingness to make it a matter of course to orient themselves on this principle in European politics then presents the third deficit on the institutional level.

4. Theoretical guiding lines for analysis

While acknowledging that the individual and political level generally fulfil a complementary role for European solidarity, the consideration of European solidarity as used in this paper is limited to the political level and refers to solidarity among member states. This choice was made to focus on the role of European institutions as stakeholders in each of the three crises under analysis. As pointed out in the theoretical framework, solidarity in general and European solidarity in particular can consist of different elements and can show different thematic priority, depending on the area in which solidarity occurs. Material and immaterial components are identified as complementing elements in the context of European solidarity. Consequently, deficits of European solidarity can arise on different levels. The following diagram (European solidarity deficit patterns) visualises potential deficits of European solidarity by assigning them to three levels, namely institutional, financial and national. The superordinate categories of structural limitations and attitudinal limitations furthermore cluster deficits which are similar in kind or direction. The enormous influence of power structures, especially of German hegemony and a shift in the balance of power of EU institutions, becomes evident in various possible manifestations of European solidarity deficits. Similarly, the lack of a European identity is a decisive factor for the dominance of national interests over a European vision and it is thus attributed a high significance with regard to deficit patterns.

Diagram 1: European solidarity deficit patterns



 Blue arrows refer to the direction of action
 Yellow arrows refer to power relations
 Arrows with two heads indicate interaction and interdependencies

Resulting from the theoretical considerations above, the following expectations can be formulated and will lead the analysis:

1. Deficits of European solidarity in crisis management are mainly located on the national level, rather than on the institutional level.
2. The power of single member states is one main reason for the dominance of attitudinal limitations in crisis responses.
3. A little developed identification with the European Union as a collectively acting community correlates with a focus on financial support and an accentuation of national interests.

III. Research Design and Methodology

The following section presents the methodological approach to work out patterns of the European solidarity deficit in crisis reaction. After an outline about the reasons for choosing the Euro crisis, refugee crisis and Corona crisis as research objects and a description of the political conditions underlying each case, the criteria for the choice of documents are set out. These are followed by a justification of a qualitative content analysis as the method of data analysis. The chapter closes with depicting the operationalisation to define patterns of the European solidarity deficits.

1. Case selection and description

In view of the overall aim of this paper to identify patterns of the European solidarity deficits, the case selection reflects the political diversity of issues the EU is confronted with. Thus, the cases were selected to enable a comparison of different policy areas and to shed light on differences and similarities of the European solidarity deficit. Additionally, and as pointed out in the previous section, solidarity unfolds particular importance in times of crisis. Consequently, European solidarity deficits in such crises affect the EU's ability to act more, than they do during regular political cooperation. In order to take account of the concept's particular relevance at times of crisis and to measure patterns of such European solidarity deficits, the EU's responses to different crises are compared with regard to the therein manifested solidarity deficits.

Three crises, which hit the EU in the past fifteen years and are different in kind, are hence selected as objects under analysis. The first case under analysis is the Euro crisis, which started in 2008 as a global financial crisis and developed into a crisis of the Eurozone shortly thereafter. Some of the main characteristics of this crisis were a collapse of the banking sector and economic recession in many (EU) countries. As it was the first serious crisis of the EU after its foundation, the difficulty for its member states consisted in finding an approach to the crisis that was effective, but also within the guidelines of European treaties. The second crisis under analysis is the refugee crisis with its beginning in 2015. It was characterised by a significantly increased influx of migrants to Europe, which exceeded the absorption capacities of several European member states and demonstrated the limitations of the European asylum system.

The debate about migration and the crisis as such is particularly charged by emotion about values and cultural direction, as well as about moral responsibilities of the EU. The crisis still provides high potential for conflict as the EU member states could not agree to modify the current European asylum system in a way, in which burden-sharing is given a high priority. The third and final case is the Corona crisis, which had its origin in China at the end of 2019 and spread globally since the beginning of 2020. The pandemic caused by the SARS COV 2 virus so far caused thousands of deaths all over the world, as the capacities of hospitals are under continuous strain. It furthermore led to lockdowns and economic recession resulting thereof, as it brought many different sectors to a standstill. That way the crisis pushes ahead the development of alternative ways of life in both the professional sector as well as in the private sector. This crisis is hence characterised by its simultaneous effect on a variety of social, economic and political sectors, while the transnational character of such pandemic emphasises the necessity for cooperation among different states.

All three crises have in common, that they exert significant economic impact on the Eurozone. Although different in nature, the three crises threaten to weaken the Euro as a currency and endanger single countries in particular. Furthermore, all three crises challenge the EU through their effects on the political level and impacts on power structures in the EU. By overlapping timewise, the three crises increase their impact on the EU, while the demand for European solidarity rises steadily. The negative implications of deficits of European solidarity for European integration and cohesion among member states hence increase, and the need to give a stop to that rises. The search for a pattern in the solidarity deficits observable in the three selected cases thus contributes to an understanding of the mistakes made in the interpretation of European solidarity and points to solutions to improve support among member states and the EU's ability to act in times of crises.

2. Methods of data collection

As the object of this paper is to compare patterns of the European solidarity deficit in crisis responses, the selected documents originate out of the context and time of the three crises under analysis. The period of time under analysis consequently starts with the financial and Euro crisis in 2008 and continues until the Corona crisis in 2020, when the research is conducted. The analysis is based on secondary data and consists of political and policy

documents. The documents are provided by European institutions and are accessible via the internet presence of the respective institution. The selection of documents is based on two considerations. First, to portray various facets and aspects of European solidarity and its deficits as occurring in the context of the three crises, especially with regard to the underlying interpretation of European solidarity concerning material and immaterial values. The documents must therefore depict a variety of instruments and measures of crisis intervention in order to reflect the EU's response to the crisis in a representative manner. Second, to reflect upon the role of the European Parliament, European Commission and Council of the European Union as three central stakeholders in the EU's crisis response, and their contribution to the European solidarity deficit.

Hence, four different types of documents, legal documents and administrative documents, as well as media communication and political communication are analysed as objects of investigation. Documents with a legal status such as laws and treaties as the first, and policy documents with an administrative status such as policies and regulations as the second type of documents cover the outcome of negotiations. That way they allow to draw conclusions about whose interests are reflected best in the final decision, and thus upon the deficits, which counteract European solidarity. Media communication such as press releases and information about decisions and measures of crisis response provided by the European Commission, European Parliament and Council of the European Union present the third type of document. As such, they offer further insight into the crisis management of the EU and the level and kind of solidarity reflected therein. Speeches held by the (former) President of the European Commission and President of the European Council cover political communication as the fourth type of documents. These add to the data basis by giving insight into the underlying understanding of solidarity and contribute to identify patterns of its deficits that way. All types of documents shed light on the power of European institutions in the process of crisis response and hence their influence on the European solidarity deficit.

As different types of documents and communication are used for analysis, the status of the data selected varies. The paper aims at combining legal and administrative documents, as well as media communication and political communication in order to provide a cross-section of the measures and instruments of each crisis response, as well as the EU's public communication about these measures. To take account of the role of different European

institutions for European solidarity deficits in crisis responses, selected documents originate from different European actors, and are also provided by these. In total, around 16 to 32 documents are selected for each crisis. Due to the different types and statuses of documents selected for analysis, the length of the documents varies from one page (mainly for press releases) up to 76 pages (mainly for legal texts). The selection of documents released by European institutions creates the advantage of evaluating the measures itself, as well as the language used by European institutions in the communication about the crisis responses decided upon. The usage of documents provided by these actors at the same time carries the risk that these are biased for the benefit of the EU. This will be counteracted, however, by precision and selectivity in the formulation of the categories and criteria used for analysis.

3. Methods of data analysis

The following section elaborates on a qualitative content analysis as the chosen method of analysis to answer the research question, as well as the sub-questions. Thus, it presents the eight criteria selected for analysis and the coding scheme as the operationalisation to measure, if a pattern in the European solidarity deficit in the Euro crisis, refugee crisis and Corona crisis is ascertainable. As the previous part has pointed out, the documents selected for analysis will put one focus on the role of the European Commission, European Parliament and Council of the European Union as stakeholders in all three crises under analysis. In the context of transnational cooperation and negotiations and in view of the far-reaching political and economic significance of the three crises, the importance of language is immense. As such, wording has a high value in both political and policy documents. In order to find out in which way deficits are expressed through language, a qualitative content analysis is carried out in this paper. Hereby, the chosen method of analysis is based on the ideas of Philipp Mayring (2015). Similar to a quantitative content analysis, the qualitative content analysis gains access to documents by constructing and applying categories and criteria. Both are the central instruments of the analysis, as the aims of the analysis are substantiated within them. The focus of a qualitative content analysis lies on the construction of criteria and their justification (Mayring, 2015, p. 51).

