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EUROSUR – Security or Threat?

How is the use of the European border surveillance system EUROSUR framed within the migration management debate in the EU?

by

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ABSTRACT

The overall aim of this bachelor thesis is to examine *how the use of EUROSUR is framed within the migration management debate in the EU*. To address this question, critical theory, including representatives of the Frankfurt School such as Theodor W. Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse and Andrew Feenberg, are drawn upon. Based on various text documents, ranging from legal texts to scientific articles and newspaper articles, a critical discourse analysis will be conducted. The discourse on the use of technology, especially surveillance technology, is driven by the EU as a push for greater security, leaving room for critical questioning about the costs at which this goal is tried to be achieved. This research is dedicated to this critical examination and provides insights into the consequences such a surveillance system can have for both migrants and the EU. Key findings indicate that the criticism of EUROSUR revolves around three central arguments: firstly, that EUROSUR promotes an exclusionary mechanism to the detriment of migrants; secondly, that the EU is pursuing a form of isolationist policy using surveillance technology; and thirdly, that EUROSUR contributes to a technocratic system that aims to govern migration through technology.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background and Research Question

Migration and asylum policy consistently present the EU with an array of challenges, often becoming the focal point of political discourse and contentious debates. Hardly any other policy area is debated as controversially as this one. At the centre of these debates is often the question of how border control - and security - should be better and more efficiently managed. The refugee crisis in 2015 in particular marked a turning point in the discussion. Since then, the EU has increasingly turned its focus towards a digital foreign policy, aiming to establish European migration management through digitalisation (Tenev 2023). For several years now, the EU has been focussing on the increased use of technologies that promise an improved and more effective migration management. Be it the use of drones, surveillance cameras or radar, the use of technologies at EU external borders sheds new light on the migration management debate and, in addition to questions of efficiency, also raises concerns about the protection of privacy and the protection of migrants' human rights. One example of technology used in the EU's external border control is the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR). Introduced by the European Commission in 2013, EUROSUR was set up with the intention of jointly coordinating border and migration policy between the EU member states (Burgess 2011). By collecting data on migration flows, which is exchanged between national border control authorities and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX), EUROSUR aims to increase the security of the EU's external borders and save the lives of migrants in distress on their way to the EU. Despite the advertised objectives that EUROSUR pursues, debates surrounding EUROSUR are often characterised by critical voices expressing concerns about potential human rights violations (Deibler 2015; Bendel 2016). Critics argue that the EU puts in first place securing its external borders with EUROSUR rather than prioritising saving lives, thus further expanding a "Fortress of Europe" (Taube 2013; Jeandesboz 2011). Not least, it is also questioned to what extent technological applications serve as a solution for humanitarian emergencies at sea (Burgess 2011; Marin 2011).

The political debate about EUROSUR, including its functionality and the associated implications, is deeply divided. This thesis picks up right here and is dedicated to the discourse surrounding EUROSUR. It centres on the topic "EUROSUR – Security or Threat to Migrants?" and will explore the research question "How is the use of the European border surveillance system EUROSUR framed within the migration management debate in the EU?" This

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exploratory question aims to investigate how the use of EUROSUR is discussed and represented within the broader context of the public debate. It seeks to understand the framing and narrative employed in the debate, implying an investigation into the various viewpoints and arguments.

1.2. Knowledge Gap and Research Approach

As EUROSUR has now been in operation for 11 years, it has already been the subject of much discussion and research in the scientific field. There is already a great deal of literature addressing the topic of EUROSUR from various perspectives. Significant research exists on the technological development and practical implementation of EUROSUR (Seiffarth 2011; Ellebrecht 2020), as well as the legal framework, including discussions on data protection regulations (Gigli 2020). A number of scholars have covered the impact of EUROSUR on the privacy of migrants, examining how surveillance practices may infringe upon their autonomy rights (Deibler 2015). Few attempts have also been made to address the extent to which surveillance systems can have a discriminatory effect on refugees and economic migrants (Lyon 2009; Bigo 2014). However, there is a lack of literature that specifically delves into the critical dimensions of the debate and investigates how EUROSUR is framed, evaluated, and discussed by different actors within the migration discourse. While a considerable set of literature is indeed critical of technologies such as EURODAC or the procedures of FRONTEX, particularly with regard to their security measures (Jeandesboz 2008), the specific design of EUROSUR and its potential to divide public opinion from that of the EU remains largely unexplored. Especially how EUROSUR is being criticised in the public discourse, thereby challenging the EU's objective of "security" has not yet been taken into account in research. This examination is crucial as it determines the level of public support for EU-established technologies. By focusing on the discourse, this thesis aims to identify and address the critical examination of the European surveillance system, thereby filling the research gap.

To achieve this, the thesis will analyze the discourse surrounding the border surveillance system through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This approach will make it possible to identify the diversity within the discourse and explore existing power dynamics. It will also allow for an examination of how different actors frame EUROSUR either as a security tool or as a threat to migrants using specific linguistic strategies. The CDA will be conducted within the framework of Critical Theory, which has been articulated by various scholars. Thinkers from the Frankfurt School, whose contributions serve as the theoretical framework for this research, have critically examined the influence technology can have on political and societal dynamics and processes. Therefore, integrating Critical Theory will help contextualize the critical perspectives on

technology use that are analyzed in the empirical part of this study. Since discourse occurs through language, the CDA is well-suited in order to answer the research question, as it allows for the examination of all types of sources that reflect societal discourse. For this purpose, various text documents such as policy documents, scientific articles and newspaper articles will be analyzed by using a coding scheme with ATLAS.ti. In order to achieve an overall analysis of the discourse around EUROSUR, the thesis is structured as follows: In section two, the research questions will be theoretically grounded, and core concepts will be discussed. Critical theory, particularly drawing on the insights of the Frankfurt School, which critically examines the societal impacts of technology, will provide the theoretical framework. Section three focuses on the methodology of the study, which includes a justification for the selection of EUROSUR, a presentation of the method of data collection, and an outline of the data analysis procedure. The final section presents the overarching findings of the analysis.

2. Theory

2.1. Introduction To The Core Theoretical Concept

As a Critical Discourse Analysis forms the core of this research, Critical Theory has been chosen for the purpose of creating a theoretical framework for this work. Critical Theory as such has a wide range of research subjects. In this study, Critical Theory's views towards technology will be specialized in. This theoretical approach provides a robust lens through which to scrutinize the socio-political implications of technology, as well as its role in reinforcing or challenging power structures.

To begin, I will briefly introduce the "founding fathers" of the Frankfurt School, Adorno and Horkheimer, who are key figures in the development of Critical Theory and outline their perspectives on technology. While both of them did not single out technology as a research focus, by the 1960s, the topic of technology had become more prominent within the Frankfurt School. During this period, two younger scholars, Herbert Marcuse and Andrew Feenberg, emerged and made significant contributions to the debate on the role of technology in society (Böhme & Manzei 2003). Given that they share a common theoretical foundation but have developed different emphases in their work, both thinkers are discussed here. Their contributions ultimately provide the theoretical basis for this study. Due to its consistent and evolving critical attitude towards technology, the Frankfurt School has developed a theoretical concept that can support the analysis of the thesis. Finally, the critical perspectives of the philosophers on technology will be applied to the context of the use of EUROSUR.

