

40 Years of Schengen:
People, Borders, Politics
EMN, Luxembourg, 11 June 2025



Re/De/Bordering Bulgaria in Post/Crisis time

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Anna Krasteva





If Borders Did Not Exist Populist Leaders Would Have Created Them

Sartre

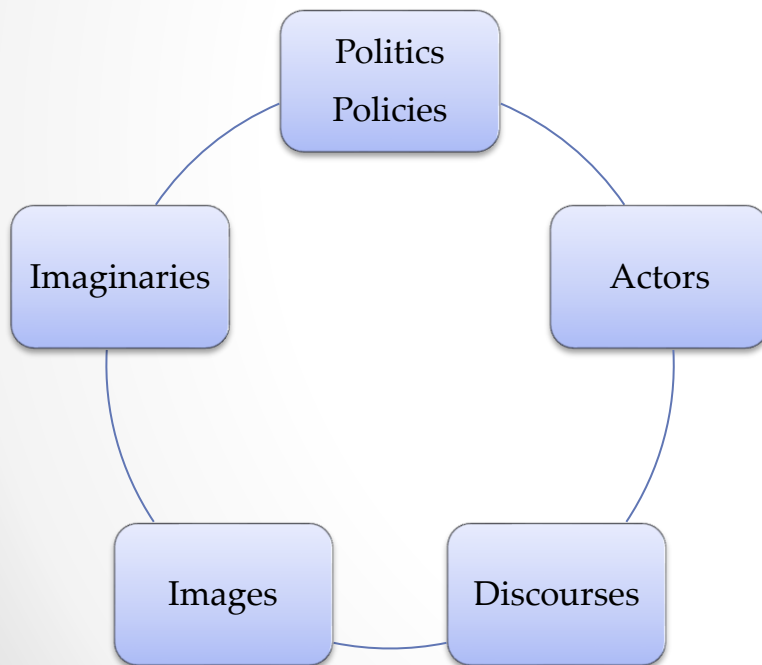
vs

Migration crises

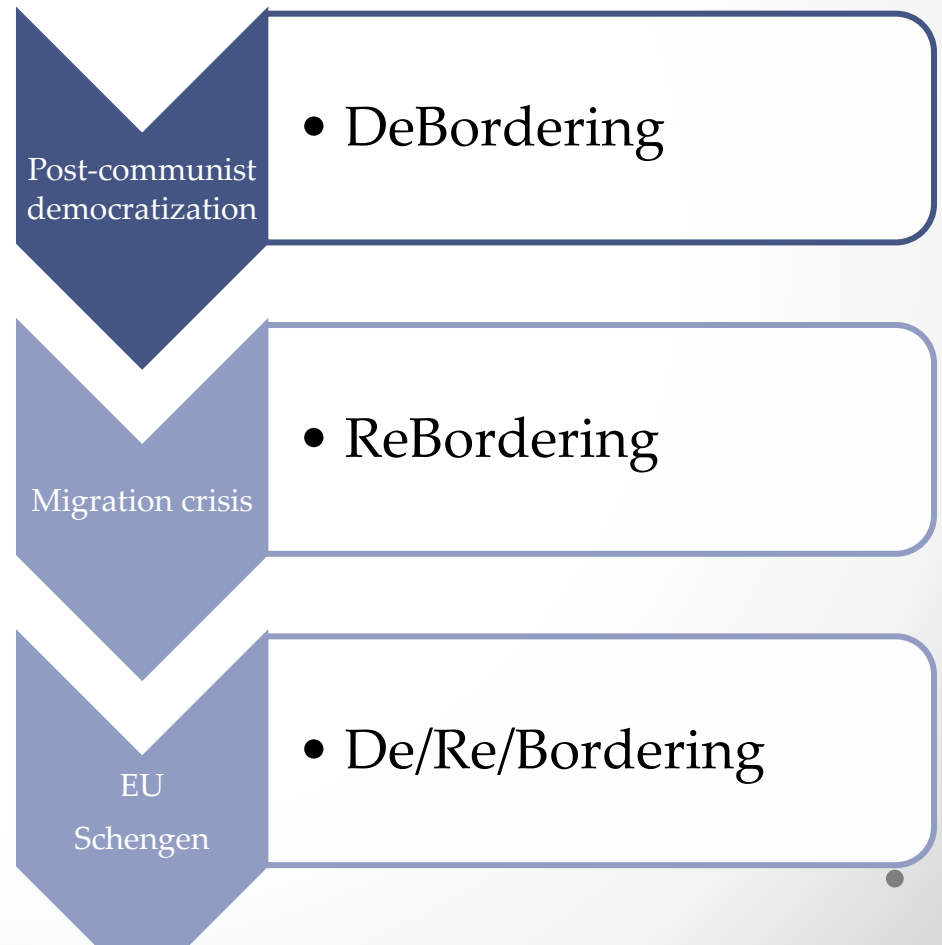
Schengen as De/Re/Bordering

Concepts & Structure

Conceptual cluster



3 periods – 3 types of bordering



Epistemological shift

Late 80-, 90ies

Bordering Triad

Henk van Houtum

&

Ton van Naerssen

2002

Schengen

1985

Borders



Bordering
Borderscapes

Bordering

Othering

Ordering

Border
policy

Migratio
n policy

Symboli
c policy

Leon Gloden, minister of
interior, LU
Schengen – home of
European identity

Schengen vs complex territory of sovereign policies

Bertrand Badie
Terre /Terroir vs Territoire

Space+ culture

*Terre/
terroir*

Space of
ancestors

Memory

Myths
Founders/
Culture

Identities

Territory

Space of
princes

Authority

Interests

Politics/Policies

Space + politics

History
Strong variables