As a qualitative content analysis is not a standardised instrument in all its components, the single analytical steps must be adapted to the material and research question (Mayring, 2015,

p. 85). In the following analysis eight criteria are specified in advance and are applied to the 68 political and policy documents as objects of investigation. This corresponds to a deductive formation of criteria, as these are derived from the current state of research and preliminary investigation (Mayring, 2015, p. 85). Based on the explanations presented in the second chapter, the following eight criteria can be derived, all of them presenting deficits of European solidarity:

- 1) National interests
- 2) Conditionality of crisis response
- 3) German hegemony and dominance of single member states
- 4) Lack of a European identity
- 5) Focus on financial support
- 6) Limitation through European treaties
- 7) Lack of legitimacy of crisis reactions due to legislatives' loss of power compared to a strengthened executive
- 8) Lack of enforceability due to political weakness of supranational institutions

In the subsequent analysis the research interest is directed towards the identification of patterns of the European solidarity deficit, based on its specific manifestations as they occur in three crises. As such, two different categories can be derived from theory and are applied to the political and policy documents selected for each crisis. Structural limitations present the first pattern and category of the European solidarity deficit, while attitudinal limitations are identified as the second pattern and category of the European solidarity deficit. If the above-mentioned criteria assigned to one category can be found in the documents, the presence of that category is indicated. However, these superordinate categories are little more than an orientation to specify, at which point in the spectrum of national interests on the one hand and a fundamental lack of power of the European institutions on the other hand the deficits are located. Therefore, it is of equal interest and importance to substantiate the pattern by comparing the specific manifestations that define each pattern. Thus, each of the criteria applied to the documents under analysis corresponds to the shortcomings of European solidarity.

On the one hand, the evaluation of the criteria or rather deficits, takes place on the basis of the frequency and distribution of the deficits as they can be found in the documents under

analysis. On the other hand, the evaluation of criteria additionally depends on their assignment to one of the three levels (institutional, financial, national; compare diagram 1: European solidarity deficit patterns) and superordinate categories. Subsequently a comparison of the criteria's or rather deficit's distribution pattern in the Euro crisis, refugee crisis and Corona crisis is carried out to identify patterns of the European solidarity deficit. A pattern of the European solidarity deficit consequently consists, if one, or a combination of several deficits, is observable in at least two crisis responses of the EU in the three crises under analysis. A pattern could also be based on a cluster of deficits within a certain level (institutional, financial, national) or being located in a certain spectrum on the continuum of structural and attitudinal limitations, insofar they occur in at least two crises (compare diagram 1: European solidarity deficit patterns).

In order to assign a passage clearly to one criterion and to avoid duplication, coding rules differentiate the criteria from one another and define, when a criterion is met (Mayring, 2015, p. 63) and a deficit of European solidarity is thus present. An anchor example taken from one of the 68 documents under analysis furthermore gives an illustration for all eight deficits to specify, when a passage of a document fulfils the criterion.

Preliminary to the analysis the evaluation units, coding units, and context units need to be determined. The evaluation unit establishes the order, in which the documents are analysed (Mayring, 2015, p. 61). All documents belonging to one of the three crises are analysed one after the other. Each document hereby represents one evaluation unit. If the evaluation unit indicates, that a criterion is met and a certain deficit of European solidarity is hence ascertainable, the passage has to be coded in accordance with the coding rules. Different criteria can occur within one evaluation unit and one criterion can be counted more than once, to emphasise the meaning of this deficit manifestation within the particular crisis. The coding unit defines the smallest text component, which can be evaluated within an evaluation unit (Mayring, 2015, p. 61). One word could hereby be the smallest possible coding unit, which could be counted as expressing a deficit of European solidarity. The context unit on the other hand sets the limit concerning the longest text extract, which can be analysed and can fall under one criterion (Mayring, 2015, p. 61). One criterion can only be counted once within one context unit; it is insignificant, how often a certain statement is repeated within it. With regard to administrative documents, media communication and political communication this refers

to paragraphs as context units. For legal documents, one article equals a context unit. This limitation serves to avoid that a certain deficit, which is repeatedly emphasised through further execution and paraphrasing, is counted several times within one unit without delivering new input for detecting pattern across the three crises. A software for qualitative analysis is used, in order to ensure reliability of the research. Using the methodology of Mayring (2015) in the conducted research includes clear coding rules and anchor examples, which enable other researchers to repeat the research of the first, second and third sub-question with comparable results.

4. Coding scheme

This coding scheme contains the derived criteria, definitions, anchor examples and coding rules. It is based on the eight criteria as outlined above, which stem from the theoretical framework of the second chapter.

Criterion (Deficit)	Definition	Anchor examples	Coding rules
1) National interests	European interests are subordinated to national interests. With their actions on the European level, member states mostly pursue goals on the national level, such as attracting voters and protecting taxpayer’s money, instead of focussing on the European common good.	„to grow up and put our common interests ahead of our national ones” (Juncker, 2015b) “There remain many cases of insufficient prior consultation and notification about foreseen changes in national policies or initiatives, in particular those having a possible knock-on effect in the whole region. Too many unilateral measures continue to be taken, including the de	When it comes to a weighing up between national and European interests and visions, member states give national interests the preference. A dominance of the Council of the EU and their representation of national interests might be visible in negotiations about solidary actions.

Criterion (Deficit)	Definition	Anchor examples	Coding rules
		<p>facto nationality-based entry conditions for migrants entering Croatia, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and fence construction at the border between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Greece (as previously Hungary had erected at its border with Serbia). Irrespective of the rationale of each individual step, the uncoordinated nature of these steps has created uncertainty and instability in the region.” (European Commission, 2015c, p. 3)</p>	
2) Conditionality of crisis response	Conditionality of granted support in times of crisis takes crisis responses their solidary character.	“The availability of such Loan Facility Agreements will be conditional upon the relevant euro-area Member States which request such loans entering into memoranda of understanding (each an "MoU") with the European Commission, acting on behalf of the euro-area Member States, in relation to budgetary discipline and economic policy	Support of other member states is granted only under certain conditions. These can for instance consist in a restructuring of social services, privatisation of certain branches of industries or the obligation to accept conditions such as approval to a maximum budgetary deficit.

Criterion (Deficit)	Definition	Anchor examples	Coding rules
		<p>guidelines and their compliance with the terms of such MoU” (EFSF Framework Agreement, 2010b, p. 1)</p> <p>“These are proving crucial in safeguarding the financial stability of the euro area, by providing assistance to Member States in need, and are conditional on commitments to implement rigorous fiscal consolidation and ambitious growth-enhancing” (Barroso, 2011b, p. 3)</p>	
3) German hegemony and dominance of single member states	The dominance of single member states causes the loss of equality and cooperation on eye-level.	“The euro-area Member States acknowledge and agree that, in the event of a vote of the board of directors of EFSF, each director which has been proposed for nomination by a euro-area Member State shall have a weighted number of the total number of votes which corresponds to the number of shares which his/her nominating euro-area Member State holds in the issued share	Single member states, and Germany in particular, exert significantly more influence in decision making processes than other member states. This becomes visible through more rights to vote, or given guidelines in terms of which behaviour is approved. These countries take the lead in negotiations and dictate conditions to recipients of (financial) support.

Criterion (Deficit)	Definition	Anchor examples	Coding rules
		capital of EFSF.” (EFSF Framework Agreement, 2010b, p. 17)	
4) Lack of a European identity	The lack of a feeling as Europeans decreases the willingness to act in solidarity.	<p>“One of the weaknesses exposed in the current policy has been the lack of mutual trust between Member States, notably as a result of the continued fragmentation of the asylum system.” (European Commission, 2015b, p. 12)</p> <p>“There is not enough Europe in this Union. And there is not enough Union in this Union.” (Juncker, 2015b, p. 2)</p>	The coding module expresses a national feeling of belonging instead of a European collective spirit. The affiliation towards being “European” is lower, than for instance towards being “French”, “Bulgarian”, “German” or “Italian”. Member states do not feel obliged to a European crisis response, as the European feeling of belonging is insufficiently pronounced. As soon as the focus lies on national interests, the coding module has to be coded as criterion 1).
5) Focus on financial support	Reduction of solidarity on its financial component. Values and a political component are subordinated.	„To live up to the extraordinary challenge and to prepare a better future, the Commission is today proposing a new recovery instrument, called Next Generation EU, within a revamped long-term EU budget. In total, this European	The coding module refers to solidarity as exclusively financial support, economic cooperation or pursuing economic aims and does not mention other elements of solidarity such as knowledge transfer or moral support.

