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INTERPRETATIONS OF SUSTAINABILITY IN FINNISH MIGRATION POLICY DOCUMENTS

Faculty of Management and Business
Master's Thesis
February 2024

ABSTRACT

Iida Ansamaa: Interpretations of sustainability in Finnish migration policy documents
Master's Thesis
Tampere University
Master's Programme in Leadership for Change, Governance for Sustainable Change
February 2024

Previous research has agreed that sustainability is a complex concept. Equally complex is governance of migration in a multilevel setting. This master's thesis contributes to the discussion on sustainability of migration policies by exploring current interpretations of sustainability in Finnish migration policy documents.

This master's thesis is empirically led. The key concepts of this thesis are sustainability and multilevel governance. The complex and flexible natures of both of the key concepts are discussed. The specific context of the research is Finnish migration governance. As a member state of the European Union, the migration governance of Finland is influenced by the supranational level.

The research was conducted with an interpretative approach. Qualitative policy document analysis was utilised as a research method. Data consisted of 237 migration policy documents, which underwent summative content analysis. The later stages of the summative content analysis were influenced by thematic data analysis methods.

As a result of the summative content analysis, it was found that only 20% of the documents within data included mentions of sustainability. When sustainability was mentioned, sustainability was spoken about in a variety of ways. Descriptive, definitive and general mentions of sustainability were identified, as well as utilising terminology, and references to other documents. Six interpretations of sustainability were present in Finnish migration policy documents: sustainability as adaptability; sustainability as economic interests; sustainability as responsibilities and obligations; sustainability as societal wellbeing; sustainability as stability; and sustainability as quality processes and systems. Sustainability as adaptability was the least observed interpretation, and sustainability as quality processes and systems was the most observed interpretation.

The findings revealed that the element of change and the effect of multilevel governance are important factors of sustainability in Finnish migration policies. Change is perceived differently depending on the interpretation of sustainability. European Union as a supranational level sets obligations to Finland as a national state, and it is also seen as part of a joint system, thus affecting sustainability at the national level. The findings also revealed that Finnish migration policy is focused on economic sustainability, and there is no balance between the traditional trifold understanding of sustainability as economic, ecological, and social.

This thesis contributes to the discussion of how sustainability can be defined by context. Additionally, this thesis points to the direction that change as an element has a central role on interpretations of sustainability within the context of migration policy. This thesis also contributes to the discussion on multilevel governance and how it has an effect on national level policies. This thesis revealed fruitful opportunities for future research, for example in tracking changes in interpretations of sustainability, utilising different approaches and methods, and focusing on different levels such as organisational or local.

Keywords: migration, migration governance, multilevel governance, sustainability

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

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Finnish Government

Abbreviation used in tables: GOV

Valtioneuvosto

Prime Minister's Office

Abbreviation used in tables: PMO

Valtioneuvoston kanslia

Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland

Abbreviation used in tables: MEAE

Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö

Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland

Abbreviation used in tables: MEC

Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö

Ministry of the Interior of Finland

Abbreviation used in tables: MI

Sisäministeriö

¹ The sources of this thesis include the following ministries of Finland, as well as the Finnish Government. For clarity and coherence, the citation practices of this thesis are the following: if the cited document is in Finnish, the organisation will be referred to by its Finnish name; if the cited document is in English, the organisation will be referred to by its English translated name. In the sources at the end of this thesis, the source will be listed according to the language of the document in question.

1 INTRODUCTION

States receiving ‘too many’ migrants. The ‘incompatibility of cultures’ and ‘failed integration’. The ‘burden’ to the governance and social aid structures of receiving states. These are examples of familiar narratives linked to migration. As migration flows are somewhat unpredictable and the agency of the migrants tends to be forgotten, the questions of *can migration be managed* and *by whom* arise.

The prevailing consensus seems to be that migration should be managed by states and international institutions, in collaboration with non-state actors (see for example van Riemsdijk et. al., 2021, pp. 3-6). International migration management is a *regulatory paradigm*, and it frames migration as a *governance problem* that is to be solved by *powerful actors* (Van Riemsdijk et. al., 2021, p. 6). Instead of recognising the agency of the migrants, migration management aims to match migration with, for example, the labour market needs and the integration capacity of the receiving countries and societies (ibid.).

The need of different powerful actors to manage migration stems (at least partially) from the social construction of migration as a crisis and as a security concern (see for example Bello, 2022, p. 1328-1329; Sahin-Mencutek et. al., 2022, p. 2, van Riemsdijk et. al., 2021, p. 6). As migration is viewed as a crisis and as a security concern, it is *securitised* as a policy field, and a migration-security nexus is formed (Léonard & Kaunert, 2022, pp. 1417-1418). Despite the securitisation of migration, in actuality, migration policy changes have become less restrictive over time (de Haas et. al., 2018, p. 352). However, as migration policies have a strong performative dimension, restrictive policies may gain more public exposure, whereas the more liberal policy choices are made in silence (de Haas et. al., 2018, p. 354). An impression of controlling and managing migration can thus be created even without drastic measures.

Despite stating that governing migration has not become more restrictive over time, it is important to elaborate, that there are restrictive elements in place when it comes to migration governance. Instead of controlling the numbers of migrants, states are increasingly more interested in controlling *who* gets admission (de Haas et. al., 2018, p. 353). The emphasis on criteria for migrant selection is an example of how the complexity of migration governance has increased.

The management of migration can be framed through the resilience of the receiving nation or through international justice, among other examples. There is potential for a narrative of sustainable migration

to arise, encouraged by the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. However, sustainable migration governance is not widely discussed, and even less so defined. It is common for states to declare that their migration policies are sustainable, but less common for states to define *by how*. In academia, some frameworks for sustainability in migration governance have been suggested. However, academics also often conclude that it is not clear what sustainability means in the context of migration.

1.1 Research objective

The aim of this master's thesis is to analyse the different interpretations of sustainability in Finnish migration governance. This is done by analysing Finnish migration policy documents. The interpretations of sustainability in Finnish migration governance will be explored by researching how sustainability is spoken about in migration policy documents. Migration policies here are understood as laws, regulations, and orders regarding the selection, admission, entry, settlement, stay, and sometimes deportation of migrants based on different legal channels, describing what the government intends to do or not do (Schultz et. al., 2021, p. 766; Helbling, et. al., 2016, p. 82). Thus, in addition to laws and regulations, government documents such as programs, reports, and strategies are included within the scope of policy documents as orders.

In addition to noting *if* an important phenomenon is talked about, it is of importance to note *how* it is talked about. Hallin et. al. (2021, p. 1950) have stated that a concept can be made sense by studying how it is given meaning through talk, and that sustainability is such a concept that is constructed through language. In the instance of this thesis, the meaning is searched from written text. Understanding how sustainability is made sense of in a specific context can lead to a more comprehensive and transformational understanding of the concept of sustainability in itself (Hallin et. al., 2021, p. 1954). This thesis moves forward based on this thought, and into an exploration of how sustainability is interpreted in Finnish migration governance. Thus, the discussion moves forward from sustainability as a general vague idea (general concept), into the different ways in which the concept can be understood and specified (specific conceptions of the concept) (Stumpf et. al., 2015, p. 7439).

In Finland, the process of determining an overarching migration policy is still underway. The Ministry of the Interior of Finland set up a project in 2021 to define the long-term objectives for a comprehensive migration policy of Finland (Ministry of the Interior of Finland, 30 June 2021). Any

deliberations on the nature of the national migration policy are unreported at the time of writing this thesis. Thus, it is unclear if sustainability would be in any shape or form included within the overarching Finnish migration policy. At present, there is a fruitful opportunity to interpret the sustainability themes of Finnish migration policy via policy documents, prior the release of an official overarching migration policy. The potential inclusion of a sustainability perspective within national migration policy is not well communicated to the public and lacks definition.

1.2 Research questions and structure of the thesis

The purpose of this thesis is to explore *what sustainability means* in Finnish migration governance. For this purpose, the main research question is the following:

How is sustainability interpreted in Finnish migration policy documents?

The main research question is accompanied by secondary research questions, to help form the definition and further discuss the topic. The secondary research questions are the following:

How frequently is sustainability mentioned in Finnish migration policy documents?

What themes, topics, and concepts are linked to sustainability in Finnish migration policy documents?

In the following chapters, firstly, the concept of sustainability will be discussed. Secondly, the complexity of migration governance is presented. This section includes insights on multilevel governance, a discussion on migration as a crisis to be governed by actors, and whether or not embracing the complexity would be a viable governance method. Finally, the idea of sustainable migration governance is elaborated on.

This thesis is empirically led and the research is conducted in an inductive way. Thus, the key concepts do not form a theoretical framework, which would heavily influence the analysis of the data. Instead, the key concepts of sustainability and multilevel governance are presented to help the reader comprehend the specific context of this thesis. Sustainability is a contested concept in itself, and the impact of multilevel governance brings an additional layer to the challenges of defining sustainability in the context of Finnish migration policies.

Following the conceptual chapters, the context of Finnish migration governance is presented, including a description of national migration governance structures and European and global influences. In the later parts of this thesis, methodology and data are presented, followed by an explanation of how the data was analysed. The findings of this research are presented in three

consecutive chapters, which explain the presence and absence of sustainability in Finnish migration policy documents, how sustainability is spoken about, and which thematic interpretations of sustainability are present in Finnish migration policy documents. A discussion on key elements of the findings and conclusions will be presented at the end.

2 DEFINING SUSTAINABILITY

In the exhaustive words of Atkinson et. al. (2011, p. 28), sustainability is a multidimensional, contextualised concept. The multidimensionality is evident in the numerous theorisations and discussions from different academic fields, not overlooking the practical efforts and layman-knowledge either. Sustainability is also context-dependent, because the vague and ambiguous nature of the concept demands contextual narratives and ‘rules’.

As an all-encompassing definition of sustainability is still amiss, there are numerous nuances added to the academic discussion on sustainability. What is repeated across all the conceptualisations, analyses, typologies, et cetera, is that sustainability is a contested concept. Amidst the discussion, it is also suggested, that sustainability could and should remain undefined (Ramsey, 2015). Even if sustainability is not defined, or is defined by numerous different attempts, the concept of sustainability will have meaning-as-use (Ramsey, 2015).

Overarching and all-encompassing sustainability goals cannot be set in stone (Atkins et. al., 2011, p. 14). Because sustainability is a concept that requires contextualisation, the goal of sustainability needs to be deliberated and defined in every instance. In optimal situations, the vagueness of sustainability leads to innovation (Atkinson et. al., 2011, p. 14) and to constructive discussion (Hallin et.al., 2021, p. 1954). On the other hand, the versatile usage of sustainability has sparked criticism. Brown (2015, p. 130) has stated that “... sustainability’s lack of fixed meaning has certainly enabled elites to present it in ways that suit their own agenda...”. Brown (ibid.) does, additionally, recognise the positive possibilities of the flexibility of sustainability. However, this striking contrast highlights the two sides of the same coin: the ambiguity of sustainability and whether it has a positive or negative effect in practice.

Despite the contextualised and multidimensional nature of sustainability, and numerous novel typologies as attempts to bring clarity to the concept, some commonly used descriptions of sustainability have been created. The Brundtland report has defined sustainability – through sustainable development – as follows:

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within two key concepts: the concept of ‘needs’, in particular the essential needs of the world’s poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of

limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, p. 41).

In this definition, the well-known notions of intergenerational and intragenerational justice are present. Sustainability is understood as consisting of three different pillars: social, economic, and environmental. A division into strong and weak sustainability is often referenced, where weak sustainability means that natural capital can be substituted by technological or manufactured capital, and strong sustainability means that such substitution is not possible because unlimited economic growth is at conflict with the limits of nature (Salas-Zapata & Ortiz-Muños, 2019, p. 154). Weak sustainability allows trade-offs between the three pillars of sustainability as the economic pillar is emphasised over the two others (Biely et. al., 2018, p. 225; Barton & Gutiérrez-Antinopai, 2020, p. 1; Laine, 2005, p. 397). Strong sustainability entails a balance and equality between the pillars (ibid.).

The 2030 Agenda of the United Nations recognises that social and economic development are dependent on the sustainable management of natural resources (United Nations, 25 September 2015, p. 9). The Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda of the United Nations promote sustainable development as a global goal and are regarded as a major accomplishment of global sustainability governance. The view of the 2030 Agenda is that the three dimensions of sustainability – economic, social, and environmental – are interlinked and indivisible (Reinar & Lundberg, 2023, pp. 1-2). This holistic view carries throughout the Sustainable Development Goals, and the goals and their more specific targets should be addressed as a coherent whole (Reinar & Lundberg, 2023, p. 2; United Nations, 25 September 2015).

However, there is national and local prioritisation when it comes to the Sustainable Development Goals, creating a discrepancy of an indivisible framework combined with selectivity of national and local authorities (Reinar & Lundberg, 2023; Forestier & Kim, 2020). The Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda are not legally binding, and implementation of measures and achieving global goals is wholly dependent on how national governments decide to act. Biermann et. al. (2022, pp. 795, 798) found that the Sustainable Development Goals have had mainly discursive effects (changes in global and national debates such as references to 2030 Agenda) with isolated normative and institutional reforms. Furthermore, Biermann et. al. (2022, p. 798) state that the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda have only had a limited political impact on global, national, and local governance.

Luckily, sustainability has become a rather overarching goal across different sectors of modern societies. As such, sustainability cannot be absent from global and national politics and governance. Nowadays, sustainability in itself is a policy field, at least in the sense of sustainable development. Additionally, sustainability is embedded as added value or as a requirement into essentially all other policy fields. At the very least, sustainability is to be understood as a political concept.