2.2. Adorno And Horkheimer And Their Approach To Technology

The term "Frankfurt School" refers to a school of social theory that formed its institutional core in the "Institute for Social Research" founded in Frankfurt am Main in 1923. Key representatives who significantly influenced this school in its beginnings were Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer. In the collection of essays compiled in "Dialectic of Enlightenment", the two philosophers Adorno and Horkheimer expressed their critical view of technology and its potential effects on society. According to them, technological advancement arose less from a notion of progress than from a capitalist endeavour (Adorno & Horkheimer 1944). Through this strong linkage between technology and capitalism, their critical view was based on the assumption that technology is used as an "instrument of domination" (Delanty & Harris 2021). They posited that technological advancements are used to exert control over nature and society. This control extends beyond mere exploitation of natural resources to encompass the regulation of human behaviour and social relations. Thus, technology is used as a means of control which reinforces the ruling class's exercise of power over society. Furthermore, from their perspective, technology is seen as an expression of instrumental rationality (Delanty & Harris 2021). This form of reason prioritises efficiency, control and utility over humanistic and ethical considerations and reduces complex human experiences and values to quantifiable metrics and functional outcomes. In this way, technology becomes not only a tool for innovation and progress but also a mechanism that strengthens systems of power and domination and shapes both individual behaviour and collective social structures according to utilitarian principles (Adorno & Horkheimer 1944). Technology, as a product of instrumental reason, becomes a means of dominating both nature and human beings. Adorno and Horkheimer (1944) assume that the use of technology based on the idea of rationality leads to a reification of social processes which ultimately undermines the critical thinking of an individual.

In this context, the critical thinkers expressed their concerns about the subordination of the individual to collective interests and technological forces. In their view, this subordination results from the pervasive influence of instrumental rationality, in which the needs and autonomy of individuals are sacrificed to the efficiency and control promoted by technological systems. As technology increasingly dictates the terms of social interaction and economic activity, individual agency is diminished, leading to a society where personal interests and critical thinking are overshadowed by the demands of technology and capitalism (Adorno & Horkheimer 1944). This further strengthens the power dynamics favouring the ruling class, as individuals become

compliant participants in a system that prioritizes collective functionality over personal freedom and critical consciousness.

2.3. Herbert Marcuse And Its Viewpoint On Technology

With his work "One-Dimensional Man", published in 1964, the philosopher Herbert Marcuse contributed to the thinking of the Frankfurt School. He expressed his criticism towards technology with regard to the entanglement of capitalism and industrial societies and their influence on society (Marcuse 2003). In his novel, he describes how industrial societies create a "one-dimensional" reality in which individuals' critical thinking is undermined. Rather, the prevailing system dictates their desires and aspirations, neutralizing their critical thinking. Marcuse introduced the term "technological rationality" (Marcuse 2022), arguing that it has supplanted traditional political rationality. In a system pursuing technological rationality, the application of technical means is emphasized to achieve predetermined ends dictated by the needs of the capitalist system. According to the philosopher, individuals become subsumed under the capitalist production apparatuses (Marcuse 2022). This deprives them of their ability to relate to the irrational since the application of technological tools seeks to find a rational outcome (Marcuse 2003). Individuals' critical thinking that is inconsistent with rational control and calculation is marginalized, turning them into passive consumers and conformists. Marcuse describes how the mere use of technology does not lead to emancipation since technology transforms politics and social processes into a "technocratic matter" that strives to find technical solutions to social problems (Marcuse 2003; Delanty & Harris 2021). As a result, a technocratic approach reduces complex social issues to technical problems surpassing the problem-solving to experts and consequently trivializing the space for democratic participation.

Similar to Adorno and Horkheimer, Marcuse also addresses a connection between the technological society and the system of power in which social control is exercised through the use of technology (Marcuse 1967). Marcuse states that the pervasive use of technology creates a new form of control and surveillance, reinforcing the existing hierarchies and maintaining the power of dominant groups. This form of domination also reaches into the private realms and attacks and restricts it (Marcuse 1967). This restriction goes so far as it limits the capacity of critical thought and reflection of an individual. Reason is replaced by technological control, which in turn leads to the exercise of power (Marcuse 1967). Technology therefore cannot be viewed neutrally as it is always located in a social context (Delanty & Harris 2021). Despite the advantage that Marcuse attributes to technology, namely, that it leads to material progress, this comes with losses: more precisely technology produces "a new unfreedom" (Delanty & Harris

2021) as it hinders individuals from becoming autonomous. Hence, emancipation is not possible through the rethinking of an individual but requires a radical transformation of society.

2.4. Andrew Feenbergs Critique Of Technological Influence

The American philosopher Andrew Feenberg builds on the theories of the Frankfurt School, specifically the work of Marcuse, and extends these with a philosophical examination of technology in relation to social processes. Although he agreed in many of his views with those of Adorno and Horkheimer in terms of history and culture, differences regarding their political view existed (Kirkpatrick 2020). Rather, his work is based on that of Marcuse and builds upon his concept of "technological rationality" (Feenberg 2017a). Central to his argument is that technology cannot be understood neutrally. Accordingly, technologies are not only a means to an end but, by being embedded in social structures, they are also shaped by human interests and power relations. Technology can therefore be configured "as to reproduce the rule of the few over the many" (Feenberg 2005). Despite this influence, the use of technology leads to an alienation between the actor using the technology and the object. The philosopher describes this as "impersonal domination" (Feenberg 2005). By withdrawing technical control and the associated lack of co-determination, technocracy preserves the elitist power structures in "technically rational forms" (Feenberg 2005). In this context, Feenberg emphasizes the importance of a "democratic transformation" (Feenberg 2005) and considers the participation of all "to make the necessary reforms" (Feenberg 2005) as indispensable in order to prevent a one-sided macroeconomy. Beyond that, he emphasises the notion of "democratic interventions" (Feenberg 2017a), seeking to bring technocratic power under democratic control.

Furthermore, the critical thinker points out the close interdependence between technology, science, and capitalism, meaning they do not operate independently of each other. Technology must therefore always be considered in the context of neoliberalism. By doing so, he emphasises a critical position towards technology used in capitalism and science arguing that it is primarily used to find "efficient solutions" (Delanty & Harris 2021) to social problems. Feenbergs significant contribution lies in showing that the technical domain is inherently cultural implying that technical practices are not just neutral or purely functional. Instead, they are deeply embedded and influenced by the cultural and social context in which they exist. This he describes as a 'technosystem' which encompasses not only the technological devices itself but also the social and political structures that are shaped by these technologies (Feenberg 2017b). Concluding, the philosopher rejects the assumption that technological progress is a dynamic of

its own that sets in motion processes that are undesired by humans. Rather, technology and its use are constantly influenced by social factors.

2.5. Critical Theory And Its Approach To EUROSUR

Even if the individual thinker did not deal exclusively with the subject of surveillance technology, one can infer their stance on the application of the surveillance system EUROSUR.