Criterion (Deficit)	Definition	Anchor examples	Coding rules
		Recovery Plan will put € 1.85 trillion to help kick-start our economy and ensure Europe bounces forward.“ (European Commission, 2020b, p. 2)	
6) Limitation through European treaties	The capacity to act in solidarity is limited through initially opposite intentions to restrict the liability among member states.	“The Union has acted rapidly to deliver a coordinated and powerful collective response to the social and economic consequences of the crisis, within the limits of the current Multiannual Financial Framework expiring in 2020” (European Commission, 2020i, p. 1)	Reference to other European treaties, law or regulations is given, which hinders solidary measures.
7) Lack of legitimacy of crisis reactions due to legislatives’ loss of power compared to a strengthened executive	The decrease in power of the European Parliament in comparison to the increase in power of the European Commission leads to a reduced legitimacy of crisis responses decided upon.	„While I am a strong defender of the Community method in normal times, I am not a purist in crisis times – I do not mind <i>how</i> we cope with a crisis, be it by intergovernmental solutions or community-led processes. As long as we find a solution and get things done in the interest of Europe's citizens.“ (Juncker, 2015b, p. 13)	The European Parliament is not, or not from the beginning consulted in negotiations; or is otherwise not equally integrated in the decision-making process. Decision-makers are thus not democratically legitimised. The executive is strong in comparison to a weak legislative, which is passed over in decision-making processes or is called to

Criterion (Deficit)	Definition	Anchor examples	Coding rules
			follow the argumentation of the executive as quick as possible.
8) Lack of enforceability due to political weakness of supranational institutions	The national level dominates over the European level and limits the influence of European institutions.	<p>„But these situations also revealed limits of our institutional arrangements. We need a better developed set of instruments– not just the alternative between the "soft power" of political persuasion and the "nuclear option" of article 7 of the Treaty.“ (Barroso, 2012b, p. 10)</p> <p>“Europe has a set of rules in place to guarantee sound public finances - the Stability and Growth Pact. But these rules need to be respected, and so giving real teeth to the Pact is crucial. For, as we have seen, by not being effectively implemented or enforced, the Pact inevitably lost some credibility.” (Barroso, 2011b, p. 4)</p>	<p>EU institutions have insufficient power to enforce solidary measures (against the national level), especially if single countries refuse to demonstrate solidarity.</p> <p>As soon as the focus lies on national interests, the coding module has to be coded as criterion 1).</p>

5. Implications for answering the sub-questions

The first sub-question (“How does the European solidarity deficit manifest itself in the Euro crisis, Refugee crisis and Corona crisis?”) is answered by analysing the type of instruments implemented as crisis management and assessing the distribution of deficits of European solidarity in the individual crisis. Hereby the frequency of criteria is used as one component to identify the most pronounced deficits of European solidarity in each of the crises. Furthermore, it is evaluated, which criteria are coded equally high, to set the occurrence of one deficit into perspective with the manifestation of other deficits.

The second sub-question (“To what extent do the solidarity deficits of the three crises differ?”) afterwards evaluates the results of the first sub-question by comparing the particular coding distribution in the three crises. On the one hand, this comparison is carried out on the basis of the occurrence of single criteria, while deficits are on the other hand compared in terms of accumulations on the three levels and with regard to the attached form of either structural or attitudinal limitations as well. The findings are then evaluated against the background of theoretical considerations as presented in the second chapter. Based on the manifestation of criteria in the three crises the second sub-question therefore examines, whether one or more patterns emerge and which criteria increasingly occur together or are mutually dependent.

The third sub-question (“How can similarities and differences of the European solidarity deficit be explained in terms of power structures?”) finally assesses the explanatory power of the influence of individual member states on the similarities and differences in the distribution and accumulation of deficits as being found in the second sub-question. It does so by comparing the type of instruments used as crisis responses and the voting share of single member states therein. It additionally evaluates, if the third criterion (German hegemony and dominance of single member states) shows a noticeable correlation with other criteria across the three crises, which would hint at power structures as contributing factor to deficits of European solidarity.

Taken together, the three sub-questions then provide answers to the research question concerning patterns of European solidarity deficits. The following chapter presents the empirical results of the qualitative content analysis and is structured by the three sub-questions as outlined above. Within the whole analysis, the frequency of criteria will be used

as one component to classify the value of such deficit for European solidarity and to show connections, which are then set into perspective with the results of the other crises. This does, however, not signify, that criteria with less coding are not considered in context or do not present a deficit of European solidarity. Instead, criteria and thus deficits with more coding appear to have a bigger impact on European cooperation based on solidarity than others and are valued by their frequency of appearance in documents therefore.

IV. Analysis

The subsequent section is three-fold and starts with a separate presentation of crisis reactions in each of the three crises. At the same time, it identifies deficits of European solidarity therein, before those are compared concerning similarities and differences in a second step. The third part evaluates the impact of power structures on the cluster of deficits found beforehand.

1. European solidarity deficits in crisis response

The following part presents the main emphasis in the EU's crisis management in the Euro crisis, refugee crisis and Corona crisis respectively and depicts the characteristics of the solidarity deficit(s) manifested therein.

a. Euro crisis

High national debts, economic recession and increasing unemployment rates were some of the Euro crisis' characteristics as the first crisis under analysis. The Euro crisis refers to a crisis in the European Monetary Union since 2010, to which the global financial crisis from 2007 contributed to a considerable extent. Especially high national debts threatened to weaken the Eurozone as a whole and required corrective measures by other member states of the EU, and members of the Eurozone in particular. These agreed on different instruments to stabilise member states financially, while aiming to develop European supervisory regimes to prevent further worsening of the situation and future crises of the economic sector. In the context of financial stabilisation, the EU decided to establish the temporary European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF). Until its replacement by the permanent European Stability Mechanism (ESM), the EFSF allocated low-interest loans to European member states in severe economic difficulties to ensure their solvency. Next to these immediate measures the EU agreed on a European Fiscal Pact to limit further state indebtedness, aggravated the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) with the intention to increase budgetary discipline and established an obligation for structural reforms by means of the Euro-Plus Pact. Furthermore, the EU countries initiated a European System of Financial Supervision (ESFS) and a Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM) to raise supervision of financial institutes, and banking supervision respectively, on a European

level. The depiction of these central crisis responses reflects the EU's main emphasis on monetary solutions in the management of the Euro crisis. EU countries receive loans at low interest rates, but have to pay them back notwithstanding of in parts precarious financial conditions.

Regarding the eight criteria, which reflect a cross section of the EU's crisis response in the Euro crisis, the evaluation is not unambiguous. All criteria and thus deficits are ascertainable in the crisis and are, except for criterion six (Limitation through European treaties) and criterion two (Conditionality of crisis response), relatively even distributed in the usage by different European institutions and politicians. When putting more emphasis on the frequency of appearance of single criteria, the image changes and a pattern becomes observable. As pointed out before, conditionality of crisis response takes up a special position in the Euro crisis, as it represents one of its three main deficits. The linkage between granting support based on solidarity and attaching conditions to this help thus seems to be a commonly used mechanism in the Euro crisis. This is for instance observable through conditions attached to a loan under the EFSF:

"The availability of such Loan Facility Agreements will be conditional upon the relevant euro-area Member States which request such loans entering into memoranda of understanding (each an "MoU") with the European Commission, acting on behalf of the euro-area Member States, in relation to budgetary discipline and economic policy guidelines and their compliance with the terms of such MoU." (EFSF Framework Agreement, 2010b, p. 2)

In combination with the focus on financial support (criterion five), which also represents an important deficit and backs up the first observation that crisis management in the Euro crisis appears to be rather focused on monetary solutions, the evaluation suggests a deficit on the national and financial level. As national interests (criterion one) were also reflected in the crisis reaction and a lack of European identity (criterion four) observable through the missing consciousness of a shared political responsibility among member states, a solidarity deficit pattern seems to be located in the spectrum of attitudinal limitations. These, and especially the lack of a European identity contradicts European crisis management, as can for example be derived from a speech by the former president of the EU Commission José Manuel Barroso:

“I would like to see the development of a European public space, where European issues are discussed and debated from a European standpoint. We cannot continue trying to solve European problems just with national solutions.” (Barroso, 2012b, p. 9)

European solidarity does, however, also show limitations on the institutional level. The limitation through European treaties (criterion six) is mainly represented by overriding the so-called No-bailout-clause, which prohibits financial assistance among member states, if one country experiences financial difficulties. In that way, European solidarity seems to dominate over the prohibition to assist one another, until the deficits attached to it grow conspicuous. On the institutional level this also refers to the dominance of executive over legislative EU institutions in negotiating crisis responses. Especially with regard to the establishment of the EFSF and ESM the lack of legitimacy of crisis reactions (criterion seven) is visible through an insufficient participation of the European Parliament. This is contrasted by a general weakness of European institutions in enforcing political decisions and solidary measures (criterion eight), which appear to struggle in the quarrel with national authorities and interests about financial obligations and the takeover of guaranties:

“these situations also revealed limits of our institutional arrangements. We need a better developed set of instruments– not just the alternative between the “soft power” of political persuasion and the “nuclear option” of article 7 of the Treaty.” (Barroso, 2012b, p. 10)

Institutional limitations are therefore also present as deficits of European solidarity, but stand back behind the dominance of attitudinal limitations as a pattern of European solidarity deficits. Concerning power structures, also the dominance of single member states and Germany in particular is quite distinct. Especially when it comes to granting loans, single countries insist on attaching conditions with respect to budgetary discipline. The third part of the analysis thus evaluates the particular influence of single member states and elaborates on its consequences for European solidarity and its deficits in more details. The usage of “solidarity” as a term is, with eight mentions, finally relatively rare, which indicates that solidarity has either not been forced or that the aspect of solidarity was not emphasised in the public communication about measures. With respect to the first sub-question, the crisis response is instead rather characterised by a deficit of European solidarity, which is caused by national expectations on the one hand and difficulties to grant support without participating in the thrust of structural reform on the other hand.

b. Refugee crisis

A high influx of refugees reaching European mainland in 2015 was decisive for the name of the second crisis. As such, the refugee crisis caused discussions among EU member states regarding national obligations out of European treaties and different admission capacities. Additional challenges arose from the handling of refugees, who were in distress at sea and dependent on help. Member states with external borders were naturally confronted with a significantly higher number of refugees, for whom they have the responsibility to carry out the asylum procedure by means of (EU) No 604/2013 (so-called Dublin III regulation). As this exceeded the admission capacities of single member states, of Italy and Greece in particular, the EU discussed about measures to support these countries and to search for instruments to harmonise the European asylum procedure. Out of these considerations, the EU reached the decision to implement the European Migration Agenda, which included – inter alia- two temporary relocations of a fixed amount of people from Italy and Greece, as well as the support of member states through financial emergency relief and assistance in registration in so-called hotspots. Furthermore, the EU strengthened the competences of the European Border and Coast Guard (Frontex) and aimed at reforming the common asylum system (CEAS). Agreements with third countries, and Turkey in particular, were in addition intended to reduce the number of refugees arriving in the EU. Those measures can be considered the core elements of crisis response in the refugee crisis. In the following, the type of deficits hindering European solidarity in this response is outlined. The chosen types of instruments already hint at a deficit of European solidarity. By aiming to reduce the number of people arriving European mainland, the EU simultaneously reduces the necessity to rely on European solidarity and relocates the challenge of migration to other countries.

A more differentiated picture regarding the deficit's characteristics emerges in view of the eight criteria. Here a cluster of criteria is observable, which code for attitudinal limitations of European solidarity. This applies specifically to the impact of national interests, which reveals a considerable dominance of national over European interests in the refugee crisis. This leads to Jean Claude Juncker's appeal

“to grow up and put our common interests ahead of our national ones” (Juncker, 2015b, p. 9).

Although it exerts less influence on European solidarity in comparison with national interests, conditionality of crisis response nonetheless holds a high relevance as a deficit of European solidarity. The linkage between granting support and expecting a service in return is distinct in the refugee crisis, which becomes evident especially with regard to the instrument of relocating migrants from one member state to another:

“While providing sufficient pledges, Member States (notably Estonia and Slovakia) should avoid over-restrictive preferences which are almost impossible for Italy to meet.”

(European Commission, 2017b, p. 6)

Equally reflected in this crisis management is the absence of a European identity, which is inter alia caused by a lack of trust among EU member states (European Commission, 2015b, p. 12). All three criteria determine one another here and create a deficit of European solidarity, which is characterised by prioritising national affiliation higher than European values and cooperation. Nonetheless, European solidarity is not considered as a primarily financially beneficial arrangement, as the focus on financial support (criterion five) is little emphasised. Slightly more pronounced than conditionality of crisis response is the lack of enforceability by the European institutions as the eighth's criterion. These appear to be insufficiently capable to impose those measures, which they consider relevant for a sustainable crisis management and cooperation in the field of migratory politics. This correlates with the dominance of national interests in negotiations about solidary support for other EU member states, which becomes apparent in the relocation plan of the European Commission:

“Look at the relocation mechanism for refugees we put on the table for Greece and Italy in May: the Commission proposed a binding, communitarian solidarity scheme. Member States opted instead for a voluntary approach. The result: the 40,000 figure was never reached. Not a single person in need of protection has been relocated yet and Italy and Greece continue to cope alone. This is simply not good enough.” (Juncker, 2015b, p. 15)

Concurrent, this criterion is an expression of structural limitations within the practice of European solidarity. However, the eighth's criterion is the only one, which points to structural next to attitudinal limitations. Both the sixth and seventh criterion are not notably represented, neither does the EU's crisis response thus seem to suffer from limitations through European treaties, nor does it lack legitimacy through an insufficient participation of the European Parliament. More relevant in that regard seems to be the influence of single

member states on negotiations. German hegemony could not be identified at first glance, but other member states such as Hungary influenced negotiations in a perceptible way. The special position of the third criterion justifies a more detailed discussion of relevant power structures in the refugee crisis in the third section of the analysis.

Despite the deficits mentioned above, the documents explicitly mention “solidarity” 77 times in total, making 3,85 on average per document. This emphasises that the EU is aware of the value of solidarity for European politics and cohesion, but also highlights that the EU applies the term in their policy documents, press releases and speeches in order to achieve a certain impression of European cooperation in migratory questions. In view of the evaluation of criteria as mentioned above, the deficit of European solidarity in the refugee crisis appears to be characterised by attitudinal limitations in general and national interests in particular. With reference to diagram 1 (European solidarity deficit patterns) and in answer to the first sub-question, the deficit is thus mainly located on the national level, rather than on the institutional level.

c. Corona crisis

The Corona crisis as the third crisis under analysis describes a worldwide pandemic caused by the SARS-COV 2 virus since the beginning of 2020 and comprises different problems ranging from a threatening collapse of health care systems to economic crises and rising levels of unemployment across the EU. The EU’s answer to the challenges arising from the pandemic is diverse and ranges from joint research on vaccination and collectively organised flights to bring EU citizens back home from third countries, over care for patients originating from other member states, to financial support for particularly affected states. The following section outlines the form of the deficit(s) of European solidarity observable in such crisis response. To start with the mentioning of the term solidarity as such it becomes evident, that the word enjoys a good reputation and has a high value for cooperation in the EU. In total, “solidarity” is explicitly mentioned 58 times, leaving out terms with an equal meaning such as cohesion. Through the mere amount the exceptional meaning attributed to the word is visible, which shall conjure cooperation and unity among EU member states.