From the point of view of this thesis – aiming to describe interpretations of sustainability in a specific setting – the following conceptualisations of sustainability pose very interesting. Zimmermann et. al. (2010, pp. 13-14) state that sustainability is related to procedures and results. Hallin et. al. (2021, p. 1954) frame the same issue as sustainability being related to practices and objectives. Both entail the same message that sustainability is an agile concept, thus lending itself to deliberations of *how things are done, how goals are reached, is the process sustainable*, in addition to sustainability being a goal in itself.

Whyte and Lamberton (2020) have added a third layer to this style of conceptualising sustainability. They introduce a worldview to accompany the objective and actions (Whyte & Lamberton, 2020). The worldview as a layer of sustainability is made up of values, beliefs, cultural understandings, and knowledge, and it affects the actions taken to achieve the objective of long-term survival (Whyte & Lamberton, 2020, pp. 15-18). According to Whyte and Lamberton (2020, p. 4, 16), different worldviews may create tension between different understandings of sustainability, as the worldview of an individual will have an impact on their conceptualisation of sustainability. Between the currently dominant Western technocentric worldview, and ecocentric worldview, lays sustaincentrism (Whyte & Lamberton, 2020, pp. 4-5, 16; Gladwin et. al., 1995). Technocentrism emphasises economic incentives and technological innovation (see: weak sustainability), ecocentrism emphasises the intrinsic value of nature and views ‘everything as connected to everything else (see: strong sustainability), and sustaincentrism emphasises the role of humans as ensuring survival and wellbeing as well as going good for nature (Whyte & Lamberton, 2020, pp. 4-5, 16).

After presenting common definitions of sustainability and expressing interest in the view of sustainability as both processes and goals, it must be stated, that there is no default conceptualisation of sustainability adopted in this thesis. This is due to the nature of the research aim and research questions. In cases where the sustainability of a system is studied, it would be important to identify and state the concept of sustainability, be it normative or operative (Salas-Zapata & Ortiz-Muñoz, p. 159). However, as the sustainability of Finnish migration policy is not researched, but the various interpretations of sustainability presented in Finnish migration policy documents, no such stances are

declared prior data analysis. Furthermore, sustainability can be conceptualised at the macro-societal level, meso-organisational level, and micro-individual level, including the intersections between them as well (Mitra & Moldavanova, 2018, p. 278; Moldavanova & Goerdel, 2018, pp. 55-56). Without undermining the importance of the micro-individual level, this thesis is mostly interested in the macro-societal and meso-organisational concepts of sustainability, and the intersection in between.

3 COMPLEX MIGRATION GOVERNANCE

Governing migration is complex. Migration as a policy field is multidimensional, it reaches across multiple levels of governance. Migration issues are often viewed as intractable policy problems. There are several conceptualisations of governance that have been suggested as descriptive of migration governance in particular. These include multilevel governance (of migration), crisis governance (of migration), the concept of battleground, mainstreaming, and ‘messy’ governance (of migration). None of the aforementioned have been accepted as describing entirely the complexity of migration governance. However, it is useful to examine the varieties of conceptualisations to understand the multiplicities of migration governance.

Multilevel governance (of migration) describes the structure of governance and how it reaches across multiple levels. The concepts of battleground and crisis governance (of migration) further explain the agency of actors within the multiple levels of governance and their relationships with each other. The approaches of mainstreaming and messy governance are recent descriptions of how to potentially govern the intractable policy field by embracing the complexities. In the following paragraphs, these modes of governance and their relevance as descriptors of the context is discussed.

3.1 Multilevel governance

Within the European context, due to the European Union, multilevel governance is often discussed as *the* mode of how migration governance is structured. Thus, it is important to look at the basic principles of multilevel governance to understand how the policy field works. Multilevel governance originated from the need to capture developments in the European Union (Bache & Flinders, 2004, p. 2), and it is still relevant when describing European Union governance of different policy fields. It is, as well, applicable to other contexts. Multilevel governance was first introduced by Marks in 1993, and additional commonly used definitions of multilevel governance include a dual typology by Hooghe and Marks (2001; 2003) and attempted conceptualisations and theorisations by multiple academics.

According to the dual typology of Hooghe and Marks (2001; 2003), type I multilevel governance refers to general purpose limited jurisdictions at a limited number of levels with exclusive boundaries and a permanent set-up, and type II multilevel governance refers to specialised task-specific

territorially overlapping jurisdictions which operate across different levels and have a more flexible set-up (Hooghe & Marks, 2003, p. 236; Panizzon & van Riemsdijk, 2019, pp. 1230-1231). How the European Union governs labour migration is an example of type I multilevel governance, as different types of competences are divided across different jurisdiction levels (Panizzon & van Riemsdijk, 2019, p. 1231). An example of type II multilevel governance is seen in the way global institutions work to enhance the migration-development nexus by setting up global forums and pacts (Panizzon & van Riemsdijk, 2019, p. 1231).

Scholten and Penninx (2016) have contributed to the multilevel governance discussion by identifying four patterns of multilevel; centralist (top-down) governance, localist (bottom-up) governance, multilevel cooperative governance, and a decoupled mode of governance. It is to be noted, that multilevel governance is often criticised for its vagueness, lack of clarity, and simplifying the complexity of actors within levels (see for example Sahin-Mencutek et. al., 2022; Panizzon & van Riemsdijk, 2019; Caponio & Jones-Correa 2018; Bache and Flinders, 2004). Multilevel governance of migration is apparent as the decision-making authority of the policy field is shifted from the central governments to the supranational level (upwards), to subnational jurisdictions (downwards), and to public-private networks (sideways), literally demonstrating the multilevelness through the vertical and horizontal dimensions (Panizzon & van Riemsdijk, 2019, p. 1226). Migration is a transboundary issue, and no state can address migration issues individually. National, regional, and international collaboration is necessary. Multilevel governance opens up possibilities to distribute risk and shift responsibilities (Panizzon & van Riemsdijk, 2019, p. 1233). Thus, governance hierarchies are reshaped, because the traditional linkages between governments, regional subnational actors, civil society actors, and international organisations are being reshaped by migration (Panizzon & van Riemsdijk, 2019, pp. 1225-1226).

The reshaped hierarchies and shifting responsibilities are related to *venue shopping*, which is in academic discussions often mentioned adjacent to or in contrast of multilevel governance. For example, in the field of migration policies, moving upwards into international venues can lead to different judicial constraints than at the national level, as well as to absence of political opposition (Guiraudon, 2000, p. 252). Thus, the motivation of the actors within the policy field is to find the most suitable venue which will work in their favour. This may be done by moving upwards, downwards, and outwards, as demonstrated by the multilevel governance approach. The most common shifts are into international (upwards) forums (Ambrosini, 2021, p. 377; Guiraudon, 2000). Venue shopping to achieve the desired outcomes of actors within the policy field begins to highlight

the utilisation of agency. This is further discussed within the next sub-chapter through chosen examples of relevant conceptualisations to the field of migration policies.

3.2 Actors governing the crisis

Since migration is often framed as a crisis to be solved, Sahin-Mencuttek et. al. (2022, p. 2) have theorised on crisis governance of migration. Crisis governance takes place within the governance structure as a response to a crisis. The aim of the governance structure is to restore order and normality, and it can be done even at the expense of formalised rules (Sahin-Mencuttek et. al., 2022, p. 2). The governance structure acts through hybrid forms of coordination and potential contestation of actors within the structure (ibid.).

Sahin-Mencuttek et. al. (2022, p. 15) have identified three distinct features of crisis governance of migration. Firstly, the landscape of actors within the policy field and governing structure is complex, including the state, civil society, private sector, and the local and international levels. Secondly, the legal systems are complicated and fragmented, and policy provisions may vary at the temporal level (frequent changes) and at the territorial level (different provisions in place in different areas of one country). Thirdly, a renationalisation narrative tries to re-establish the control of the nation states to solve the crisis. (ibid.) When a governance structure is in the mode of crisis governance of migration, tensions arise, and the messiness of the issue is detested. The uncertainty of the situation warrants for temporary measures such as ad hoc measures, different interpretations of legislation, and informal policy formation and adaptation (Sahin-Mecuttek et. al., 2022, p. 15).

Whereas the crisis governance is discussed in relation to multiple policy fields, Ambrosini (2021) introduced the concept of battleground to especially describe the landscape of migration (and asylum) policies. The battleground describes a policy field of different political and social actors. These actors, similarly to the view of crisis governance, interact in cooperation or conflict (Ambrosini, 2021, pp. 379-380). The considerations of actors include both pro-migrant movements and xenophobic movements (ibid.). The actors are seen as forming alliances and coalitions to influence policies (ibid.). Instead of focusing on the levels of governance, the concept of battleground is especially focused on the different types of actors within the levels, and their interactions (Ambrosini, 2021, p. 388). Additionally, in contrast to multilevel governance and venue shopping, the migrants themselves are seen as actors utilising their agency (ibid.).

When migration is framed as a crisis, and the narrative gains momentum within the policy field, it complicates the interactions between the actors and cooperation becomes more difficult. The complexity of the policy field is not appreciated, and the uncertainty of the crisis warrants for emergency measures to solve the issue. Instead of flexibility and future-oriented long-term planning, emphasis is on resilience in the sense of actors wanting to ‘return back to normal’. This view is at least partially at war with the aim of sustainable migration governance, as adaptability is lacking, and measures are taken to *protect* and *restore*.

3.3 Embracing the complexity and messiness of migration policy

A newly emerged view on how to globally govern migration is a ‘messy’ approach. The key ideology is that of utilising a ‘messy’ approach of governance because migration as a complex, uncontrollable, and unpredictable matter is ‘messy’ in itself. The messiness is not used as a negative adjective, but a neutral expression of the state of the matter.

Instead of aiming for predictability, utilising risk management, and relying on data, a ‘messy’ governance approach would embrace the uncertainty and complexity (Triandafyllidou, 2021, pp. 24-25). Governance tools would intentionally consist of creative solutions, temporary and flexible measures, and emergency declarations (ibid). It is noteworthy, that the utilisation of ad hoc measures is similar to the crisis governance, but the nature of the justification for the temporary measures can be viewed as opposite. Dissensus would not be viewed as a bad thing, since one-size-fits-all solutions are seen as not likely to work (Triandafyllidou, 2021, p. 25). Thus, the adaptability of policies to local and regional conditions would be optimal (ibid.).

The narratives of improvisation, experimentation, networked relations, and overall flexibility and adaptability (Triandafyllidou, 2021, pp. 24-25) are potential bridges towards sustainable governance of migration. The messy approach is not in actuality used to govern migration at this point in time. Instead, it paints a picture of how migration could be governed in the future, as a response to migration being an intractable policy issue.

Scholten (2020, p. 120) equally recognises the complexity of the migration policy field, and has conceptualised on mainstreaming versus alienation and the ‘dual nature of policymaking in the face of complexity’. In sum, to cope with complex policy problems, complex approaches are needed. Failing to sufficiently respond to the complexity leads to alienation from issue developments in

migration (Scholten, 2020). Scholten (2020) has used ‘quick fixes’ in migration regulation as an example of such failure. Again, the usage of ‘quick fixes’ is discussed, similar to ad hoc measures of crisis governance and temporary and flexible measures of messy governance. Here, the nature of such measures is seen as negative as they are interpreted as failures. Clearly, the potential of temporary measures is contested between researchers of the field. Quick fixes can be a manifestation of *maintaining* a certain state or of efforts to *return to* a desired state, or they can convey a more *transformative and flexible* strategy.

An alternative to alienation from issue developments in migration is a mainstreaming governance approach, where complexity is seen as part of policymaking (Scholten, 2020), similarly to messy governance. Mainstreaming requires an approach where migration governance is rethought as a generic approach instead of a stand-alone strand (ibid.). Thus, migration governance would not exist, and a generic approach concerning the whole population would be adopted. Of course, this would be a highly debated, contested, and opposed way to govern migration, and is not apparent in the chosen context at current times. States would have to move past the migration as a crisis narrative, and also past managing migration, and focus more on overarching governance and policies. A mainstreamed approach would in itself be a sustainable form of governance, as resources would be utilised and solutions would be generated in a more comprehensive manner. Additionally, as Scholten (2020) suggests, reflexive research-policy dialogues would be utilised, creating a more research-based policy formation model.

3.4 Sustainable migration governance

As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, it is currently not clear what sustainability means in the context of migration governance. In general, sustainability is understood as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The three-pillared view of sustainability includes environmental, economic, and social branches. Moving on from sustainability to sustainable migration, Franco Gavonell et. al. (2021, p. 98) propose a migration-sustainability paradox stating that migration is contributing to economic unsustainability while at the same time potentially contributing to social and environmental sustainability. Thus, migration simultaneously has positive and negative effects on sustainability.

Franco Gavonel et. al. (2021, p. 99) propose that to facilitate transformation towards sustainability, migration would have to simultaneously improve all three dimensions of sustainability. Economic improvement would be evident in increased material wellbeing, social improvement would be evident in reduced inequality in multiple dimensions, and environmental improvement would be evident in lowered environmental burden (ibid.). Raffelhüschen and Manthei (2018, p. 459) have concluded that migration adds to the strain of the public sector fiscal sustainability, which is already burdened by the aging population in many welfare states in Europe, such as in Finland. This is evidence of the negative contribution of migration towards economic sustainability. This is also a concrete example of how sustainable migration is linked to governance. Opportunities, challenges, risks, and trade-offs in migration processes and policies should be identified and analysed to determine the sustainability of such processes (Janker & Thieme, 2021, p. 1431, 1433).

