

Refuge Europe – a question of solidarity?

International conference at Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany,

October 1-2, 2019.

Since 2015, migration towards and within Europe has created a ‘stress’ in the EU asylum and migration systems, challenging both the adequacy of the legal design of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) and its practical implementation. Soon after the influx, the process was labeled as a “refugee crisis” by some, and “crisis of solidarity” by others, referring to the notion of solidarity and responsibility-sharing, which both are founding principles of the European Union.

Our conference aims to reflect on these recent experiences with refugee reception in Europe and present research results on how those challenges have been tackled at the different levels of governance. The conference will discuss asylum governance and refugee reception from a multilevel governance perspective. It will integrate the migrants’ perspective and reflect their experiences of mobility, borders, arrival and settlement. It will furthermore reflect the massive politicization processes of migration and integration, which stimulated a transformation of the political landscape in many European countries. Last but not least, the conference will be attentive to best practice approaches in the field of refugee reception and asylum governance and will discuss future scenarios of a common European asylum system, based on the principle of solidarity and responsibility sharing.

This conference is part of the Horizon 2020 project **CEASEVAL Evaluation of the Common European Asylum System under Pressure and Recommendations for Further Development**, which aims to evaluate the European Asylum System considering recent events of stress and elaborate possibilities for reform, based on the central idea of harmonization of regulations and solidarity among EU member states. The conference will give the floor to fellow researchers to present and discuss their findings in the field of refugee reception and asylum governance, focusing on the five thematic fields CEASEVAL is studying: (1) regulatory mechanisms of the CEAS, (2) multilevel governance of reception, (3) borders and the mobility of migrants, (4) patterns of politicization on refugees and policy responses and (5) rethinking solidarity – from lip service to good practice. Moreover, we will (6) debate methodological challenges of comparative fieldwork and (7) discuss good practice of dissemination to various audiences.

Venue and Organizational Issues

The conference will take place at Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany. Chemnitz is a mid-size town, located in the federal state of Saxony, about three hours from Berlin or one hour from Dresden (several train and bus connections available). Nearest airports are Berlin, Leipzig/Halle, Dresden, and Prague. There are train and bus connections from all those airports to Chemnitz.

Panels will be held in English and German, translation will be provided. Panels will start in the morning of 1st October and last until 2nd October 2 p.m. Conference registration will be open via the CEASEVAL website from May. **The conference is free of charge and entails catering. The conference dinner on Tuesday evening will be approximately 50 EUR.** More details on travel, venue and room contingents in recommended hotels will be given during the second circular.

Organizing Committee

Birgit Glorius (Chemnitz University of Technology, GERMANY)
Melanie Kintz (Chemnitz University of Technology, GERMANY)
Michael Collyer (University of Sussex, UNITED KINGDOM)
Erica Consterdine (University of Sussex, UNITED KINGDOM)
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Martin Wagner (International Centre for Migration Policy Development, ICMPD, AUSTRIA)
Blanca Garces (Barcelona Centre for International Information and Documentation, CIDOB, SPAIN)
Minos Mouzourakis (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, ECRE, BELGIUM)
Evelien Brouwer (Stichting Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS)

Call for Papers

We invite scholars from various disciplines to submit abstracts that make an original theoretical and/or empirical contribution related to the Common European Asylum System. This includes but is not limited to asylum governance, refugee reception, borders, the Refugee Crisis, debates related to harmonisation and solidarity in CEAS and the politicisation of asylum. We encourage submissions that fit into one of the panels listed below. However, we welcome abstracts that go beyond these specific themes. **Please submit your abstract in English or German (max. 300 words), indicating which (if any) specific panel listed below you wish to be part of, together with your name, institution/affiliation, short-biography and contact details via email (ceaseval@gmail.com) by 15 April 2019.** Applicants will be notified by May 2019 about the outcome of their submission. Participants will be asked to prepare a presentation of 15 minutes to leave time for discussion. After the conference, participants will be invited to submit papers based on their conference presentation for a special issue in a leading journal and/or an edited volume of a leading publisher. More information about this will be shared prior to the conference.

For further information, please contact either Prof. Dr. Birgit Glorius (birgit.glorius@phil.tu-chemnitz.de) or Dr. Melanie Kintz (melanie.kintz@phil.tu-chemnitz.de)

Panels

PANEL I: HARMONISATION IN THE CEAS: FORMS AND PERSPECTIVES

The panel looks at the different regulatory mechanisms of the CEAS and their effectiveness in promoting convergence in protection standards across Europe so far. It focuses on the particular forms of harmonisation through legislation, soft law and guidance, and network-building at different institutional levels. The panel will also discuss perspectives and reform opportunities for the CEAS. Contributions will be prepared by the CEASEVAL team and discussed during the panel.