Adorno and Horkheimer as representatives of the Frankfurt School, regarded the use of technology as a means used to consolidate the ruling order. It serves as a tool with which the elites can exercise power and control over society. In this light, the EUROSUR surveillance system, which is used to monitor the external borders of the EU, could be seen as an example of the contemporary dynamics criticised by Adorno and Horkheimer. It can be argued that the EU uses EUROSUR as a tool to control and increase its power over people crossing the border. This type of control could be seen as reinforcing the power differentials between the "surveillers" and the "surveilled", limiting the freedom of the latter.

Moreover, Adorno and Horkheimer criticised the alienation of humans from nature through the use of technology, which could embody the tendency to reduce humans to quantifiable data. This would dehumanise political problems such as migration, which EUROSUR is dedicated to, and present it as a problem that can only be solved by technological means. Overall, the founding fathers of the Frankfurt School would have been critical towards the implementation of technologies such as EUROSUR, as it can serve as a tool that reinforces existing power relations and transforms the complexity of human experience into a set of quantifiable data.

Like Adorno and Horkheimer, Marcuse would see the use of EUROSUR as a reproduction of power relations. However, he would explain this under the term "technological rationality", which he coined, to pursue rational goals such as regulating the existing order. It can be argued that EUROSUR is used to justify state surveillance and control in the name of a rational goal such as security. One could also assume that issues such as migration are not properly addressed and are only dealt with superficially, leaving technology to manage and regulate the political problem. This points to Marcuse's book "One-Dimensional Man" (1964), in which he states that the public discourse is characterised by a one-dimensionality in which there is no room for qualitative reflections on social problems, but challenges are tackled by technocratic rule. In this respect, it could be problematised that the professionals who operate EUROSUR do not critically question "what" they are operating, turning them into what Marcuse describes as "passive consumers". This passivity results from the technological rationality that drives

EUROSUR, determining decisions and actions through data collection without questioning the social and ethical implications. This could be particularly in the interests of those in power in the EU which, according to Marcuse, could lead to existing power structures being reproduced. EUROSUR can therefore be used as a symbol of power that the EU wants to promote to the outside. According to the philosopher Feenberg, EUROSUR could be seen as part of a "technosystem" in which the interaction between the political level and the technical level is increasingly interlinked. In Feenberg's view, the use of the surveillance technology would be a means of finding the most effective solutions to the social problem of migration.

2.6. Conclusion

This section presented the theoretical framework, providing insight into the diverse yet interconnected assumptions of the four scholars Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse, and Feenberg regarding the influence of technology on social relations and power structures. Concerning the research question, this framework suggests a critical assessment of the use of surveillance technologies, particularly those responsible for managing people at borders. Technologies can be employed to reinforce existing power structures, which warrants a thorough and critical evaluation of their implications and uses.

3. Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to outline how the data analysis is conducted, pursuing the research question "How is the use of the European border surveillance system EUROSUR framed within the migration management debate in the EU?". It is divided into four sections. Firstly, the case EUROSUR is introduced as well as the reason for choosing it will be justified. Secondly, the chosen research design and its relevance to the research question at hand are discussed, followed by an explanation of the data collection method. Lastly, the operationalization and analysis of the data are further elaborated upon.

3.1. Case Selection

The first ideas for the development of a European surveillance system were presented by the European Commission in 2008 as part of the so-called "Border Package", which aims to achieve integrated border management within the EU. Officially launched in December 2013, EUROSUR, short for the European Border Surveillance System, has been implemented to exchange information on migration movements and is intended to strengthen the EU's external border management. Thus, EUROSUR embodies the collaborative effort to unify EU-wide migration management shaping a supranational European external border.

At its core, EUROSUR functions as a real-time mapping system designed to detect and respond to illegal immigration events and border crimes as they occur (Tazzioli 2016). Within the framework of the network created by EUROSUR, border-related information generated by the EU member states is collected, processed and exchanged (Ellebrecht 2014). The system encompasses a diverse array of information, including risk analyses, geodetic data, current news, police reports, and near-real-time surveillance data (Ellebrecht 2014). These data points are sourced from various locations along the EU's external borders. The EUROSUR program connects the European headquarters of Frontex in Warsaw with the National Coordination Centres (NCCs) that are set up in each member state (Dijstelbloem 2021). They create national situational pictures, which are fed into the EUROSUR system. To create these images, information from systems, sensors and platforms such as ship reporting systems, satellite images and sensors mounted on vehicles, ships or other vessels is made available to the respective NCC (Regulation No. 1052/2013). For the creation of the national situational pictures, the member states assign each incident that has been observed at the border an "indicative impact level, ranging from 'low' and 'medium' to 'high'" (Regulation No. 1052/2013 Article 9 (4)). The resulting national situational pictures are then transmitted to FRONTEX. Based on the Member States´ assessment of the impact level, FRONTEX creates a European Situational Picture (ESP) of the observed zones in which areas with incidents that have a "high impact" are marked in red, sections that have a medium impact are marked in yellow and areas with incidents that have a low impact are marked in green (Ellebrecht 2014). The ESP serves as a comprehensive overview of the situation at the EU's external borders and allows for a coordinated response to border-related threats, thus effectively supranationalizing border management within the EU (Dijstelbloem 2021).

Several reasons support the selection of the case EUROSUR: on the one hand, the EUROSUR project has already been in use for 11 years, which indicates that the project has further developed and that a broad discourse has emerged around it. The project of EUROSUR proves to be highly complex and has already become the subject of controversial debates about security, privacy, human rights and immigration policies, making it a rich subject for critical examination. On the other hand, the debate about EUROSUR is shaped by various stakeholders including policymakers, civil society organizations and migrant rights advocates making it possible to highlight potential tensions and contradictions between those positions.

3.2. Research Design

The subsequent section is dedicated to describing the chosen research design aimed at addressing the research question. Generally, how research is conducted pertains to the research design, which forms the framework for the research processes (Babbie 2007). In social science, it is widely accepted that the relationship between human beings and the world is mediated through "collectively created symbolic meaning systems or orders of knowledge" (Keller 2013). According to Keller (2013), discourse refers to the construction of the world through concrete language, structural patterns, or rules, and thus to the production of meaning. While discourse theories provide a theoretical approach to this linguistic construction of reality, discourse analysis is used to conduct empirical investigations of discourses. However, the term discourse analysis does not refer to a specific method; rather, it examines certain research subjects and perspectives that are understood as discourse (Keller 2013). Today, discourse analyses are primarily regarded as qualitative, hermeneutic, or interpretative approaches (Keller 2013).

One approach to conducting discourse analysis is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which also forms the basis of this work. CDA is used when the connection between linguistics and the critical analysis of ideologies and social formations needs to be established (Keller 2013). Since discourses and social structures are in a reciprocal relationship, they influence and condition each other. Analysing a discourse is a way of understanding the broader social and power dynamics that language both reflects and constructs (Gill 2000), which makes the chosen language a key element of discourse analysis (Wodak 2002). Therefore, CDA aims to examine how "social-power abuse and inequality are legitimated, by text and talk in the social and political context" (Van Dijk 2015). Within a CDA, researchers "take an explicit position" (Van Dijk 1993) in order to reveal these power asymmetries and expose structures of social inequalities (Given 2008; Ainsworth & Hardy 2004). Nevertheless, Van Dijk (1993) points out that not every text enacts or reproduces power relations; rather, this can only be understood through the consideration of the whole context. The goal of such analysis is the emancipatory enlightenment through criticism of current practices, resulting in a proposal for improvement (Keller 2013).