To offer a concrete example on the matter of sustainable migration governance, the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations are a key international component of sustainability and sustainable governance. Migration has been incorporated within the goals, especially with the target 10.7 of facilitating orderly, safe, regular, and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies, under the broader goal number 10 of reducing inequality within and among countries (United Nations, 25 September 2015, p. 21). Under the target, indicator 10.7.2 takes stock of number of countries with migration policies that facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, n.d.). The relationship of migration and the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations can be viewed from both directions: what is the impact that migration has on the achievement of sustainable development objectives; and how achieving sustainable development objectives impacts migration (Bălan et. al., 2020, p. 51).

As stated earlier, migration is linked to all of the three dimensions of sustainability – environmental, social, and economic. In general, scholars agree that international migration drives economic, social, and political developments, and can be a key factor in achieving some of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations (Kwilinski et. al., 2022, p. 13). However, the outcomes depend on how migration is governed (ibid.). This links governance into the trifecta of sustainable migration governance.

The multilevelness of migration policies is uncontested. However, within academic discussions and theorisations, the point of focus tends to shift between levels of governance and the agency of actors, between building resilience and embracing the messiness. The multiplicity of actors across the

vertical and horizontal dimensions is also uncontested, but the relevance given to the dimensions varies between governance conceptualisations. Building from the multiple conceptualisations of migration governance, and moving on to multiple conceptualisations of sustainable governance, it is not straightforward to create a definition of sustainable migration governance. Additionally, sustainable migration governance is a manifold term. Sustainability, sustainable migration, sustainable governance, and migration governance are all included within it.

4 NATIONAL MIGRATION GOVERNANCE

The migration governance of European Union member states is multi-level governance of nature. It is comprised of the national level, moving down to the subnational level, and moving up to the European Union level, with broader global influence interfering into the mix as well. At the national level, national narratives play into national policy formation and policy interpretation. At this national level, cognitions of ethnicity and nation can create a prejudicial narrative of migration, which then informs policies and practices (Bello, 2022, pp. 1328-1330). Through such prejudice, migration might be socially constructed into a threat, which then links into the securitisation of migration, and further to migration being a crisis to be managed (Bello, 2022, pp. 1328; Sahin-Mencutek, 2022). An antidote to this is, of course, de-securitisation of the issue by indiscriminatory cognition, varied discourse, and diverse social construction (ibid.). Different actors at different levels have an impact on how migration is viewed, and how the issue is managed.

National migration policies are affected by global migration governance and the supranational (European Union) level. As migration is a transboundary issue-area, a single state cannot solve migration related issues and questions individually (Betts, 2011, p. 307). Global and regional collaboration and cooperation is necessary, but the multiplicity of narratives of migration at each level (global, supranational, national, and even local) makes it a complex policy field. To make matters even more complex, migration policies may actually be 'policy mixes', due to different policy dimensions related to it (Schultz et. al., 2021, p. 764). For example, the humanitarian motivation to admit refugees and the economic motivation to admit migrant workers are both present when considering migration policies, and the different motivations or logics can compete or coexist (ibid.). Additionally, migration is governed under different (national) organisations, and different norms and mechanisms address different aspect of migration (Pécoud, 2021, p. 17).

In the following sub-chapter, the global and European influence to national migration policies will be briefly discussed. After, the specifics of migration governance in Finland will be described. The description will focus on three elements: the structure of migration governance; the key migration policy documents; and the general state of migration policy.

4.1 Global and European influence

Global institutions shape national level migration governance. The United Nations and other global actors have an impact on national migration governance by steering global discourses. Global agreements and pacts have an impact on national matters, and discussion is facilitated at global forums. Despite efforts for connections and conversations, it is argued (see for example Van Riemsdijk et. al., 2021; Pécoud, 2021) that global migration governance is fragmented and thus weakened due to lack of consensus of states. States want to uphold their sovereignty as decision makers, may be reluctant towards international cooperation, and have diverging interests (van Riemsdijk et. al., 2021, p. 4; Pécoud, 2021, p. 17). However, a single narrative, a sort of consensus, connects states globally. Migration, as a global issue, is framed as a security threat (van Riemsdijk et. al., 2021, p. 5).

In Europe, the European Union is the main regional body influencing national migration governance of EU and even non-EU countries. The European Union manages migration by frameworks for legal migration and by the common European asylum system (European Council, 9 February 2023). At the European Union level, the focus of migration policies is mainly on external border control and on controlling migration flows (European Council, 9 February 2023).

Managing migration flows and the securitisation of migration have been key factors of the European Union migration policy for a long time (see for example Wahlbeck, 2021, pp. 120-121). Within the European Union, policy choices have been made based on security concerns since the late 1990s (Geddes, 2018, p. 120). For example, during the influx of asylum seekers to Europe in 2015, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex intensified its security practices, which in turn has contributed to the continuous spiralling of the securitisation of migration in the European Union (Léonard & Kaunert, 2022, p. 1427). Due to path dependencies, it is difficult to shift these initial policy choices (Geddes, 2018, p. 120). The securitisation of migration is thus repeated at the supranational level, similarly to the narratives at the global level.

As for the European Union migration policy goals, an ‘European approach to manage migration’ is desired (European Commission, n.d.). The desires are framed as an ‘effective, humanitarian and safe European migration policy’ (European Council, 9 February 2023). A European Agenda on Migration 2015-2020 was introduced by the European Commission in 2015 to provide tools to better manage migration both in the medium term and in the long term by focusing on the areas of border control

and irregular migration versus legal migration (European Commission, n.d.). The European Agenda on Migration was a response to the refugee crisis of 2014-2016, and when it was possible to shift the focus from immediate challenges to longer-term strategies on how to manage migration ‘responsibly and fairly’, a New Pact on Migration and Asylum was presented by the European Commission in 2020 (ibid.). The Pact is a framework to normalise and manage migration within the European Union, recognising the importance of solidarity between member states. (European Commission, 23 September 2020, pp. 1-2).

When compared to the global level, there is evidence of policy convergency in Europe in the field of migration (see for example Helbling & Kalkum, 2018, pp. 1782, 1793; Schultz et. al. 2021, p. 779). However, migration is a contested policy field within the European Union, and the member states have infamously had contradictory opinions on the principles and the extent of a joint European Union migration policy (Wahlbeck, 2021, p. 100). Despite multilevel governance at the European Union and the convergence of migration policies, European Union member states customise European Union policies when they are transposed into national law (Zhelyazkova & Thomann, 2022, p. 428). This can lead to differentiated national migration policies, and even to practical non-compliance regarding European Union legislation and soft law (Zhelyazkova & Thomann, 2022, p. 429). The customisation of policies, when not at the level of total non-compliance, is a problem-solving strategy to better adapt centrally decided policies to the national level within the complete framework of multilevel governance (Zhelyazkova & Thomann, 2022, p. 428).

A timely component of national migration governance across states in Europe is the popularity of far-right parties and the emergence of radical right populist parties. Such parties are known for their opposition to migration and multiculturalism. However, Lutz (2019, pp. 535-536) and Natter et. al. (2020 pp. 18-19) have concluded that radical right populist parties have not had significant effects on migration policy restrictiveness or reform. Some evidence of integration policy restrictiveness and greater selectivity of migrant admissions are observed when radical right populist parties are a part of a government coalition (Lutz, 2019, p. 535). Even if national migration policies have not de facto become more restricted, migration as a matter has been polarised within societies.

It is to be noted that the current popularity of far-right parties could not have yet been researched in depth. Thus, the effects that the recent governments and coalitions will have may differ from what has been previously found. In times of European wide inflation, energy crisis, and the unstable security situation, it seems that the radical right parties gain momentum and are able to convey the ideas of stricter migration policies to the public as a solution to a wide range of issues at hand.

Despite global and European level tools to facilitate common goals, convergency, and forums for discussion, migration has remained a matter that sparks arguments between states within the forums. State sovereignty and national narratives are rooted deep and valued, leading to differentiated national migration-policies or practical non-compliance. A European and global consensus of migration as a crisis to be managed potentially even lessens the solidarity between states, as every state wants to protect itself from the crisis while equally avoiding the responsibility of having to deal with the crisis. State sovereignty, international agreements, and solidarity between states are what Finland and other European Union member states have to weigh on when considering migration policy matters within the multilevel governance framework (Wahlbeck, 2021, p 101). National policies have an effect on the stance of the nation state within the European Union, and thus far the tensions between nation states have hindered the forming of a commonly agreed upon EU migration policy (Wahlbeck, 2021, p. 118).

4.2 Migration governance structure in Finland

The Finnish migration governance is directed by the Finnish Government by setting targets in the Government Programme and approving policies (European Migration Network, 2022, p. 9; Sisäministeriö 2023b, pp. 30-31). The main ministry in charge of migration issues is the Ministry of the Interior, with its own Migration Department (ibid.). Migration policy is formulated and migration legislation is drafted at the department (ibid.). The Migration Department of the Ministry of the Interior guides the Finnish Immigration Service, which is the main agency of migration matters in Finland, in cooperation with the Ministry of Employment and Economic Affairs (ibid.). Under the Ministry of the Interior, the Finnish Police and the Finnish Border Guard have responsibilities related to monitoring, receiving applications, and registering migrants (Ministry of the Interior of Finland, n.d.-a). The Ministry of the Interior represents Finland at the European Union and at any international forums in migration matters (Sisäministeriö, 2023b, p. 31).

Additionally, several other ministries are included in the Finnish migration governance. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is responsible for visa policy (Ministry of the Interior of Finland, n.d.-a). The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has a shared responsibility with the Ministry of the Interior on monitoring labour migration, and since 2020 it has been responsible for policy and legislation of worker, student, and researcher migration (Ministry of the Interior of Finland, n.d.-a; European Migration Network, 2022, p. 9). Under the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment

operates the Centre of Expertise in Integration, and the Ministry is responsible for integration matters (European Migration Network, 2022, p. 9; Sisäministeriö, 2023b, p. 31).). Also under the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment act as regional administrations on migration and integration matters, and the Employment and Economic Development Offices issue preliminary decisions on applications for residence permits for employed persons ahead of the application being processed at the Finnish Immigration Service (European Migration Network, 2022, pp. 9-10).

The Ministry of Education and Culture develops education provided to migrants at all levels, and the field of the ministry also stretches across culture, sports, youth work, and religion activities (Ministry of the Interior of Finland, n.d.-a; Sisäministeriö, 2023b, p. 31). The practicalities of the education issues and recognition of foreign degrees is handled by the Finnish National Agency for Education (ibid.). The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is responsible for promoting health and wellbeing of migrants and means of support by for example developing social and health services to accommodate the needs of migrants (ibid.). To promote equality, the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations and the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman work under the Ministry of Justice (European Migration Network, 2022, p. 10; Sisäministeriö, 2023b, pp. 31-32). The Ministry of Justice is also responsible for legislation related to legal aid for asylum seekers, and overseeing the administrative courts, which process appeals against the decisions given by the Finnish Immigration Service (Ministry of the Interior of Finland, n.d.-a; European Migration Network, 2022, p. 10).

The migration governance structure in Finland is somewhat siloed and fragmented across several ministries (Sisäministeriö, 2023b, p. 58). On the other hand, the ministries obtain substantial knowledge according to their specialties, but an over compassing structure and joint objectives are amiss (ibid.). However, suggestions for a ministry focused solely on migration matters have not gained momentum (Sisäministeriö, 2023b, p. 62).

The migration (and asylum) policy of Finland is based on Government objectives, EU legislation, and international agreements (Ministry of the Interior of Finland, n.d.-b). However, Finland does not in actuality have *a concrete migration policy programme* in place. Any long-term strategies or objectives are non-existent. However, the Ministry of the Interior set up a project in June of 2021 to formulate an effective, comprehensive, and consistent national migration policy (Sisäministeriö, 30 June 2021). The project term ended in June 2023, but no documents on the results of the project were published by the time this thesis was finalised.

What is communicated to the general public by the Ministry of the Interior is that Finland *needs* migration, especially labour migration, to balance the effects of the ageing population (Ministry of the Interior of Finland, n.d.-b). At the same time migration should be *controlled* (ibid.). The element of control is described and justified by legal statuses, international obligations, the capacity of society, and security considerations (ibid.).

At present, in the absence of a migration policy programme, the key migration policy documents consist of the Aliens Act and other related acts, and the Programme of the Government. The Government Programme is drafted anew as a new government is elected. As a result, focus points may differ from government term to government term, instead of long-term policies (Sisäministeriö, 2023b, p. 64) Government Programme offers governmental strategic themes, general objectives, and concrete promises, and thus is an important policy document. The Government Programme is accompanied by several policy documents published by the various ministries of Finland that are included in governing migration policy.

The current Finnish Aliens Act entered into force in 2004, and it is problematic due to multiple amendments since its entry in to force. The Act has been amended due to changes in European Union regulation, government measures, and changes in other legislation related to the Aliens Act (Ministry of the Interior of Finland, 23 January 2023). In total, the Act has been amended “about 90 times” (ibid.), which has created a confusing act that is difficult to understand and to apply into practice. The Ministry of Interior began preliminary preparations to reform the Aliens Act in October 2021 by setting up a project, and it is stated that the actual reform process should start during the government term of 2023-2027 (Ministry of the Interior of Finland, 23 January 2023). During the preparations to reform the Aliens Act, further amendments have been proposed and implemented. The reform of the Aliens Act provides an opportunity to clarify the general migration policy of Finland and it is related to the process of creating a migration policy programme.

As described in this sub-chapter, migration in Finland is governed by the Finnish Government and key ministries. As the migration governance structure in Finland is somewhat siloed, in addition to laws and Government objectives, each of the ministries has produced a notable amount of documents regarded as migration policy documents. From within this context of governance, the interpretations of sustainability will be explored.

