

About the Research Programme *FRONTERAS*

Description of the *FRONTERAS* Project

For a long time the notion of border has been taken-for-granted in the social sciences. More recently however, it has become a political category subject to controversy. This latter development will be the main focus of our project which will follow various Lines of Research.

The Objective of this project is to develop a Borders Political Theory (BPT) that will inform new policy guidelines, especially those related to the management of the movement of persons, and that that will also provide answers to associated political problems.

We propose a research which will proceed as follows: first we will consider the border as a concept that helps us to understand new directions on migration policies. To this end, we will analyze the border along two dimensions of work, institutional and normative, employing 14 concrete Lines of Research with three basic pillars of analysis (theoretical, applied and methodological). These studies will enable us to report on Spain and the European Union in the context of the ongoing process of defining a Euro-Mediterranean borders policy.

Length of the Project: January 2009 – December 2011

FRONTERAS Team

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Please see the GRITIM Web:

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Research Programme *FRONTERAS*

Political Theory on Borders:
Policies and movement of
persons in the
Euromediterranean

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The scope of our research

The main objective of the *FRONTERAS* project is to open a new line of research on borders and migration.

We are interested both in the theoretical implications and analysis of policies, discourses, and actions of actors' networks, keeping in mind the Euromediterranean framework and the process of defining an EU border policy.

We pretend to establish the state of the art at three levels of analysis: the academic, the empirical, and the institutional context of the EU and the Mediterranean region. The research design will be structured following two dimensions, the institutional dimension and the normative dimension, requiring both different methodologies, but in all cases quantitative and qualitative elements will be combined in the analysis. In each one of these dimensions we will open innovative and political different Lines of Research:

1. Institutional Dimension: Analysis of the juridical and administrative instruments and the policies related to the management of borders, from the point of view of the network of stakeholders, and the political and social discourses and the effects on the definition of EU policies in the Euromediterranean framework.

In this dimension, 6 Lines of Research will be addressed (LR):

- LR1: Border Management Policies: Comparative analysis of the south-European borders: policies, discourse, social practices.
- LR2: Construction of the EU external borders: From the security-based approach to the development-based approach
- LR3: Policies beyond borders I: The external dimension and externalization of migration policies
- LR4: Policies beyond borders II: Management and Policy of transnationalism
- LR5: Perceptions and images around borders, political and social discourses on borders in Spain
- LR6: Society of information, borders and migration.

2. Normative dimension: Analysis of the main values and principles, of the arguments and foundations that exist in the national and international academic debate about borders, specially the debate about the movement of people and the foundations of the control migration flows. This dimension has an analytical and conceptual character. We will address 6 Lines of Research:

- LR7: Border as a political category: Conceptual analysis
- LR8: Border as an approach: interdisciplinary analysis.
- LR9: Definition of border policies: its political instruments and foundations
- LR10: Borders, liberalism and democracy.
- LR11: Theoretical framework for the analysis of borders I: Theories of nationalism
- LR12: Theoretical Framework for the analysis of borders II: Immigration theories

Finally, in the last stage of the project, by way of conclusion, we will open two Lines of Research to regroup the main findings and to combine the institutional and normative dimensions of the research:

LR13: A Political Theory of Borders

LR14: A World without borders?

In all the LR, this research project has three basic pillars:

- 1. Theoretical-Political pillar:** basic elements that can inform a Political Theory on Borders.
- 2. Applied pillar:** it aims to propose a framework orientated to the definition of policies related with borders.
- 3. Methodological pillar:** propose a series of indicators that can served to evaluate the policies and strategic actions implemented and proposed by the member states and the EU, with special interest in Spain.