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ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS
ABSTRACTS, SESSION BY SESSION
**WS 33: BORDERING PROCESSES**

**Strand Organisers:** Jacob Lind & Ioanna Tsoni  
**Chair:** Austin Kocher  
**Location:** Room C233

**Border management, cooperation and control in the Baltic Sea area.**

_Goran Basic (Linnaeus University)_  
_Sophia Yakhlef (Lund University)_

Recent events in Europe concerning the large influx of irregular migrants and re-implementation of border controls have drawn our attention towards European migration management and border politics. Border officers claim that they must rely on cooperation to perform their duties of border guarding. In 2014 a collaborative project initiated by the Stockholm County Police, Border Division in Sweden was commenced. The project was partly funded by the European commission. The participants were border police and border authorities in Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, and Sweden. This is a qualitative study based on empirically gathered material such as field interviews with border officers and fieldwork observations. This study suggests that the border officers re-negotiate spatial and cultural identities to make cooperation possible creating new distinctions and boundaries of “us and them”. The border officers are united in their views and efforts to protect EU territory and Schengen space from criminal activity but some express ambivalence towards categories of “criminals” concerning irregular migrants. At the same time, cooperation and increased social interaction stimulate the officers to create new categories of “us and them”; those who you know personally trust and those whom you do not know and cannot trust. Earlier distinctions between the east (the former soviet states such as Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia) and the west (Sweden and Finland) are in some ways diminished through interaction and close cooperation. Instead, the Baltic Sea officers create distinctions between themselves and southern European countries regarding work methods, general attitude, opinions, and efficiency.

**“Fortress Europe”? The role of Frontex in the European political discourse.**

_Bahar Mahzari (University College Maastricht)_

During the last years, NGOs, scholars, and significant parts of civil society have harshly criticized the European Union’s (EU) immigration and asylum system. The EU’s various agencies working under the Common European Asylum System have been accused of violating principles of international law and securitizing the phenomenon of immigration. Frontex is one of these agencies. The political debate around the common border management agency reached its heights with the shipwreck incident at the coasts of Lampedusa. On the one hand, civil protest against the European immigration policies has never been so rigorous. On the other hand, the Union persistently defends Frontex and its role. However, the reasons put forward in the debate have not been made entirely explicit by the EU. Hence, this paper analyzes EU legislation, speeches, publications and other Union documents in order to shed light on the main arguments. With the tool of Analytical Discourse Evaluation (ADE) it assesses the three most salient arguments consisting of the issues concerning illegal immigration, saving lives and solidarity. Extracting, reconstructing and evaluating these arguments can place the debate around Frontex into a broader framework regarding the Union’s legitimacy. Although both, the Saving Lives argument and Solidarity argument can be regarded as strong, all three arguments can be rendered questionable in terms of practical reality: the values promoted by the EU do not mirror the operational reality of Frontex’s tasks and missions.