5 METHOD AND DATA

5.1 Research design

The research is conducted with an interpretive approach. As ‘making meaning out of the meaning-making of other humans’ (Pachirat, 2014, p. 374) is a key aspect of interpretivism, it is well suited as an approach for this thesis because the approach is in line with the research aim. Interpretivism has an openness to messiness and ambiguity, and the approach embraces fluidity of methods and research questions (Pachirat, 2014, pp. 377-378). Additionally, interpretive research allows for the possibility of letting the data speak for itself without pre-set hypotheses (Yanow, 2014, p. 71). Conducting the research in a data-driven way has been one of the key aspects of this research from the very beginning. Interpretative approach is suited for this thesis, as it does not point out rights and wrongs or suggest solutions to problems. Differences within data are treated as different ways of seeing instead of *different meaning wrong* or *negative*, and all views are accounted for and presented equally (Yanow, 2003, p. 243). Interpretive research is not strict, but flexible instead (Pachirat, 2014; Yanow, 2014). To avoid criticism about interpretive research not being rigorous or objective enough, attention is paid to explaining the process of analysing the data.

Qualitative policy document analysis is utilised as research method. As Bowen (2009, pp. 27-28) has presented, document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing documents, during which data obtained from documents is organised into themes, categories, and examples through content analysis. According to Bowen (2009, p. 32), document analysis involves skimming, reading, and interpretation. He has stated that document analysis combines elements of content analysis and thematic analysis in the process (2009). More specifically, in this thesis, the data was analysed by summative content analysis with an emphasis on themes and framings of sustainability during the analysis of the context. The explanation by Hsieh and Shannon of summative content analysis (2005, pp. 1283-1284) is followed as a guide: summative content analysis starts by identifying and quantifying certain words in the text to understand the contextual use of the words, and continues by interpreting the content. Bowen (2009) and Hsieh and Shannon (2005) both emphasise that the style of content analysis suited for analysing documents takes into account the frequency of terms within the data, but also moves beyond that into additional analysis. That is precisely what is done in this thesis.

5.2 Data

A total of 238 policy documents are included within the dataset of this thesis. The dataset consists of Finnish migration policy documents. Migration policies here are understood as laws, regulations, and orders regarding the selection, admission, entry, settlement, stay, and sometimes deportation of migrants based on different legal channels, describing what the government intends to do or not do (Schultz et. al., 2021, p. 766; Helbling, et. al., 2016, p. 82). Thus, the migration policy documents examined in this thesis consist of laws, decrees, preparatory legislative work documents and court precedents representing the side of laws and regulations; and government and ministerial documents such as programs, reports and strategies representing orders.

It is to be clarified, that the included documents are not necessarily labelled as migration policy documents by the publishing organisations. However, as they concern migration policy matters, in this thesis they are referred to as migration policy documents. In addition to these migration policy documents, the dataset includes documents from other policy fields, which include insights on migration matters in some portions of the documents.

Contrary to the choices illustrated in the next paragraph regarding secondary data, a singular document of analysis, assessment, and research nature is admitted into primary data. *Preparing Sustainable Legislation: the Aliens Act case* (Sisäministeriö, 2023a) is included within primary data even though it entails a disclaimer about the information not necessarily representing the views of the ministry. The justification for this decision is that the document is constantly referred to in other Finnish migration policy documents. Secondly, due to the nature and topic of the document it can be determined as one of the key documents of recent years published by the Ministry of the Interior, and it would have been a disservice to exclude it from the analysis.

In addition to the primary data, 7 documents are included within secondary data. Five of them are analysis, assessment, or research publications. According to their publication details, the information does not necessarily represent the views of the Finnish Government or the ministries, but instead the content is the responsibility of the producers of the information. However, the topics are related to the migration phenomenon, and the documents are official publications of the Finnish Government or the ministries, so they are included within secondary data. One of the documents is a compilation of topics raised during Immigration Dialogues, a series of discussion events coordinated by the Ministry of the Interior of Finland during autumn 2022. The compilation describes the discussions of 700 individuals, and is not as such a representation of the views of governance. However, again, the

document is related to the migration phenomenon and is an official publication of the Ministry of the Interior. One of the documents is published by the Family Federation of Finland, which is a non-governmental organisation. However, the document in question is referred to in legislative documents included in primary data, and the document regards migration from the point of view of population policy in Finland, which as a theme is heavily present in multiple policy documents within primary data. The role of secondary data is to support the findings of the thematic phase of the data analysis. A list of secondary data is presented in the following *Table 1*.

Table 1

Secondary data

Identifier	Document name	Why in secondary data
MEAE 2023:5	Alueellinen resilienssi ja työperusteinen maahanmuutto: Kasvihuoneteollisuuden ulkomainen työvoima Närpiön seudulla	Analysis, assessment, and research publication
PMO 2021:42	Climate Migration: Towards a Better Understanding and Management: Finland and a Global Perspective	Analysis, assessment, and research publication
MI 2023:12	Immigration Dialogues: Diverse discussions on the daily life and politics of immigration	Presenting the views of 700 individuals instead of governance
PMO 2021:29	Maahan muuttaneiden koulutus- ja työllisyyspolut	Analysis, assessment, and research publication
PMO 2023:6	Paperittomien henkilöiden sosiaaliset oikeudet Suomessa	Analysis, assessment, and research publication
	Sustainable population development in Finland: the 2020 Population Policy Report by Väestöliitto	Non-governmental publication
PMO 2021:10	Ulkomaalaislain ja sen soveltamiskäytännön muutosten yhteisvaikutukset kansainvälistä suojelua hakaneiden ja saaneiden asemaan	Analysis, assessment, and research publication

As the aim of this thesis is not to track changes and developments, but instead to analyse how sustainability has been spoken about in current years within the policy field, only recently published documents were included within the dataset of this thesis. The dataset consists of documents published in 2020-2023. Any documents published prior to 2020, but which were still in force during the data analysis phase of this thesis were included, such as laws and strategies. Additionally, some government proposals (as preparatory legislative work documents) published in 2019 were included within the dataset, when the adjoining committee reports were published in 2020. If documents were published in 2020, but clearly referred to actions and projects from previous years, they were excluded from the research.

The documents are regarded as data themselves, but they also yielded data from within, as excerpts from the text were the object of analysis. A list of documents within data with mentions of sustainability is presented in *Annex 1*. Keyword searches were conducted to all of the documents within primary data as a step of summative data analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The later phases of the data analysis processes focused primarily on the excerpts derived from the keyword searches. However, some key documents were also analysed as a whole during the thematic phase of the analysis process.

As the data consists of documents in two languages, Finnish and English, a statement regarding citation practices is necessary. If the cited document is in Finnish, the citation will also entail the name of the publisher in Finnish. If the cited document is in English, the citation will entail the name of the publisher in English. This is to ensure clarity and coherence between citations and the list of sources. A *list of translations* is provided at the beginning of this thesis.

If publications of the ministries or Finnish government are referred to within the text, they will be referred to according to the English translations of the document names. The official publications of ministries and Finnish government include abstracts in English, with official translations of the names of the documents. This practice is adopted to ensure the clarity and flow of the text.

Longer excerpts from the documents within the dataset are included in *chapters 6-8* to further explain the findings. In these instances, if the text is originally in Finnish, an unofficial translation into English by the author of this thesis will be provided. Such cases will be stated in footnotes. Diligent citation practices ensure that the original texts in Finnish can be traced back to.

5.3 Data gathering process

The data gathering begun with looking through all of the published documents on the websites of relevant ministries (Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, and Ministry of Education and Culture) and the Finnish Government. All documents published in 2020-2023 by the ministries and by the government were scanned based on their titles and key words to determine whether or not they were migration policy documents. All migration policy documents which were found were included within the data set. Additionally, the scanning of documents included looking for policy documents from other fields than migration, but which included insights on migration. This was conducted by identifying potential documents by their titles and abstracts, and completing word searches for migration within the documents. The other policy documents with insights on migration were also added to the dataset, but with the exception of only the parts related

to migration being included in content analysis. The snowball method was utilised during data analysis to identify additional documents. If the documents were available in Finnish and in English, the English versions of the documents were prioritised.

Internal security policy documents, development policy documents, integration policy documents, and human rights policy documents were intentionally ruled out of the scope of the research, even though the phenomena presented in such documents are related to or discussed with migration policies. This was done to ensure the scope of the thesis would remain at a reasonable level. Policy documents specifically focused on sustainable development were also ruled out of the scope of the research to limit the possibility of 'sustainable development' being over-represented in the findings. Additionally, any documents related to practices of evaluating the government or ministries were omitted.

Secondly, data gathering was done by looking at migration legislation currently in force by utilising the EdiLex legal database. This step also included looking at the governmental preparatory legislative work documents and precedents by the Supreme Court and the Supreme Administrative Court of Finland related to migration legislation, published from the year 2000 onwards until the completion of the data gathering time period. As stated earlier, integration policy documents were intentionally excluded from the scope of this thesis. Thus, legislation, precedents and preparatory legislative work documents related to integration were not included within the data.

During data gathering, some documents which were not within the established scope of policy documents, but were relevant to the topic of the thesis, were identified. These documents included brochures, studies, reports by non-governmental bodies, articles, and survey results. They were gathered as secondary data.

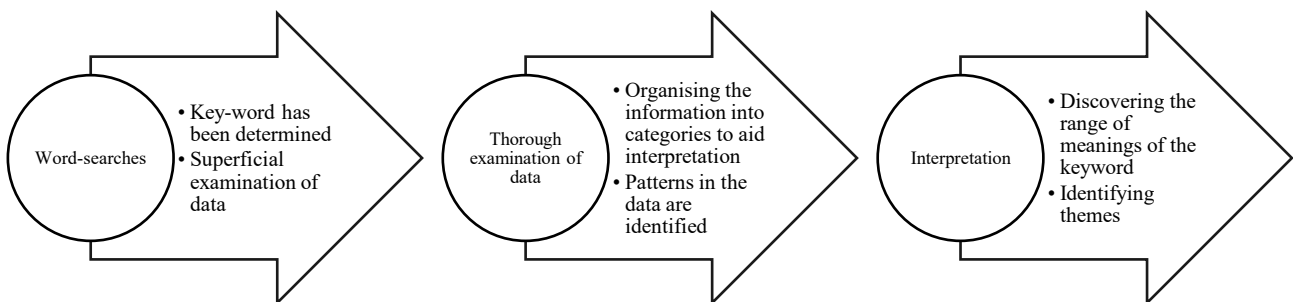
During the initial data gathering phase, it became evident that some key policy documents would be published after the planned data gathering timetable. These key policy documents were the Government Programme of Prime Minister Petteri Orpo, and final reports from the comprehensive migration policy project of the Ministry of the Interior. Thus, additional data gathering was conducted during the time period otherwise reserved for data analysis and reporting findings. The initial data gathering was completed between May 19th 2023 and June 12th 2023. The additional data gathering was done on July 1st 2023. The publication of any final reports from the comprehensive migration policy project of the Ministry of the Interior was monitored, but no such documents were published by the end of the data analysis process.

5.4 Data analysis

A qualitative content analysis with a summative approach was conducted. Summative content analysis begins with identifying keywords (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1286). As the research aim was to explore how sustainability appears in Finnish policy documents, *sustainability* was used as the key word. Both Bowen (2009) and Hsieh and Shannon (2005) present three phases of analysis, which align, and are combined for this research. Firstly, word-searches are conducted for all of the documents within the dataset to search for occurrences of the keyword, calculate the frequency of occurrences, and note the source (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This is regarded as skimming or superficial examination of the data (Bowen, 2009). Next, patterns in the data are identified (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), as the data is thoroughly examined (Bowen, 2009). During this phase of the data analysis process, an additional step of organising the information into categories was done to ease the next step of the analysis. The last phase of the data analysis is interpretation (Bowen, 2009). More specifically, word usage is further explored to discover the range of meanings the word has (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). At this stage of the analysis process, repeating overarching themes were identified. The specific analysis process of this thesis is illustrated in *Figure 1* for added clarity.

Figure 1

Summative content analysis process



The summative content analysis process begun by word searches for the keyword of *sustainability* on all of the documents within the dataset. A word search tool was utilised, and word searches of *sustainab** and *kestäv** were conducted to ensure all forms of the words *sustainability* and *kestävyys* (Finnish for sustainability) were included within the search results. Any search results including any forms of the words *sustainability* and *kestävyys* were noted and marked within the documents. If

sustainability was mentioned multiple times within one sentence, the sentence was separated into sections and each of the mentions was counted as a separate result. For the quantity of mentions of sustainability per document, the following scale was utilised: a singular mention; two to ten mentions, more than ten mentions. The scale does not differentiate any more after ten mentions, as it quickly became evident that having more than ten mentions of sustainability per document was quite rare.

The aim as set by the first secondary research question was to identify the frequency of mentions of sustainability within migration policy documents of Finland. Taking note of this included quantity of documents in which sustainability is mentioned, and the quantity of mentions per document. Additionally, the sources were noted in the sense that the quantities were also analysed according to document categories, and further by publishing organisations. Absence of mentions of sustainability was also noted.

Secondly, the mentions of sustainability were arranged into categories to help organise the information at hand. The categories of mentions of sustainability were not predetermined. Instead, the categories emerged and evolved during the analysis. The categories essentially represent *how* sustainability is spoken about. Five categories were identified: 1. General; 2. Term; 3. Reference; 4. Description; 5. Definition. A general mention was logged if the text did not specify what was meant by sustainability by describing or defining it. A term was logged in instances when a widely acknowledged and approved term including the word sustainability was used. If the mentions of sustainability were references to other documents, a reference was logged. In instances where additional information was given related to how sustainability was to be understood in the specific context, a descriptive mention was logged. A definition was logged if a definition or an explanation of what was meant by sustainability was offered along with the mention of sustainability, including statements of preconditions or requirements. This phase of the data analysis process begun to answer the secondary research question *What themes, topics, and concepts are linked to sustainability in Finnish migration policy documents?*

Finally, the mentions of sustainability were further explored in an interpretative phase of the data analysis. The aim of this stage was to further clarify the secondary research question of *What themes, topics, and concepts are linked to sustainability in Finnish migration policy documents?* but also to provide answers to the main research question of *How is sustainability interpreted in Finnish migration policy documents?*. This stage was influenced by thematic data analysis methods, as the practical aim was to develop themes by data coding, and to uncover patterns of meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p. 31).