Strategies of actors
Events/
contingencies

What

- **To think**
- Bordering

Who

- **To act**
- The actors

How

- **To manage**
- Border politics & policies

Christian Wille,
Centre for border
studies

Critical Questions/
Reflection

Post-communist Democratization as DeBordering



Communist Bordering

Hyper Bordering

- Cold war borders – fortified, militarized

State – the monopoly of agency of borders & e/i/migration

- Borders - symbol of sovereignty of a closed society

Over-production of
borders
vs.
Under-production
of migration

Shift of Agency vs. Redefinition of Bordering vs Sovereignty

Historic & Symbolic
Fall of Berlin wall

- From closed to open society



State

- Major, but not any more the only actor
- Multiplication and diversification of actors:
 - parties, civic & uncivil actors, artists

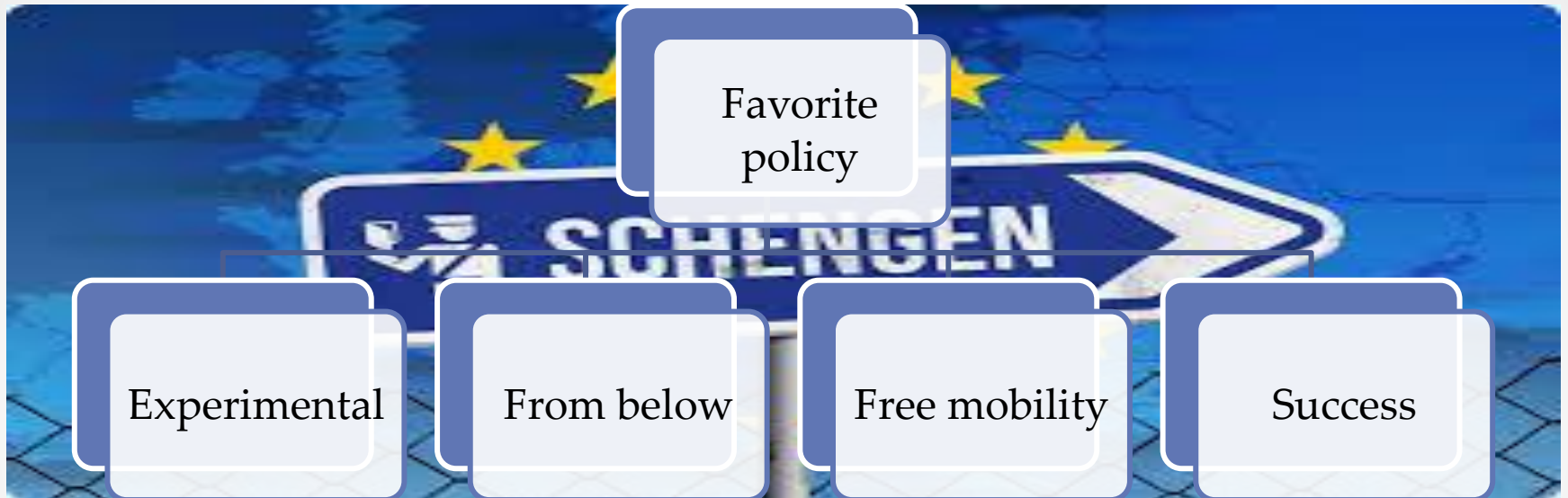
Citizens

- Transborder practices
- Borderscapes– lived & practiced space
- Border as resource

Deteritorialization vs
Reteritorialization

- DeBordering by Emigration and Immigration

Schengen - Dream



Tom Snels, EC, DG HOME
Schengen – Peoples first!

