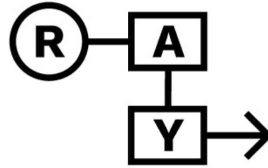

Research project on the evidence-based analysis and monitoring of the European Solidarity Corps (RAY-SOC)

2nd LITERATURE SNAPSHOT

SOLIDARITY REVISITED

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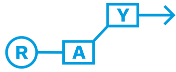

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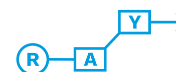


1. INTRODUCTION

In this second literature snapshot for RAY-SOC we revisit a topic already treated in the first snapshot, considering the concepts and understandings of solidarity and European solidarity in more detail. We start with a summary of the first literature snapshot and aim with the following additional insights, in particular the role of crises, to lay the ground for a third literature snapshot on solidarity and COVID-19.

2. SOLIDARITY – THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND MEANINGS

In our first literature snapshot for this project, we focussed on perspectives and approaches to solidarity, coming mainly from philosophy, sociology and social policy. As there is no academic consensus as to how to understand solidarity, there are significant differences in terms of how solidarity can be defined. In a nutshell, philosophical explanations were found to focus mainly on the normative and ontological foundations or basis of solidarity; sociology appeared to mainly approach solidarity in terms of the societal purposes it serves, namely its contribution to social order, and social policy was detected to focus on solidarity's relationship with social justice and equality in the context of the welfare state. In our analysis we summarised the elements upon which the definitions vary in terms of two continuums, the first one being to what extent solidarity is ascribed individual versus collective responsibility and the second one being the extent to which solidarity is perceived as an act of charity versus a legal entitlement. We concluded one's position on these two continuums in turn influences normative assumptions as to who should be included or excluded from the solidarity frame, which goals, and whose interest's solidarity should serve politically and socially.

After the publication of our first literature snapshot, Nicodemi and Bačlija Knoch (2020) developed a study to explore the common perceptions of solidarity among different actors of the European Solidarity Corps programme, mainly practioners. As they state, understanding solidarity is a difficult task the European Solidarity Corps programme puts forward, as it "has been up and running in different corners of Europe with as yet no clear definition or a common ground on what solidarity means in Europe - or at least what it means in the youth work field in Europe" (Nicodemi and Bačlija Knoch, 2020, p.9). In their study solidarity is first broken down into different concepts and these concepts are then, in a second step, rated by participants according to their perception of the concepts forming part or not of the definition of solidarity. Four concepts supported by all participants as part of the solidarity definition are Human Rights, Active Citizenship, Inclusion and Empathy.

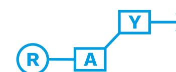
2.1. SOLIDARITY IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Shortly after the elaboration of the first literature snapshot in August 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic with its respective lockdown measures hit the world and in its wake appeared different academic publications revisiting the concept of solidarity. As Popa (2020, p.105) puts it: "The COVID-19 pandemic took the whole world by surprise, and proved to be the most drastic crisis in the EU's history with very severe socio-economic consequences." Kneuer et al. (2021, p.2) argue that "[t]he multiple challenges and crises in the last decade have revitalized the debate on the nature and conditions of solidarity", mentioning the financial and debt crisis, the refugee crisis, Brexit, the climate crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic as elements of a "multiple crisis phenomena." Crises spur the "discursive struggle over solidarity" (Koos, 2019, p. 12), explaining

why the topic gained historically and continues to gain today importance in the context of crises: “When the history of the concept of solidarity is traced it can be seen that the frequency of its use can be shown to follow or depend on different crisis moments in history, such as revolutions, wars or economic trouble” (Nicodemi and Bačlija Knoch, 2020, p.26). A crisis, “understood as some sudden unforeseen event that challenges the organization of a larger social group, thereby threatening everyday routines and inducing uncertainty and at times fear” (Koos, 2019, p.7), is a potential “trigger” of solidarity (Ciornei and Ross, 2021, p. 211f.; Koos, 2019). It is in many senses the starting point of all solidarity, as the perception that an adversity[1] affects somebody without their fault (“perceived injustice”) and who “cannot manage to overcome it individually” (Kneuer et al., 2021, p. 9) is a precondition of solidarity. Petelczyc et al. (2021, p.135) consider that a “crisis causes an increase in social needs”, which if not adequately satisfied by the state cause a “gap between growing social needs (increase in demand for solidarity) and responses of the public sector (decrease in supply of solidarity)” (p.135f). “Citizens and existing civil society organisations might be called on to fill this gap by providing activities of non-state social entities of solidarity” (p.136), meaning non-institutionalised civic solidarity can increase in times of crises in an attempt to compensate (and reactivate through protests) insufficient institutionalized solidarity, though this depends more on the perception of the crisis and the “governmental action” (p.137) than the crisis itself.

Multiple crises put the very concept of solidarity under “increasing pressure” (Kneuer et al., 2021, p.2). Wallaschek and Eigmüller (2020, p.61) believe that “solidarity issues have been at the heart of each of the EU’s major crises” and conclude their analyses judging that “the union has not shown itself capable of solving any of the crises” (p.65). Ciornei and Ross (2021, p.209) even speak of “a crisis of European solidarity,”, arguing that “historically, solidarity has been institutionalised to prevent future risks and adversities such as social marginalisation, unemployment, illness or natural disaster”, while in “recent EU history (...) [c]alls to solidarity have been made in order to redress crises rather than to prevent them” (p. 210). Popa (2020, p.105) believes that “[t]he crises the European Union has gone through over time have called into question the Union's legitimacy and efficiency” and that the different crises “tested the solidarity between member states”. In a similar vein, Koos (2019, p.1) argues that “crises have led to a reconfiguration of solidarities in Europe”, because they are both a “threat to and an opportunity for solidarity in Europe”, leading to “new modes of solidarity” (p.2). While it is clear that these new insights on solidarity did not lead to academic consensus, the new definitions and approaches can be useful for the study and empirical examination of different dimensions and levels of solidarity.

[1] Kneuer et al. (2021) also speak, among others, of challenge, threat or difficulty and use the term “adversity” following Sangiovanni. Ciornei and Ross (2021) revise publications on solidarity identifying furthermore references to need, risk and misfortune. The latter is also used by van Parijs (2021, p.101). Koos (2019, p.2), focuses on crises, but also uses the terms “major social problem, shock or grievance”. Lahusen, Zschache and Kousis (2021, p.2) similarly speak of “societal problems and grievances” and also mention “needs”.