At the beginning of the interpretative data analysis phase, initial notes were made regarding word usage and themes of the mentions. Thus, the data was further inspected to recognise patterns, which could then be categorised into emerging themes for further analysis (Bowen, 2009, p. 32). The notes on word usage focused on things such as which adjectives were interlinked with the mentions of sustainability and from which fields were the frequently used terms adopted from. Thematic notes at this stage focused on ‘clear cases’, if for example a very strong economical connotation was present.

After this preliminary coding process, a two-step category formation took place. Firstly, the initial coded notes were transformed into categories. In some instances, the categories were straightforwardly developed, such as in the case of terms, when the term itself became the category. In other instances, the implications of the text were clear and it was easy to form categories such as ‘economic sustainability’, or ‘adaptability’. In most of the instances, the categories were assigned by interpreting the underlying message of the mention of sustainability, or by deriving the categories from word usage. Thus, the categories were formed with an inductive approach, as the categories were developed from the data (Mayring, 2023, p. 317). Finally, the categories were further grouped and refined into overarching themes. A complete table with the text excerpts of mentions of sustainability, the categories, and the final themes is available in *Appendix 2*.

References were not included within the interpretive part of the data analysis process. Thus, only general mentions of sustainability, descriptive mentions of sustainability, definitions, and terms were analysed to determine repeating and overarching themes. It is to be noted, that in some cases of general mentions of sustainability, no further interpretations or thematic groupings could not be done.

5.5 Limitations

Due to the nature of this thesis, there are no major ethical concerns or limitations. As only publicly available documents are used, there has been no need for ethics approvals or for arrangements related to storing data. A valid point related to ethics of this thesis is that migration is sometimes viewed as an intricate, sensitive, or contested topic. However, as the main focus of this thesis is not on migration per se, migration matters are not debated in depth. Instead, migration policies and migration governance at the levels of the European Union and Finland are described, but in a neutral manner. Furthermore, migration is used as an overarching term in this thesis for all kinds of migration, including asylum seekers, migrants, and refugees. This is not to diminish the differences, but to clarify the text.

It is important to point out, that the relationships between migration policies and other policy fields is recognised. For example, integration policies are closely related to migration policies. However, to maintain a clear focus, any other policy fields than migration have been ruled out of the scope of this thesis. This principle extends to the specifics of the data-analysis process, and for clarity, it is important to declare that not all segments of all documents within the dataset were analysed. While conducting a content analysis of the policy documents from other policy fields than migration, only the parts of the documents including insights on migration were analysed. Hence, such documents may have had more mentions of sustainability, but to remain within the scope of the thesis, the documents were not wholly analysed. Similarly, the preparatory legislative work documents contained sections related to other matters than migration policy, and thus were not wholly analysed either.

Some limitations related to the research method and data analysis will be addressed next. Firstly, the dataset consists of only documents. However, Bowen (2009, p. 29) states that documents may be the only necessary data source for studies with an interpretive research design. In line with Bowen (2009), this qualitative research is of such specialised nature, that it can rely solely on the analysis of documents instead of multiple data sources.

As a more selective lens was utilised while choosing the documents from other policy fields than migration, there is a possibility of misrepresentation related to the amount of documents in which sustainability is mentioned. The other policy documents were included within the dataset if they included insights on migration. Probably the policy documents from other policy fields than migration, which had insights on migration, were quite general of nature instead of policy issue specific. In such generalised documents, the appearance of ambiguous themes such as sustainability can be more likely than in documents focused on specific policy matters. Any misrepresentations would not reach beyond the amounts of mentions into the interpretations of mentions, however.

The summative content analysis method utilised in this thesis is somewhat limited when it comes to deriving meaning from the data. The data analysis method provides insights into how words are used within text, but the findings are limited by their inattention to the broader meanings present in the data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1285). Measures are taken to ensure the validity of findings. Secondary data is utilised to back up the findings. Key documents, identified during categorising the information obtained from the data, are analysed as a whole to back up the findings. With these mechanisms, credibility is demonstrated.

6 PRESENCE AND ABSENCE OF SUSTAINABILITY IN FINNISH MIGRATION POLICY DOCUMENTS

Out of the 238 documents that were analysed, only 48 included mentions of sustainability within the context of migration matters. In total, sustainability (within the context of migration) was mentioned 230 times. Three notable findings were discovered while analysing how often sustainability is mentioned within the policy documents included in the dataset.

Firstly, 80% of the policy documents included in the analysis do not have mentions of sustainability at all. Furthermore, the absence of mentions of sustainability in the legislative documents stood out. None of the laws, decrees or precedents have any mentions of sustainability. As a great number of the primary data consists of legislative documents, the absence of mentions of sustainability within this category significantly lowers the percentage of policy documents that mention sustainability. In the legislative documents where sustainability is mentioned, the mentions of sustainability are still sparse, with the exception of one document containing twelve mentions. *Thus, sustainability is not woven into legislation, but it is somewhat taken into account at the preparatory stages.*

Another interesting observation about the absence of mentions of sustainability can also be made. Two government programmes were included within the dataset, from the governments of Sanna Marin and Petteri Orpo. In the programme of the government of Sanna Marin, sustainability is mentioned in the context of migration (Finnish Government, 2019). However, in the programme of the government of Petteri Orpo it is not, despite a grand inclusion of sustainability within the programme as a whole (Finnish Government, 2023). Even though other levels of the chain (ministries, and potentially organisations under ministries responsible for the day-to-day operations) do include sustainability views into migration policies, the short-term solutions of politics are visible in this context. Biermann et. al. (2022, p. 797) have stated, in relation to implementing Sustainable Development Goals, that short-term political agendas are one of the challenges of policy coherence.

Secondly, there is a relatively small amount of mentions of sustainability per document across all policy documents. Out of the 48 documents which include mentions of sustainability, 19 documents had only singular mentions of sustainability, and 26 documents had two to ten mentions of sustainability. The amount of mentions of sustainability exceeds ten in only three of the documents that were analysed. In one of these three documents, the number of mentions of sustainability was

notably high: 79. The topic of the document in question was sustainable migration legislation. Understandably, this theme would include multiple mentions of sustainability.

Thirdly, sustainability is included in the work of all the ministries of Finland from which published documents were analysed, as well as the government of Finland. 14 out of the 23 documents analysed from the Finnish government had mentions of sustainability. 16 out of the 30 documents analysed from the Ministry of the Interior of Finland had mentions of sustainability. 6 out of the 14 documents analysed from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment had mentions of sustainability. Two documents from the Ministry of Education and Culture were analysed, and they both had mentions of sustainability.

It is to be said, that the Finnish Government has published a sustainability roadmap with in-depth insights into sustainability objectives related to economic, ecological, and social dimensions (Finnish Government, 2021b). Thus, sustainability is present in Finnish governance, even though it is not that apparent in Finnish migration governance. Furthermore, ecological, economic, and social sustainability are explicitly and context-specifically defined:

Ecological sustainability means society's capability to operate within the limits of the earth's carrying capacity. The aim is to safeguard the functioning of natural systems and their capacity for regeneration today and in the future. Ecological sustainability requires that the environmental burden and environmental impacts caused by the activities of people and society be brought down to a level that does not threaten ecosystems or cause loss of species and nature. (Finnish Government, 2021b, p. 9.)

Social sustainability means the ability to develop society so that people's trust and security are maintained, disagreements can be resolved and conflicts prevented. Social sustainability is above all aimed at safeguarding the integrity of communities and societies, the realisation of fundamental rights, human rights and equality, the functioning of democracy, and preserving them from one generation to another. The preconditions for the realisation of social sustainability and fundamental rights are social equality, effective rule of law, sufficient income, decent work, sufficient health and welfare services and security, access to housing, and the right of individuals to education and skills development. (Finnish Government, 2021b, p. 17.)

Economic sustainability means that both general government finances and the entire public economy are stable and function well. Here, we will focus especially on the

sustainability of general government finances, which in Finland involves challenges posed by the changing age structure, in particular. (Finnish Government, 2021b, p. 32.)

7 THE TYPES OF MENTIONS

To further organise the information of sustainability mentions, they were divided into five categories, as explained in sub-chapter 5.4. and presented here in *Table 2*.

Table 2

Sustainability mentions by category per policy document type and in total

	Definition	Descriptive	General	Reference	Term
Legislative documents	4	4	3	8	7
Migration policy documents	20	47	23	27	22
Other policy documents	1	8	12	33	11
Total	25	59	38	68	40

As *Table 2* showcases, references and terms are the most common ways to speak about sustainability in migration legislation documents. However, in migration policy documents, descriptive mentions of sustainability are the most common. In other policy documents, in the sections concerning migration, references to other documents are the most common way to speak about sustainability.

In total, when looking at mentions of sustainability in the context of migration, references are the most common out of the five established categories. Furthermore, several documents only entail references of other documents as mentions of sustainability.

The Government aims to at least double the current level of work-related immigration by 2030 to achieve the total increase of at least 50,000 work-related immigrants as required by the sustainability roadmap (Finnish Government, 2021c, p. 21).

Out of all research conducted during this preliminary study project, the most related to the project was one commissioned by the Ministry of the Interior as part of their research, development, and innovation activities[;] Preparing Sustainable Legislation – the Aliens Act case. [...] The research publication in question states that the

prerequisites for sustainable legislation are a proper situational picture, controlled change, and a quality preparatory process with adequate resources.² (Sisäministeriö, 2023c, p. 48)

Thus, sustainability is not defined or described in such documents, but instead the referenced documents are relied upon to provide such content. The most referred to documents were *Preparing Sustainable Legislation: the Aliens Act case* (Sisäministeriö, 2023a) with 17 references; *Government's Sustainability Roadmap* (Finnish Government, 2021b) with 15 references, and *the Concern Strategy of the Ministry of the Interior of Finland* (Sisäministeriö, 2022a). In general, referencing is important, as it increases legitimacy due to added information and sources. *However, what is won in the sense of legitimacy, is lost in the sense of clarity and definition in these instances.*

Descriptive mentions of sustainability in the context of migration policies were sparse. An exception was made in a single document, where sustainability was given a description a total of 38 times. The document in question is *Preparing Sustainable Legislation: the Aliens Act case* by the Ministry of the Interior of Finland (Sisäministeriö, 2023a). The same document also offers the majority of the definitions of sustainability in the context of migration policies in Finland. In the document in question, and in other documents in the dataset as well, *the definitions are offered by setting preconditions and prerequisites, explaining necessities and essentials, and stating what is to be taken into consideration.* Actual statements of how sustainability is understood are only given three times, all in the same document, *Preparing Sustainable Legislation: the Aliens Act case:*

In this research we understand the concept of sustainable legislation as legislation which can, in moderation, adapt to predictable social changes² (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 13).

Sustainability of legislation is a concept without an unambiguous definition. Here, the concept is understood as having a certain stage of stability.² (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 62).

Sustainable legislation is thus here understood as legislation based on a proper situational picture, with its effects been thoroughly pre-evaluated, and with its effects evaluated afterwards as well. Sustainable legislation recognises as well the requirements set by constitutional law, including sensitive regulatory situations related to fundamental rights and human rights. Additionally, sustainable legislation takes into account the specifics of international law and EU-regulations and their demands, and in

² The cited document is in Finnish, this is an unofficial translation from Finnish to English made by the author of this thesis.

these instances as well aims to control change with a pre-emptive approach.³ (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 63).

These references are of course related to *sustainable legislation* specifically. However, they do still define sustainability in the context related to migration policies. Additionally, *Preparing Sustainable Legislation: the Aliens Act case* (Sisäministeriö, 2023a) is the most referred to document when it comes to mentioning sustainability in Finnish migration policy documents. Thus, these are noted as meaningful findings of how sustainability is spoken about, and in which instances sustainability is defined. Interestingly, the definitions are present in a migration policy document regarding legislation, when the majority of the legislative documents included in the dataset of this thesis do not have mentions of sustainability at all. This could signify a change in how, where, and when sustainability is taken into account.

General mentions of sustainability are used relatively often. *Thus, the delivery of sustainability in the context of Finnish migration governance remains at a very nonchalant level.* In a similar vein, in a study researching psychosocial as a field of knowledge and how it is applied in education policy in Norway, Mathias (2021, p. 70) found that the term ‘psychosocial’ was used *habitually*. Previously, Brown (2016) has elaborated on the usage of the word sustainability as *an empty signifier*.

Sustainable Finland is built with migration³ (Sisäministeriö, 2022a, p. 3).

Additionally, an aim of the proposal is to build a more sustainable foundation for developing work-based migration³[...] (HE 253/2020 vp, p. 8).

The general nature of mentions of sustainability found in this thesis, sustainability as an empty signifier, and the habitual use of the term psychosocial in education policy documents all underline the same element of a concept or a term being frequently applied without questioning or investigating the meaning and thus the concept or a term lacking precision (Mathias, 2021, p. 70; Brown, 2016, pp. 130-131). Thus, the concept or term seems familiar and alien at the same time, as it is frequently used but not defined (Mathias, 2021, p. 70). The lack of precision enables empty gestures and agenda framing from decision makers (Brown, 2016, pp. 130-131), and creates issues related to scope, accountability, and subjectivity (Mathias, 2021, p. 70). When the general public does not know what sustainability really means in the context it is used at, decision makers can use the term to their advantage for example by promoting a current economic system (Biely et. al., 2016, p. 224). These

³ The cited document is in Finnish, this is an unofficial translation from Finnish to English made by the author of this thesis.

are risks related to the very general nature of usage of the word sustainability in the context of Finnish migration governance.

