

CALL FOR PAPERS

Workshop

Identification, Technologies and Deportation of Foreigners: Comparative Perspectives

17-18 November 2017

Institute of Sociology, University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland

The deportation of foreigners remains a central domain to observe current and future changes as well as the limits of national and European immigration policies. Besides Nation-states, the European Union (EU) has been increasingly active in this field. The “Green Paper on a Community return policy for illegal residents” published by the European Commission in 2002 can be considered as one of the first steps in this area within European migration policies. It highlights, on the one hand, the importance of cooperation between the member states and the need for common standards at the European level, and, on the other hand, the readmission agreements with third countries.

In this sense, several texts, such as the Directive of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals (2008/115/EC), also known as the ‘Return Directive’ can be mentioned. In addition, one can mention the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation III, called into question following the mass arrival of migrants in 2015. The two texts are closely linked to the increased use of technological instruments, in particular the EURODAC, a database containing the fingerprints of asylum seekers, and the Schengen Information System (SIS). These instruments also include the Visa Information System (VIS) collecting data about people who request a visa from a European country and the Entry/Exit System of the EU, presented by the European Commission in 2008. European databases show that the use of biometric data is especially put forward on the European level in order to cope with the lack of cooperation of deportees and the difficulties of identifying them.

On the national level, the deportation of different categories of foreigners has gradually become prominent on the agendas of the governments of several European countries since the mid-1990s. The identification of foreigners to be deported emerged as a central issue for Nation-states. Besides, member states or states associated with the EU, such as Switzerland, use the abovementioned European instruments in order to identify and deport these foreigners.

Nevertheless, most migrants arriving in Europe are able to stay despite deportation orders against them and this fact constitutes the basis for European and national efforts to overcome the relative inefficiency of their deportation policies. In its Communication ‘on the European Union's Return Policy’ and in several other documents, the Commission of the European Communities (2014) underlines the ‘considerable gap’ between the number of people who have

been served with a deportation order and the number of actual deportations. In this regard, the difficulty of identifying foreigners to be deported is considered as one of the major obstacles mainly due to avoidance strategies deployed by them in order to derail or interrupt the deportation process.

This workshop will examine the identification process of foreigners to be deported and the use by Nation-states of the instruments and procedures existing for this purpose at national and European levels (such as EURODAC and the SIS). In this respect, the role of (biometric) control technologies is of central focus. The workshop will also analyse the strategies and means that foreigners threatened with deportation use to avoid identification and thus escape deportation. Moreover, a whole session will be devoted to comparative perspectives in the study of the deportation of foreigners in Europe and identification practices.

Papers could address, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- description and analysis of the European technological instruments for the identification of foreigners to be deported;
- in-depth and comparative analysis of the use of these European instruments by Nation-states;
- analysis of resources, means, as well as avoidance strategies and actions used by foreigners to prevent their identification and deportation.

Abstract submissions

We welcome abstracts of no more than 500 words, including authors' names, titles, emails and institutional affiliations by July 7th, 2017 at the latest. All proposals must be prepared in word format and submitted to Ibrahim Soysüren (ibrahim.soysuren@unine.ch) and Mihaela Nedelcu (mihaela.nedelcu@unine.ch). After assessment, the authors of accepted proposals will be informed by August 7th, 2017. A first draft of the papers is expected to be delivered by October 31st, 2017. *It should be noted that the organizers intend to publish (as a special issue or an edited volume) all or a selection of papers after the workshop.*

This workshop relates to the current research project: "Institutional uses of European technological tools for identification and avoidance strategies by foreigners to be deported in France and in Switzerland. Towards a Europeanization of the deportation of undesirable foreigners?" (Swiss National Science Foundation Grant FN 10001A_166142/1, 2016-2019)