In this work, the research design of CDA relies on official documents of the EU such as the regulation on EUROSUR as well as statements from stakeholders who have a legitimate interest in questioning the use of EUROSUR. In particular, the analysis is concentrated on two sides: on the one hand, the EU, which promises greater security with the establishment of EUROSUR, and on the other hand, critical voices from human rights organizations and scholars who view the use of the surveillance technology critically from several perspectives. Central to the

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argumentation is that EUROSUR is used less for the rescue of migrants in distress and more as a mechanism to prevent migrants from attempting to reach the EU, signifying the EU´s approach to shield itself against migrants, contributing to the expansion of a "Fortress of Europe".

For several reasons, the choice of a CDA proves to be the most suitable here: Firstly, it allows for a detailed examination of language use in order to uncover social inequalities resulting from the power imbalance between the EU and the migrants affected by EUROSUR. It looks at how the EU legitimizes EUROSUR and thereby reveals its position of power in the discussion. Secondly, to uncover power relations, it is necessary not only to illuminate one side of the discourse but to include a variety of positions dedicated to this topic. This can be criticized as a disadvantage insofar as, due to the scope of the work, it does not deal with one side specifically and in-depth but rather attempts to depict both sides, which certainly forms a point of contrast. Following a CDA approach, a hermeneutic method was selected since the research focuses on textual analysis.

3.3. Method Of Data Collection

In this section it is outlined how data was collected in order to conduct the research. The research is based on qualitative data shedding light on the discourse on the border surveillance system EUROSUR.

On the one hand, policymakers such as the European Commission and FRONTEX play a central role, promising effective border management and serving the rescue of the lives of refugees. On the other side of the discourse, the critical side is highlighted, characterised by NGOs and individual scholars who assess the installation of surveillance systems at the external borders as a danger rather than a security measure in migration control. To unmask the discourse of how EUROSUR is portrayed, various documents including official programme documents, journal publications, newspapers and scientific articles are drawn upon. The analysed documents have been derived from various sources. The data ranges from 2013, the year in which EUROSUR was introduced, until today, the year 2024. Therefore, the analysis will be based on this time period. The dataset consists of a total of 27 documents, with 5 documents published by the EU and Frontex and 22 documents issued by various stakeholders such as human rights organizations, scientists, and journalists. Out of these, 16 documents have been published in English and 6 documents in German.

The dataset representing the EU's side of the discourse contains policy documents and legal texts issued by European Union institutions and EU agencies responsible for external border

control, specifically FRONTEX. Official documents of the EU institutions have been obtained from both the official website as well as from the EU research result page (CORDIS). Documents from FRONTEX were found on their website. This particular data will primarily serve to demonstrate how the EU is addressing the objectives and strategies of the project. To discover the other side of the discourse that is emphasized in this thesis, scientific articles, reports as well as policy papers on EUROSUR were consulted. Additionally, documents by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are considered as well, as they have also turned out to be important within the debate. Documents were found through an advanced search via Google Scholar, using the following keywords in combination: "EUROSUR", "security", "migration" and "management". The examination of this variety of documents will serve to critically assess the achievement of EUROSUR's objectives on the one hand and engage with different perspectives ranging from humanitarian concerns to technical questions on the other. Several documents have been found, representing a collection of qualitative data.

The selected documents, while varying in their size, are consistent in their scope. They were selected based on their relevance to the problem at hand, using criteria that either support the notion of EUROSUR as a security measure, protecting the lives of migrants, and criteria that delegitimatise the use of EUROSUR. The selection process aimed to include data that represent the highest possible diversity of viewpoints. This diversity is crucial for presenting the different perspectives on EUROSUR and understanding how various actors represent their notions within the migration policy debate. Whereas it is expected that official project documents set a focus on the technological character of the European surveillance system, media documents are assumed to emphasize potential implications affecting the migrants.

A list of the documents examined in the analysis can be found in the appendix.

3.4. Method Of Data Operationalization and Analysis

The following section outlines the process by which the data will be operationalized and measured. In order to ensure that the most crucial concepts are captured, a coding scheme was created. Coding plays an essential role in examining qualitative data using a discourse analysis approach. A code is understood as "a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual-data" (Saldaña 2009). Coding a text makes it possible to better analyse and summarize large data sets (Saldaña 2009). Within the thesis, ATLAS.ti will be applied for the purpose of creating codes that capture different aspects that frame EUROSUR within the debate. ATLAS.ti is a qualitative data analysis and research software that can be used to organise and analyse a

large amount of qualitative data (Friese 2012). Especially the function of creating categories helps to obtain an overview of the themes of a large amount of texts. This methodology enables the categorization of thematically related parts of the texts and the breakdown of extensive data, helping to structure the points that are being analysed (Friese 2012).

In my work, the question of how EUROSUR is framed within the migration debate will be examined. Based on the dual perspectives of utilizing EUROSUR to improve internal security and to rescue migrants as pursued by the EU, and the critical assumption that EUROSUR has a negative impact on migrants, two main concepts emerged from this research: "EUROSUR as a security measure," representing the EU's perspective, and "EUROSUR as a tool against migrants," reflecting the critical side of the debate. The two main concepts are each split up again into distinctive features. Based on an inductive approach, the respective features of the two concepts were derived from the analysis of the data. For example, the features "security" and "protection" were selected as they were found to be particularly important in the analysis of the EU's official documents. The three features "Exclusionary Mechanism", "Fortress of Europe," and "Technocracy" were developed as these have emerged as central to the argumentation in the critical debate surrounding EUROSUR. The features associated with the concepts are depicted in Figure 1. Based on the features of the main concepts, a series of keywords are derived in order to further enable the data analysis, which is also illustrated in the table.

Given that this thesis employs textual analysis, the coding approach guided by the two primary concepts will facilitate the data analysis.

Table 1

Keywords used for coding documents

Concept	Features	Keywords
	Security	Internal security, border security
EUROSUR as security measure		
	Protection	Sea rescue, saving life, situational awareness, action capability, detection

	Exclusionary mechanism	Dehumanisation, fundamental rights, irregular migration, notion of migrants as threat
EUROSUR as a tool against migrant	Fortress of Europe	Border extension, control, deterrence, securitization, tool of power, pushbacks
	Technocracy	Technological solutionalism, depolitizisation, practicability, privacy protection, arms industry

3.5. Conclusion

In this methodology section, a justification for the selected case, along with the significance of employing a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), was outlined. Additionally, the process of data collection and the method of data analysis were explained. Following this outline of the methodological approach, the next chapter presents the results obtained using the methodology presented.