The terminology of sustainability will be further discussed in the following chapter, alongside the thematical findings and interpretations of sustainability in Finnish migration governance.

8 INTERPRETATIONS OF SUSTAINABILITY IN FINNISH MIGRATION POLICY DOCUMENTS

As a result of the thematically influenced interpretive phase of the summative content analysis, *six overarching thematic interpretations of sustainability were identified as being present in Finnish migration policy documents*. The thematic interpretations are presented in *Table 3*, in alphabetical order. As *Table 3* shows, there are differences between the themes regarding how often they appear. Out of the six established themes, *quality systems and processes is the most observed theme, and adaptability is the least observed theme*. As presented in *Table 3*, some mentions of sustainability could not be assigned a theme due to their general or otherwise unambiguous nature.

Table 3

Thematic interpretations of sustainability in Finnish migration policy documents

Thematic interpretation	Amounts of mentions
Adaptability	8 (4,9%)
Economic interests	33 (20,2%)
Responsibilities and obligations	30 (18,4%)
Societal wellbeing	12 (7,4%)
Stability	17 (10,4%)
Quality systems and processes	43 (26,4%)
No theme assigned	20 (12,3%)

It is noteworthy, that *environmental sustainability is not present within the themes*. This is somewhat surprising since migration reaches into all pillars of the traditional trifecta of environmental, economic, and social sustainability. For example, in a study on sustainability in Finnish food policies, Risku-Norja and Muukka (2013, p. 11) found that in addition to general statements on sustainability, many documents specifically focused on environmental issues. This is definitely not the case with migration policy documents. However, a document within secondary data does contemplate climate change, environmental change, and climate migration, as well as what environmental mechanisms generate and increase climate migration (Prime Minister's Office, 2021). In contrast, categories related to economic sustainability and social sustainability were numerous enough that themes of economic interests and societal wellbeing were formed.

Secondly, *a contradiction of adaptability and stability is apparent*. This was highlighted throughout the research and especially during the interpretative stage of the data analysis. Even though adaptability and stability could be viewed as opposing values or descriptions, both of them are repeatedly connected to sustainability, creating a juxtaposition. Adaptability and stability – and how they relate to change – are especially debated in the two migration policy documents related to renewing the Aliens Act of Finland; *Preparing Sustainable Legislation: the Aliens Act case* (Sisäministeriö, 2023a) and *Perspectives on the Comprehensive Reform of the Aliens Act* (Sisäministeriö, 2023c). Even in a single document, sustainability was interpreted firstly through stability, but on the very same page, change was called a necessity:

Sustainability of legislation is a concept without an unambiguous definition. Here, the concept is understood as having a certain stage of stability. [...] As change is a natural phase in the evolution of laws, sustainability cannot only be attributed to pursuits of stable legal solutions. There has to be a possibility of change, but the change has to be sustainable.⁴ (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 62).

In another instance, in the same document, change was posed as a threat to the stability of sustainability:

At the same time, it is questionable whether or not legislation can be called sustainable if regulations are changed whenever a new government is formed⁴ (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 93).

However, the bigger theme of the two seems to be the stability of sustainability over the adaptability of sustainability, as stability as a theme has more mentions of sustainability grouped into it from the dataset. This is in line with what was discussed in earlier chapters, how stability with elements of adaptability to maintain the desired state differs from adaptability as a transformative quality. When governing against migration crisis, the aim is to restore order and normality. To stabilise the state, short-sighted adaptability such as temporary measures are seen as a possibility without it meaning adaptability per se.

To deepen the analysis of interpretations of sustainability in Finnish migration policy documents, each of the six themes will be further discussed in the following sub-chapters. The discussion will be accompanied by textual examples from the dataset.

⁴ The cited document is in Finnish, this is an unofficial translation from Finnish to English made by the author of this thesis.

8.1 Sustainability as adaptability

Adaptability is the least observed theme of sustainability in Finnish migration policy documents. Additionally, it is predominantly discussed in conjunction with stability. However, there are clear peculiarities of adaptability as an interpretation of sustainability.

In addition to sustainability being discussed straightforwardly as adaptability (Sisäministeriö, 2023c, p. 9; Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 13), a more nuanced view of what it means to adapt is presented. *Sustainability is linked to inevitable change, and change is seen as a natural thing* (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 62). In one excerpt, innovation is celebrated as a path to sustainability:

From the viewpoint of sustainability of legislation, it would be important that at preparatory stages the sights would not be locked on present state such as present systems, processes, or solutions, but instead any solutions yet unknown would be taken into consideration⁵ (Sisäministeriö, 2023c, p. 24).

Thus, with this interpretation of sustainability as adaptability, change is seen in a positive light. To change is to evolve, not to restore and return. Adaptability has intrinsic value, instead of being a mere tactic or quality of stability. Sustainability as adaptability has a transformative and flexible connotation.

8.2 Sustainability as economic interests

Sustainability as economic interests is conveyed through terminology. The economic interests became apparent in the excessive appearance of the terms *sustainability gap*, *sustainable population development*, and *sustainable growth* in the Finnish migration policy documents. The three above mentioned terms were used 20 times. Terms, in general, were logged as a type of mention a total of 40 times. Thus, half of the time, the terminology was focused on economic interests. Additionally, sustainability as economic interests is conveyed through varied discussions on work-based migration.

The interpretation of sustainability as economic interests is in line with the view of migration management aiming to regulate migration to match the needs of the receiving state instead of

⁵ The cited document is in Finnish, this is an unofficial translation from Finnish to English made by the author of this thesis.

recognising the agency of the migrants (Van Riemsdijk et. al., 2021, p. 6). According to the migration-sustainability paradox, migration is contributing to economic unsustainability (Franco Gavonel et. al., 2021, p. 98) by straining public sector fiscal sustainability. However, sustainability in this context is created by utilising work-based migration to act as an antidote as opposed to the aging population in Finland. Thus, migration is seen as a solution to economic sustainability problems, as demonstrated by these examples:

The most sustainable means to strengthen general government finances in the long term is employment growth, including labour migration, in a way that also bolsters general government finances (Finnish Government, 2019, p. 16).

According to a sensitivity analysis of the sustainability gap calculations of the Ministry of Finance, a permanent increase in net migration by 7,500 people to 22,500 people per year would reduce the sustainability gap by around 0.4 percent relative to GDP, or nearly EUR 1 billion (Finnish Government, 2021c, p. 17).

In the Government's Sustainability Roadmap (Finnish Government, 2021b, p. 32) it is stated that the focus regarding economic sustainability is especially on the sustainability of general government finances. The sustainability of general government finances is challenged in Finland particularly by the aging population, and additionally by anticipated slow growth of productivity and economy, comparatively low employment rate, low birth rate, and low work-based and education-based immigration (ibid.). Thus, the finding of sustainability as economic interests is in line with the description of the Finnish Government on economic sustainability.

As a result of recent research regarding migrants in the Finnish labour market, Ndomo (2024, p. 85) argues that Finland needs migrant workers to take up unfavourable jobs that not only produce public and social welfare services, but are also essential to the Finnish welfare system. The need stems from the possibility possessed by native workers (and some groups of migrant workers) to refuse the low status jobs (ibid.). Ndomo (2024, p. 86) argues, in line with examples posed in this sub-chapter, that the objective of Finland is to gain an alternative workforce, which can be utilised for the jobs that need to be filled.

In secondary data, in contrast to primary data sources, the agency of the migrants is discussed in addition to the needs of the receiving nation. The Family Federation of Finland (2020, pp. 65, 119, 165) recognises that migration improves the sustainability of the national pension system and has a positive impact on the sustainability gap, but equally reminds of humanitarian reasons for migration,

and even states that “an approach that is informed purely by economics is not enough to create a just, prosperous and diverse society that breeds well-being”. In the publication on Immigration Dialogues, a question of “is a foreign worker a commodity or a human being?” is put forth as raised by the discussants (Ministry of the Interior, 2023, p. 38). Mapping the competences of migrants and adequate individual guidance are regarded as building blocks for sustainable futures of the individuals in an analysis on the education and employment paths of migrants (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2021, pp. 71, 124). In Finnish migration policy documents, the narrative of work-based migration is narrower than that of secondary sources, where the narrative includes the agency of migrants.

Peculiarly, when the talk is of sustainability as economic interests, or economic sustainability, the environmental and social sides of sustainability are emphasised as well. This is almost as to not leave them out of the discussion:

Thus equipped, it is possible to strive for good growth in view of the sustainable economy, the environment and social justice and attain an employment rate of 75 per cent (Finnish Government, 2019, p. 139).

This is not the case with the other interpretations of sustainability in Finnish migration policy documents. If the talk is of stability or adaptability, the three pillars of sustainability are not referred to. When looking at sustainability as quality processes and systems or as responsibilities and obligations, economic, ecological, and social sustainability are absent. In a similar vein, on one instance, the ethical side of pushing economic interests is taken into account and included within the discussion:

To succeed in the competition for international talent, inputs into national structures are also required, with which economically and ethically sustainable student recruiting is supported⁶ (Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö, 2023, p. 17).

To conclude the findings related to sustainability as economic interests, a final observation related to the theme springs up. The theme was quite heavily concentrated within the same documents. In multiple documents, sustainability as economic interests was the only interpretation of sustainability presented.

⁶ The cited document is in Finnish, this is an unofficial translation from Finnish to English made by the author of this thesis.

8.3 Sustainability as responsibilities and obligations

The repeating terminology related to the interpretation of sustainability as responsibilities and obligations includes *sustainable return and reintegration* and *sustainable development*. A governmental responsibility of providing possibilities for sustainable return and reintegration are discussed in several documents. Responsibilities to comply according to the obligations of sustainable development goals are voiced.

Action 36: Developing the means of reintegration, including reintegration benefits and training, both nationally and in cooperation with EU Member States and the returning migrants' countries of origin to secure sustainable returns (Ministry of the Interior of Finland, 2021, p. 57).

Focus points for implementing sustainable development are, as described in the introduction [...] promoting safe and responsible migration (social sustainability/responsibility)⁷ (Sisäministeriö, 2022c, p. 12).

As highlighted by the examples above, *a dual nature of responsibilities and obligations* can be observed. There is a responsibility *to provide sustainability* to the society. What sustainability means in a democratic state is discussed, as is the relationship of sustainability and fundamental rights (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, pp. 13, 63, 122, 126;

Simultaneously, *obligations put on Finland as a nation state have an effect on sustainability matters*. International agreements such as human rights affect the view on sustainability (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 63). Sustainability as obligations highlights the role of multilevel governance of migration in relation to sustainability. Most of the obligations set on Finland are seen as coming from the European Union, which is the supranational level above the national level in the hierarchy of multilevel governance, in a top-down manner:

When figuring out the concept of sustainability, obligations as a member state of the European Union and other international legal obligations of Finland need to be taken into account, as they cause legislative changes that are not single handedly decided upon by the parliament of Finland⁷ (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 63).

⁷ The cited document is in Finnish, this is an unofficial translation from Finnish to English made by the author of this thesis.

There is a question of how EU-regulations affect the sustainability of (Finnish) Aliens Act, and a question of how sustainable the EU-regulations in themselves are, as they have a direct effect on the Finnish system⁸ (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 72).

Additionally, sustainable legislation takes into account the specifics related to EU-legislation and international legal obligations, and strives to control change by a pre-emptive approach in these instances⁸ (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 63).

As seen from the last excerpt, the element of change is present within this interpretation of sustainability. Change is seen as something that needs to be controlled by pre-emptive measures. This is in contrast with the interpretation of sustainability as adaptability, but in line with the interpretation of sustainability as stability.

8.4 Sustainability as societal wellbeing

Sustainability as societal wellbeing is apparent through the usage of value-loaded adjectives in conjunction with it. *Sustainability is described as fair, responsible, and equal state of affairs* (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 73; Finnish Government, 2021a, p. 31; Finnish Government, 2019, p. 88). Additionally, the terms *sustainable wellbeing* and *social sustainability* appear within the data. Looking back to the Government's Sustainability Roadmap (Finnish Government, 2021b), the interpretation of sustainability as societal wellbeing is in line with the description of social sustainability in the context of Finnish governance in general. Fairness and equality are used as descriptors of social sustainability in the Sustainability Roadmap (Finnish Government, 2021b, p. 17).

Sustainability is also linked to societal change:

The most important thing is the effect of actions: how much and how sustainably an action changes the society⁸ (Sisäministeriö, 14 January 2022, p. 22).

In addition, the matters that affect the sustainability of legislation related to societal changes, are mapped⁸ (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 13).

⁸ The cited document is in Finnish, this is an unofficial translation from Finnish to English made by the author of this thesis.

The interpretation of sustainability as societal wellbeing reaches across the borders of Finland as a nation state. The discussions on equality and fairness are linked to European Union level cooperation:

We will promote the formulation of common European solutions for asylum and refugee policy that respect human rights, with the aim of achieving a fair and sustainable division of responsibility between European countries (Finnish Government, 2019, p. 88).

It is important to create equal and sustainable partnerships with countries of origin and transit and use partnerships in promoting the EU's goals in relation to, for example, addressing the root causes of migration and a good management of migration (Finnish Government, 2021a, p. 31).

Thus, the interpretation of sustainability as societal wellbeing, again, brings forth the multilevel governance of migration. The idea of upholding societal wellbeing reaches over from the national governance level and into the supranational level of the European Union. Promoting common solutions at the European level in cooperation speaks of top-down processes, but also of bottom-up action.