2.2. SOLIDARITY LEVELS AND SOCIAL BONDS

Lahusen, Zschache and Kousis (2021, p.4) describe solidarity in their introduction to the book "Transnational Solidarity in Times of Crises" as "one of the basic components of sociability, social integration and societal cohesion". Kapeller and Wolkenstein (2013, p.477) review that solidarity is evoked as able to "fulfill such crucial functions as strengthening democracy, facilitating European integration, and stabilizing Europe in times of crisis". For them the aspect of social cohesion is the common factor of all conceptions of solidarity:

> "[S]olidarity is the 'cement' (Bayertz, 1998: 11), which holds groups of people together. Solidarity, as its etymology indicates, is assumed to solidify social bonds." (Kapeller and Wolkenstein, 2013, p.477)

Prainsack (2020, p.125) supports a similar approach by arguing that "virtually all conceptualizations of solidarity have in common (...) that they signify pro-social phenomena that make groups or societies more cohesive". In the further delimitation of the concept, Prainsack (2020) focuses on distinguishing solidarity from other concepts, namely 'empathy', 'charity' and 'love':

> "Solidarity is different from empathy because it requires some outer expression; merely feeling a connection—or sympathy with—someone else is not sufficient for solidarity to exist. Solidarity is different from charity in that it expresses itself as a fellowship of people who have something important in common: that they all share a joined human vulnerability in the face of crisis, or in that they fight for the same cause. Whereas charity could emerge from a moral or religious duty on the side of those who are rich to give to the poor because they are different, within solidarity, support emerges across all societal and economic differences due to the things people have in common. Finally, solidarity is different from support between lovers, friends, or within families, because what binds them together are much thicker bonds than the recognition of similarities in a relevant respect. Solidarity is subsidiary to these thicker bonds: it is particularly pertinent to situations where no other ties exist to bind people together." (Prainsack, 2020, p.126)

In this demarcation Prainsack excludes many 'pro-social phenomena' which other authors include into the solidarity framework, most clearly solidarity among family members, depicted by a range of articles on 'intergenerational solidarity' within families (for a study in relation to COVID-19 see, for example, Pustułka and Buler, 2021) and family solidarity in general. Van Parijs (2021, p.98), while not sharing these exclusions, presents a similar distinction from charity, highlighting the equal relationship between giver and taker of a solidarity act, as "a relationship of symmetry and hence of equality (...) is intrinsic to solidarity, not to charity, pity, or benevolence[2]" (van Parijs, 2021, p.98). This links to the continuum of charity versus a legal entitlement we carved out in our first literature snapshot for this project and is also crucial for the understanding of European solidarity as we will see below.

Lahusen (2020, p.306f.) includes family solidarity and 'social capital' within the solidarity framework, but recognises the different character of solidarity expressions by distinguishing the following levels:

> "Social solidarity is enacted at the micro-level on the basis of face to-face interactions and immediate social relations (informal solidarity); it is an organised practice that is

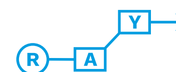
[2] Wolthuis (2020, p.7) also considers the distinction between solidarity and benevolence, arguing that the first is "linked to self-interest", that is to say the expectation of reciprocity, even though "a party can never be certain that the favour will be returned".

> facilitated, co-ordinated and regulated at the meso-level in terms of voluntary groups, civic associations and networks (civil society solidarity); and it is institutionalised at the macro level by means of (redistributive) policies, programmes and measures (welfare state solidarity)." (Lahusen, 2020, p.306)

For other authors the pro-social behaviour among groups of significant others, in particular family members, are a prototype of solidarity that has then expanded to other groups. Van Parijs (2021, p.100) mentions the notion of "instinctive solidarity", arguing that solidarity "with other members of a genetically related group has developed and spread through the evolutionary process"; Lynch and Kalaitzake (2018, p.2) argue that "[i]n normative terms, solidarity is a macro-level expression of collective caring, a politicized form of love", and Klindworth and Schröder (2010, p.10, translated from German by the authors) carve out a line of thought in German academic literature on solidarity according to which "[s]olidarity among friends has been generalized to solidarity among strangers". Though Prainsack (2020) would not call the mutual support among family members and friends 'solidarity', as well in this approach the inter-personal level of solidarity (tier 1) is the starting point of group (tier 2) and, in consequence, institutionalized solidarity (tier 3), leading to a distinction of levels similar to Lahusen (2020), but with a consecutive logic:

> "When actions of mutual support become so common that they turn into 'normal', expected behavior in some groups, we see an instance of 'tier 2 solidarity'. When solidarity express [sic.] itself in legal, administrative, and bureaucratic norms, regulations and designs, we call it 'tier 3 solidarity'. Tier 3 solidarity typically happens when individual and group-level practices have solidified into 'harder', more structural, forms of solidarity." (Prainsack,2020, p.126)

Petelczyc et al. (2021) distinguish, following an approach from Rymsza, solidarity according to the prevailing social tie, taking additionally the scope of solidarity into consideration. Two forms of social ties are distinguished: "institutionalised ties (expressed in public authorities' activities) and non-institutionalised ties (mediated by non-governmental organisations engaged in social and political support for deprived groups)" (Petelczyc et al., 2021, p.135). Scope can vary from very concrete and narrow issues and small target groups of potential beneficiaries of solidarity acts "to a very broad array of issues and many different groups" (p. 135). Moreover a distinction regarding the level of organization is tangible, as the authors focus on "organised forms of solidarity", in particular on non-institutionalised and therefore "civic" solidarity.



2.3. SIMILARITY, RECIPROCITY AND OUTER EXPRESSION

As we will see in the following, the requirements of similarity, reciprocity and outer expression are all repeatedly mentioned to distinguish solidarity, but interpreted in very different ways, ranging from subtle and hypothetic notions to distinguishing features and implying different scopes of solidarity. While some authors require the outer expression to represent a clear sacrifice for the giver, others mention utterances of identification or consider an attitude a sufficient expression of solidarity. While in particular solidarity expressions on social media have been questioned for "target[ing] more public attention and try[ing] to convey a certain message or brand on social media than aiming for social change or empathy with others", others see a pedagogical potential in the use of instagram for teaching solidarity as "[i]t could create instances of belonging, relating to others and showing empathy" (Wallaschek, 2021, p.4). Empathy is then not only a distinct concept, but also a part or possibly a precondition of solidarity. The motivation to achieve social change raises the question of motivation and perception in general. From this normative stance, it seems that only acts based on the 'right' motivations and perceptions can be considered 'real' solidarity.

Van Parijs (2021) analyses the feature of equality further by arguing that solidarity happens between members of a community of equals, be it a family, a social class, a neighborhood, a religious community or member states of an international community, like the EU. In this, members of the community may not necessarily know each other personally to identify with the other. It is the feeling of belonging to this community, the identification with its members, that leads actors to feel "an altruistic virtual or counterfactual reciprocity: I help you because I assume that I could have been you", which is based on the identification with the same category, the belonging to a community: "I could have been you because you are 'one of us'" (van Parijs, 2021, p.98). In this reciprocity (in a broad sense including 'altruistic virtual or counterfactual reciprocity') is the main trait distinguishing solidarity from purely self-interested insurance schemes (van Parijs, 2021).

Similarly, Lahusen (2020, p.303) highlights the reciprocal character of solidarity by defining it as "a specific type of social relation", in concrete "a social relation that is marked by three elements: reciprocity, mutual responsibilities and obligations, and group commitments". Lahusen (2020, p.304) bridges the motivational dilemma in part by accepting "egoistic and altruistic intentions and motives" for solidarity, purely and in combination, embracing the more egoistic aspect of expected reciprocity in a more pragmatic way.

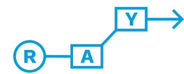
Lahusen's (2020) recognition of the combination of a wish to help and a wish to gain something out of it is mirrored in the description of the European Solidarity Corps programme available on its website, where it is stated that "[t]hese projects offer an inspiring and empowering experience, as well as the chance to bring change while developing your skills and competences"3. Here it seems, however, that the reciprocity the young applicants can expect is not a potential return of the favour but a more direct gratification and personal gain – possibly giving additional reasons to potential applicants or compensating a lack of perceived similarities.

[3] This is taken from the description available at: https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity_en [date of last access: 30/11/2021].

