

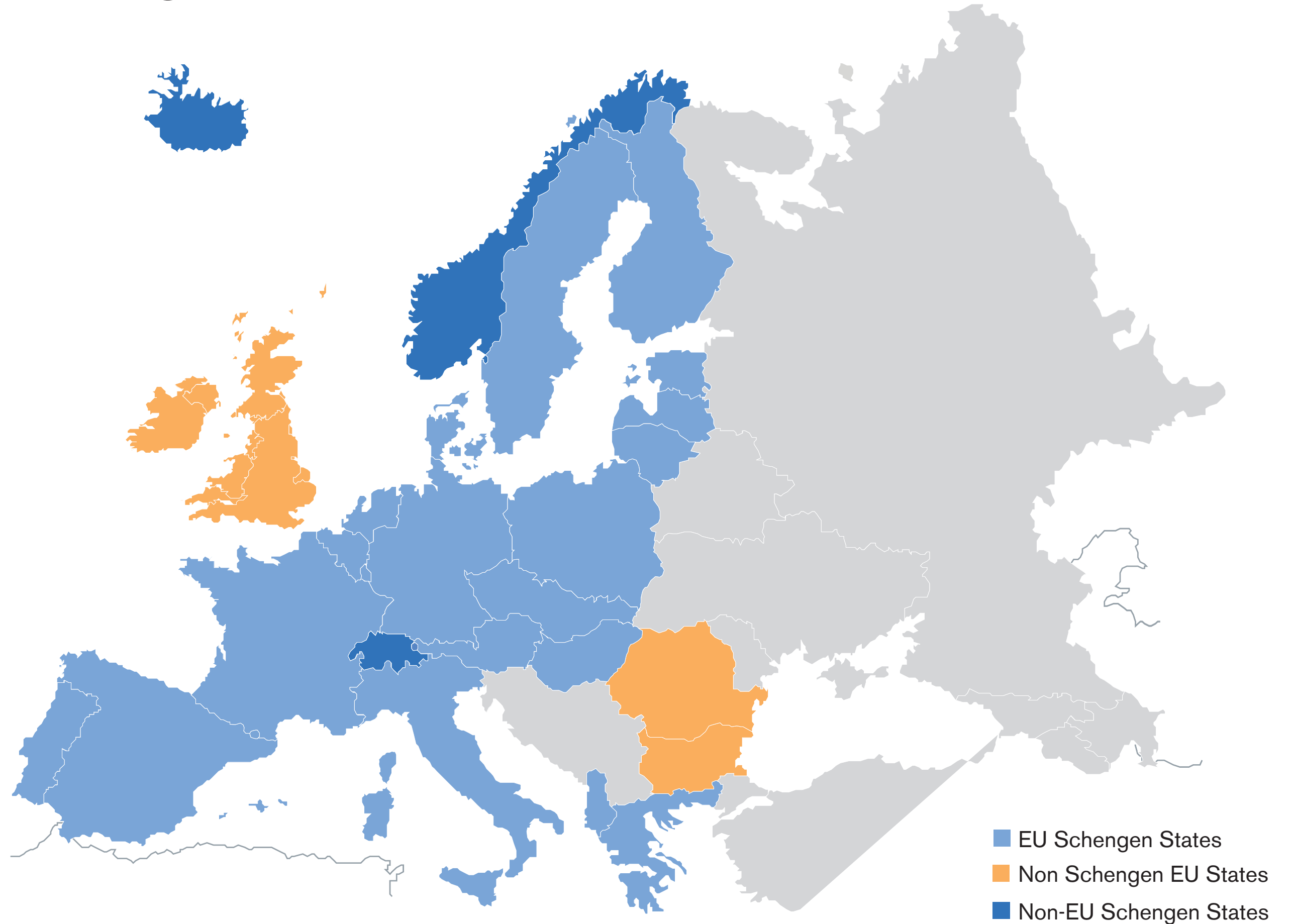
# **Negotiating Fortress Europe: A Discursive Approach to Italian Migration Policy and European Solidarity**

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# Research Puzzle

# Schengen Area in 2011



**“Solidarity—between the better off and the less well off, between generations, between regions and between wealthier and less wealthy Member States—is widely accepted in Europe. We should be crystal clear that solidarity is part of how European society works.”**