4. Analysis

4.1. Introduction

The analysis section provides insights into the discourse surrounding the surveillance technology EUROSUR being used as a means of monitoring the European external border. Firstly, the use of surveillance as a technological apparatus by the EU is investigated. This involves an examination of how the EU attempts to establish a link between the use of EUROSUR and an increase in security. The pursuit of security, as the analysis will reveal, fundamentally pertains to two aspects: internal EU security and the security of the migrants. In order to find out whether the EU's effort to increase security through a high degree of surveillance is also perceived as a protective measure for migrants in the broader discourse, the critical perspective of the discourse will be examined. Several concerns have been raised, including the extent to which EUROSUR has a negative impact on migrants' rights as well as the assumption that the EU is pursuing a policy of deterrence and thus developing a "Fortress of Europe". Considerations also enter the debate regarding the implications of using surveillance technologies in humanitarian crises. Albeit this analysis sheds light on how EUROSUR is presented by the EU, the focus

remains on examining the arguments made within the critical debate surrounding the surveillance system.

The following analysis will delve deeper into the following questions: What objectives does the EU aim to achieve through the application of EUROSUR? What concerns do critics express regarding the effects it has on migrants? What are the feared consequences of the use of EUROSUR for the EU? And how is the dependence on technology in migration management perceived within the debate? By addressing these questions, a fundamental understanding of the discourse surrounding the use, intentions and consequences of EUROSUR will be gained.

4.2. Discourse on Secure Migration Management through EUROSUR

The discourse on secure migration management through external border surveillance, as advocated by EU representatives, is underpinned by three main objectives: combating cross-border crime, preventing illegal migration, and protecting lives at sea (Regulation (EU) No 1052/2013). Various documents such as the regulation regarding EUROSUR and publications of FRONTEX, highlight how enhanced border surveillance can contribute to these goals. The concept of simultaneously ensuring internal EU security and migrant safety is put into the foreground.

The strong emphasis on security within the EU's approach using EUROSUR pertains to different aspects outlined in Regulation 1052/2013. These include enhancing EU internal security cooperation among member states to establish a unified external border policy (Regulation 1052/2013, para. 7), ensuring respect for the rights to liberty and security (Regulation 1052/2013, para. 1), and ensuring border security (Regulation 1052/2013 Article 15(1)). The first point underscores the EU's aim to strengthen cooperation among member states through a robust European security architecture, thereby enhancing EU internal security. The second point highlights the EU's commitment to conducting border surveillance in line with fundamental rights, with security considerations focused on individuals affected by border surveillance. The final point aims to detect potential threats from illegal migration and cross-border crime early on through efficient border surveillance, further emphasizing the EU's goal of contributing to a "secure" border through EUROSUR.

Another goal pursued through the application of EUROSUR is the protection of migrants covering the humanitarian aspects. As stated in the regulation's first paragraph, EUROSUR aims to "contribute to ensuring the protection and saving the lives of migrants" (Regulation (EU) No

1052/2013). To achieve this, the EU establishes a real-time information exchange system between national border control authorities and FRONTEX, aimed at enhancing situational awareness. Situational awareness, as defined by the European Security Research Advisory Board (ESRAB) in 2006, involves the "comprehensive capture, fusion, correlation, and interpretation of real-time and historical data to facilitate effective decision-making and performance in complex environments". FRONTEX emphasizes that based on situational awareness across land and sea borders of member states, EUROSUR seeks to strengthen the reaction capabilities to effectively respond to threats and unexpected events affecting migrants (FRONTEX: Monitoring and Risk Analysis). The European Commission further articulates its objectives:

> *"We have to become better at identifying and rescuing vessels at risk [...] EUROSUR will improve situational awareness and the capability of early detection of irregular migrants at sea, thus enabling more effective prevention of loss of life"* (EU Commission, 2013b: 17).

Thus, the EU seeks to achieve quicker responses to save migrant lives at sea through increased member-state cooperation and information exchange. Overall, it becomes evident from the official documents of the EU that the EU shapes its border surveillance and migration management strategy from both a security policy and humanitarian perspective.

4.3. Critical Debate on EUROSUR

Critical voices shaping the debate around EUROSUR question the cost at which the security aspirations pursued by EUROSUR are implemented. These voices offer a comprehensive argumentation covering various aspects. The focus of the critical examination of EUROSUR in this analysis revolves around the following arguments: firstly, technological border surveillance represents and exacerbates a repressive mechanism against migrants. Secondly, the surveillance system reinforces the EU's policy of deterrence. Additionally, and forming the final point, it is problematized that EUROSUR is used as a technocratic solution to a humanitarian issue, thereby creating dependencies on technology. These arguments, which seem to profoundly influence the discourse, can be summarized under the following three points: repressive mechanisms against migrants, Fortress of Europe, and technocracy, which underpin the following analysis.

4.3.1. Exclusionary Mechanism

As early as 1999, sociologist Thomas Matthiesen described the SIS (Schengen Information System), which is used as an information system for the security authorities of the Schengen countries, as a "huge panoptic machine that is the most repressive political instrument of modern times" (Sombetzki & Quicker 2016). In line with the SIS, the use of EUROSUR is also accused of serving repressive purposes by promoting an exclusion mechanism that leads to the stigmatization and exclusion of migrants. Critics see the origin of the problem that technology follows a repressive mechanism not in the technology itself, but in the migration debate. This debate is characterized by two main aspects: firstly, that migrants are perceived as a threat, and secondly, that the EU pursues an external border policy of "securitization" to justify the use of technology.

Sombetzki and Quicker (2016) show that the perception of migrants as a threat results from the fact that the current migration debate associates migration with crime.

> *"In current political and social discourse, migration is associated with crime (...) and thus creates a strong dynamic of social exclusion. The EU reinforces this connotation and exclusion through EUROSUR."* (Sombetzki & Quicker 2016)

This negative connotation leads to the creation of dynamics of social exclusion. Technologies such as EUROSUR do not break these dynamics; on the contrary, they perpetuate them and can act as an amplifier of social exclusion. This points to the assumption that technology cannot be seen as neutral, at least "it would be impossible to have a value-free use of technologies" (Jumbert 2012). Rather, it is used as a political instrument and therefore cannot be viewed in isolation from political notions.

> *"This strengthened surveillance system excludes asylum seekers on an internal EU level, as asylum seekers become coupled with threat and illegality."* (Sombetzki & Quicker 2016)

The technology therefore does not work "by itself" or is responsible for an exclusion mechanism of migrants but is used as a means to an end to reinforce this perception. However, not merely the societal association made between migration and crime causes an exclusionary mechanism. Sombetzki and Quicker (2016) have discussed how conflating the terms "asylum seekers" and "illegal immigrants" within the migration debate negatively impacts a humanitarian migration management. The criticism lies in both groups being categorized as security risks and threats

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to the EU, leading to migrants not being treated as potential asylum seekers. Instead, the EU pursues a policy where, through early detection of vessels in the Mediterranean using EURO-SUR, all migrants are treated as illegal immigrants and are being returned, without knowing if there are potential asylum seekers among them. These arguments are made against the backdrop of the assumption that EUROSUR enables pushbacks. According to Green EU parliamentarian Ska Keller, this undermines the right to seek asylum (Weiß 2012). She points to the principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits the return or expulsion of individuals to countries where they face serious threats to life or freedom (United Nations General Assembly, Article 33(1); ECHR, Article 3; Geneva Refugee Convention, Article 33(1)). Instead, all refugees should be regarded as potential asylum seekers who have the right to undergo a fair asylum procedure. This would signify a more humane approach to migration management and strip EUROSUR of its character as being responsible for the repatriation of refugees. The conflation of asylum seekers and "illegal" immigrants is seen as reinforcing right-wing political narratives and justifying extensive surveillance and restrictive measures that curtail migrants' rights (Sombetzki & Quicker 2016).