Nonetheless, certain deficits of European solidarity become observable in the management of the Corona crisis. The distribution of deficits ascertainable in the Corona crisis is hereby

dominated by two criteria. The first, a perception of European solidarity as primarily performing component is widespread and becomes visible through the fifth criterion (Focus on financial support). One example presents the European Commission's communication about a new development programme:

"To live up to the extraordinary challenge and to prepare a better future, the Commission is today proposing a new recovery instrument, called Next Generation EU, within a revamped long-term EU budget. In total, this European Recovery Plan will put € 1.85 trillion to help kick-start our economy and ensure Europe bounces forward." (European Commission, 2020b, p. 2)

The second main influential factor is the speciousness of national interests in comparison to European visions. Though the first criterion is less often represented than the orientation on financial support, the difference between the two aspects is not that big. The distinct reflection of national interests in the documents does, however, not go along with a significant lack of a European identity. The expression of national interests in the formulation of crisis management in the Corona crisis thus does not seem to equal a solely national understanding of membership in the EU in 2020, in which every state primarily focusses on its particular interests. It furthermore shows that solidarity is not limited, as perceived by some scholars (Scholz, 2011, p. 1023) and pointed out by Gussone (2006, p. 32), to a national construct in the Corona crisis and can enter into force across national borders. However, the

"first weeks of the crisis were thus characterised by competition between national, regional and EU-level joint procurements, disruptions of supply chains including export restrictions, and the lack of information of different Member States' needs." (European Commission, 2020e, p. 9), which demonstrates a necessity to strengthen European cooperation and cohesion.

In addition, conditionality of European solidarity has a comparably high status in the third crisis under analysis. Mostly in combination with a focus on financial support (criterion five) the importance of conditional help is identified as an important deficit of European solidarity in the Corona crisis. At the same time, a correlation between a certain level of conditionality in crisis response and the dominance of single member states, and Germany in particular does not become evident. Less emphasis is also placed on the limitation of European solidarity through European treaties. Likewise, seem the weakness of supranational institutions in general and the parliament's loss of power not to have any negative impact on European solidarity. Neither let the documents expect, that instruments of the crisis response lack its

democratic legitimacy, nor does the EU suffer from a considerable lack of enforceability. Consequently, both criteria seem to represent a hardly noticeable deficit for European solidarity in the management of the Corona crisis.

With regard to the first sub-question, the analysis shows a dominance of national interests, which block further concessions to one another, the main focus on solidarity as being a “performing” construct and a conditionality of crisis response are the most dominant deficits of European solidarity here. As these deficits are located on the national level, crisis response in the Corona crisis is consequently limited by a certain attitude oriented on national advantages (compare diagram 1: European solidarity deficit patterns). Attitudinal limitations thus present a significant obstacle for European solidarity, while structural limitations play a minor role.

2. Similarities and differences of European solidarity deficits

While the previous part evaluated each crisis management separately, the second sub-question raises the question, whether the crises responses differ or show certain parallels and repetitions. This section thus compares the results of each analysis and presents similarities and differences between the Euro crisis, refugee crisis and Corona crisis with regard to deficits of European solidarity. It furthermore sets the evaluation in relation to theoretical considerations as outlined in the second chapter.

The Euro crisis, refugee crisis and Corona crisis differ in the policy area, in which they take negative effects and also differ widely in the instruments and measures implemented to counter their influence. Nonetheless, certain similarities can be observed regarding the deficits of European solidarity reflected therein. The comparison of the type of measures taken already hints at certain deficits of European solidarity. As an economic crisis, the response towards the Euro crisis is dominated by monetary instruments aiming to improve liquidity and room for economic manoeuvre. This implies a narrow understanding of European solidarity as a purely performing construct (Gussone, 2006), which is reflected in a frequent coding of the fifth criterion. This can in parts be seen in the Corona crisis as well, as it also constitutes an economic crisis. Measures in the Corona crisis are, however, not limited to financial support for other member states, but include further cooperation such as research for a vaccination and joint flights to bring European citizens back home. Such evoked

impression of a broader understanding of European solidarity encompassing respecting (Gussone, 2006) or rather political elements (Lahusen & Grasso, 2018) is contrasted by a pronounced focus on European solidarity as performing element via criterion five. The response towards the refugee crisis as deducible from the totality of instruments contains the strategy of concluding agreements with third countries in order to prevent an excessive influx of migrants to the EU. This correlates with a special significance of particular interests (criterion one) and appears to be associated with a national identification (criterion four).

Looking at the analysis of all eight criteria in more details, some cluster are observable concerning the appearance, frequency, and distribution of criteria. All eight criteria of analysis and thus all eight deficits of European solidarity, as identified by the theoretical considerations in the second chapter, can be found in each of the three crises. However, the analysis shows an accumulation of single criteria. Especially the coupling of supportive measures, mostly under the premise of financial assistance, with counter claims appears to be a common deficit of European solidarity. As such, the second criterion is most frequently coded in all three crises under analysis. However, a decrease in the frequency, with which conditionality was coded in the three crises is observable. This certainly does not mean, that European solidarity is less conditional in the Corona crisis, than it used to be in the Euro crisis, but it indicates a development, in which solidary support might be less likely automatically be bound to conditions.

Another commonly found deficit of European solidarity is the dominance of national interests over European interests. While the first criterion is widespread in the refugee crisis and Corona crisis, the analysis suggests, that national interests did not present a decisive deficit of European solidarity in the Euro crisis. This does, however, not mean, that national interests played a subordinated role in negotiations about solidary measures. Rather did they manifest themselves in the conditionality of crisis response, which can be interpreted as an expression of national interests:

“At the national level it means undertaking structural reforms that have been postponed for decades. Modernising public administration. Reducing wasteful expenditure. Tackling vested interests and privileges.” (Barroso, 2012b, p. 5)

Likewise do national interests and conditionality go along in the refugee crisis:

„Member States would need even more flexibility, which could be achieved through minimum allocations of funds to objectives no longer being imposed and the number of national objectives being reduced.” (European Commission, 2018a, p. 11)

Like the linked appearance of conditionality and national interest in the refugee crisis and Corona crisis, a coupling between conditionality and a focus on financial support as the fifth criterion happens in the Euro crisis and in the Corona crisis. This permits the conclusion, that despite widespread assurances as to the importance of solidarity for the EU as a whole in a variety of documents, European solidarity is still quite focussed on monetary solutions and interprets solidarity as another source of financing or rather payment obligation- and thus continues to attach conditions to such help. In some cases, the focus on financial matters becomes additionally apparent through the emphasis on aims like economic strengthening of the Eurozone. In the Euro crisis this is exemplarily manifested as follows:

“The purpose of the ESM shall be to mobilise funding and provide stability support under strict conditionality, appropriate to the financial assistance instrument chosen, to the benefit of ESM Members which are experiencing, or are threatened by, severe financing problems, if indispensable to safeguard the financial stability of the euro area as a whole and of its Member States. (...)” (Art. 3, European Stability Mechanism, 2012b).

The different focus of crisis response in the refugee crisis is reflected through little coding of criterion five. Within topics such as border management, relocation and quarrel about responsibility, financial support for more burdened member states was one point of negotiation among others, but not one of the main deficits of European solidarity.

In a comparison of the three crisis managements, the weakness of European institutions, as being incorporated in the eighth's criterion, is a comparatively decisive component for a limited effectiveness of European solidarity in the refugee crisis. Against the background of pronounced national interests and a conditionality of granted support, the missing corrective impact of effectively working European institutions becomes apparent:

“The migration crisis in the Mediterranean has put the spotlight on immediate needs. But it has also revealed much about the structural limitations of EU migration policy and the tools at its disposal. This is an opportunity for the EU to face up to the need to strike the right balance

in its migration policy and send a clear message to citizens that migration can be better managed collectively by all EU actors.” (European Commission, 2015b, p. 6)

Is the dominance of national interests over a joint European vision as such already a precarious condition, does the combination with a lack of enforceability of European institutions develop it into a severe problem of European cooperation and ability to act in times of crisis. This challenge also applies to the Corona crisis, albeit in weakened form, as European institutions demonstrate a higher level of enforceability of European measures. Although the connection between the eighth and first criteria does not seem to be pronounced in the Euro crisis, the weakness of European institutions is also present here. The characteristic here rather consists in an additional weakness of the parliament, which reduces the legitimacy of crisis response (criterion seven). This limitation becomes particularly visible through the power of the ESM in the Euro crisis, over which decisions the European Parliament does not have decision-making power:

“Europe has a set of rules in place to guarantee sound public finances - the Stability and Growth Pact. But these rules need to be respected, and so giving real teeth to the Pact is crucial. For, as we have seen, by not being effectively implemented or enforced, the Pact inevitably lost some credibility.” (Barroso, 2011b, p. 4)

Both limitations in combination take effect in the form of a structural deficit on the institutional level. In the subsequent two crises, the lack of legitimacy through an insufficient participation of the European Parliament is still existent, although it has lost value to a considerable extent. However, it becomes apparent that the EU seems to put more emphasis on responding to the crisis as such, than to comply with common procedures:

“While I am a strong defender of the Community method in normal times, I am not a purist in crisis times – I do not mind how we cope with a crisis, be it by intergovernmental solutions or community-led processes. As long as we find a solution and get things done in the interest of Europe's citizens.” (Juncker, 2015b, p. 14)

As such, the analysis does not reveal significant differences regarding internal power structures within European institutions of the performance in the EU's crisis response. It can thus be seen as a constant that the European Parliament is less involved in such decision-making processes than the Commission, European Council and also Council of the EU. The shift

in power in favour of the executive seems to be due in particular to time pressure, which corresponds to the considerations of Dawson and de Witte (2013, pp. 837-838) and Beck (2012).