Florian Weber & Dominique Brodowski
Schengen – Making Europe visible to citizens

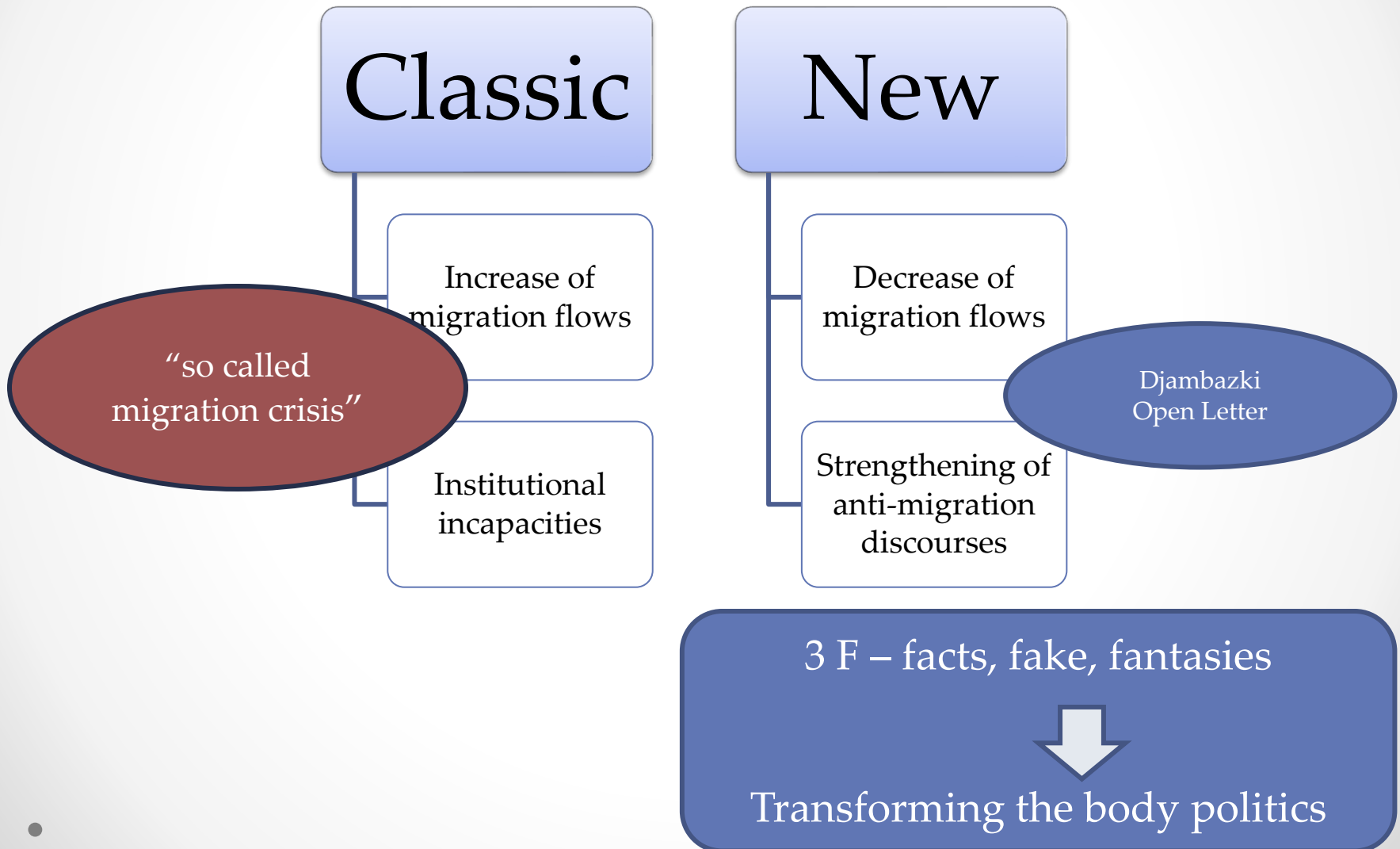
Migration Crisis as ReBordering



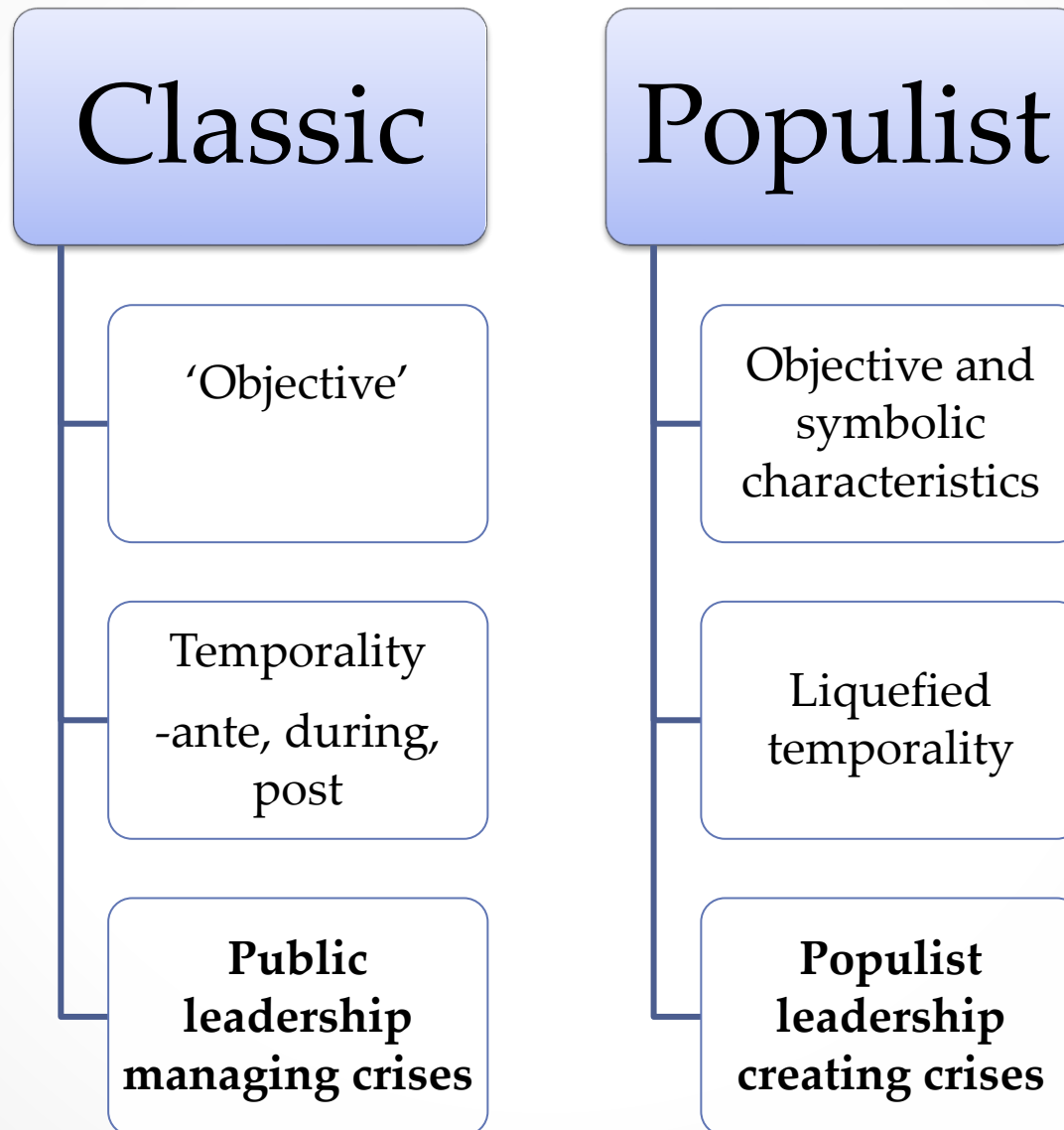
From opening the humanitarian Balkan refugee route
to closing & strengthening Balkan borders



2 Types of Migration Crisis



Comparison



Migration/Refugee crisis

Triple ReBordering

Fenced Wall



Theoretical deconstruction of borders
vs/.
Strengthening of State borders

Refugee Camp



Brusque transition
from no migration
to big migration flow

Populist Othering



Populist brokers vs. Everyday Bordering:
- 1.5% or 11%?
- 3,500 or 5.000?
- Politics undermining policies

