

Following the anxiety triggered by the “shock” of the “refugee crisis” in 2015, states have adopted a wide range of legislative measures to reduce the access of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers alike, to their territory. Governments have also sought to curtail the rights of migrants and asylum seekers within their territories. Moreover, these legislative changes have co-occurred as the budgets dedicated to migration controls have been increased in several member states. As such, a tendency can be observed in most member states to invest large amounts of money in sophisticated technologies aimed at increasing migration control and monitoring (Lehtonen and Aalto, 2017).

This situation of unparalleled migration flows provided fertile ground for the proliferation of securitisation dynamics of migration and asylum in Europe. As the EU intensified narratives and policy actions that have pushed migration and asylum into security discourses and practices, the response to the refugee crisis found itself with more stringent measures (most of them adopted unilaterally by member states) and less coordination. In this light, the instruments for coordination between the Member States in dealing with asylum and refugee applications seem to fall short of meeting the increase in asylum and refugee claims. To respond to this exceptional migratory situation, the European institutions adopted a strategy defined in the European Agenda on Migration, which marked the beginning of a new stage in European immigration policy, especially in measures related to asylum.

The hypothesis underlying this research is that the European Union’s reaction to the growing migratory pressure experienced since the “refugee crisis” of 2015 has not resulted in greater integration in the field of migration – especially in the area of asylum – but has instead strengthened the existing coordination instruments of an intergovernmental system that fails to effectively manage exceptional migratory flows.