The fourth criterion has an interesting value for European solidarity in view of the concepts meaning for European cohesion. A lack of a European identity is ascertainable in all three crises, but most pronounced in the refugee crisis. This can be attributed to the cultural dimension appealed by the influx of migrants, which causes a return on national values in some member states. This contradicts a European crisis response, as the focus changes towards a more narrow, national identity, which contributes to a superimposition of a European identity. Jean Claude Juncker thus concludes:

“There is not enough Europe in this Union. And there is not enough Union in this Union.”
(Juncker, 2015b, p. 2)

The crisis response in the Corona crisis shows similar elements of such reaction, as member states closed their borders and searched for national solutions in the beginning of the crisis:

“A truly European approach would avoid competition between Member States.”
(European Commission, 2020a, p. 3)

However, the coherence with other criteria like national interests is not as strong, as it could have been assumed by a common misunderstanding of European solidarity as a purely performing concept (Gussone, 2006, p. 189). This would have expressed an understanding of the EU as a partnership of convenience for economic purposes, but not necessarily with shared values. Although this relation cannot be backed up by the analysis continuously, the consequences of an at least weak European identity should not be underestimated as a deficit of European solidarity, which operates in the background.

Criterion six, the limitation of European solidarity through other, contradicting European treaties is hardly represented in the three crises, wherefore it can at best marginally be considered a deficit of European solidarity. Only in the Euro crisis does the No-bail-out clause out of article 125 TFEU stand in the way of the implementation of the EFSF and ESM. However, it is simply disregarded and can thus not be considered a substantial deficit of European solidarity. In a similar way does the suspension of budgetary rules in the Corona crisis present such a solution. European treaties hence do not prevent European solidarity regularly

(Gentiloni, 2020, p. 3). Instead, it again emphasises the political power of the EU's executive and political weakness of legislative institutions. In comparison to the influence of other deficits on European solidarity the sixth criterion stands back behind other deficits in value and can therefore be neglected.

In response to the second sub-question, the analysis thus shows that deficits of European solidarity do not differ fundamentally in the Euro crisis, refugee crisis and Corona crisis. In the refugee crisis and Corona crisis, deficits are mainly located on the national level and form a pattern of attitudinal limitations. Nonetheless, the crises differ with regard to the main emphasis within this limitation. The dominating deficits vary, although all three crises share conditionality of crisis response as the most frequent and thus most pronounced deficit of European solidarity. The frequency alone, however, is not the decisive reason to evaluate similarities and differences in the crisis managements. Rather the combination with other criteria, in particular one and partly four, shows that European solidarity in crisis response suffers from the dominance of national over European interests and visions, as well as from the unwillingness of single member states to accept responsibility for other European countries. Another similarity is the understanding of solidarity as an additional way of distributing money between EU member states in the Euro crisis and in the Corona crisis. Nonetheless, the analysis outlines an important difference between the Euro crisis and the other two crises with regard to the cluster of deficits and the level of effect. Whereas attitudinal clustered criteria dominate in the refugee crisis and Corona crisis, the frequency distribution shows less differences between attitudinal and structural limitations in the Euro crisis. Deficits are also observable on the financial and institutional level. In temporary perspective, this points towards a development aiming to reduce deficits of European solidarity. EU member states cooperate in more policy areas for crisis response than in the two previous crises. On the contrary, the lack of enforceability is even more pronounced in the refugee crisis, than in the Euro crisis. This demonstrates that the EU is so far not able to remove structural deficits completely.

3. Explanatory power of power structures

After the second part has outlined similarities and differences within the deficits of European solidarity in crisis management, this section elaborates on the explanatory value of power

structures for the cluster identified. Within the analysis, the third criterion holds a special position among all eight criteria by exerting influence on many levels of European cooperation. As such, power structures play a role in the creation of other deficits of European solidarity and their connections among each other. In this context, power structures are mainly understood as power of single EU member states and Germany in particular, which create hierarchies (Beck, 2012).

The comparison of solidarity deficit structures in the three crises under analysis outlines a significant cluster of coding on the national level. Under the assumption of power structures as an explanatory approach, this points towards a significant influence of single member states on the outcome of negotiations about crisis responses. Indeed, present the strength of national interests and the attachment of conditions to granted support an expression of the member states' opportunity to enforce their will against resistance of other member states or against European interests. In two of the crises this is reflected in different ways. In the Euro crisis this becomes apparent through the power of the board of governors and the power of the directorate, where the voting right is dependent on the member states' capital share. Especially Germany can thus, based on its capital share, exert influence on the conditions of credit granting (European Stability Mechanism, 2012b, pp. 61-62). The refusal of Hungary and Poland to take in migrants on the basis of a relocation scheme agreed by a qualified majority is similarly an expression of exercising power to enforce national interests in the refugee crisis, and confirms the weakness of European institutions in relation to the more powerful nation states at the same time (Council of the European Union, 2015a). Although national interests and conditionality present deficits of European solidarity in the Corona crisis as well, the analysis cannot establish a causality with the dominance of single member states. This may be reasoned in the greater variety of measures implemented to encounter the crisis, than in the narrower crisis response in the previous crises. The cluster of deficits in the spectrum of attitudinal limitations of European solidarity can thus in parts be explained by power structures. While a dominance of changing member states can be observed here, the analysis does not give evidence about a dominating German influence. As such is not ascertainable in the analysis, the assumption by Beck (2012), that Germany takes the position of a hegemon in the EU cannot be backed up by the analysis. It is simultaneously a confirmation of the thesis by Bulmer and Paterson (2013, pp. 1396-1397) that Germany certainly takes a leading role in crisis management but does not act as a hegemon in doing so.

