Border security in the Eastern neighbourhood: Where bio-politics and geopolitics meet


Abstract

Abstract. This article takes a close look at the Justice and Home Affairs-related activities conducted under the European Neighbourhood Policy in the Ukrainian–Russian borderland. It argues that European Union initiatives directed at the management of Ukraine’s eastern border with Russia are driven by two related strategic objectives: 1) to confer greater visibility on the social and economic transactions taking place in the Ukrainian–Russian borderland, and 2) to alter the border regime, and by implication the border politics, between Ukraine and Russia in order to make it more compatible with EU interests in the eastern neighbourhood. In this context, the growing informationalization of the border by means of databanks, liaison officers and the involvement of private/quasi-public agencies is discussed, as is the conveying of EU norms, standards and best practices through legislative and technical approximation. By considering the strategic implications of EU involvement in the policing of the Ukrainian–Russian borderland, the article entertains the possibility that the ‘immigration diplomacy’ practised by the EU in the eastern neighbourhood can be made to serve more traditional foreign policy ends.