



Beyond Effectiveness – The EU's Actions in Niger Re-garding Irregular Migration, 2015-2018

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Abstract

Since 2015, Niger has emerged as a central player for the attempts of the European Union (EU) to stem the so-called migration crisis. With no functioning state in Libya able to control the country's borders, the EU has shifted its gaze further south, to the vast Sahelian state of Niger. It has deployed a number of methods and tools from its external action arsenal, with the ultimate objective of reducing irregular migration to towards the EU's borders. The EU has hailed its approach in Niger as a prime example of an effective policy, and a model for how partnerships should work. Yet this view neglects the wider impacts of the EU's approach, unanticipated effects, and consequences that are not as easily quantifiable as the number of migrant arrivals on European shores.

This thesis interrogates both the narrative of 'success' presented by the EU, as well as the notion of 'effectiveness' as an analytical tool for external policy analysis. The key argument is that the focus on effectiveness has undermined the ability of both policymakers and analysts to grasp the wide-ranging, long-term consequences of a policy. The analysis of policy effectiveness restricts the analyst's view, and thus her or his conclusions, from the outset. Only in going beyond effectiveness, and approaching it first by understanding effects, can analysts and policymakers reach a more holistic and accurate understanding of how policy is implemented on-the-ground and the impacts of it.