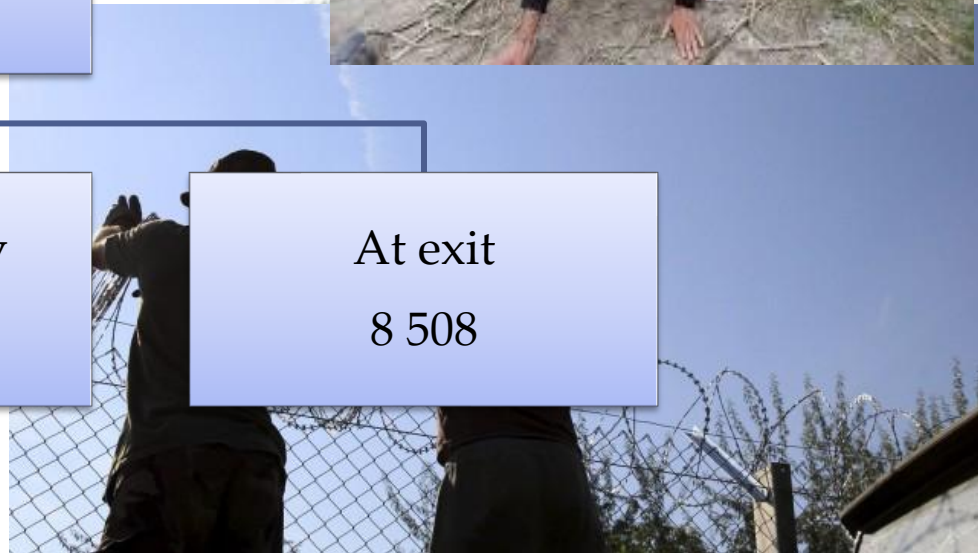
(In)Efficiency of Fences

Irregular migrants
in BG
2015

At entry
10 900

In the country
11140

At exit
8 508



What Do Borders Do if They Do Not Protect?

Political magic of walls

- Left + Right + **Far-right**

Economic magic of walls

- the less effective the fences,
- the more money invested

Symbolic magic of walls

Wall – mega image and metaphor



Paradox

Outsourcing
externalization of
border management

Visibilisation of borders



New Border Actors in Crisis Time



- 'Hunting' refugees



- Vigilante
- 'arresting' refugees



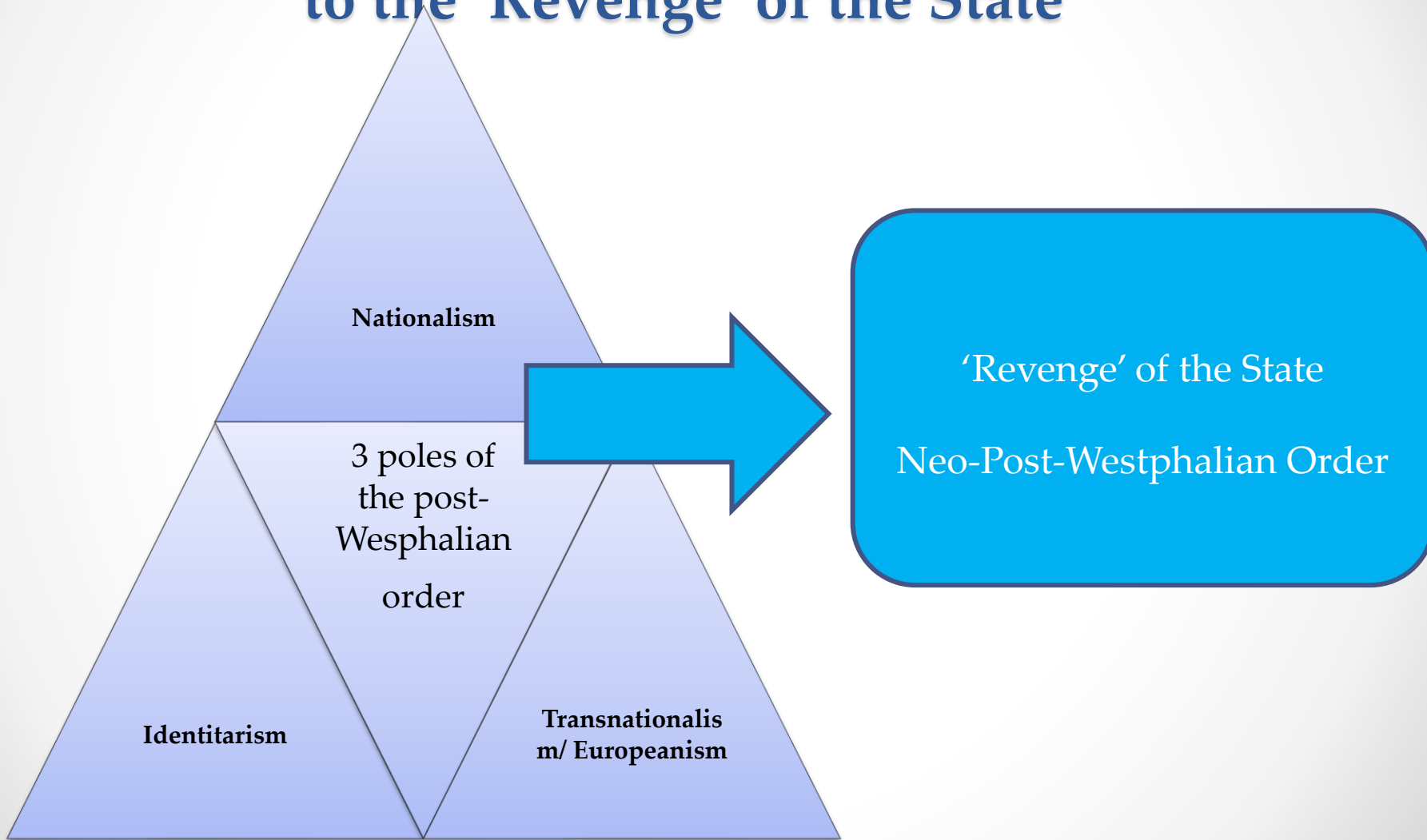
New 'genre'

