

## **The Management of borders and migration in Europe's Southeastern "Backyard"**

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In 2015, the so-called Balkan route became the focus of the European media as it became the main route for irregular migrants from the global south to reach the wealthier states of the EU. Since then, border and migration management along the "Balkan Route" has changed significantly. After formalizing the route by creating a so-called corridor, it was closed again in spring 2016. This was followed by the securitization of the borders. In my presentation, I would like to address the new modalities of border and migration management in the Balkans, and in particular the use of digital technologies for border and migration management. In doing so, I highlight two very different strategies: First, the detection of irregular migrants at the inner fringe of the EU, which is regularly followed by unauthorized push-backs; second, the increasingly digitalized registration of migrants in the outer zones of the EU, which focuses on the individualized control of their movement. While the first strategy is in the spotlight of human rights organizations, the latter is developing more covertly but could be more far-reaching, as it sets the stage for EU states to legally return migrants to southeastern European states. This would turn the Balkan states even more systematically into a "backyard of Europe". In my presentation, I would like to provide an embedded view of migration and border management by also highlighting the pitfalls of the new management system.