8.5 Sustainability as stability

Sustainability as stability is given as one of the stated definitions of sustainability:

Sustainability of legislation is a concept without an unambiguous definition. Here, the concept is understood as having a certain stage of stability.⁹ (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, pp. 62, 80).

This certain stage of stability is further described within the data by insights on longevity, long-term solutions, and long-sighted policies (Sisäministeriö, 2023c, p. 12; Sisäministeriö, 2023a, pp. 57-58, 72; Sisäministeriö, 20 November 2020, p. 1). Stability is in some cases expressed by negating change (Sisäministeriö, 20 November 2020, p. 1), or by stating a need to control change (Sisäministeriö,

⁹ The cited document is in Finnish, this is an unofficial translation from Finnish to English made by the author of this thesis.

2023c, p. 12). Consistency, stability, and predictability are set as core descriptors of sustainability (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, pp. 95, 125).

Two themes related to stability were discussed extensively in the document *Preparing Sustainable Legislation: the Aliens Act case: crises and the influence of politics* (Sisäministeriö, 2023a). Crises were seen as a disruptor of stability. When crises affect the available resources, sustainability as stability could not necessarily be achieved, as was described in a case of a legislative example (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 59). In the same source, acute crisis was attributed as a situation where sustainability would not necessarily need to be aimed for (ibid.). However, the source put forth, that in Finland, sustainability of legislation was achieved even in times of crisis (ibid.).

Crises were seen as affecting long-term planning and sustainability (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 59). In an event of crisis, an orientation to return and to restore is a common reaction (see for example Sahin-Mencutek et. al., 2022), and flexibility and longevity go out the window. Additionally, an increase of political influencing in times of crises was reported, and the effect it has on the sustainability of migration legislation was pondered (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 59). In a further note, when politics affect policies drastically, sustainability as stability is at risk:

Differing views of coalition governments on migration- and asylum policies may become a sustainability problem, if the different views lead to drastic switches between electoral terms¹⁰ (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 125).

8.6 Sustainability as quality systems and processes

The most used interpretation is sustainability as quality systems and processes. This interpretation somewhat follows the conceptualisation of sustainability as procedures and results (Atkinson et. al. 2011) or as practices and objectives (Hallin et. al. 2021). As discussed in *chapter 2*, sustainability as an agile concept is applicable to the processes and systems as well as being a goal in itself. How things are done and how the goals are reached seem to be a part of the sustainability of Finnish migration governance.

¹⁰ The cited document is in Finnish, this is an unofficial translation from Finnish to English made by the author of this thesis.

Quality processes refers to quality of preparations and being prepared in general, as well as adequate planning, and predictability of matters (HE 162/2021 vp, 2021, p. 9; Sisäministeriö, 2023a, pp. 11, 13, 63, 80, 96, 106, 128). Quality processes also refers to adequate resources and to cooperation of officials (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, pp. 3, 30, 51, 128; Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2023, p. 64). *With these practices that could themselves be described as sustainable, sustainability is (re)produced.*

Several missions have outsourced the reception of applications to a private service provider. In this case, it is important to supervise the partners' activities and engage in cooperation between the actors to ensure that the standard of the activities is sustainable in terms of preventing irregular immigration. (Ministry of the Interior of Finland, 2021, pp. 33-34.)

Quality legislation demands resources, and only with quality legislation can the aim be sustainable results¹¹ (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 128).

Quality systems refers to structures and systems supporting sustainability. Democracy and legitimacy are highlighted (Sisäministeriö, 2023a, p. 94; TyVM 8/2021 vp). Rooting out exploitation is mentioned as a concrete example (HE 253/2020 vp, 2020, p. 3; HaVM 37/2022 vp; Valtioneuvosto, 2023a, p. 26), as well as building trust in officials (Sisäministeriö, 2022b, p. 12). When looked at in light of the Government's Sustainability Roadmap, the interpretation of sustainability as quality systems and processes is partly in line with the definition of social sustainability, as social sustainability aims to safeguard the functioning of democracy with preconditions such as effective rule of law (Finnish Government, 2021b, p. 17).

Similarly to responsibilities and obligations, quality systems and processes are related to the concept of multilevel governance of migration, as European Union level policies and systems are discussed in national migration policy documents:

Developing legal channels and their accessibility forms an essential part of the EU's comprehensive and sustainable migration policy (Finnish Government, 2021a, p. 31).

The current weaknesses of the EU asylum system come to a head in times of big phenomenon. ... This underlines the need for stronger and more sustainable European systems in times of crises.¹¹ (Valtioneuvosto, 2023b, p. 118.)

¹¹ The cited document is in Finnish, this is an unofficial translation from Finnish to English made by the author of this thesis.

Sustainability as quality processes is a very practical view. Concrete matters and actions create sustainability, acting as building blocks. Strong structures, smooth processes, and well-working systems promote, provide, and support sustainability. Quality stems from adequate resources, well executed preparatory processes, and cooperation.

9 THE ELEMENT OF CHANGE AND THE EFFECT OF MULTILEVEL GOVERNANCE

Two reoccurring elements are present within the interpretations of sustainability: change and multilevel governance. Depending on the interpretation of sustainability, change is viewed differently. The effects that multilevel governance has on national migration governance are noted more in certain interpretations of sustainability.

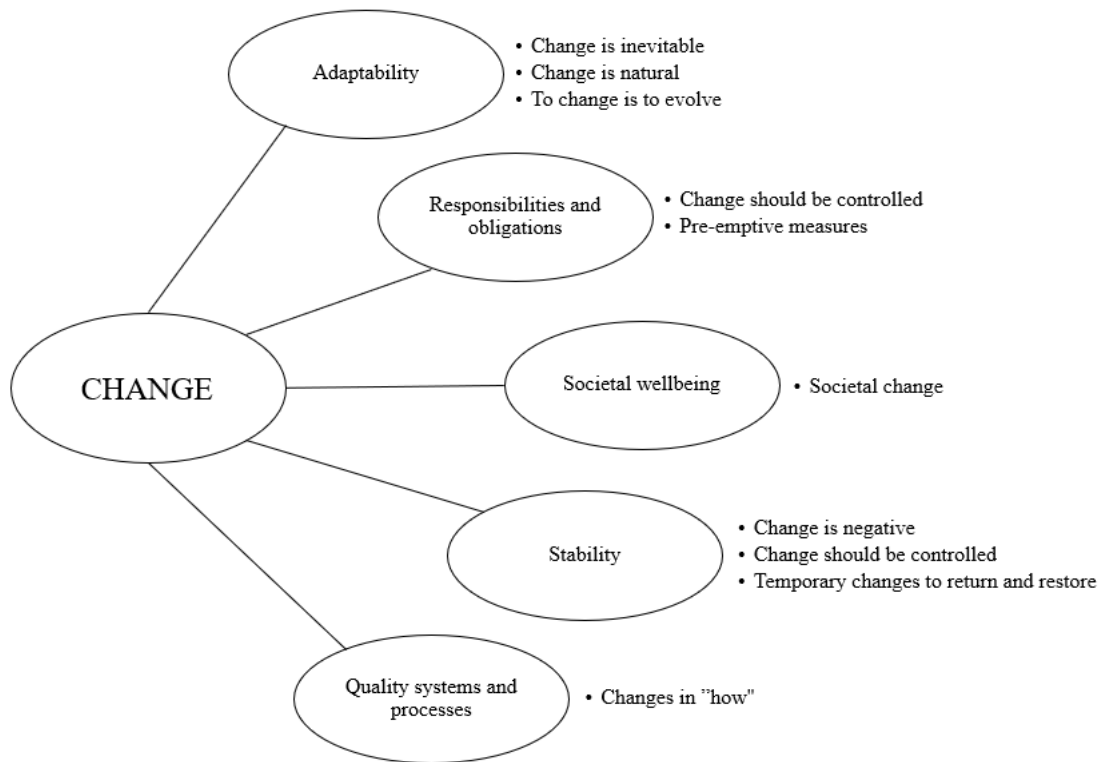
As illustrated by *Figure 2*, five of the six interpretations of sustainability have a distinct relationship with change. The exception is sustainability as economic interests, where change did not have a notable role. When sustainability was interpreted as adaptability, change was described as a natural thing, as something that is inevitable. A catchphrase of to change is to evolve could be used, as change is seen as a potential catalyst for positive developments.

A stark contrast is evident within the interpretation of sustainability as stability, where change is a negative thing, and change is not desired. Longevity, long-term solutions, predictability and consistency take a centre stage. Change is tolerated if the nature of change is temporary, and it is utilised to return and to restore. The interpretation of sustainability as responsibilities and obligations has a similar stance regarding control. Change should be controlled and especially by pre-emptive measures. However, in reality, migration matters are complex and entail elements of unpredictability. Recent discussions point out that predictability may be an inadequate aspiration when it comes to migration governance (see for example Triandafyllidou, 2021).

The interpretations of sustainability as quality systems and processes and sustainability as societal wellbeing have more practical views of change. For sustainability as quality systems and processes, change is placed within those systems and processes, and it is seen as a tool to create quality. *How things are done* can change to ensure strong systems and functioning processes. Sustainability as societal wellbeing recognises societal change. Moreover, sustainability is seen as a driver or as a building block for positive societal change.

Figure 2

Change in relation to interpretations of sustainability



Change is either embraced or viewed as something that needs to be controlled. Change can be a tool to strive for something better, or a broader concept of evolving for something better. On the other hand, change can be a threat to resilience and stability, and thus needs to be controlled by measures such as long-term planning.

Change is linked to multilevel governance. The supranational level of the European Union demands changes from the national level. The national level then has to meet the expectations. Instead of a single pattern, various patterns of interaction and relationships are simultaneously happening between the national level and the European Union level (Scholten & Penninx, 2016, p. 97). These different modes of multilevel governance are especially noted in three of the six interpretations of sustainability, as shown in *Figure 3*.

When sustainability is interpreted as responsibilities and obligations, the top-down effects of multilevel governance are emphasised. European Union law and soft law place demands on Finnish migration governance, and how sustainability can be or has to be woven into it. Thus, the European

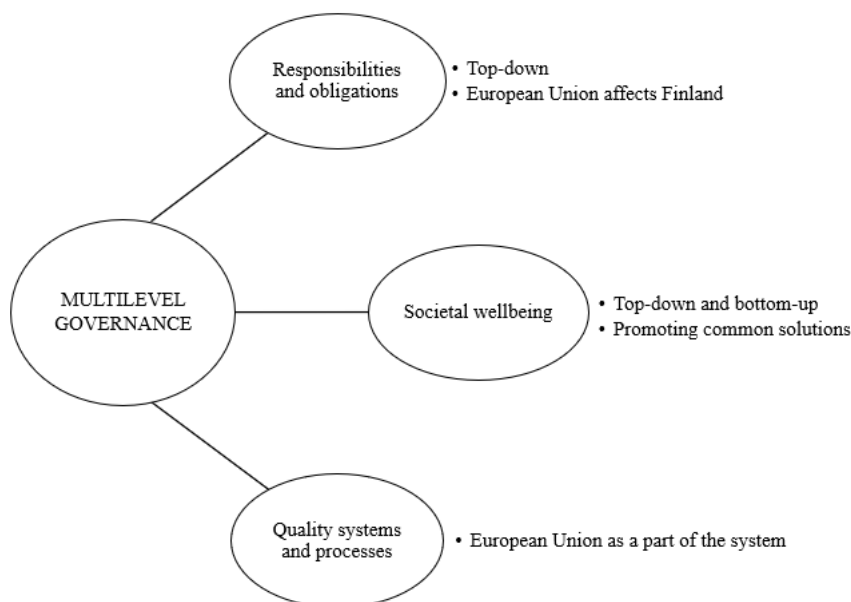
Union affects Finland, and a centralist mode of multilevelness can be identified (Scholten & Penninx, 2016; Panizzon & van Riemsdijk, 2019, pp. 1231-1232).

With sustainability as societal wellbeing, the multilevelness of multilevel governance is apparent. Instead of purely top-down demands or bottom-up effect, cooperation and common solutions are highlighted. Thus, cooperation and mutual engagement highlight a true multilevel mode (Scholten & Penninx, 2016; Panizzon & van Riemsdijk, 2019, pp. 1231-1232). The concept of social wellbeing reaches beyond the nation state of Finland, and all the way across to the European Union, and it is co-created.

As for sustainability as quality systems and processes, the European Union is seen as a part of the system. Thus, the quality of processes at the European Union affects the quality of the whole system, and the processes at the national level. As does the national level, the supranational level of the European Union has its own interpretations, practices, and structures, which then intertwine with the national level due to multilevel governance of migration.

Figure 3

Multilevel governance in relation to interpretations of sustainability



The interpretations of sustainability as adaptability, sustainability as stability, and sustainability as economic interests did not include notable insights on multilevel governance. This is somewhat surprising regarding sustainability as adaptability and stability, as they have strong opposing views

on change, and change as an element is related to the multilevel governance structure. Changes from the European Union create changes at the national level.

Sustainability as economic interests may highlight the need of Finland as a nation state to receive migrants, and thus it is separated as an issue from the multilevel governance structure. As explained earlier in this thesis, there is a tendency to manage migration to match the needs of the receiving state instead of recognising the agency of the migrants. From the point of view of sustainability as economic interests, or economic sustainability, work-based migration is a positive thing for Finland as it matches a need. This need is not the result of top-down processes and demands from the European Union, so it is not posed as a matter of multilevel governance.

When the European Union sets obligations and responsibilities to Finland in the policy field of migration, it is seen as a mandatory top-down process to be respected. When Finland frames sustainability in the context of migration as enhancing societal wellbeing, it is a bottom-up promotion of common solutions that reaches across Finland and upwards to the European Union. Migration as a policy issue is performative.