– Jose Manuel Barroso

President of the European Commission

June 5, 2008

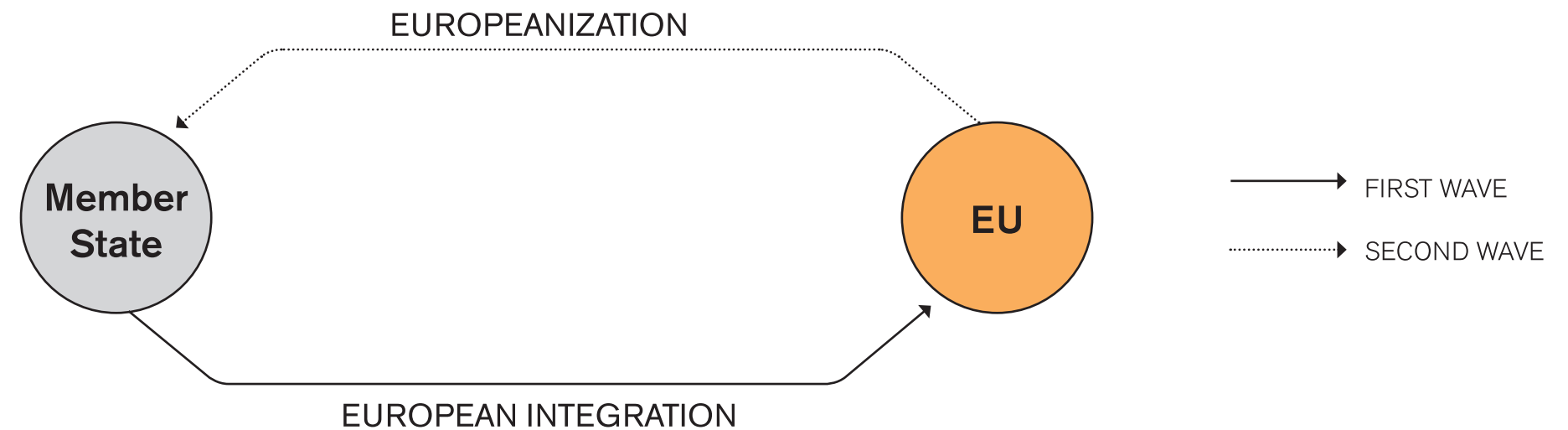
# Research Question

How do policies and principles articulated at the European level influence member states and their domestic policy?

**To what extent does Italian migration policy reflect solidarity with the European integration project?**

# Intellectual Context

## Scholarship on EU Governance



## Europeanization (Radaelli 2003)

“Processes of (a) construction, (b) diffusion, and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, ‘ways of doing things’, and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU public policy and politics and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures, and public policies.”



**My Contribution:  
Reconceptualizing Europeanization as Negotiation**

**Discursive Institutionalism  
(Schmidt)**

Discourse: “what is said in political speeches, party platforms, government pronouncements, opposition positions, public debates, and media commentary.”

Representation of ideas

Process of communicating ideas

**Discourse and Negotiation  
(Putnam)**

Discourse analyzes the meaning of language

How language “enacts” negotiation

## **So what? Who cares?**

### **Theoretical Significance**

Reassessing process of Europeanization: discursive negotiation framework

Contributing empirical research to the study of EU migration policy area

Italy: an understudied case in Europeanization and EU migration policy literature

### **Practical Significance**

International migration flows are increasing, Europe is currently the leading destination

Regional blocs forming around the world: managing migration flows is no longer solely a national issue (EU: Schengen Area)