Prainsack (2020) links the perception of similarity to socialization and life experiences, as having been in a similar situation or knowing someone who was in a similar situation can forward solidarity with someone. Regarding the former it is argued that people learn to recognize or ignore certain commonalities “[i]f I had learned to see people with a different religion, gender, or political values as ‘the other’, then it would be harder for me to see myself in these others than if I had been socialized to focus on what people have in common” (Prainsack, 2020, p.126). Similarly, Libal and Kashwan (2020, p.540) argue that solidarity towards people from different backgrounds requires socialization as political solidarity “must be constructed and fostered through socialization and proximity of individuals who may not share the same community or social ties”. Like many other authors, Prainsack develops a definition of solidarity based on rather broad elements that require further definition themselves:

> “We believe that solidarity is best defined as a *practice that expresses the willingness to support others with whom we recognize similarity in a relevant respect.*” (Prainsack, 2020, p.125, italics in the original)

Lahusen, Zschache and Kousis (2021, p.5) “define solidarity as a disposition and practice of help or support towards others” and argue that “solidarity transcends the unilateral orientation of concepts such as care, empathy or altruism”. Both uni- and bilateral help are included within this conception of solidarity, whereat “top-down relations of unilateral help refer to philanthropic values or altruistic motives in support of others; bottom-up or horizontal relations of support are governed by principles of reciprocity and mutualism”. However, a minimum of reciprocity or imperfect one-sidedness is a distinctive feature of solidarity, which “is linked to reciprocal expectations and practices between people expressing sameness, togetherness and inclusiveness, which means that solidarity assumes the existence of (imagined) reference groups with some sort of mutual responsibilities” (p.5). In the further analysis, “civic and political components” are considered, at which the civic component of solidarity relates to an “understanding of solidarity that tends to privilege compassion, altruism and care” (p.7). Correspondingly, actions stemming from the civic aspect of solidarity “lean strongly towards the provision of help and support, primarily in terms of services and goods” (p. 7). The political component of solidarity, on the other hand, focuses on the “advocatory element of collective actions”, so it is about the denunciation of “injustice, discrimination and oppression” (p.7). Though the authors consider both components part of the same solidarity and argue that “both components should be conceived of as endpoints of a continuum of potential solidarity orientations, action repertoires and organisational structures” (p.8), they also speak of “political solidarity” and “civic solidarity”, as if these were two types of solidarity with distinct features, that mingle in practice in “hybrid forms of collective action” (p.8).



The European Solidarity Corps Programme highlights in its description the importance of "help" ("an opportunity to help the wider community4") and can therefore be understood as linked to "civic solidarity" (Lahusen, Zschache and Kousis, 2021). This is indirectly confirmed in another chapter of Lahusen et al.'s book where it is mentioned that several of the studied organizations' "activities are embedded within European funding schemes such as the ESF, Erasmus Plus, the European Voluntary Service as part of Y-outh in Action or regional programmes" (Zschache, 2021, p.105) – including precursor programmes of the European Solidarity Corps.

Following Lahusen et al. (2021), Petelczyc et al. (2021) include in their study a wide range of so-called transnational solidarity organisations (TSOs), ranging from unions of individuals affected by a legal change and fighting together for its removal to organizations offering humanitarian aid in Syria. Dany (2021, p.3) distinguishes humanitarianism from solidarity, highlighting that "[t]he main aim of humanitarian aid is to save and protect human lives", while "solidarity (...) is more ambitious in its aims and more political than humanitarian aid". However, it is also stated that humanitarianism and solidarity can "be combined in practice", with new combinations emerging of "solidarity humanitarianism", for example, in the course of the refugee crisis (Dany, 2021, p.3f.). This may explain the broad understanding of solidarity adapted in Lahusen et al.'s (2021) publication, giving rather little importance to the reciprocal character of solidarity and not aiming to distinguish solidarity from other concepts, like charity.

The rather broad understanding of solidarity applied in the book "Transnational Solidarity in Times of Crises" (Lahusen, Zschache and Kousis (eds.), 2021) seems to coincide very well with the subjacent definition in the EU Solidarity Corps programme. Other theoretical approaches and different understandings may, however, be useful to better understand what solidarity means – and what it does not mean – in this programme. Nicodemi and Bačlija Knoch (2020) offer insights in what a common ground of solidarity understandings could or should be in this context.

From the community-based perspective, the scope of solidarity depends on the scope of the community the actors identify with. This can include 'global solidarity', as one can argue that in spite of severe inequalities between different regions of the world and a usual lack of reciprocity as solidarity acts are almost always directed from richer towards poorer individuals/regions, these acts may still be considered solidarity if the givers identify with the receivers, for example for "being a member of the human[5] species" (van Parijs, 2021, p. 99) or for feeling that they could have been born in the other's place. However, the opposite is also possible and solidarity can be applied very exclusively to a community with a "shared cultural horizon" (Kapeller and Wolkenstein, 2013, p.487). Lahusen (2020, p.306) describes this by distinguishing "particular", in the sense of limited to members of a certain group with a clear outgroup of people who are not eligible for solidarity, and "transnational solidarity", distinctive in its "universalist orientation", that is to say "it is tied to bigger entities, possibly even to the most

[4] This is taken from the description available at: https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity_en [date of last access: 30/11/2021]. ¡

[5] Tomasini (2021, p.3) even calls for 'biocentric solidarity', that is "solidarity with all life", not only the human species (see third literature snapshot).

encompassing (imagined) group: humankind" (p.305). It is noteworthy that the predisposition to show solidarity seems to be the same both for particularistic and transnational solidarity, as "European citizens engaged in solidarity activities within their own country are also more likely to be active on behalf of individuals living in other European countries or outside Europe, while citizens refraining from transnational solidarity are less likely to be active in regard to their fellow citizens" (Lahusen, 2020, p.305). Nevertheless, on the theoretical level the different scope depending on the individual identification of the involved actors with each other, has two further implications, as the simple statement of identification (be it "*Ich bin ein Berliner*" or "*Je suis Charlie*") can then also be seen as "expressing solidarity" (van Parijs, 2021, p.99). Secondly, one and the same act can be perceived differently by the involved actors, for example as a solidarity act by the giver and a charity act by the taker and onlookers could qualify an act as charity, even if the givers claim it solidarity. Van Parijs' (2021, p.99) relates to this through the concept of "strength" of common identities and explains through the variation of this strength why the same act may be for some people out of charity and for others out of solidarity, depending on how strongly they identify with the category the receiver belongs to.

2.4. COMMUNICATION ON SOLIDARITY

While some authors embrace the complexities of the normative approach to solidarity, others take a further step back and study how solidarity is studied. Wallaschek (2021) captures the different approaches to studying solidarity in a typology that considers structures apart from including actions and discourses:

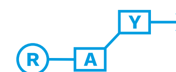
> "[W]e can distinguish between structure-oriented, agency-oriented and discourse-oriented solidarity research. The first one refers to institutions, structures and mechanism that 'produce' solidarity. The second approach locates solidarity in certain actions, behaviour and attitudes by individuals and social groups. The third and final approach suggests looking at communicative manifestations and discursive constructions of solidarity." (Wallaschek's, 2021, p.2)

In particular the third approach avoids issues with the definition of solidarity as, rather than defining solidarity themselves, the researchers study how different speakers define solidarity in their claims[6]. With the goal to develop a "theory-based conceptualization of solidarity that aims to generate a well-delineated definition of solidarity" and is able to "captur[e] the 'real world' dimensions of solidarity", Kneuer et al. (2021, p.3) develop a non-normative, "value-free approach" (p.3), focusing on the "understanding of solidarity reflected in the *communication on solidarity* rather than in the manifestation of a potential solidarity action" (p.3, italics in original).

