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Johannes Pollak,  
Peter Slominski (eds.), *The role  
of EU Agencies in the Eurozone  
and Migration Crisis:  
Impact and Future Challenges*

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The post-2008 Eurozone crisis and the post-2015 migration crisis have proven to be two of the biggest challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century for the European Union. Both shook its stability though each in a slightly different dimension. Some form of summary and reflection on the functioning of EU agencies at that time has been undertaken by the authors of Johannes Pollak and Peter Slominski in their book entitled *The role of EU Agencies in the Eurozone and Migration Crisis: Impact and Future Challenges*. To their project they invited a group of specialists from following fields such as: financial, legal and political sciences. The authors rightly point out the importance of both these crises, also called “cross-border” crises. The significance of the crises caused by external events for the unity and solidarity of the European Union has been presented by the authors on the basis of creating new agencies or giving them a number of new competences. As the authors note, the European Union has the capacity to create new agencies, but only under the Treaties or primary legislation. Despite this dependence, many agencies today play a very important role in the Union’s mode of action. The theses and statements presented in the publication are reflected with examples, such as those with data for 2016 – when the budget

of the EU agencies amounted to 1.2 billion euros and the total number of its employees reached 5500 people.

This item is divided into three parts. The first is an introduction of sorts. It deals with the role of EU agencies in the structures of European Union activities. This process is called “agencyfication”. The authors of this section rightly point out that EU authorities can no longer function without their specialised agencies. It is their characteristics in the two crisis processes that will be the subject of the rest of the paper. Agencies are assigned the role of “administrative-executive gaps” in the overall operation of the European Commission in particular.

In the second part, the authors focused on presenting the activities and processes related to the functioning of the agencies’ activities during the financial crisis. Reference was made *inter alia* to the establishment of the European System of Financial Supervision in 2011. The Eurozone crisis led to the creation of three more agencies such as: European Banking Authority, European Securities and Markets Authority, European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority. Particularly noteworthy in this part of the book is the chapter by Aneta B. Spendzharova – entitled: ‘Fit for Purpose or Drowning in Details? Institutional Evolution of the European Financial Sector Supervisory Authorities a Decade After the Global Financial Crisis’. Spendzharova assesses the changes in the institutional system of financial regulation and supervision in the European Union. The perspective of over a decade allows the author to take a step back and analyse the moves made by the Union to regulate and secure the Eurozone financial system. This chapter will certainly be of interest to all those who are interested in the redesign of the so called “new” design. financial architecture in the European Union. The author characterizes the individual agencies and shows their new competences while referring to the reactions of the European Union Member States. She adds that a number of directives, such as Omnibus I and Omnibus II, have also been adopted as part of the work to extend the powers of the European supervisory authorities. A. Spendzharova tried to present a brief chronology of events in creating changes and improving the system after the crisis in the Euro zone.

The third and last part of the publication was devoted to the European Union’s agencies in the time of the migration crisis. This is certainly the most interesting part in the book because of its novel approach. The topic of the post-2015 migration crisis has already been presented in many publications since its inception. However, each of them shows a different perspective on this profound topic, which is an everyday reality for many European citizens. In this part, the chapter describing the changes that have taken place in the management of the migration crisis with the help of Frontex proved to be a pertinent one. As the title of the publication implies, the European Border and Coast Guard has been assessed here not only in terms of changes in the structure and organization of the agency’s activities, but by showing an increase in its capabilities the author presents a pattern of the agency’s growing role within the structure of the European Union. Frontex, which at first had only executive functions, over the years and with the intensification of the migration crisis has become an important instrument for the European Union to coordinate and solve the problem. By giving the Agency the possibility to acquire its own equipment, by increasing its budget and, consequently, its powers, Frontex itself

has become a kind of entity responsible and delegated to the European Union for tackling and resolving the migration issue. In the publication Frontex is repeatedly referred to as a “super agency” – the quotation marks indicate the criticism of its work. In contrast, the process of change that has taken place for the EU’s transnational response to the migration crisis is undeniable.

The book edited by Johannes Pollak and Peter Slominski is a kind of compendium for those interested in the creation and extension of EU agencies. The system of action chosen by the European Union reflects a kind of specialised agency of the United Nations. The process of so-called “agencyfication” seems to be inevitable in a supranational organization such as the European Union, which coordinates and manages many fields of politics, economy and security in an international format. Directing the various divisions of these three dimensions to separate sectors of the agency seems to be a rational matter of specializing specific actors in institutional processes.

This publication is recommended to everyone interested in subjects related to the European Union, its structures and current problems of its member states. Reading particular chapters will be a perfect complement and systematization of already possessed knowledge within the scope of European Union’s actions in the times of crises. A well-conducted train of thought gives a chance to analyze the creation, development, and problems while showing a slight criticism towards Union agencies. Both of the presented crises, the economic crisis in the Eurozone and the migration crisis, are perfect examples to illustrate the theme of agenda-setting in the European Union.