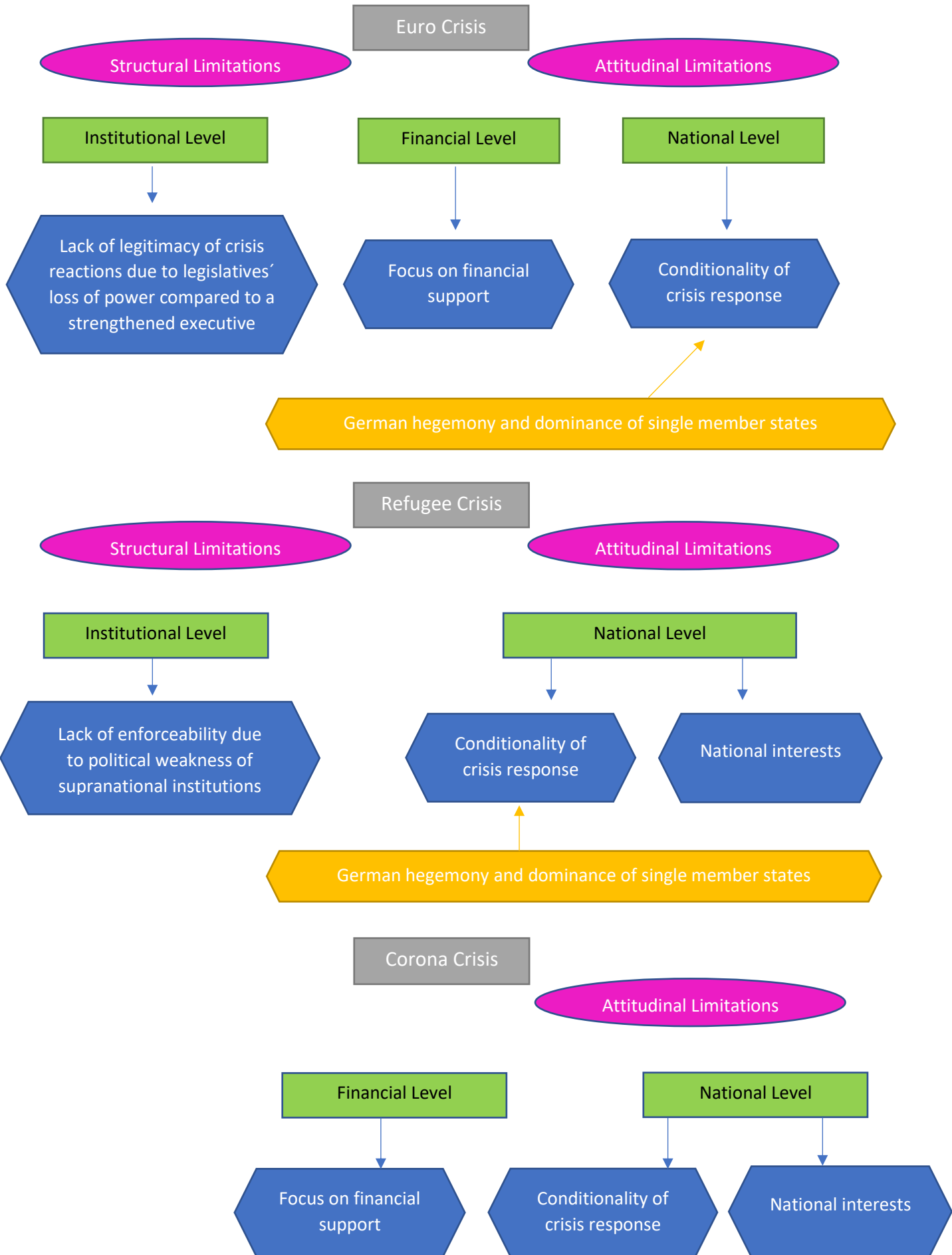
The analysis further reveals a difference in crisis managements regarding the occurrence of structural deficits. European solidarity in the crisis response of the refugee crisis and Corona crisis is not as much interfered by institutional deficits as the Euro crisis. This difference can in parts be attributed to the outstanding value of the ESM as an instrument of crisis management in the Euro crisis. Through this, single member states receive a greater share of the vote in decisions on lending, wherefore the crisis response lacks a balance in the power of EU institutions, as well as in the balance of power regarding member states negotiating position. It thus contributes to the creation of structural limitation, which occur in addition to attitudinal limitations in the Euro crisis. Although structural deficits occur in clusters predominantly in the Euro crisis, the lack of enforceability is nonetheless another similarity of the European solidarity deficit in the three crises. This can be attributed to a continued power imbalance of the European institutions, which shows insufficient involvement of the European Parliament in decision-making processes in favour of executing organs.

In view of crisis responses in the three crises under analysis and in response to the third sub-question it appears, that power structures contain a high explanatory value to evaluate similarities and differences of the European solidarity deficit. Although differences exist between the crises regarding the extent, to which an influence of power is manifested, power structures can particularly explain the pronounced deficits of national interests and conditionality. Whereas a German hegemony is overall not ascertainable, varying member states use their power to push their interests through against resistance. However, the scope of power structures as explanatory variable is limited when it comes to European identity as an important element of European cooperation. While the lack of a European identity can explain, why European solidary help is often combined with conditions, the analysis does not allow the conclusion that the lack of a European identity itself is caused by German hegemony.

4. European solidarity deficit patterns in the Euro crisis, Refugee crisis and Corona crisis

The following diagram (2: European solidarity deficit patterns in the Euro crisis, Refugee crisis and Corona crisis) visualises the results of the analysis as presented above:

Diagram 2: European solidarity deficit patterns in the Euro crisis, Refugee crisis and Corona crisis



In view of the high frequency of crises, which hit the EU in the past few years, the analysis provides answers to the relevant question, whether the EU's crisis management shows a pattern of the European solidarity deficit. It is demonstrated that the EU's crisis response in the Euro crisis, refugee crisis and Corona crisis shows several parallels regarding the deficits manifested therein. While all eight deficits of European solidarity are ascertainable in each of the three crises, the evaluation suggests that some deficits have a higher impact on European solidarity than others, or at least influence European solidarity more often. Crisis response in the European Union is in all three crises characterised by conditionality of support provided, and in the refugee crisis and Corona crisis additionally influenced by national interests standing in the way of a collective approach to tackle European challenges. As such, each of the two criteria presents a pattern of European solidarity deficits. The conditionality of support is furthermore linked to the dominance of single member states in the Euro crisis and refugee crisis, wherefore this can also be identified as a pattern within European solidarity deficits. At the same time, these similarities imply that deficits of European solidarity are particularly expressed on the national level, wherefore this cluster is identified as the fourth, and most pronounced pattern of European solidarity deficits across the Euro crisis, refugee crisis and Corona crisis.

The comparison of deficits located on the financial level shows a fifth pattern of European solidarity deficits through the focus on financial support in the interpretation of European solidarity in the Euro crisis and Corona crisis. As this deficit is connected with other deficits of European solidarity assigned to the national level, it can be attributed to the category of attitudinal limitations. The cluster of deficits classified as attitudinal limitations is very distinct in all three crises under analysis and can therefore be named as the sixth pattern within European solidarity deficits. While structural limitations are observable in the Euro crisis through the lack of legitimacy of crisis reactions on the one hand, and in the refugee crisis through the lack of enforceability of supranational institutions on the other hand, this does not qualify as a deficit pattern of European solidarity as they each apply in one crisis only. In response to the research question it can thus be said that the European Union's crisis reactions in the Euro crisis, refugee crisis and Corona crisis show several patterns of the European solidarity deficit. Over time the deficits of the EU's crisis reactions do not show a significant development regarding attitudinal limitations, but let expect that structural limitations further lose importance as exerting a negative impact on European solidarity.

Consequently, a permanent postponement of the balance of power of EU institutions cannot be substantiated in the comparison of crisis reactions in the Euro crisis with following crises, as Dawson and de Witte (2013, pp. 837-838) assume. This thus allows to evaluate discrepancies of power structures among EU institutions as a subordinated deficit of European solidarity. However, the crisis response of the EU still largely shows the tendency to be led by national visions and losing sight of European cohesion.

With regard to the expectations, which guided the analysis, the results thus confirm the first anticipation that deficits of European solidarity in crisis management are mainly located on the national level, while the institutional level plays a subordinate role. The results that way stand in contrast to the findings made by Marin et al. (2020), according to which deficits of European solidarity arise due to conflicts on the institutional level. On the other hand, the results support the weighting of deficits made by Wallaschek (2019), who classified conditionality as one of the most challenging deficits of European solidarity in crisis responses. It furthermore confirms the statement by Dawson and de Witte (2013) that national interests often dominate over European cooperation, wherefore a high level of European solidarity requires an intersection of national and European interests. The suggestion by Verhaegen (2018) related thereto, that solidary support might as well lay in the self-interests of single member states due to, for instance, economic interdependences, is so far little reflected in the crisis management of single member states and thus in sum, little reflected in the EU's crisis response. When enhancing the perspective to the dominance of attitudinal limitations, the deficits located on the financial level correspond to the interpretation of European solidarity as mainly financial support. This conception of European solidarity was for instance presented by Gussone (2006, p. 189) and can be validated by the analysis carried out here.

Asking for reasons, why attitudinal limitations are still powerful enough to prevent further cooperation in times of crisis, leads to the significance of power structures for European solidarity. The second assumption beforehand the analysis formulated the expectancy, that the lack of a European solidarity due to attitudinal limitations not least derives from the dominance of single EU member states. Like the first expectation, also this second assumption can be confirmed, particularly on the basis of the EU's crisis reactions in the Euro crisis and refugee crisis. This dominance mainly finds expression in the attachment of conditions to (financial) support, while a lack of European identity caused by dominant member states

cannot be established by the analysis. This opposes the line of argumentation made by Beck (2012), who assumed that especially German hegemony functions as a scattering force with regard to European cohesion by preventing cooperation on eye-level and maintenance of European identity that way. In contrast to this expectancy, a German hegemony cannot be substantiated by the analysis as a pattern of the EU's crisis management. Instead, can the results be seen as support for the thesis by Bulmer and Paterson (2013, pp. 1396-1397) that German national interests prevent the country from taking a hegemonic position. Although Germany thus does not continuously specify conditions, can the power of changing single member states nonetheless be evaluated as an influential parameter for the dominance of national interests and conditionality of immediate support.