> "Solidarity entails actors motivated to contribute to overcoming an adversity and, therefore, to accomplishing a goal that is perceived as shared by both the giver and the taker of solidarity. The relationship between the giver and the taker of solidarity may rest on, yet does not require, equality and reciprocity." (Kneuer et al., 2021, p.11)

In this, actors are no longer only the givers and takers of a solidary action, but include furthermore any "person speaking about a determined solidary action (...) without being involved into it" (Kneuer et al., 2021, p.4). Beyond the individual level, groups, organizations, institutions, states and other entities are also considered actors (p. 8), highlighting the actor-centered

[6] For some authors solidarity is "confined to the 'realm of rhetoric'" (Kapeller and Wolkenstein, 2013, p.477, referring to Wilde, 2007, p. 171), precisely because it is so difficult to grasp and has so many different meanings.



theoretical perspective, while the authors "refrain from a structural perspective of solidarity" (p.7) that would focus on "anonymous bureaucratic apparatuses" (p.8). Different understandings of solidarity can then coexist and "potentially interact" (p.3) and the meaning and significance of a statement depend on the place where and the conditions under which it is uttered. To analyse this context of enunciation, Kneuer et al. (2021, p.4) develop a multilevel approach, considering the micro level (individual citizens), the meso level (social actors and organizations), and the macro level (political actors and institutions). Moreover, they distinguish four primary features, that is to say "necessary conditions of solidarity" (p.7), and two secondary features regarding the relation between giver and taker that are a "sufficient, but not a necessary condition" of solidarity (p.7). While the latter refer to reciprocity ('solidarity among' versus 'solidarity with', p.8) and (in)equality (asymmetric or symmetric relationships, p.11f.), the former include "the actorness that is implicated in solidarity acts, the adversity that actuates a solidarity act and the contribution as potential cost linked to the solidary act based on shared goals" (p.7). The contribution, that can both be an action or an attitude and may take the form of "personal, temporal or financial resources" (p. 10), is a distinctive element of the definition, differentiating solidarity from compassion.

In different publications Wallaschek focuses on the relationship between "*discursive and actional solidarity*" during the COVID-19 pandemic (2021, p.1, italics in the original), or on the "discursive construction" of solidarity (Wallaschek, 2020, p.1039). By saying that "it has to be appealed to and argued for by actors so as to resonate in discourses and mobilise the public", Wallaschek (2020, p.1038) adds the impact of the discursive construction of solidarity on other actors and the public in general to the study of solidarity as a discursive construct. Rather than seeking to develop an all-encompassing definition of solidarity or to justify a normative decision how solidarity should be defined, Wallaschek carves out the different meanings of solidarity in political discourse expressed in mass media and analyses how they interact and which are more recurrent and influential at a given point in time. In this appears again a focus on crises, namely the Euro crisis and the migration crisis, as these are supposed to create "institutional uncertainty", fertile soil for change: "In such times, ideas matter most and account for ideational-institutional change" (Wallaschek, 2020, p.1038). For the analysis, Wallaschek (2020, p.1038) identifies "influential ideas", so-called "coalition magnets", arguing that "a coalition magnet mobilises political power and helps actors to reach their goals". That is to say, when different political actors claim in times of crisis solidarity, they aim for acceptance of their understanding of solidarity, as enforcing their understanding would also mean further acceptance for their approach and policies and, thus, more power. It is precisely the ambiguity of the concept of solidarity that turns it into an ideal 'coalition magnet', as different actors can forward different understandings of the same term. Solidarity is, in this sense, "contested solidarity", "as actors argue about the proper meaning of the term without coming to an agreement" (Wallaschek, 2020, p.1039). In Wallaschek's (2020, p.1035) analysis of solidarity claims in German mass media, the power and importance of this 'battle' of solidarity understandings becomes visible:

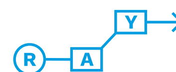
> "[S]olidarity and austerity claims are linked and thus create a unique framing strategy, which serves to justify the Euro crisis management in the German discourse. In the migration crisis, I show that political solidarity is the predominant meaning in the discourse, but it is contested by a security oriented framing of migration. This has hindered the establishment of a solidary framework and contributed to the failure of solidarity in Europe's migration crisis". (Wallaschek's, 2020, p.1035)

Lynch and Kalaitzake (2018) also offer an approach to study how political (as well as academic and intellectual) conceptions of solidarity influence the general acceptance of a certain

understanding of solidarity that, in turn, shapes policies – and their acceptance. According to Lynch and Kalaitzake (2018, p.3) "the concept of solidarity is an ideological hybrid" within the EU, with a calculative and a normative dimension. Accordingly, Lynch and Kalaitzake (2018, p.5) differentiate 'calculative' and 'affective' solidarity, arguing that as the first is dominant in Europe, "solidarity is generally defined as a contingent and conditional social disposition", however, "it is also recognized as a positive and affective disposition driven by the desire to alleviate or prevent the suffering of others".

In their analysis, Lynch and Kalaitzake (2018) explain how religious ideals, in particular Calvinism but also aspects of Judaeo-Christian thought in general, together with liberal political ideas that have a certain continuity in Neoliberalism, have fostered "self-responsibilized individualism that is antithetical to universalistic, affective forms of solidarity" (p.9), leading to an approach in which individuals' wealth or poverty is seen as a direct result of their "moral election" or "failing" (p. 7). This links to Kneuer et al.'s (2021) perceived injustice, crucial for the shared perception of an adversity, as inequalities and misfortune are understood as 'just', the affected individual's own fault, and lose hence power to actuate solidarity. In Klindworth and Schröders (2010, p.16, translated from German by the authors) analysis of the concept of solidarity in German academic writing, they distinguish authors according to their political orientation and find that socio-Christian and liberal authors hold a view of a necessity to limit solidarity, in particular in its institutionalized form of the welfare state, in order to encourage people to become active and overcome their difficulties in a sense of solidarity as "help for self-help". Social democratic authors, on the contrary, were found to forward a conception of solidarity closer to charity. This may indicate that different traditions of thought continue to influence the current conceptions of solidarity beyond the dominance of calculative solidarity in Neoliberalism.

The division of public and private sphere in liberal political thinking has its expression in the work of Lynch and Kalaitzake (2018, p.7) in the sense that 'affective solidarity' is reduced to the private sphere, while the public sphere is dominated by 'calculative solidarity' which can only be conceived in relation to "responsibility in return for, or as a condition of, solidarity". For Lynch and Kalaitzake (2018, p.9) Capitalism and Neoliberalism, defined as "the prioritization of market-based economic activity, as opposed to state-directed involvement", foster the dominance of 'calculated solidarity' further, as they are "more compatible with particularistic and calculative expressions of solidarity" (p.10) and Neoliberalism "promotes a strategic and reciprocal mistrust of others" and, thus, may "inhibit solidaristic behaviour" (p.11). The rise of Neoliberalism can then explain the "persistent welfare state retrenchment, and a decline in redistributive solidarity", just as well as a shift "from traditional social policies such as compensating for income loss and other transfers towards labour activation policies and human capital investment programmes" (p.11). Individualization, rising inequality and anti-democracy are then analysed as developments directly resulting from neoliberal reforms, whereat individualization with its changes in the welfare state leads to rising inequality, which in turn leave the "resource-poor" in a worse and worse position "to have their political voices heard and attended" (p.13), while "corporate actors" gain influence and control. In a similar vein, Libal and Kashwan (2020, p.540) consider that "neoliberalism has undermined the efficacy of the social democratic or other kinds of protections available for the poor within the Global North and the efforts related to international development and global environment". The implications of this approach for European solidarity and conditionality are detailed in the following section.