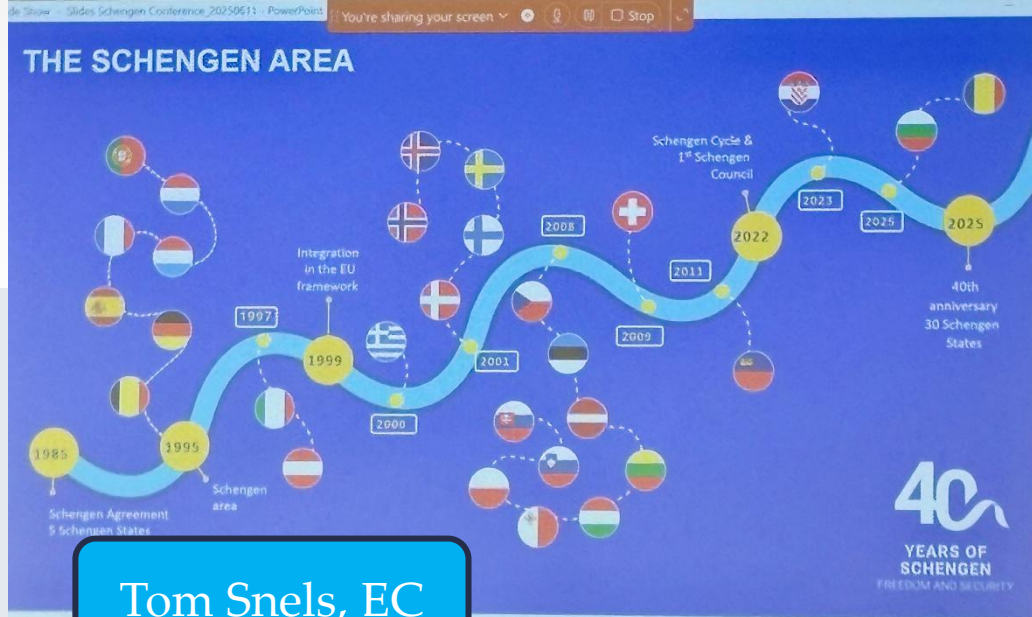


- Fight for interpretations

Vigilante – heroes & media stars
Mediatization, heroization, glorification
of extremism
vs. 'monopoly of violence'

From Westphalian Territorial Order to the 'End of Territories' (B.Badie) to the 'Revenge' of the State





Tom Snels, EC

Schengen & EU as De/Re/Bordering

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EU – 2007

Schengen:

- June 8, 2011 – positive opinion of Eur Parliament on application of BG and RO
- March 32, 2024 – sky and sea
- January 1, 2025 – full membership



