



Empowerment through migration control cooperation.

The Spanish-Moroccan case

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Abstract

In EU migration studies, sending and transit states' compliance with destination states' migration control policies is often explained as the result of the EU and the member states successfully wielding pressure and persuasive bargaining power.

This thesis argues that sending and transit states do not cooperate because they are persuaded to do so by the superior power and are subject to pressure exercised by the EU member state, but because of a long bargaining process between the two countries in which bilateral, multilateral, geopolitical factors and bargaining strategies all play an important role. Migration control cooperation cannot be understood by just analyzing the relations between the EU and its neighbourhood countries, but instead needs to be analyzed in the terms of bilateral relations and the influence of linkages, interdependence relations and embedded processes between EU members and neighbour states. Moreover, by examining the terms and factors of migration control cooperation between such pairs of states, I demonstrate how the latter can enhance their bargaining position by cooperating strategically and conditionally. Through an in-depth analysis of over twenty-five years of the Spanish-Moroccan migration control cooperation I explain the reasons of Moroccan (non-) cooperation over certain periods of times, geographical areas and measures, as well as the structure of the terms of their collaboration.

The findings prove that Morocco has instrumentalized migration in order to obtain bargaining power. In other words, through migration control cooperation Morocco has gained power in economic, political, diplomatic, and regional terms. By applying a strategic conditional cooperation on migration control, refusing to implement certain migration control tasks, using the interdependence framework in its favour, taking advantage of the international context and implementing a successful bargaining strategy, Morocco has over the years become a key partner for Spain and the EU with a strong and privileged bargaining position in the North-African, Mediterranean and international arenas.



Jury: Rainer Bauböck (EUI), Jonathan Zaragoza, Anna Triandafyllidou (EUI), Hein de Haas (University of Amsterdam), Sandra Lavenex (Université de Genève) (via videolink)

Bio

Jonathan Zaragoza Cristiani is a research associate at the BORDERLANDS project hosted by the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute.

He holds an M.A in Political Science from the European University Institute and a Licenciatura and an MA in Political Science from the Universidad Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona. He has been Research Assistant for the EMILIE European Project financed by the European Commission, and researcher for the *FRONTERAS* project (funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation).

His Ph.D. thesis, supervised by Prof. Rainer Bauböck, does an in-depth analysis of more than 25 years of the Spanish-Moroccan migration control cooperation, and explains the reasons of Moroccan (non-)cooperation over certain periods of times, geographic areas and measures, as well as the structure of the terms of their collaboration. In his thesis, he argues that sending and transit states do not cooperate because they are persuaded by the means of pressure exercised by the EU member state, but rather as the result of a long bargaining process between the two countries in which bilateral, multilateral, geopolitical factors and bargaining strategies all play an important role.

His research focuses on borders, migration control, Spanish–Moroccan relations, refugees and EU-Maghreb relations.