The third expectation finally takes a little developed identification with the European Union as a collectively acting community as the starting point to explain a dominance of national interests and focus on financial support. This correlation can, however, not be confirmed as a lack of European identity is not generally represented in the EU's crisis management of the Euro crisis, refugee crisis and Corona crisis and rather appears anticyclical with a focus on financial support. The same applies to the previously assumed correlation of accentuating national interests due to a national identification, rather than a European identification. As neither a connection with a focus on financial support, nor with national interests can be backed up by the analysis, the third guiding line cannot be affirmed. These results are interesting against the background of the theoretical considerations as outlined earlier in this work. As has been argued by Delanty (2018, p. 4), European identity is the glue holding the EU together and is indispensable for the legitimation of redistributive policies among EU countries, as was outlined by Scharpf (2015, p. 43). The analysis was able to show, that the relevance of a pronounced European identity for European solidarity was less distinct than expected, and that even an existing European identity cannot suppress national self-interests in European politics. Other challenges consequently have a higher significance as deficits of European solidarity.

V. Conclusion

Taking the crisis management of different kinds of crises as the basis to evaluate the power of European solidarity, allows to examine its consistency in times requiring cohesion among EU member states in approaching common challenges. It is shown, that the EU suffers from severe problems within its crisis reactions, which can to a great amount be traced back to national solo efforts and interests. The paper is thus able to show, that the European Union's crisis reactions in the Euro crisis, refugee crisis and Corona crisis show several patterns of the European solidarity deficit. In relation to the ambition by Lahusen and Grasso (2018) to measure the level of European solidarity, this paper focusses on the identification of deficits and their patterns. In comparison to such previous research on European solidarity deficits, which mainly focused on either the Euro crisis, refugee crisis or Corona crisis, the added value of this paper consists in investigating clusters and patterns of such deficits in crisis reactions. That way, this paper approaches the topic from the opposite direction in order to develop solutions based on these findings. Marin et al. (2020) only deal with the migration crisis and come to the conclusion, that European solidarity mainly lacks structural enforceability of settled measures showing solidarity. By comparing different crises this paper is able to show, that neither exist fixed rules for how European solidarity shall be carried out in times of crises, which are then simply dismissed, nor does it confirm the dominance of structural shortcomings. Although it does not deny, that structural limitations contribute to the ineffectiveness of European solidarity for crisis responses, it rather presents proof of the dominance of a school of thought, which values independencies of single member states higher than the collective good.

In comparison to Gerhards (2020), who interprets European solidarity predominantly as the willingness of individuals to provide support to other European citizens and states, this paper concentrates on the institutional level. This narrower interpretation enables a precise analysis of structural and attitudinal deficits within the cooperation of national governments and EU institutions and adds to the findings of Gerhards (2020) by including the perspective of national willingness and interests. In that respect, this paper partly refutes Beck (2012) in his conclusion of a German hegemon in crisis management. While his considerations regarding the existence of hierarchies among EU member states in general and between members of the Eurozone in particular can be confirmed, the analysis suggests changing power structures

depending on the thematic values of a crisis instead of a German hegemon. Due to the focus on financial support in the interpretation of European solidarity, the economic output of Germany allocates it a central position in negotiations. However, the analysis cannot find proof for the thesis, that the country continuously dictates conditions to such support in all three crises.

Nonetheless, European solidarity is not defined about its functionality in crisis responses alone, but also takes effect in everyday politics. Although the deficits of European solidarity as described in this paper might take more effect in the context of crises, it is assumed that those deficits also have an impact on the general cooperation on EU level. The paper consequently contributes to create knowledge about difficulties in the realisation of European cooperation as foreseen by the obligation to show mutual solidarity out of Art 222 in the Treaty of Lisbon. Against this background and the high likelihood of future crises, the identification of European solidarity deficit patterns enables policy makers to develop targeted preventive measures and agreements. These must foresee clear arrangements for the type of cooperation and support in times of crisis on the one hand, and need to strengthen everyday cooperation on EU level with a stronger European orientation on the other hand.

In terms of future crises, it is expectable that national interests will continue to dominate over European cooperation in EU crisis reactions, especially against the background of re-nationalisation in some European countries. As such, European solidarity will continue to lack its integrating function with regard to European cohesion and cannot unfold its full potential as one aspect of the EU's crisis management. So far, however, this outstanding value of national interests as a deficit of European solidarity does not correlate with a lack of a European identity. Consequently, it cannot be taken for granted that strengthening a collective European identity would have a significant effect on weakening the impact of national interests on European solidarity. This implies that efforts to enhance the willingness to act in accordance with European solidarity in crises cannot concentrate on improving a European identity alone, but need to emphasize the advantages of collective action also for the national level. As such, solutions must approach the widely national origin of the deficit patterns of European solidarity to address future crises more coordinated, more effectively and in particular with an attitude of solidarity. With respect to the largely attitudinal origin of European solidarity deficits and the question regarding the "appropriate" extent of European

solidarity resulting thereof, the requirement emerges to open a new chapter in the cooperation of EU member states. Especially the shared internal market and the common currency in the Eurozone create the necessity of an economic and monetary policy oriented towards European interests, rather than being led by national political realities. As such, a common and more interwoven policy could contribute to provide support in times of crisis, particularly in financial terms, in a more coordinated way instead of putting single member states in charge. Such approach could additionally strengthen a cooperation based on eye-level, which seems to have lost its value in light of the pronouncement of conditions attached to European solidarity in recent crisis management and hierarchies resulting thereof.

These considerations not only apply to economic and monetary policies, but explicitly to other shared policy areas as well. Particularly does it refer to the common asylum system in need for a reform, obliging every EU member state equally to take responsibility for migrants and carrying out asylum procedures. The Corona crisis additionally demonstrates that a collective crisis response showing solidarity is beneficial for the EU as a whole and has a positive effect on the cohesion of EU member states. However, the call for a crisis response showing solidarity in financial terms can only be the treatment of symptoms of an insufficiently resolved economic and monetary policy, wherefore structural changes remain necessary. These need to be oriented on the priority to increase the intersection of national and European interests and to thus provide incentives for European solutions, rather than leaving too much room for solo efforts. This goes along with the need to widen the interpretation of European solidarity to include immaterial elements next to financial support. European solidarity must not be understood as another European source of income, but as an expression of shared political visions and objectives. By that means the core values of European society can be strengthened, encouraging a joint European approach to meet future crises in a less conditional, and more solidary way.

The comparison of European solidarity deficits in three crises enables to derive options for actions to strengthen European solidarity in future crisis management. However, while the paper allows to identify patterns of European solidarity deficits on the national level and within attitudinal limitations, it exceeds the scope of this work to search for reasons for such limitations in detail. As it is nonetheless important to generate detailed knowledge about underlying reasons for such deficit patterns, further research could concentrate on questions

like where and how these patterns (e.g. the dominance of national interests) are founded and how they can be approached. As the scope of this work is furthermore limited to crisis responses, the analysis only examines certain aspects of the multi-faceted topic of European solidarity. It furthermore focusses on the institutional level of European solidarity. In that regard, further research could as well use a widened understanding of European solidarity which is not limited to the cooperation of European institutions, but emphasises the individual level. While the influence of European identity on European solidarity was only one aspect among others to explain European solidarity deficits in this work, further research could focus more on the mutual correlation of European solidarity and European identity. To shed light on this immaterial component of European solidarity, the connection between a strengthened European identity and the willingness to act in solidarity with other EU member states could be evaluated. On the other hand, the influence of an increased level of European solidarity on the feeling as being a European citizen is also worth taking a closer look. This could serve to determine the scope, by which an increase in European solidarity could widen a predominantly national identification towards identifying as Europeans.

Another interesting aspect for further research in that context could be the communication of measures showing European solidarity among EU member states to a wider European public. Although this aspect of European solidarity was not the main focus of this work, the importance of communicating about European solidarity is nonetheless striking in view of the Euro crisis, refugee crisis and Corona crisis. Despite a quite stable deficit distribution in the three crises, the communication about European supportive measures has increased significantly. This let expect that policy makers recognise the value of creating awareness for the advantages of European solidarity for the EU as a whole and the necessity to strengthen such value. It could thus be interesting to collect data on a possibly positive effect of such an increased communication about European solidarity in crisis responses on a European identity and on cohesion among EU member states.

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