In summary, we can state that the term solidarity continues to be widely used, however with very different subjacent understandings. Even when different academic authors state to observe a certain common dominator of all understandings they reviewed, these common dominators do not necessarily coincide, as some highlight the idea of help, others of social cohesion, yet others of reciprocity, etc. While some authors opt for a broad definition of solidarity seeking to grasp all relevant elements, others focus on the justification of an ideal definition of solidarity, that is to say what solidarity should be understood as. For some authors solidarity is a practice or activities, for others an attitude or disposition or a social relation and yet for others a discursive construct. Some authors focus on the origins of solidarity, analysing different philosophical traditions of thought or historical developments. Others focus on the impact of solidarity or solidarity claims, to see how these are used to establish and enforce power. Different authors attempt to systematise the broad existing body of academic writing on solidarity by developing typologies of solidarities, solidarity understandings or solidarity research – leading to another broad and often contradictory body of academic writing.

While it remains unclear what solidarity actually means, we can conclude at this point that not all presented understandings of solidarity would include the European Solidarity Corps as actually referring to solidarity. The subjacent meaning of solidarity in the European Solidarity Corps programme seems to relate to a broad definition of civic solidarity which could also be analysed as a solidarity claim uttered by the European Union in an attempt to forward this understanding of solidarity.

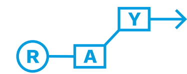
3. EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY – SOLIDARITY IN THE EU

Solidarity does not only appear repeatedly as a discursive construction in the European mass media and in political discourse, it has a "legal substance at the EU level", expressed, for example, in Chapter IV of The Charter of Basic Rights, entitled 'Solidarity' (Lynch and Kalaitzake, 2018, p.3). Wallaschek and Eigmüller (2020, p.61) believe that the EU citizens rights to move between member states "create a sense of community to enhance further its members' solidarity".

> "European solidarity encompasses mutual help and reciprocity among Europeans on issues such as social security, labour relations and health. (...) The EU may well be the most ambitious and comprehensive attempt ever to make solidarity of supranational relevance, to create a postnational community among member states and citizens." (Wallaschek and Eigmüller, 2020, p.61)

However, the "framing of solidarity in EU law" is "fluid and flexible" (Lynch and Kalaitzake, 2018, p.3), just as the definition of the concept solidarity itself. According to Lahusen (2020, p.314), "the degree of institutionalisation of solidarity in terms of European treaties and public policies at the EU level is rather low" (p.314), as key competences remain with the member states limiting the institutionalisation of European solidarity to "policy co-ordination" (p.315). In the analysis of how the institutionalisation of solidarity at the macro level is achieved, Lahusen (2020, p.310) argues that "not the legal provisions themselves, but rather the active and/or passive support of these rights, policies and measures by citizens is what matters most", coming to the conclusion that "[t]he prospects of institutionalising solidarity within the EU are thus dependent on the arousal of sufficient public support from citizens". At the same time, such support is expected to depend on the national contexts, in particular national welfare regimes and the impact of crises (Lahusen, 2020), but also on the existence and structure of "organisations and organised forms of action and the availability of political opportunities and targets" (Petelczyc, 2021, p.136). Moreover, in the absence of organisation and institutionalisation of solidarity, mass media is expected to "have a much higher impact on mobilising, stabilising, questioning and discouraging European solidarity" (Lahusen, 2020, p.315). This explains sudden changes in the solidarity attitudes of EU citizens, for example "the German 'welcoming culture', which ended abruptly as a publicly visible phenomenon once criticism and populist mobilisations gained momentum" (p.324). Wallaschek and Eigmüller's (2020, p.67) argument that the EU needs to better institutionalize solidarity, for instance through a "EU-wide health fund", in order to achieve that citizens perceive the EU as a "positive force that supports them and makes their lives easier in this devastating situation", can be seen as an example of the reciprocity between citizen support and structures. This depicts how the different levels of analysis (micro-, meso-, macro-; see above) interrelate in highly complex ways and following different logics than at national level, "given that the EU is a much more complex social formation" (Lahusen, 2020, p.311). Coming from this argumentation, Lahusen (2020, p.316) develops the following description of European solidarity:

> "European solidarity is a widely diffused latent normative principle, activated only under specific circumstances. In this sense, European solidarity in action is expected to be fragile, contested, volatile and fragmented. lt is contested because the degree of institutionalisation is low, and the number of institutional proponents defending its cause have limited powers. lt is fragile because it cannot build on a well-developed organisational field that has a transnational structure and outreach, volatile because it is not a fixed point on public agendas, but rather an issue surfacing in emergency situations where immediate



> action is required. Lastly, it is fragmented because European solidarity is not a cross-cutting principle of action within the EU, and thus left to the discretion of citizens with their specific preferences, and to civic organisations with their issue-specific foci of attention and memberships." (Lahusen, 2020, p.316)

3.1. SOLIDARITY & THE PROCESS OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Van Parijs (2021) links solidarity in three different senses to the process of European integration: 1) solidarity as a fact, 2) solidarity as an obligation between member states and 3) solidarity as an obligation between individuals or citizens. For van Parijs (2021), it is the latter sense of solidarity that is referred to in the title of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. This solidarity is conceived as "the core of the 'European social model'" and "Europe's *differentia specifica*" in comparison to "the rest of the Western world, especially the United States" (van Parijs, 2021, p.97).

The first sense of solidarity according to van Parijs (2021, p.95f.), solidarity as a fact, understands solidarity as "interdependence", in a "purely descriptive sense". "Each step forward calls for another step forward because of the intensified interdependence it generates." (van Parijs, 2021, p.96) Interdependence is, however, also said to indirectly provoke normative solidarity between member states, solidarity in the second sense according to van Parijs, as the growing interdependence limits a member state's options to regulate a crisis internally, for example through border controls or currency devaluation (p.96f.). This is also implied in Wallaschek and Eigmüller's (2020, p.67) comment on European solidarity throughout the COVID-19 pandemic: "The Covid-19 crisis has once again demonstrated the need for solidarity, since the economic interdependencies among EU member states are simply too great to accept egoistic state action." Van Parijs (2021) agrees with Lahusen (2020) that the normative understanding of solidarity, present in the second and third definition, is the dominant sense now in the EU, but believes that in the first steps of the European integration process, key personalities mentioning 'solidarity', actually referred to solidarity in the descriptive sense only. That is to say, at the start, European solidarity was limited to interdependence.

