

Project 4.2 Managing the Immigration Crisis: Inter-Institutional Co-operation and External Relations

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This study aims

- to explore the inter-institutional co-operation between EU institutions in handling the immigration crisis
- to explore how external relations affect transboundary crisis management, through documentary analysis and assessment of existing public opinion data on European citizens' attitudes about migration
- to provide recommendations as to how EU transboundary crisis management capacity can be advanced in the case of crises on the EU's borders.

Description

Immigration represents a special challenge to the EU and its member states. This project studies the role leadership plays in the EU's crisis management at the borders of Europe. Several EU official documents pledge to enhance the European involvement in effective, multilateral actions in countries affected by disaster and serious conflict events.

Accordingly, the EU institutions and the Member States have created common and joint capabilities of action which have been employed in some cases with good results, in others with poor and mixed results, and in some other cases failed to be put in place. Leadership and lack of it are one of the main reasons for such different performance of the EU's response to the need for external action in crisis management. The financial crisis worsened the EU's role and the potentiality for leadership in crisis management due to the retrenchment policy of some governments and the repositioning of some states' public opinion towards contributing to common actions.

This research project will combine a *retrospective* and *prospective* perspective, in order to find out (a) the conditions favoring and hampering leadership in crisis management at the borders of Europe and (b) the consequences of leadership and missing leadership on the legitimacy and efficiency of the EU crisis management operations at the borders of Europe.

In the *retrospective* analysis, the role of leadership/lack of leadership will be tested through the analysis of the management of the immigration issue. Particular attention will be given to the EU operation in Libya. The Libya case provides an ideal setting to test the EU's ability and coherence in matching capabilities and actions for trans-boundary crisis management for societal crises and capabilities and actions for conflict resolution.

The *prospective* analysis will dive into the existing EU crisis management mechanisms and capabilities to check whether they fit to the lessons learned from the retrospective analysis, and also investigates on the institutional and political conditions that can make the EU crisis management at the borders of Europe more legitimate and effective through enhancing leadership in the multi-level (Union and the states) governance of such operations. In both the retrospective and prospective analysis, the research methods of this project will be process-tracing and decision-making analysis to investigate about the leadership dynamics. In addition, the analysis will be supported by an analysis of existing public opinion research on migration. Accordingly, the research will explore Eurobarometer and national public opinion research to analyse public attitudes towards migration, and their attitudes towards the role of the EU in migration policy.