Migration policies have life and death consequences for migrants

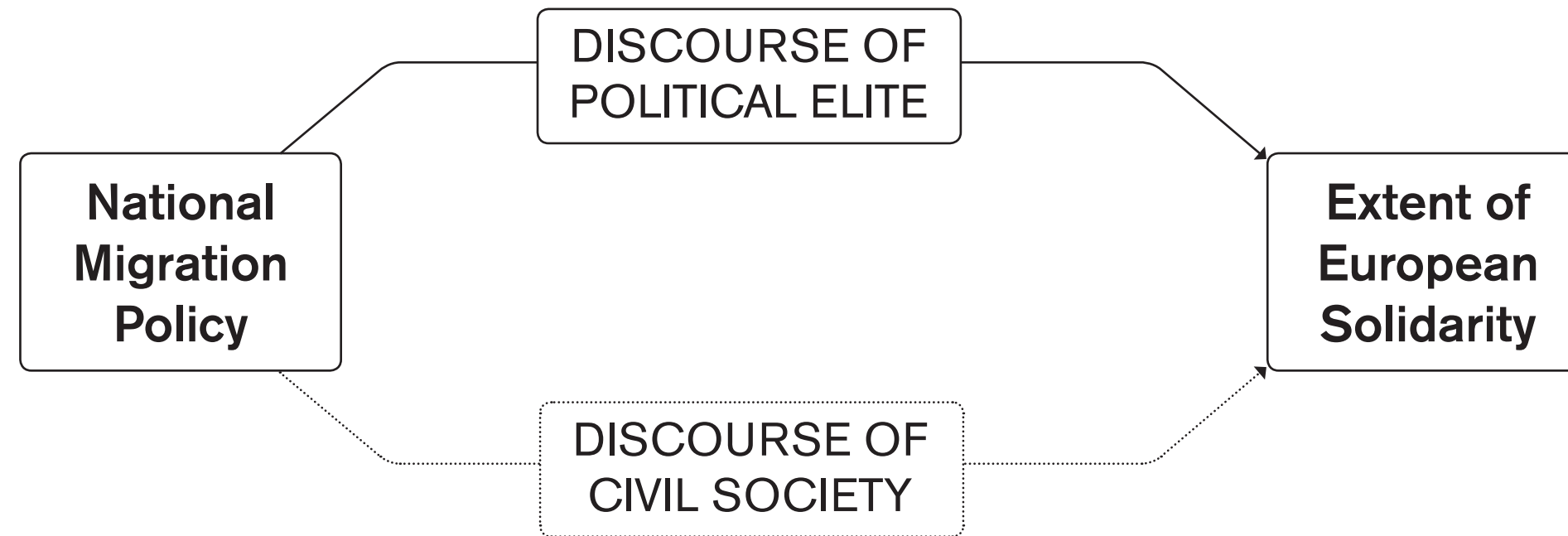
**Argument**

## **Solidarity in Italian Migration Policy Discourse**

1. Solidarity is present in discourse, although not always in the way that the EU intended
2. Solidarity is negotiated through discourse in Italian society
  - among and between the political elite and civil society
  - across time and space
3. Not all instances of solidarity discourse are genuine