10 CONCLUSIONS

This thesis set forth to research how sustainability is interpreted in Finnish migration policy documents to better understand the concept of sustainability within the context of Finnish migration governance. The research was conducted with an interpretative approach. Qualitative policy document analysis was utilised as a research method, and Finnish migration policy documents were analysed by qualitative content analysis with a summative approach.

At the time of writing this thesis, there is no overarching migration policy in Finland. Policy discussions, policy documents, and policy tools are of course in place, and they steer the Finnish migration policy. As migration policy has not been formulated in Finland, neither has it been defined what sustainability means in the context of Finnish migration policy. In general, sustainability is not a key topic within Finnish migration policy documents, as it is not included in 80% of the documents. Additionally, sustainability is often spoken about through referencing other documents, by only using terminology, and by general mentions of sustainability.

As discovered through this research, multiple interpretations of sustainability exist simultaneously in Finnish migration policy documents. The six interpretations of sustainability identified in Finnish migration policy documents are the following, in alphabetical order: sustainability as adaptability; sustainability as economic interests; sustainability as responsibilities and obligations; sustainability as societal wellbeing; sustainability as stability; and sustainability as quality systems and processes. Out of the six interpretations, adaptability is the least observed and quality systems and processes are the most observed.

As a response to securitisation of migration, states have a desire to manage migration. Migration management often leads to matching migration to the needs of the receiving state instead of recognising the agency of the migrants. The interpretation of sustainability as economic interests is largely explained by this narrative of migration as a security matter to be managed, and the need of Finland to attain work-based migration to satisfy the economic needs of the state.

However, the traditional trifecta of sustainability – economic, environmental, and social – is not fully represented within the findings. Economic sustainability is discussed in depth, and migration is seen as a solution to achieving economic sustainability. Social sustainability is barely present within the interpretation of sustainability as societal wellbeing. Furthermore, migration is not seen as

contributing to societal wellbeing, but instead the society has to adapt to preserve a certain state of wellbeing despite migration. The interpretations of sustainability as economic interests and sustainability as societal welfare are in line with the definitions of economic sustainability and societal sustainability presented in the Government's Sustainability Roadmap (Finnish Government, 2021b). Ecological sustainability is nowhere to be seen within the interpretations, as it is barely discussed in the context of Finnish migration governance.

Migration is seen as contributing to the change of affairs of the receiving state. The element of change surfaced continuously within the data, and there were clear differences between the interpretations of sustainability regarding how change was perceived. Sustainability as adaptability and sustainability as stability paradoxically have opposing views of change. Within the data, change is seen as a natural thing and a catalyst to positive evolving (sustainability as adaptability), but it is simultaneously seen as something that has to be controlled by pre-emptive measures as it is a negative thing (sustainability as stability).

Multiple of the interpretations of sustainability shed light to how the multilevel nature of migration governance is perceived in Finland. Not only the national governance influences national migration policies. The impact that the European Union as a supranational level has on Finland as a national level is obvious. As discussed in sub-chapter 4.1, the global level also affects national migration policies. However, in the Finnish migration policy documents, the global level demands or assets were fairly absent.

All in all, even though certain thematic interpretations of sustainability can be identified within Finnish migration policy documents, the concept of sustainability is not defined within the context. In general, as pointed out by multiple different studies from multiple different fields, sustainability is rarely defined per context. The vagueness results in unclarity, and practical implications are amiss. This was evident in Finnish migration policy documents.

From a practical point of view, the findings of this thesis suggest, that sustainability should be included more often within migration policy documents. Sustainability should also be viewed in a more comprehensive manner, including all three traditional aspects of sustainability into the discussion: ecological, economic, and social. As of now, the discussion within the context of Finnish migration governance is heavily focused on economic sustainability. Finally, in future policy documents, sustainability should be defined. Rarely was there an explanation available as to what was meant by sustainability within the context. Theoretically, this thesis has contributed to the

discussions of how sustainability can be defined. This thesis suggests, that sustainability as a concept can be defined by context. Additionally, this thesis points to the direction that change as an element has a central role on interpretations of sustainability within the context of migration policy. This thesis also contributes to the discussion of multilevel governance and how it has an effect on national level policies.

As for future research, tracking potential changes of interpretations of sustainability during a longer period of time could reveal long-term trends or potential corroborations between societal and political changes and the interpretations. Additionally, shifting the focus to the local or organisational levels could further contribute to the findings related to multilevel governance. Equally, the focus could be shifted to the supranational level of the European union, to identify thematic interpretations of sustainability at that level. Any comparisons between interpretations of sustainability of different European Union member states would contribute to a wider conceptualisation of sustainability within the context of migration governance. As this master's thesis was completed with only documents as data, a different approach regarding research methodology and data analysis methods could deepen the understanding of how sustainability is interpreted within a policy field. A deeper dive into how the interpretations affect policy framing and agenda setting (or vice versa), and further the multilevel governance of intractable policy issues, could perhaps be revealed.

This thesis has touched upon the tip of the iceberg of sustainability in the context of migration policies. It managed to reveal that sustainability is spoken about in a variety of ways. Different interpretations of sustainability lend themselves to different framings of the concept. How sustainability is spoken about can be altered according to what it is that the publisher wants to convey to the general public.

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ANNEX 1: List of documents within data with mentions of sustainability, in alphabetical order

Identifier	Document name	Document type	Number of mentions of sustainability
MI 2021:34	Action Plan for the Prevention of Irregular Entry and Stay for 2021–2024 — Tackling the Parallel Society	Migration policy document	8
GOV 2021:6	Government Report on EU Policy: Strong and united EU - towards a more sustainable European Union	Other policy document	3
GOV 2021:73	Government's Sustainability Roadmap	Other policy document	2
HAVM 6/2022 vp	Hallintovaliokunnan mietintö 6/2022	Legislative document	1
HAVM 20/2022 vp	Hallintovaliokunnan mietintö 20/2022	Legislative document	1
HAVM 37/2022 vp	Hallintovaliokunnan mietintö 37/2022	Legislative document	2
HE 207/2022 vp	Hallituksen esitys eduskunnalle julkisten työvoima- ja yrityspalveluiden uudelleen järjestämistä koskevaksi lainsäädännöksi	Legislative document	2
HE 162/2021 vp	Hallituksen esitys eduskunnalle laiksi kansainvälistä suojelua hakevan vastaanotosta sekä ih-miskaupan uhrin tunnistamisesta ja auttamisesta annetun lain 12 §:n muuttamisesta	Legislative document	1
HE 99/2022 vp	Hallituksen esitys eduskunnalle laiksi ulkomaalaislain muuttamisesta	Legislative document	1
HE 100/2022 vp	Hallituksen esitys eduskunnalle laiksi ulkomaalaislain muuttamisesta	Legislative document	1
HE 253/2020 vp	Hallituksen esitys eduskunnalle laiksi ulkomaalaislain muuttamisesta	Legislative document	4

HE 114/2022 vp	Hallituksen esitys eduskunnalle laiksi ulkomaalaislain muuttamisesta ja siihen liittyviksi laeiksi	Legislative document	12
GOV 2022:57	Hallituksen kestävyystiekartta: Tiekartan edistyminen ja jatkovalmistelun kokonaisuudet (Government's Sustainability Roadmap: Progress of the roadmap and themes for further preparation)	Other policy document	3
GOV 2023:36	Hallituksen vuosikertomus 2022	Other policy document	1
GOV 2022:26	Hallituksen vuosikertomus 2021, Liite 3: Toimenpiteet eduskunnan lausumien ja kannanottojen johdosta	Other policy document	1
GOV 2023:72	Ilmastonmuutokseen liittyvät riskit ja haavoittuvuudet Suomessa: Tarkastelu Kansallisen ilmastonmuutoksen sopeutumissuunnitelman 2030 taustaksi (Risks and Vulnerabilities Related to Climate Change in Finland: Background study for the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2030)	Other policy document	1
MEAE 2022:37	Kestävä talouskasvu ja hyvinvointimme tulevaisuus: Loppuraportti (Sustainable economic growth and our future wellbeing: Final report)	Other policy document	6
MI 2023:3	Kestävän lainsäädännön valmistelu: tapaus ulkomaalaislaki (Preparing Sustainable Legislation: the Aliens Act case)	Migration policy document	79
MEC 2022:1	Kohti korkeakoulutuksen ja tutkimuksen kansainvälisyyden edistämisen linjausten päivitystä: KV-foorumin väliraportti (Updating the International Policies for Higher Education and Research: Interim report by the Forum for International Policies)	Other policy document	4
MEAE 2020:27	Maahanmuuttajien matalan kynnyksen ohjaus- ja neuvontapalvelut. Selvityksen loppuraportti. (Low-threshold guidance and counselling services for immigrants. Final report of the study)	Migration policy document	1

GOV 2022:58	Ministeriöiden tulevaisuuskatsaus 2022: Yhteiskunnan tila ja päätöksiä vaativat kysymykset (Futures review of the ministries 2022: Society's status and issues requiring decisions)	Other policy document	4
MI 2023:17	Näkökohtia ulkomaalaislain kokonaisuudistuksen valmisteluun (Perspectives on the Comprehensive Reform of the Aliens Act)	Migration policy document	7
GOV 2019:33	Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government 10 December 2019: Inclusive and competent Finland - a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable society	Other policy document	4
MEC 2023:9	Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriön virkanäkemys tulevan hallituskauden valinnoista (Outlook Review of the Officials of the Ministry of Education and Culture on the Next Government Term)	Other policy document	4
MI	Pöytäkirja ulkomaalaislain kokonaisuudistuksen esiselvityshankkeen seurantaryhmän 6. kokouksesta	Migration policy document	1
MI	Pöytäkirja ulkomaalaislain kokonaisuudistuksen esiselvityshankkeen seurantaryhmän 9. kokouksesta	Migration policy document	3
VN/26783/2021	Pöytäkirja ulkomaalaislain kokonaisuudistuksen esiselvityshankkeen seurantaryhmän 10. kokouksesta	Migration policy document	9
GOV 2021:86	Roadmap for education-based and work-based immigration 2035	Migration policy document	11
MEAE 2022:14	Selvitys alueellisista maahanmuuttostrategioista (Report on regional immigration strategies)	Migration policy document	3
MI 2023:10	Selvitys Suomen maahanmuuttohallinnon järjestämisestä (Study on the organisation of migration administration in Finland)	Migration policy document	2

MEAE 2023:42	Selvitys tilapäistä suojelua saavista työvoimapolvelujen asiakkaina ja työmarkkinoilla (Report on Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection as Customers of Employment Services and in the Labour Market)	Migration policy document	1
MEAE 2023:18	Selvitys työ- ja koulutusperusteisen maahanmuuton viranomaisrakenteesta ja -yhteistyöstä (Report on the Official Structures and Cooperation in Work-Based and Education-Based Immigration)	Migration policy document	1
MI	Sisäministeriön hallinnonlan konsernistrategia	Other policy document	3
MI 2020:10	Sisäministeriön lainsäädäntösuunnitelma 2020–2023 (Legislative plan of the Ministry of the Interior 2022–2024)	Other policy document	8
MI 2022:33	Sisäministeriön lainsäädäntösuunnitelma 2022–2024. Tilannekatsaus, elokuu 2022. (Legislative plan of the Ministry of the Interior 2022–2024. Progress report, August 2022)	Other policy document	7
MI 2023:27	Sisäministeriön vastuullisuusraportti vuodesta 2022 (Ministry of the Interior Sustainability Report for 2022)	Other policy document	2
MI 2022:30	Sisäministeriön vastuullisuusraportti 2022 (Ministry of the Interior Sustainability Report for 2022)	Other policy document	3
MI 2021:44	Strategy on Expatriate Finns 2022–2026	Migration policy document	4
GOV 2021:52	Suomen kestävä kasvun ohjelma: Elpymis- ja palautumissuunnitelma (Sustainable Growth Programme for Finland: Recovery and Resilience Plan)	Other policy document	5
GOV 2023:71	Talent Boost 2023–2027: Työ- ja koulutusperusteisen maahanmuuton toimenpideohjelma (Talent Boost 2023–2027: Programme for international recruitment and work-based and education-based immigration)	Migration policy document	1

MI	Tulevaisuuden Maahanmuuttovirasto ja maahanmuuttohallinnon toiminnan vaikuttavuus	Migration policy document	1
MI	Tulevaisuuden Maahanmuuttovirasto ja maahanmuuttohallinnon toiminnan vaikuttavuus: Hankkeen kooste 14.1.2022	Migration policy document	1
TYVM 8/2021	Työelämä- ja tasa-arvovaliokunnan mietintö 8/2021	Legislative document	1
MEAE 2023:25	Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriön vuoden 2022 vastuullisuusraportti (Sustainability Report of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment 2022)	Other policy document	1
GOV 2020:35	Valtioneuvoston selonteko eduskunnalle – Suomen kestävän kasvun ohjelma (Government report to Parliament – Sustainable Growth Programme for Finland)	Other policy document	1
GOV 2023:1	Valtioneuvoston tulevaisuusselonteon 1. ja 2. osa: Näkymiä seuraavien sukupolvien Suomeen (Government Report on the Future, parts 1 and 2: Outlook on the Finland of the next generations)	Other policy document	2
MI 2022:20	Varautuminen muuttoliikettä hyväksikäyttävään hybrdivaikuttamiseen: Selvitys lainsäädännön muutostarpeista (Preparedness for Use of Migration as a Form of Hybrid Influence Activities: Report on Needs for Legislative Amendments)	Migration policy document	5
MI 2018:5	Work in Finland — Government Migration Policy Programme to Strengthen Labour Migration	Migration policy document	1