"[S]olidarity in the normative sense of an obligation" is furthermore distinguished in "'warm' solidarity between generous contributors and grateful beneficiaries" (...) [and] 'cold' solidarity between contributors complying with their obligations and beneficiaries exercising their right" (van Parijs, 2021, p. 96). This links to the dimension of charity versus legal entitlement we carved out in the first literature snapshot for this project. Another interesting link to consider here is to social justice. As van Parijs (2021, p.100) argues, solidarity does also exist among mafiosis and terrorists and much "systemic corruption" is in the end an expression of solidarity towards members of the same family or tribe. The refusal of solidarity can therefore be a more positive act in the sense of social justice "for example when a commitment to fairness wins over solidarity- driven favouritism, or reconciliation over revenge". These examples of 'corrupted solidarity' relate, however, all to 'warm solidarity', while 'cold' institutionalized solidarity is, according to van Parijs (2021, p.101), indeed "likely to contribute to EU- wide distributive justice". As we will see in the following, the notion of institutionalized solidarity as a more just solidarity is contested.

Next to solidarity, 'European solidarity' appears in the literature as a distinctive concept, a topic for special issues on solidarity between member states and citizens in the EU. Ciornei and Ross (2021, p.210) offer a minimal definition of solidarity entailing "the sharing of goals and resources to prevent or redress situations of economic, social, political or environmental adversity". Thereupon they develop the concept of "European Solidarity", coming "from an

institutional perspective that analyses policy responses of state and supranational political actors" (p.210). Analogue to the concept of solidarity "among" and solidarity "with" described in the previous section, Ciornei and Ross (2021) distinguish "'vertical' solidarity, that arises among member states or between the EU and European citizens" and "'horizontal' solidarity that develops among EU citizens with or without a pre-existing solidarity institutional framework" (p.211).

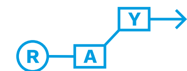
> European (social) solidarity is then described as 1) "sharing economic resources between regions, individuals and member states" and 2) "sharing goals and joint action that are beyond economic redistribution and reduction of social inequalities" (Ciornei and Ross, 2021, p.212).

Examples for sharing economic resources are funds of Regional policy (permanent institutional mechanism) or the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) ("'punctuated' type of redistribution (...) activated only when some member states, regions or individuals face crisis-like situations that significantly worsen their condition") (Ciornei and Ross, 2021, p.212). The sharing of goals and joint action is "related to democratic solidarity, i.e., the development of democratic norms and processes that increase the participation and representation of diverse social groups within the EU" (ibid.).

That the EU uses the ESM to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic is, for these authors, an example of how a "primarily healthcare and natural emergency is addressed through instruments of fiscal solidarity" (Ciornei and Ross, 2021, p.212), indicating that European solidarity is often limited to 'fiscal solidarity', in the sense of "providing financial assistance to crisis countries" (Lengfeld and Kley, 2020, p.331). Van Parijs (2021, p.98) seems to confirm that European solidarity is limited to economic support, when describing in a footnote that "[s]olidarity is sometimes meant much more widely (...), so as to cover, in addition to 'redistributive solidarity' (a large part of what is here characterized as 'solidarity'), 'civic solidarity' (or mutual respect) and 'democratic solidarity' (or support for equal rights)". Kapeller and Wolkenstein (2013, p.481) link one of four solidarity types, "self-centered solidarity", with fiscal solidarity in the sense that "[i]nteractions between individuals are primarily ones of economic interests and bargain, yet with a reciprocal bent that has integrative power in the social." Self-centered solidarity or fiscal solidarity seems to be the main solidarity between EU Member States (Kapeller and Wolkenstein, 2013). Gerhards (2020) explains the dominance of economic solidarity with existent EU institutions and instruments relating mainly to economic aspects. Though further institutions and instruments could be established, Gerhards (2020) argues that this takes time and is therefore unlikely to happen in an acute crisis.

From the discourse perspective on solidarity claims described in the previous section, we can assume that the predominant understanding of European solidarity is that of fiscal solidarity and that the European Solidarity Corps as an EU programme forwarding civic solidarity could represent an attempt to challenge and change this dominant understanding, tackling, furthermore, the lack of organisation and, in the long term, institutionalisation of European solidarity described by Lahusen (2020).

For the study of European solidarity, Ciornei and Ross (2021, p.212) describe three dimensions at the transnational level: trigger, outreach and level of inquiry (micro-, meso- or macro). Linking these dimensions to the concepts described in the previous section, we can say that the trigger is, in the end, the adversity or crisis actuating the claims for solidarity, in the sense of a



sharing of resources. Outreach refers to the actors, in the sense of givers and takers of solidarity, whereat "the recipients of European solidarity (...) can be member states, citizens or regions" (Ciornei and Ross, 2021, p.212). Member states appear as key actors of European solidarity, whereat "member state solidarity" can reach from "risk insurance schemes" (minimalist form) to "redistributive mechanisms" (maximalist form) (p. 212f.). While the former focuses on compensations, the latter aims at "reducing social, political and economic inequalities between member-states", a "territorially redistributive logic" used by most federal states in their Regional Policy (p.213). European solidarity with EU citizens as main actors is according to Ciornei and Ross (2021, p.213), currently focused on "EU movers", a form of transnational' solidarity with the principles of "freedom of movement and (...) non-discrimination" as the most prominent examples. Transnational solidarity and member state solidarity enter, however, into conflict leading to a situation in which freedom of movement and access to social rights are restricted for "inactive EU movers". Ciornei and Ross (2021, p.213) quote different authors arguing that transnational solidarity should not be limited to EU movers, but should include a "supranational layer of social rights" applied to "movers and stayers alike" and that would, ultimately, "mimic national solidarity schemes" for all EU citizens. Ross (2021) criticizes this approach in the same issue, arguing "that solidarity cannot be enabled merely by adding an additional layer of social rights to existing free movement and non-discrimination principles. Rather, the EU should seize opportunities to develop and enhance processes and powers that allow for bottom-up expressions of solidarity attitudes and practices". (Ciornei and Ross, 2021, p.216)

Much of the European Solidarity Corps programme could be understood in the sense of a fostering of "bottom-up expressions of solidarity attitudes and practices" (Ciornei and Ross, 2021, p.216), though the authors do not mention the programme.

The third dimension of analysis presented by Ciornei and Ross (2021) is the level of inquiry, once again distinguished in micro, meso and macro level. Ciornei and Ross (2021, p.214) refer to the "variety of social and political actors", furthermore combining these with different types of solidarity expressions: At the macro-structural level main expressions are principles, laws and policies and actors can be national and European Parliaments or member state and commission officials. At the meso-level of European solidarity, expressions are practices and actors civil society organizations. The micro-level "encompasses both attitudes and practices of European citizens" (p.214). Research on attitudes focuses on the individual support EU citizens express for European solidarity principles and policies, such as Eurobonds, the ESM or The Temporary Relocation Scheme for Asylum-seekers, concluding that "only a very small fraction of European citizenry clearly rejects any institutional mechanism that entail risk and resource sharing at the level of the Union" (Ciornei and Ross, 2021, p.214). Lahusen (2020, p.322) concludes in a similar vein:

> "European solidarity is a reality. Recent studies have evidenced that the principle of European solidarity is supported by a wide strata of the population, in part also by majorities, even though this support is conditional and contested". (Lahusen, 2020, p.322)

While this shows that "European solidarity as idea and as practice is much more widespread among the European populace", "an institutional form of solidarity that concerns member states and/or transnational solidarity is still in the making and will not necessarily be materialised in the foreseeable future" (Ciornei and Ross, 2021, p.214). Wallaschek and Eigmüller (2020, p.63) describe a similar contrast between citizen support and institutional structures for solidarity at EU level, giving the example of the "*Wilkommenskultur*" combined with "politics

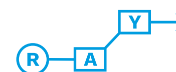
of demarcation, of 'security'" and the failure to institutionalize solidarity even in the context of the refugee crisis where public support for solidarity was principally given. Börner (2021, p.2) mentions the "wave of civic solidarity" shown by EU citizens in the face of "the reluctance of individual member states to take responsibility" as "'acts of resistance'", even including "civil disobedience". Following this impression that European solidarity among citizens is much stronger than between Member States, Ciornei and Ross (2021, p.214) argue that "the citizen-centred solidarity route may be the most pressing policy option to pursue given repeated inadequacies of the member-state focus".