# Research Design

# The Italian Case: 1986–2013



**La Repubblica**

**La Stampa**

**Discourse Analysis**

qualitative, interpretive,  
constructivist

locating text in its historical and  
social context

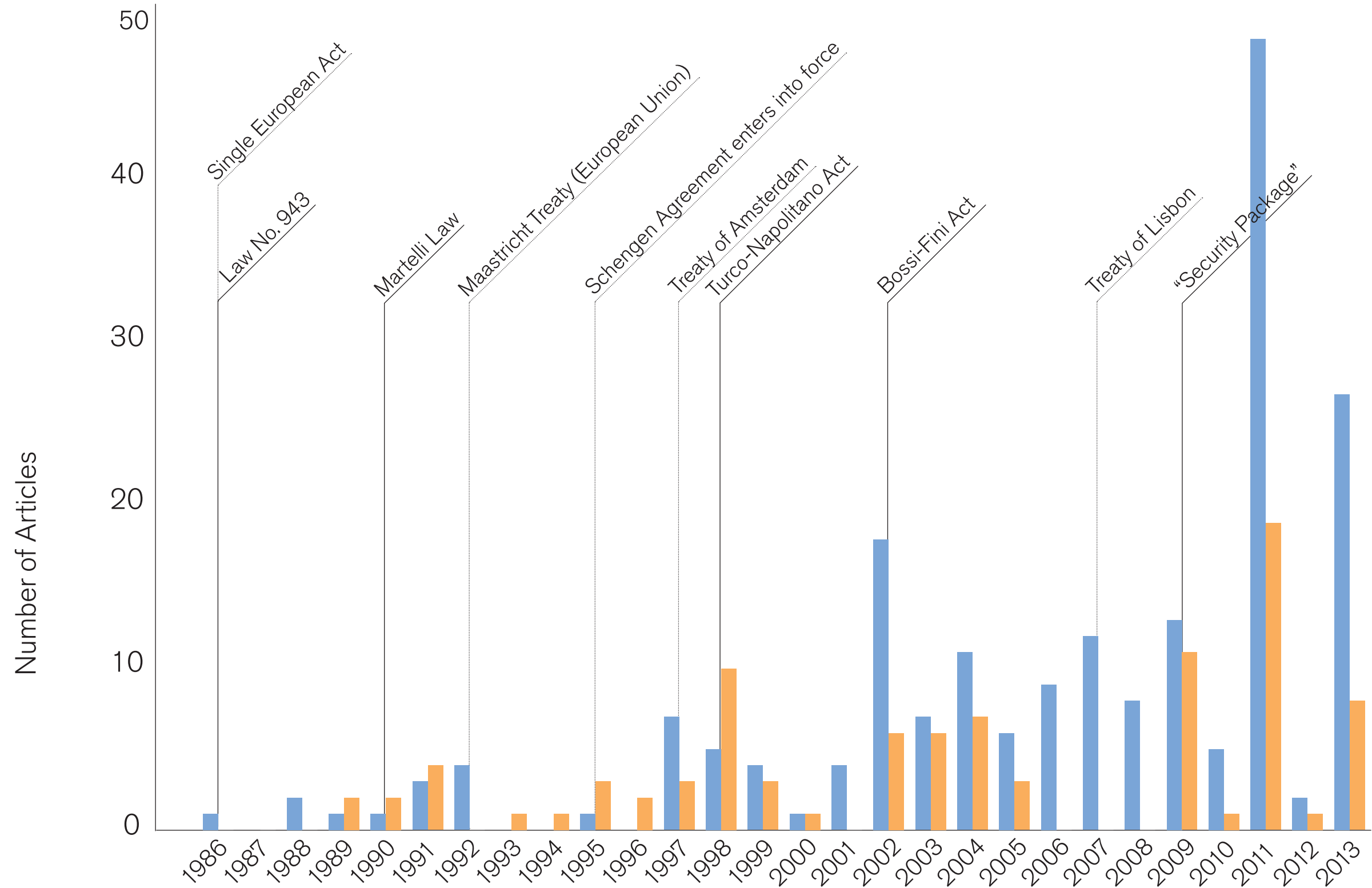
meaning is fluid

# **Findings: Patterns of Solidarity Discourse**

# Frequency of Articles with “Solidarity,” “Immigration,” and “Asylum” in the Text, 1986–2013

- La Repubblica
- La Stampa
- Italy
- ..... European Union

**n = 294**

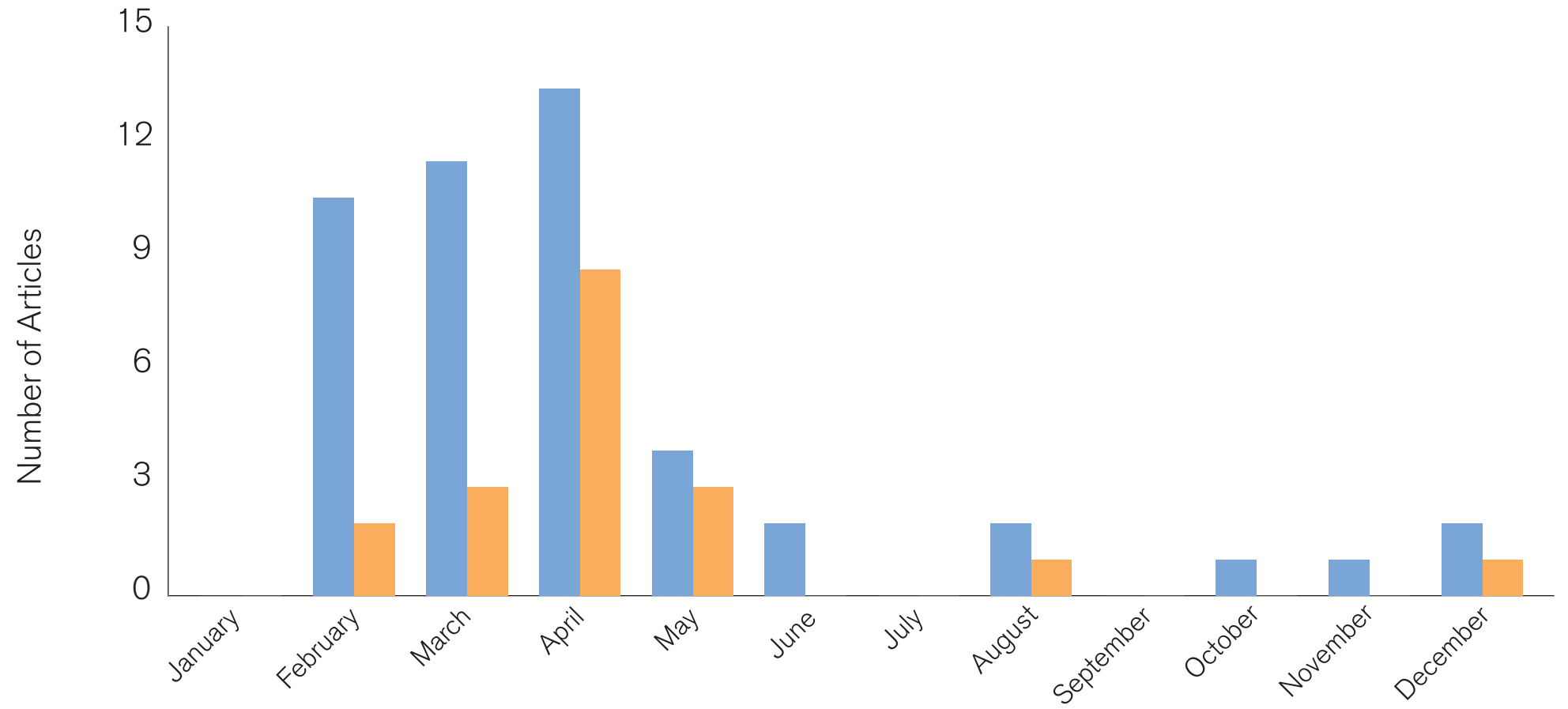




■ La Repubblica  
■ La Stampa

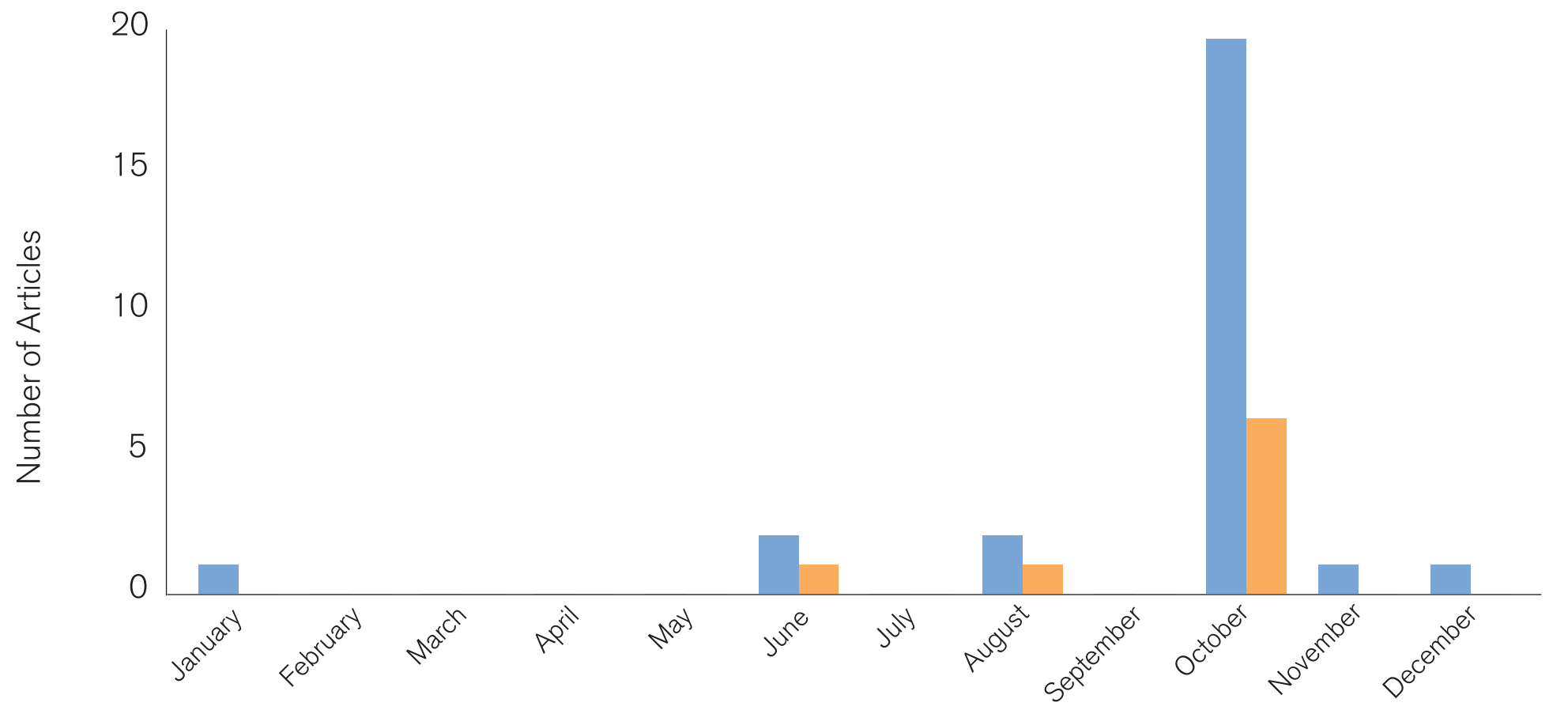
**2011**

49 ■  
19 ■  
68 total



**2013**

26 ■  
8 ■  
34 total



# **Italian Political Elite vs. Civil Society Groups**

multi-level solidarity negotiation

reframing and expanding terms

## **Regional level**

burden sharing between regions

## **Catholic Church**

human solidarity with migrants

## **National level**

center-right: migration threat

center-left: legal change to protect rights of migrants

## **NGOs**

legal and moral commitment to human rights