In this context, particular attention is drawn to the negative consequences of the interoperability of EU surveillance systems such as SIS II, EUROSUR, the Visa Information System (VIS), and EURODAC. These measures, which are part of broader security and border management strategies, are designed to intensify the exclusion of asylum seekers by strengthening surveillance and control capabilities (Sombetzki & Quicker 2016). All these systems, which are intended to facilitate information exchange, are criticized for perpetuating a "vicious circle" of exclusion. This circle operates by categorizing asylum seekers as threats through policies and practices that then prove to be self-fulfilling (Sombetzki & Quicker 2016). This "vicious circle" is also underscored by Jumbert, who illustrates how technology is repeatedly used as a response to both real and perceived threats.

> "(…) the very nature of current threats, whether real or perceived, to European internal and external security encourages technological responses." (Jumbert 2012)

The connection created between migration and threat in the migration debate not only results in social exclusion but also, according to Julien Jeandesboz (2011), leads the EU to securitize its borders. Therefore, the second factor shaping the migration debate and favouring an exclusionary mechanism of EUROSUR is the removal of migration policy from its original policy field and its perception as a "security issue" (Jumbert 2012). He views the framing of migration as a threat to EU security as a driving factor for border surveillance systems such as EUROSUR.

The pursuit of securitization is then used as a basis and justification to extend and intensify border surveillance beyond the EU's borders.

> *"There is (...) a constant move towards reinforcing the means of carrying out effective border control along the EU's external border, in order to keep what is defined as unwanted elements outside." (Jumbert 2012)*

Jumbert illustrates the increasing discrepancy between the legal border, which marks the recognized limits of sovereign nation-states, and the borders of control, where verification of those attempting to cross occurs. Surveillance beyond the sovereign nation states' borders, and thus early detection of migrants, would also increase the chances for EU member states "of evading their obligation to rescue them" (Heller & Jones 2014). Additionally, extending borders of control into the sovereign territory of third countries compromises individuals' rights to leave their own country and may infringe on refugees' rights to seek protection, as they are denied the opportunity to apply for asylum. This creates conflicts with the freedom of movement upon which the European Union is founded. EUROSUR would primarily be used to secure borders and prevent the arrival of migrants. This occurs at the expense of its original and promoted goal, which is to save lives:

> *"EUROSUR is destined to become just another tool that will be at the disposal of Member States in order to secure borders and prevent arrivals, rather than a genuine life-saving tool."* (Deibler 2015)

Deibler (2015) argues that by extending border surveillance beyond EU borders, the primary function of EUROSUR is not humanitarian aid but rather the fortification and control of EU borders. This assessment implies that EUROSUR was introduced under the guise of "rescue", but now serves opposite purposes. It also suggests that the efforts towards securitization primarily serve EU internal security rather than the security of migrants. This policy aligns with the perception that migrants are viewed as a threat and that Europe must "protect" itself from them. As a result, social exclusion is intensified, and the perception of migrants as a threat is further entrenched.

> *"The EUROSUR programme (...) also comes with the contradictory rhetoric it has developed on migration, a humanitarian but also security discourse, where immigration is established as a threat that must be intercepted before reaching the territory of a*

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Member State, and where immigration is equated with other traditional threats and crimes" (Benedicto & Brunet 2018)

Also, the French human rights organization "International Federation for Human Rights" accuses the EU of extending its border control regime beyond its sovereign borders to prevent migrants from reaching Europe. This accusation is supported by claims that the EU collaborates with third countries such as Libya, Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco "in order for them to play the role of prison guards and dissuade them from taking the northward route" (Lampedusa: Murderous Europe 2013). This practice is labelled by the human rights organization as a "war against migrants" (Lampedusa: Murderous Europe 2013), emphasizing the narrative that EU-ROSUR is not used for rescuing migrants but rather against them. Deibler (2015) describes the EU's expanded security policy as "dystopian," as it goes beyond the traditional function of border security. This policy is characterized by intensive surveillance and control that severely restricts not only the EU's external borders but also the freedom of movement and privacy of migrants.

Vaughan-Williams (2015) also perceives ambiguity in the EU's promotion of securing borders while purportedly saving lives. By intertwining the approach of securitization with humanitarian discourses, humanitarian arguments are no longer seen as counteracting the harshness of security measures. Instead, they become part of a unified strategy of migration control. Humanitarianism thus serves not only to mitigate the excesses of migration security but also to legitimize and enforce these measures. This blurring of boundaries between humanitarianism and border security obscures their distinctions to the detriments of the migrants (Vaughan-Williams 2015).

The accusation that EUROSUR favours an exclusionary and repressive mechanism at the expense of migrants, which has its origins in the migration debate, thus arises, as described above, on the one hand from the fact that migrants are perceived as a threat, and on the other hand from the fact that the EU's policy of "securitization" justifies increased technological border surveillance. The conclusion reached by both Jumbert (2012) and Jeandesboz (2011) is that this surveillance is aimed at deterring migrants from taking routes across the Mediterranean in order to avoid the need for sea rescue. However, these measures are not achieving their intended goal. Instead, they lead migrants to consider even riskier routes in order to evade European migration control systems (Jumbert 2012; Jeandesboz 2011). So, although the EU's aim with EUROSUR is also to combat crime at the border and track down people smugglers, critics say the opposite

is happening: "more restrictive European border control would create conditions that "force migrants into the hands of (...) criminals." (Lampedusa: Murderous Europe 2013).

The critical debate surrounding EUROSUR shows that the strategy of increased security measures paradoxically increases the danger for migrants and does not achieve the deterrent effects desired by the EU.

4.3.2. Fortress of Europe

The critical discourse on EUROSUR is also characterised by the uncertainty that it would contribute to the isolation of Europe and the expansion of a "Fortress of Europe". Closely related to this is the argument that the EU is pursuing a policy of securitization with EUROSUR. This has already been dealt with in detail in the previous chapter and discussed with regard to its exclusionary effect on migrants and will therefore not be taken up again in this chapter. Instead, this part of the analysis shows how the discourse reflects opinions that assume that the EU is pursuing a policy of deterrence with the help of EUROSUR. This is linked in particular to the argument that the EU can exploit and expand its position of power through technical border controls. The concept of "Fortress of Europe" is thus understood more broadly here, not merely in the sense that the EU isolates itself, but also in the sense that it can expand its power through technological facilities and thereby act as a deterrent towards migrants.

