

Panel 1 - The production of crisis and fragility

Collection of abstracts

Monday, 26 June, 9:30–13.00

The temporal construction of fragility – Hijacked knowledge and non-knowledge in migration management

Lorenzo Olivieri, University of Bologna

The management of population mobility depends on the incessant production of knowledge about border-crossers. Such processes of knowledge production are shaped by temporal goals and mechanisms which tend to negatively affect border-crossers' possibilities of action, eventually creating vulnerable and fragile subjects. To enquire how time is used for maintaining and strengthening power relations and knowledge asymmetries I analyze, first, the temporalities shaping the Registration and Identification procedures carried out at the Hotspots and, second, accelerated asylum procedures.

Hotspots represent the first moment in which people unknown to European authorities are made legible (Pelizza 2020, Pollozeck & Passoth 2019), in which knowledge about them is extracted and produced for hindering, regulating and controlling their following movements. Yet, the "temporal choreography" (Felt 2015) which is both embedded in and generated by those operations is often omitted or concealed in policy documents. To investigate how the temporalities shaping these procedures affect and hinder border-crossers' agency, I analyze the "temporal collisions" emerging from the encounters between migration management and border-crossers. I argue that migration management harnesses such "temporal collisions" to produce hijacked knowledge, namely to achieve border-crossers' compliance and, more broadly, to produce knowledge about them while, simultaneously, leaving border-crossers with a confused and partial understanding of the temporal implications of the procedures to which they are subjected.

Second, I focus on the so-called "accelerated procedures", which have been introduced in Member States in order to speed up the asylum process (Cwerner 2004, Tazzioli 2018, Reneman & Stronks 2021). These procedures apply to several categories of applicants, for instance people of certain nationalities as well as to those who lodge a new asylum application after a rejection. These applicants have less time to prepare their cases, to provide relevant evidence and to appeal in case of a negative decision. I suggest that accelerated procedures produce non-knowledge about asylum seekers by relying upon two main temporal mechanisms. First, by reversing the temporal relationship between procedure and assessment: applications submitted by certain categories of applicants are deemed to be unfounded *a priori*, and thus channeled into an accelerated procedure. Second, by reducing the timeframes shaping the asylum process, these procedures hinder asylum seekers' possibilities to collect and produce knowledge about themselves.

The Crisis of Schengen, revisited. Intensive Zones of Europeanisation and the Return of Sovereign Violence

Bernd Kasperek, Humboldt-University Berlin

For any kind of network comprised of multiple and heterogeneous actors/actants, and in the absence of a clear organising logic, a well-defined hierarchy or a centre of power, the periodic emergence of instability, fragility and crisis must be the norm, rather than the exception. The study of regimes (e.g. Krasner 1983), particularly of border and migration regimes (e.g. Kasperek 2023 forthcoming), is thus primarily concerned

with understanding and theorising how nevertheless, temporary stability and coherence can emerge. For border and migration regimes, this may be even more difficult. While for international regimes, good-faith cooperation may be generally assumed, this is not necessarily the case for border and migration regimes. They are fundamentally characterised by the un-democratic character of borders (Balibar 2002) and the antagonistic relationship of nation states to international migration. 'Quick fixes' (Sciortino 2004) are the order of any day in the life of a migration regime. In my presentation, I will discuss the case of what we have called the 'Crisis of Schengen' (Kasperek and Tsianos 2013), i.e. the multiple challenges that the European border and migration regime as it emerged after Amsterdam (1997/1999) faced after 2010. Exacerbated by the 'Summer of Migration' (Kasperek and Speer 2015) in 2015/16, the European border and migration regime today has stabilised around a political stalemate which is however characterised by the rise in violence, detention and denial of fundamental rights at the borders of Europe.

How the borders in Ukraine became wide open in light of the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine?

Mariia Shaidrova, University of Tilburg

Throughout the last year, we have witnessed how the European Union dealt with the migration crisis resulted from the Ukrainian-Russian war. Following the full-scale invasion, according to the UNHCR, up to 7 million people fled their homes seeking refuge in the EU. The Eastern European Member States opened their borders to welcome displaced people from Ukraine. This act was widely criticized for its selectiveness and racism especially considering the situation on the Belorussian and Polish borders for non-Ukrainian migrants trying to reach the EU. Although Western human rights defenders and academics got confronted with such an appealing contradiction in the EU migration policy, little we know about the legal, political, and historical preconditions for the open borders' response.

Firstly, we will address the visa-free policy with Ukraine and respective border crossings from 2017 to 2022. Taking the example of Poland, we will also analyse the number of crossings among displaced people from Ukraine and Ukrainian labor markets (Polish diaspora counting up to a million Ukrainians who either migrated to Poland or possessed Polish work permits/seasonal work permits). Secondly, we will look at the political preconditions of the EU visa travel policy and potentially the role of migration management in it. Finally, we will analyze the anti-Soviet and anti-Russia postcolonial solidarity among Eastern European states directly affected by the Soviet Regime. Our understanding of this context could essentially contribute to the notion of the borders' fragility by conceptualizing the political and historical nature of the border control that goes beyond solely racist and discriminative claims when it comes to the displacement from Ukraine.

Infrastructural fragility and/as algorithmic power in European security

Rocco Bellanova – Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Building on the research work carried out with Georgios Glouftsiou, this contribution attempts to investigate the relation between infrastructural fragility and algorithmic power in the domain of European security. Much research at the intersection of Science and Technology Studies and Critical Security/Border Studies highlights how old and new data practices foster the powers of public authorities in the domain of policing, migration and border controls. Notably, large-scale databases and the connection between diverse systems could be considered foundational for European Union (EU) security. In this contribution I propose to supplement this literature by suggesting exploring the fragility of such mighty data infrastructures. What are their infrastructural fragilities and how do they relate to something we can understand as algorithmic power? How does infrastructural fragility inform power relations in the domain of European security? The

point of departure of my exploration is the EU Court of Justice's judgement on the so-called PNR Directive, adopted in June 2022. The Court's reasoning offers us the occasion to explore the fragility of a high-tech information system that automatically pre-assesses millions of travelers' data (Passenger Name Records/PNR) against multiple databases and pre-determined criteria. It also offers us the possibility to unpack how infrastructural fragility, for example the high number of errors and the data workload that these errors trigger, may end up strengthening some forms of algorithmic power. These forms of algorithmic power deserve to be better understood because they affect too how European security is practiced, and not only how it is envisioned at the level of much policy debate.