Celebrating Schengen

Business

1% increase of
GDP

1%
-half of 2.4%
expected growth

Pro-European elites

All governments

Currently in
power and in
opposition

Citizens



Border as Bridge & Connectivity

Symmetry of border crossing

Bulgarian-Turkish Border Nurcan Ozgur, 2024

Turkish citizens
to Bulgaria

2,286,711

Bulgarian
citizens to
Türkiye

2,431,396

Border as resource

Suitcase business

Grandmothers' religious
tourism

Leisure time

Better Protection – Less Populist Reaction

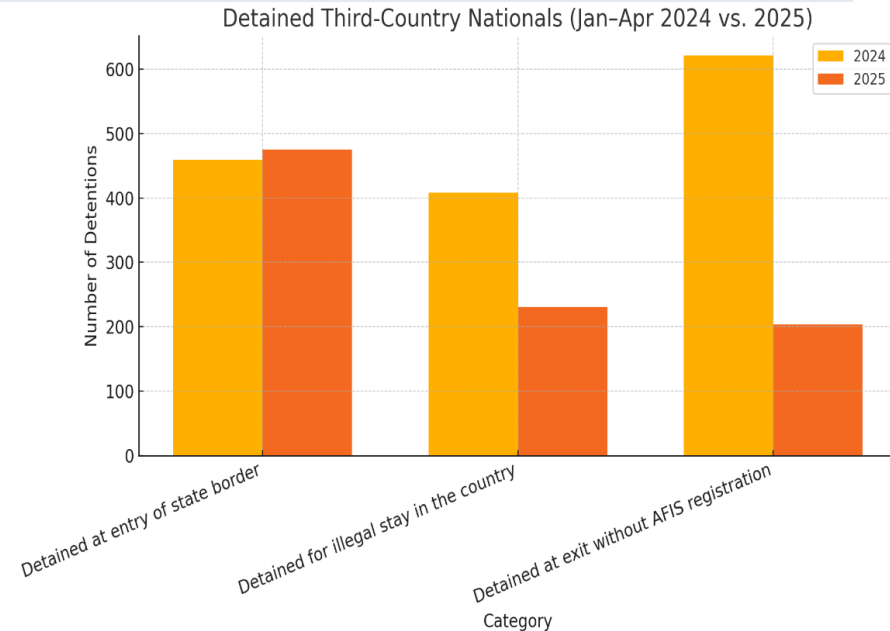
Strengthening the International protection of the Bg-Tr border

- International police contingent of 100 from January 2, 2025:
 - Bulgaria – 25
 - Austria – 15
 - Rumania – 40
 - Hungary - 20



Director of border police, 21.05.25:
zero irregular migration
at the Bg-Gr border

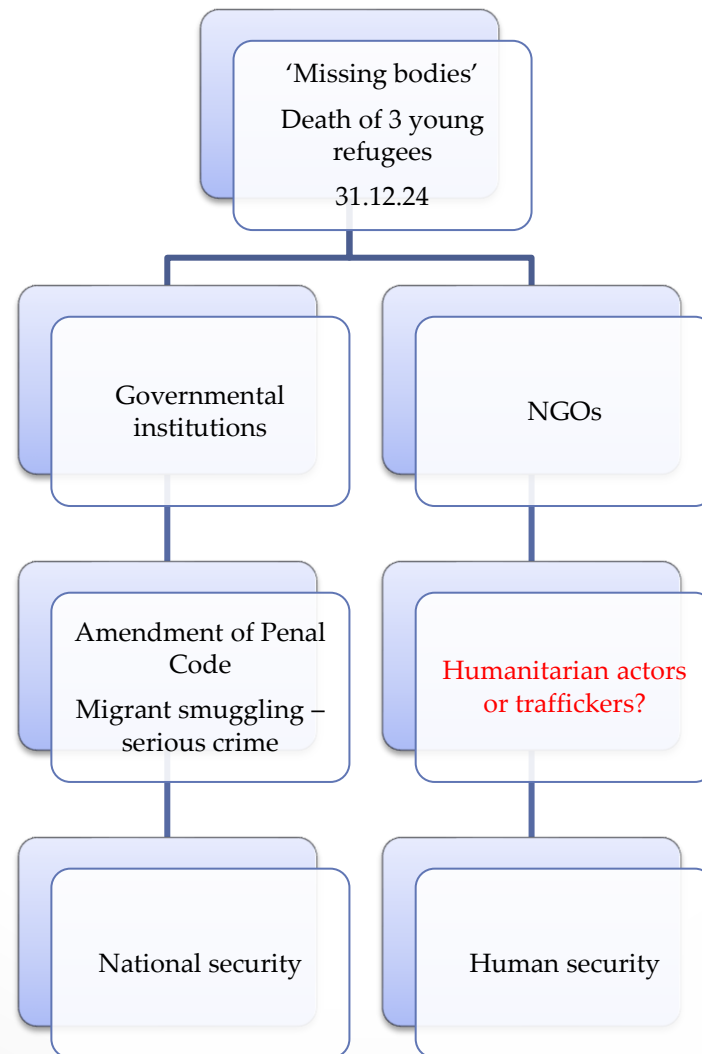
Detained Third-Country Nationals (Jan–Apr 2024 vs. 2025)