The European Solidarity Corps programme could be seen as a step in the direction of a more "citizen-centred solidarity route" (Ciornei and Ross, 2021, p.214).

3.2. THE CONDITIONALITY OF EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY

A distinctive feature of European solidarity policies is conditionality (Ciornei and Ross, 2021; Lengfeld and Kley, 2020; Lynch and Kalaitzake, 2018). Lengfeld and Kley (2020, p.331) coin "conditioned solidarity" as a solidarity with a particular actor relation, in which "Ego [the giver] may expect that providing support to Alter [the receiver] should be dependent on Alter's agreement to meet particular obligations or patterns of behavior". Conditionality is strongly related to two attributes of solidarity: boundedness and reciprocity. Boundedness in European solidarity means "that solidarity policies and practices are related to membership in a group or political community", i.e. the EU (Ciornei and Ross, 2021, p.210). In Ciornei's and Ross' (2021, p.210) description of European solidarity reciprocity appears as an important trait, making solidarity "sustainable as an institution and social practice in the long-run". This is related to Lynch and Kalaitzake's (2018, p.5) definition of 'calculative solidarity', as "solidarity is most often defined as a type of reciprocal insurance system within, rather than between, nation states". Lynch and Kalaitzake (2018, p.5) consider conditionality an implicit trait of 'calculative solidarity', as there is always at least the condition that "what is given is expected to be reciprocated, should the need arise." However, conditionality can easily go beyond the simple expectation of a return of the favour when needed, so that "[r]eciprocity also paves the way to criteria on deservingness and conditionality, since only those that can 'give back' or 'share further' the goals, risks or burdens of solidarity arrangements are seen as legitimate recipients" (Ciornei and Ross, 2021, p.211). That is to say, the prominence of boundedness and reciprocity in the sense of a sharing of goals and giving back within a distinguished community of selected members, may also explain why "solidarity measures [in the EU] are often highly conditional" (Ciornei and Ross, 2021, p.218).

Other studies have found that the perception of deservingness depends directly on the type of crisis that created the need for solidarity, in particular whether it is considered "man-made" or "natural", whereat "respondents are most likely to support financial measures for countries that have been hit by a natural disaster, and least likely to help in case of fiscal debt burdens" (Koos, 2019, p. 8; Gerhards, 2020). Deservingness is, in this sense, another facet of the 'perceived injustice' as a precondition of solidarity (Kneuer et al. 2021) and neoliberal political ideas (Lynch and Kalaitzake, 2018) described in the previous section. From this approach the often used public argument in the discussion of the debt crisis that "Greece brought this upon itself" (Wolthuis, 2020, p.13) can be analysed as a lack of perceived deservingness and hence an explanation for the high conditionality of the European fiscal solidarity. As we will see in the next paragraphs, some authors understand this extreme conditionality, however, as a lack of or even the end of European solidarity.



The bailout programmes developed in the wake of the Euro and sovereign debt crisis can be considered a "hitherto unseen degree of intra-European redistribution" (Lengfeld and Kley, 2020, p. 331). These programmes were conceived "to avoid a collapse of the common currency" (Lengfeld and Kley, 2020, p.331), with a clear interest from the giving member states that followed a strong logic of deservingness and conditionality, requiring receiving member states to implement austerity measures "heavily limit[ing] this country's freedom of choice to design and execute its financial policy" (Ciornei and Ross, 2021, p.216).

Lynch and Kalaitzake (2018, p.4) understand the bailout programmes from the logic of 'calculated solidarity' and argue that "[t]he terms of bailouts for countries in crisis can only be considered solidaristic in a distinctively calculative sense" and criticize this approach to solidarity as a "narrow, calculative, self-interested vision of solidarity in Europe" (p.1). For van Parijs (2021, p. 98), on the other side, 'solidarity' goes always beyond a "self- interested insurance", so that even insurance schemes in the EU include "an element of altruism, of generosity", in the sense of a readiness to give without expecting to receive the same aid in turn when needed. This is exemplified by member states accepting refugees from other member states, not because they can expect to ever become a major destination of refugee waves and will require the same aid, but because they identify with the affected member states and feel "an altruistic virtual or counterfactual reciprocity: I help you because I assume that I could have been you", which is based on the identification with the same category, the belonging to a community: "I could have been you because you are 'one of us'" (van Parijs, 2021, p.98). Following this line of thought, it is the sense of community that is the basis of European solidarity – and conflicts in this identification and feeling of belonging might be useful to explain why member states sometimes refuse solidarity or opt for highly conditioned solidarity.

3.3. THE LIMITS OF EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY

The question of solidarity in the bailout programmes is, in van Parijs' (2021) analysis, furthermore linked to another element related to identification and thus virtual reciprocity: cultural diversity. Van Parijs (2021, p.101) argues that a shared understanding of "misfortune" (what Kneuer et al. (2021) call a shared perception of an adversity, see previous section), depends on the cultural context, just as much as the perception of responsible behaviour. Van Parijs (2021, p.101) believes that "[t]he more cultural diversity, the likelier the resentment of the contributors about the 'irresponsible' behaviour of the beneficiaries and the likelier the resentment of the beneficiaries about the 'meddlesome' behaviour of the contributors", concluding "[t]his cannot feed much optimism about EU- level solidarity— with an EU- wide population far more diverse than national populations" and increasing cultural diversity even within Member States. With Kapeller and Wolkenstein (2013, p. 487), we can identify van Parijs argument as a reference to a 'shared cultural horizon of a specific community' and thus originating from the philosophical tradition of "counter-Enlightenment solidarity", that is to say "solidarity as loyalty", which can take the form of nationalism in its exclusion of people whose suffering does not actuate solidarity because they are not perceived as members of the same group. While other types of solidarity based on the philosophical tradition of the Enlightenment (Kapeller and Wolkenstein, 2013) offer alternatives here, it is possible that European solidarity as such is deeply linked to concepts of solidarity as loyalty, which in turn could explain its difficulties in reacting to crises.