The accusation that EUROSUR serves to expand a "Fortress of Europe" to the detriment of migrants is made, among others, by Wenzel Michalski, Director of Human Rights Watch, who describes EUROSUR as the "big brother of the Mediterranean region" (Taube 2013) taking on the role of deterring migrants rather than protecting them. This goes hand in hand with the accusation that EUROSUR's primary goal is not to save migrants at sea, but primarily to secure the external borders and prevent illegal immigration thereby undermining and contradicting the goal put forward by the EU to ensure overall security. Tazzioli (2016) puts forward that EUROSUR is used as a security measure, but not in the sense that it detects migrants at sea in order to initiate rescue operations, but by making use of EUROSUR as a deterrent measure.

> *"The functioning of monitoring systems like EUROSUR generates an effect of deterrence, discouraging migrants from crossing the sea." (Tazzioli 2016).*

Human security is thus ultimately framed in terms of deterrence, specifically as measures designed to prevent migrant departures and discourage them from seeking asylum in Europe. Defining the saving of migrant lives through a deterrence-based approach by not allowing migrants

to cross the Mediterranean, is viewed as part of a broader trend in EU migration governance. This trend is particularly evident in the context of migrant deaths in the Mediterranean.

> *"The obsession with border control has turned Europe into a fortress, causing large scale human tragedies. The citizens of Europe must understand that these tragedies are not unavoidable accidents, but the result of deliberate policies adopted by their governments."*, declared Dimitris Christopoulos, FIDH Vice-president (*Deaths in The Mediterranean: The EU Has No Alternative* 2015).

Essentially, providing protection to migrants is equated with preventing their sea crossings. However, this overlooks the reality that migrants are not deterred from fleeing. Instead of pursuing a policy of prevention, governments should create "safe channels" (Tazzioli 2016) through which migrants can reach Europe. Only then it could be argued that prioritizing the protection of migrants is being addressed.

Last but not least, the EUROSUR system is seen as an opportunity for the EU to reproduce and expand its power.

> *"As a means of control, it [EUROSUR] reproduces power relations, but it also has the potential to change them. Furthermore, it also creates new ones."* (Huber 2021)

Huber brings forward how the European border regime can exercise and create an all-encompassing power. He defines the European border surveillance regime as a network consisting of the intergovernmental political power network, the supranational political power network and parts of the economic power network, whose interests dominate the debate on surveillance at Europe's external borders (Huber 2021). He attributes this to the fact that the border surveillance regime makes use of the integration and interoperability of various databases such as PNR (Passenger Name Record), EES (Entry/Exit System) and ETIAS (European Travel Information and Authorization System). EUROSUR, as part of the border systems, collects data which is then forwarded to other systems. The exchange between the systems itself is not fundamentally criticised, but rather the concern lies in how this exchange results in a lack of transparency for individuals whose data is collected. For them it is "increasingly difficult to reconstruct what data is gathered, who has access to it and what are the consequences" (Huber 2021). Surveillance systems create a kind of opacity, making it difficult for data subjects to understand how their personal data might be used or affect their status. This leads to a considerable "asymmetry of power and knowledge" (Huber 2021) between the data subjects and the surveillance apparatus and strengthens the power of those who control the data. Through what Huber (2021)

describes as "panoptic power", existing social and political hierarchies are deepened by giving the already powerful more control and surveillance options. This would contribute to the expansion of a "Fortress of Europe" insofar as the EU would gain a position of power over migrants through creating non-transparent systems.

This paragraph has illustrated how the discourse favouring EUROSUR as a "Fortress of Europe" is shaped by two features: on the one hand, by the EU deterring migrants from embarking on the route towards the EU, and on the other hand, by creating a technical system that leads to an imbalance of power favouring the EU.

4.3.3. Technocracy

The last final point of the critical analysis of EUROSUR is examined from the point of view that EUROSUR is strongly technocratic in nature, thus functioning as part of a technocratic governance model within the EU. Technocracy can be defined as "the administrative and political domination of a society (...) that seeks to impose a single, exclusive policy paradigm based on the application of instrumentally rational techniques." (Centeno 1993). Based on this definition, EUROSUR can be classified as a tool that the EU employs as a dominant actor to achieve the political goal of security through rational means. The criticism builds upon this premise: on the one hand, it is argued that generally rational techniques alone cannot adequately address humanitarian issues. On the other hand, concern exists that the data summarized by EUROSUR, which forms the basis for decision-making, grants significant power to those responsible for its functionality—engineers and scientists. This can potentially lead to a relationship of dependency. Furthermore, apprehensions exist that the technologization and heightened surveillance of external borders, exemplified by EUROSUR, will increase reliance on industries that produce such technologies. This section explores how the debate surrounding EUROSUR's functioning as a technocratic apparatus is unfolding.

One accusation is made that EUROSUR is being used as a technical solution to a humanitarian problem of saving human lives in distress at sea. According to critics, however, a social problem does not require technical solutions. Technologies such as EUROSUR collect data in order to make predictions and draw conclusions. This process, referred to by Jumbert (2012) as the "information race", suggests that the best answers to legal and ethical dilemmas could be found through the accumulation of information and ever more knowledge. This is accompanied by the accusation that the focus for tackling the social problem is placed more on technical conditions and procedures instead of addressing the social problem itself. Levy (2013) argues that

despite EUROSUR's primary emphasis on saving lives, it actually prioritizes a control frame-work based on databases and biometrics. This "rationalization" by EUROSUR, as described by Walter (2017), leads to a loss of connection with reality and the source of the problem, namely that migrants feel compelled to take dangerous routes across the Mediterranean. The doubt is that both the subjects, i.e. the migrants, and the actual causes of migration or humanitarian needs are being pushed into the background by an increased use of technology.

> *"(…) with EUROSUR the answer to the socio-political and humanitarian problems generated by surveillance seems to be more surveillance."* (Walters 2016).

Instead of tackling the causes of these problems or minimizing the negative effects of surveil-lance, EUROSUR focuses on intensifying surveillance measures. In doing so, the EU is enforc-ing a problem management that increasingly relies on and necessitates the use of technology.

The impacts of technologized border management are also intertwined with the perception of borders, which plays a crucial role in shaping how they are managed. Surveillance systems like EUROSUR create a separation between the "observer" and "the observed", potentially contrib-uting to the dehumanization of migration issues. In "Die Entmenschlichung der Grenze", (engl.: "The dehumanization of the border"), Maria Schwertl (2018) examines how the use of high-tech tools such as drones, sensors and the collection of biometric data in border management is changing the perception of Europe's external borders. She argues that these technologies can contribute to perceiving the border less as a place of human interaction and more as a technically monitored space. In her view, this leads to a dehumanization of the migration issue, as the individual needs and rights of migrants might take a back seat to technological efficiency gains. She arrived at this conclusion when, during an interview, she asked an engineer at what point he would classify a border to be secure. He described a border as being secure "if any attempt to cross is repelled or detected, ... and of course, no life and limb should be harmed." (Schwertl 2018). The quote illustrates that border guards primarily perceive and treat borders to fulfill their purpose, prioritizing the prevention of unauthorized crossings. Subordinately, it is men-tioned that borders are considered secure when the safety of migrants is ensured. Schwertl prob-lematizes that this perception of borders has a significant impact on the design of migration management. In particular, concerns are expressed regarding the ability of technology in creat-ing a divide between technology and politics. Engineers who work on border facilities often have a technical view and less of the "object" that is affected by the technology. They see the work of ensuring that the technology meets the humanitarian aspects as a political task.