Convenors: Dr. Evelien Brouwer and Prof. Dr. Hemme Battjes (VU), Dr. Martin Wagner (ICMPD), Minos Mouzourakis (ECRE)

PANEL II: THE MULTILEVEL GOVERNANCE OF RECEPTION

Existing research on the Common European Asylum System has taken primarily two specular approaches: a legal perspective, aimed at assessing the degree of legislative harmonisation across EU countries vis-à-vis the EU Directives constituting the CAES; a local practices approach, looking more closely at reception practices carried out at a grassroots level (at borders, in reception facilities etc) by public officers, bureaucrats, and NGOs practitioners. Still lacking is a mid-range analysis of policymaking processes. To fill this gap, in this panel we take a multilevel governance (MLG) perspective and we focus on decision making and implementation processes of asylum seekers reception, namely one of the most complex components of CEAS and probably the one with the highest range of actors involved. The goal is that of unravelling how these policies are concretely decided upon and implemented through the interactions between public and non-public actors mobilised at different territorial scales.

According to policy literature, MLG policymaking arrangements are particularly apt to address and manage complex and multifaceted social challenges. By bringing together all the concerned public and non-public actors, the expectation is that non-hierarchical and cooperative types of relations will develop with the goal of contributing to solve the issues on the ground (Agranoff 2018). However, such a perspective seems to overlook the possible political conflicts underlying actors' interactions, especially on such politically sensitive issues as is the reception of asylum seekers. Therefore, in this panel we are particularly interested in papers that thematise the MLG of reception policies from a critical perspective.

We aim at answering two main questions:

- 1) to what extent multi-level political dynamics are actually underpinned by cooperation and coordination among the mobilised actors, or rather marked by conflict and opposition;
- 2) to what extent the – eventual – presence of cooperative MLG policy-making arrangements can favour policy convergence at the grassroots level, therefore going beyond legislative harmonisation.

Convenors: Dr. Tiziana Caponio (University of Turin), Dr. Ferruccio Pastore (FIERI), Dr. Lucas Oesch (Institute of Geography and Spatial Planning, University of Luxembourg)

PANEL III: EVERYDAY BORDERS IN THE LIVES OF ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES COMING TO EUROPE

The birth of "fortress Europe" has resulted in the creation of new borders and mechanisms of control of migratory movements (Walters 2006), as well as walls and gates aiming to manage migration (Nevins 2002). This panel interrogates the conceptualisations of borders as 1) physical external frontiers and 2) internal social categorisations (Fassin 2011) in the lives of asylum seekers and refugees. Internal social boundaries recreate state borders, highlighting who is (not) allowed to be in a given space or what their rights might be limited to. Borders have thus become ubiquitous (Balibar 2002), as they no longer exist only at the limit of the state territory, but have (also) been transferred into the middle of the social and political space. Borders are thus not only separation lines between topological spaces, but they also represent social and cultural frontiers of inclusion and exclusion (Yuval-Davis 2013) which differentiate between 'insiders' and those deemed 'outsiders'. Asylum seekers and refugees are surrounded by multiple borders in their everyday lives, which are enacted by various actors such as traditional border-guards, as well as public and private agents from the labour and housing market or health and education sectors. All these actors may facilitate or prevent migrants from crossing barriers allowing them to have access or not to various services.

We invite theoretical, empirical, and/or methodological contributions which engage with, but are not limited to, the following aspects:

- 1) How contemporary borders are formed in asylum seekers and refugees' everyday lives.
- 2) The crossing of physical borders, and the encounters with border-guards.
- 3) The interplay between borders and boundaries in the everyday lives of asylum seekers and refugees.
- 4) Borders in the labour and housing market, as well as in the health and education sectors for asylum seekers and refugees.
- 5) If and how the Schengen agreement has redefined the notion of borders for asylum seekers and refugees.
- 6) The role of the Dublin regulation in the movements of asylum seekers and refugees.
- 7) How borders influence the mobility of asylum seekers and refugees and/or how they are challenged by their mobility.