In this sense, it seems that the bailout programmes showed the limitations of European solidarity, as "the EU's coping mechanism in this instance was not rooted in the mutual solidarity of member states" (Wallaschek and Eigmüller, 2020, p.62), marking a complete halt of

solidarity, if this is conceived as necessarily including "an element of altruism, of generosity" (van Parijs, 2021, p. 98) or at least reducing it to "a distinctively calculative sense" (Lynch and Kalaitzake, 2018, p.1). Börner (2021, p.2) speaks of "a process of de-solidarization", highlighting that solidarity is not either given or not, but can increase and decrease gradually. This de-solidarization is explained with "the crisis harmed trust and the transnational processes that connect people" (Börner, 2021, p.2), that is to say, the debt crisis played people from different European nationalities off against each other, rather than fostering their feeling to belong to the same category. While van Parijs (2021, p.102) believes that nurturing "a common European identity" together with "an institutional framework that articulates a coherent multilevel citizenship status" can save European solidarity, this author also demands to "go beyond solidarity and appeal to a conception of justice that combines equal concern with equal respect for diverse conceptions of the good life", that is to say, the "conception of fairness". In the face of the difficulties to develop a common identity, the author calls for "the civilizing force of common deliberation, rather than the solidarizing force of a common identity and a common culture" (p.103). Wallaschek and Eigmüller (2020, p.60) believe, however, that "it now seems we have a new common narrative on 'European solidarity', which has replaced the earlier narrative of a European identity". Nicodemi and Bačlija Knoch (2020) build the opposite relation questioning whether "social justice is not so present in Europe today, as there is no organised and systemic approach to solidarity". Though it goes beyond the scope of this literature snapshot to assess whether conceptions of fairness and social justice are less contested and culturally shaped than understandings of solidarity, we will see in the following how important the link between solidarity and justice is in some views.

3.4. SOLIDARITY WITH HEAD AND HEART

Following the distinction between levels, we can say that the high conditionality of the bailout programmes was a decision taken at state level, while van Parijs (2021) and others see its origin in a lack of European identity – that is to say at the individual level. With Lengfeld and Kley (2020) we can analyse further how EU citizens relate to conditionality in EU policies. In an analysis of data from the 'Transnational European Solidarity Survey[7]' from 2016, Lengfeld and Kley (2020, p.330), find "that the majority of respondents reject the idea of conditionality"; "[s]trikingly, even those living in affluent countries oppose the idea of conditionality, especially those weakening the social welfare of low status persons" (p. 347). "Findings also confirm a general notion of solidarity Europe's citizens have in mind saying that the economically strongest shall strengthen the most vulnerable in society." (Lengfeld and Kley, 2020, p.347) However, the authors do not simply advocate for an abolishment of conditionality, arguing that considering conditionality is important "if political actors look to avoid a lack of legitimacy among European citizens". In this, they suggest that the appropriate selection of conditions should not only consider "their efficiency and effectiveness but also their acceptance among the public to not burdening the social bond within and among European societies" (Lengfeld and Kley, 2020, p.332). This indicates that conditioned solidarity might on the one hand constitute the basis for European solidarity, in the sense that only its conditioned character leads member states to show solidarity towards others. On the other hand, conditioned solidarity "may pose a minefield

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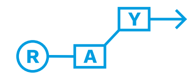
[7] The 'Transnational European Solidarity Survey' (TESS), carried out in 2016, "is a joint-project between two research groups: (1) 'Solidarity in European Societies: Empowerment, Social Justice and Citizenship (SOLIDUS)' funded by the European Commission in the context of the Horizon 2020 research programme (Grant Agreement n. 649489), and (2) the German DFG Research Unit 'Horizontal Europeanization' funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) (FOR 1539)" (Lengfeld and Kley, 2020, p.337f.).



for the EU, leading to a decrease of EU's legitimacy in the public eye" (Lengfeld and Kley, 2020, p.347). Conditioned solidarity does then foster a severe European solidarity crisis and can endanger the existence of the EU as a political community, if the conditions imply injustice, a worsening of the situation of the receiving member states and a general broadening of inequalities between member states. The logical consequence of this approach is the dilemma to achieve the right level of conditionality, contested by Lengfeld and Kley (2020, p.347) with a call for "sensitivity".

For Wolthuis (2020), the Greek debt crisis is a crisis of justice and not of solidarity, as financial aid was given, but undermined Greek's independence. In concrete, it is the lack of "a just legal background" that enables conditioned solidarity like the bailout programmes in the EU to "disrupt the independence of cooperating parties" (Wolthuis, 2020, p.7). The Greek crisis is then an example illustrating "what may happen once states agree to cooperate on the basis of *solidarity* in the absence of a background system of (in this case) international *justice* that secures their independence" (Wolthuis, 2020, p.10, italics in the original). For Wolthuis (2020, p.6) justice concerns the "legal order", while solidarity is a "supererogatory duty of a party (a citizen or state) engaged in cooperation"; "acts of solidarity are understood to be motivated by long-term self-interests, while the support for a just system of positive law should be conceptualised as based on a proper sense of justice" (p.7). Moreover, "a state's legal system is just if it makes possible a society of free and equal persons" (Wolthuis, 2020, p.6). Individuals within a state (and states within a union) are, according to this approach, free as long as they do not depend on other individuals, because the state cares for them when needed. In contrast, Koos (2019, p.13) describes an example in which the dependence on the state is what makes individuals dependent, while civic solidarity, in concrete new "grassroots food banks", are considered an attempt to "overcome the stigmatizing passive and dependent role of the poor". With Durkheim it is precisely the interplay of neither depending solely on state aid nor on civic solidarity that leads to justice, as thorough institutionalisation could lead to a "dehumanization of solidarity" if the state only relied on a head but not a heart (Thijssen, 2012, p.23). For Durkheim "[t]he heart of the state is embodied by a network of interrelated intermediate corporations, operating at micro level as well as globally" (Thijssen, 2012, p.23), so civic solidarity organised in 'solidarity organisations' (Petelczyc, 2021, p.134) could then work as a necessary control mechanism to ensure the proper functioning of institutionalised solidarity and, hence, justice. At the same time, the activity of such NGOs depends on "the availability of organisations and organised forms of action and the availability of political opportunities and targets" (Petelczyc, 2021, p.136), indicating that a minimal degree of justice is already necessary to achieve the functioning of control mechanisms that can then increase justice further. Lahusen (2020, p.318) observes that, in the EU, "solidarity work is mainly a local and decentralised activity, embedded in transnational webs of cooperation", that is to say lacking "a well-developed organisational field that has a transnational structure and outreach" (p.315), arguably because "obstacles predominate over incentives where transnational solidarity is concerned" (p.323).

The definition of European solidarity does not only apply elements of solidarity to the EU context (like reciprocity, different levels or tiers, etc.), but comes with some specific elements and issues (lack of institutionalisation and organisation; conditionality; dominant understanding of solidarity limited to fiscal solidarity, etc.). From a historical perspective, the sense of the term solidarity seems to have changed from pure interdependence to a more normative conceptualisation, but is still mostly limited to a self-centred conceptualisation of solidarity. The strong in-group focus may explain the apparent difficulties in integrating cultural diversity, the importance ascribed to European identity,

issues to achieve a further institutionalisation of solidarity and with conditionality and justice. Institutionally European solidarity is still mainly limited to economic support, as instruments and institutions going beyond fiscal aspects are missing. In particular conditionality raises questions about the scope of European solidarity, leading some authors to highlight its limitations and others to claim its non-existence or end. Eye-catchingly, different studies find that EU citizens tend to support European (and global) solidarity to much bigger extents than their political representatives and thus the EU Member States. For some authors, citizens and civic solidarity organisations can be the key to overcoming the current stalemate situation, fostering European solidarity and with it the European integration process.

Supporting solidarity organisations through the European Solidarity Corps programme could be seen as a form to foster not only solidarity, but also justice in the EU and could help to tackle severe issues with European solidarity like conditionality.

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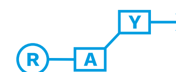

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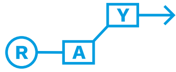

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