**Populism:
Schengen vs Euro?**

Death of Migrants

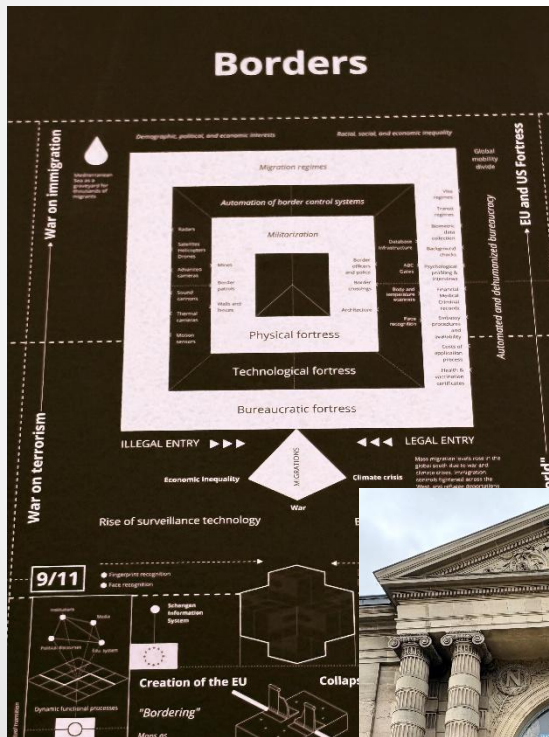
Securitarian vs. Humanitarian Perspectives



Digital & Smart Borders

‘Le monde selon l’IA’

Acceleration of digitalization



- Schengen Information System (SIS)
- Visa Information System (VIS)
- EU Entry/Exit System (EES) and ETIAS
- Automated surveillance systems
- Smart towers
- Drones
- Biometric and Identity Verification Tools
- Integrated Border Management System (IBMS)

Surveillance
vs.
Human Security

Concluding Remarks

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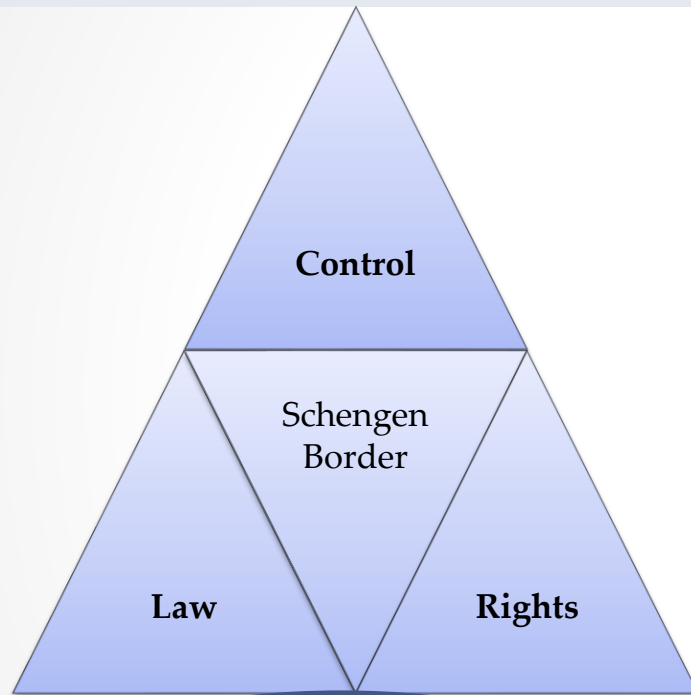
Schengen for Bulgaria

Great European achievement

Policy appreciated by both pro-European elites and big majority of citizens

'First class' membership in EU

Schengen Borders for All – Borders of Control, Law, Rights



**Frontieres de controle,
de droit, des droits**

Sabine Dullin et Etienne Forestier-
Peyrat
Les frontieres mondialisees, Paris:PUF,
2015