Convenors: Dr. Claudia Paraschivescu and Dr. Lucas Oesch (Institute of Geography and Spatial Planning, University of Luxembourg)

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PANEL IV: THE POLITICISATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

Since 2015 migration towards and within Europe has created a 'stress' in the EU asylum and migration systems, challenging the adequacy of the legal and policy design of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). In particular, the 2015 so-called Refugee Crisis – for many a “crisis in solidarity” - has raised major questions for what fair burden-sharing and responsibility-sharing mean in practice and whether the current CEAS can cohesively deliver a harmonized asylum system. Despite the centrality of these questions, most academic literature has focused on the politicisation of immigration, including how public opinion, political rhetoric and media coverage shape the debates, saliency and polarisation of migration and in turn how such contestations influence policy responses. Taking cues from this literature, this panel shifts the focus from the politicisation of immigration to the politicisation of responsibility. This means a shift from questions such as how migration is covered, perceived and responded to questions about the meaning and boundaries of responsibility, which includes debates about state's responsibility towards citizens and non-citizens; to whom we should be responsible, who is a deserving asylum seekers and what it means to deserve; and who should be responsible both at the national and European levels, including debates on sovereignty and the clash between Europeanisation and renationalisation of immigration policies. The final purpose is to identify different patterns and mechanisms of politicization (Wilde 2011) and by so doing understand the relationship between politics, politicisation and policies vis-à-vis debates on responsibility both between and within Member States. We invite theoretical, empirical, and/or methodological contributions which engage with these aspects.

Convenors: Dr. Blanca Garces (CIDOB, Spain), Prof. Dr. Anna Krasteva (CERMES/NBU, Bulgaria), Dr. Erica Consterdine (University of Sussex, UK)

PANEL V: SOLIDARITY FROM BELOW: NEW PERSPECTIVES FROM THE LOCAL

The notion of solidarity stands at the core of CEASEVAL's research and is approached from various perspectives and at various scales of observation. Solidarity is commonly defined as an “agreement between and support for the members of a group, especially a political group.” (Cambridge Dictionary). In the EU and its multilevel governance framework, “solidarity” is usually interpreted as responsibility sharing, which requires countries to cooperate aiming to achieve shared goals which go beyond individual MS interests (Wagner, Kraler, Baumgartner 2018). In the context of refugee reception and asylum, the term “solidarity” also shows high relevance on the sub-national level and among non-state actors, where it is much more in evidence than among member states. State and non-state actors, civil society as well as asylum seekers themselves play a major role in bypassing normative regulations and authorities' constraints to develop alternative approaches of reception and integration (Ruszczyk 2018, Siopera 2019, Agustín and Jørgensen 2019). Theoretically, those processes are studied in the context of research on social movements' and contentious politics (Ataç, Rygiel, Stierl 2017) and also between governmental levels (Kos, Maussen, Doomernik 2015, Oomen, Baumgärtel, Durmus 2018).

From the geographical point of view, solidarity from below connects to the notion of the “local turn”, which stresses the relevance of local settings, the role of local governance as well as the engagement of local actors, that may however transcend the local level by adopting a transnational or translocal approach (see for example the Solidarity Cities and Sanctuary Cities movements). Thus, we can ask if and how solidarity movements from below have the potential to create new relationships between actors and governance levels.

In this panel, we would like to take a perspective from below and analyse how solidarity is enacted on the local level and among local actors. We are specifically interested in the development of solidarity practices across space and time, how solidarity is framed and argued by the involved actors, who those actors are and how solidarity movements can be understood from a social theory perspective. On the basis of the contributions to our panel, we want to discuss the transformative potential of solidarity from below with regards to responsibility, belonging, and citizenship. We invite theoretical, empirical, and/or methodological contributions which engage with these aspects.

Convenors: Prof. Dr. Birgit Glorius (TU Chemnitz, Germany), Dr. Jeroen Doomernik (University of Amsterdam, Netherlands)

References:

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PANEL VI: ROUND TABLE: AN EXCHANGE BETWEEN POLICY AND SCIENTIFIC PERSPECTIVE

Most of the CEASEVAL findings feed into a set of scenarios on the future of refugee protection in the European Union. Those scenarios will be presented at this round table, to which stakeholders are invited who in their daily practice are concerned with the reception of asylum seekers and refugees; organizing solidarity; harmonizing policies and practices; and dealing with the consequences of secondary movements (i.e. asylum seekers who travel beyond the country responsible for them under the Dublin-rules). These issues manifest themselves at diverse locations and at varying levels of governance; i.e. from grass roots to the international level. Stakeholders familiar with any of those perspectives are highly welcome to join the exchange and to critically reflect on CEASEVAL's scenarios.

Convenors: Dr. Jeroen Doomernik and Dr. Vincenzo Gomes (University of Amsterdam, Netherlands)



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