## **Supranational level**

burden sharing in EU

## **Italian Media**

burden sharing in EU  
policy solutions

## **Labor Unions**

solidarity with law enforcement

# **Instrumental vs. Genuine Solidarity Discourse Amongst the Italian Political Elite**

**Center-Right in 2011: Berlusconi**

## **Instrumental**

solidarity discourse is a means to an end: financial and logistical assistance

1. Lacked international credibility
2. European skepticism about Italian capacity to control borders
3. Perceived hypocrisy of Italian calls for solidarity due to lack of reciprocity

**Center-Left in 2013: Letta**

## **Genuine**

discourse reflects goal of solidarity in European and Italian migration policies is an end itself

1. Self-aware regarding failure of Italian migration policy to protect migrant rights
2. Letta personally championed new European campaign for solidarity

## **Implications and Future Research**

## **Theoretical Implications**

Process of Europeanization is mediated by domestic politics, individual political leaders, interest groups, and economic considerations

Instrumental solidarity discourse still counts as evidence of Europeanization

Discourse can both reflect norms as well as drive policy change

## **Policy Implications**

Importance of reciprocity: paying solidarity forward

Clarity of EU policy language, norms, and mechanisms impacts domestic interpretation

The language used to define policy objectives and prevailing norms matters

## **Future Research**

Rise of regional blocs: Can theories of Europeanization travel to other regions of the world?

Policy areas other than migration: Does the discursive negotiation framework hold?

Solidarity as a fundamental principle: Does solidarity in economic policy or energy policy impact solidarity in migration policy?

**“And yet, solidarity means different things to different people and different governments. Any political, legal, and even moral definition of the term can be re-defined and consequently contested by the (political) opponent.”**

– Raspotnik, Jacob, & Ventura

“The Issue of Solidarity in the European Union”