Schwertl (2018) emphasizes that technology and politics must be considered together. In her assessment, an exclusively technical approach to border management would create dehumanizing tendencies. If technical solutions are developed and implemented in isolation from political and humanitarian considerations, there is a risk that the welfare and rights of migrants will be neglected.

Furthermore, it is shown that the mechanization of borders would result in a new form of technologization in the area of European migration policy. The political scientist Julien Jeandesboz clearly refers to EUROSUR in this context and says that EUROSUR reflects "a trend (...), namely the tendency to seek agreement over initiatives that are deemed "technical" in the face of persistent struggles in domains considered by Member States governments as sovereign matters." (Jeandesboz 2011). He also points out that the lack of a common European migration policy means that more technology will be used to facilitate communication and cooperation between the MGS in terms of migration management. Technology thus serves as a remedy for the poorly communitized policy field of migration policy in the EU. As a result, the policy area is more dependent on research and industry, which can provide these technologies (Schwertl 2018). Consequently, a connection between the technologization of borders and the depoliticization of migration issues is also based on the assumption that the industrial sector takes advantage of border security and uses it as a source of profit. As a result of the refugee crisis in 2015, several newspapers published articles highlighting how the security industry profited from the refugee crisis. Also, articles on EUROSUR have been published highlighting how the security industry has taken advantage of it. The French magazine "Le Temps", for example, described EUROSUR as "a dream for the arms industry" (Petrovic 2013). The magazine "Slate" reported on the border surveillance system in October 2013, shortly after the introduction of EUROSUR quoting Charles Heller, a researcher at London's Goldsmiths University, who described EUROSUR as "scandalous" (Vallet 2013). EUROSUR, critics suspect, plays into the hands of the arms industry rather than serving to save refugees. The human rights organization International Federation For Human Rights states:

> *"EUROSUR, (...) calls upon cutting edge technologies to militarise the European Union's external borders in order to limit the number of irregular immigrants who penetrate them."* (Lampedusa: Murderous Europe 2013).

The left-wing parties Greens/ EFA and the left also sharply criticized the surveillance system, calling it an "investment programme for the arms industry" (deutschlandfunk.de 2013). The argument that EUROSUR reinforces the militarization of borders is once again accompanied by the fear and criticism that migrants will take more dangerous routes in order to remain undetected. This, again, concludes that EUROSUR does not help to keep migrants safe, but rather serves as a deterrent.

Beyond the aspects made regarding engineers' dependencies and benefits for the security industry from EUROSUR reinforce its perception as a technocratic tool, the reliance on the technology itself is questioned, which raises doubts about its practicality and success of its use:

> *"Is it possible, even beneficial, to have cameras covering every stretch of the coast?"*
> *(Jumbert 2012)*

Concerns encompass both the geographical challenges that result in difficult surveillance and the limited responsiveness once migrants in distress are detected. Practical difficulties to consider in the use of EUROSUR include the vastness of the Mediterranean Sea. With a coastline of approximately 45,000 kilometres, surveillance poses a significant challenge and requires broad coverage of the sections to be observed (Tazzioli 2016). Additionally, unpredictable migration routes and changing weather conditions complicate surveillance efforts resulting in a delayed reaction capability of FRONTEX. This would mean that EUROSUR does not operate in the present and would not possess real-time capabilities, but rather serve as an archive of "migratory events" (Tazzioli 2016) from which risk analyses for the future are created (Kasparek 2021). Tazzioli (2016) summarizes it as follows:

> *"Yet, when we scrutinize (...) how long it takes before a migration event is displayed on the map, it becomes clear that prompt intervention is far from being EUROSUR's goal. On average, it takes several hours before a migration event that has been added to the map is displayed, and in some cases, the latency can be as much as a day. These delays are partly caused by the technical limits of the system: that is, the national coordination centers require a certain amount of time to process data."* (Tazzioli 2016)

This highlights how the restrictive conditions under which EUROSUR is deployed make timely rescue almost impossible. This accusation underscores once again the notion that EUROSUR

is perceived not as a tool for rescuing migrants in time but rather as a tool that functions a data-collecting system.

4.4. Conclusion

Based on the analysis, a conclusion can be drawn regarding the findings and general insights. As for the EU's claim of increased security through surveillance technology, it has been demonstrated that this perspective clearly exists, as evident in the regulation itself and publications from FRONTEX. Increased security refers both to the internal security of the EU and to the goal of saving migrants' lives through the enhanced situational awareness that EUROSUR creates. However, further analysis reveals that the critical perspective on the technology contradicts this linkage between security and surveillance.

While the critical perspective acknowledges that the EU aims to create a form of security policy with EUROSUR, it argues that this form of security is limited to the internal security of the EU. However, this is not viewed positively; the EU is accused of pursuing a policy of securitisation under the guise of internal security, which leads to the expansion of the "Fortress of Europe." Regarding the second connection made by the EU between EUROSUR and the safety of migrants, the critical perspective completely disagrees with this goal presented by the EU. Instead, the critical perspective argues that migrants face an exclusionary mechanism intentionally designed to detect them early through surveillance in order to carry out pushbacks. This critical view thus completely denies that the EU aims to save migrants' lives with EUROSUR.

This contrast between the EU's stance and the critical debate highlights the existing divergent notions.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Answer To The Research Question

Finally, the main research question: "How is the use of the EUROSUR technological border surveillance system framed within the migration management debate in the EU?" can be answered. By means of the analysis, key insights into the EUROSUR discourse were revealed, highlighting both the EU's stance on security enhancement and the critical perspective on its implications. With regard to Critical Theory, which served as the theoretical framework for this work, many parallels can be found between the arguments made by the four scholars Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse, and Feenberg and the critical debate surrounding EUROSUR. The

founding fathers of the Frankfurt School argued that technology is used as a means to consolidate the ruling order, serving as a reproduction of power. This argument is also evident in the debate around EUROSUR, as it is on the one hand seen as part of a network of technological systems that are intransparent to those affected and create an imbalance of power between those who use the technology and those who are subject to it. And on the other hand, it is seen as facilitating the EU's implementation of pushbacks, further reflecting a form of exercise of power. Both arguments are aimed at the EU making use of EUROSUR to exert its power over migrants.

The critical thinker Marcuse problematized that societal problems are tackled by "technological rationality" (Marcuse 2022). This aligns with the critical perspective that EUROSUR is used as a means to address humanitarian crises and migrants in distress at sea, without solving the underlying issues of migration. Critics argue that while EUROSUR is technocratically driven, making decisions based on data collection, it does not address the root causes of migration, thereby perpetuating the cycle of crisis rather than solving it. Marcuse's critique regarding technology's pursuit of rational outcomes underscores how critical thinking can be undermined, reducing users to passive consumers. This dynamic is implicitly echoed in the EUROSUR debate, particularly when considering the role of engineers tasked with analyzing collected data. These professionals often possess a purely technical perspective on border control, lacking direct interaction with migrants. Their observations are confined to screens, establishing a significant distance between those who operate EUROSUR and those impacted by its implementation. This detachment potentially diminishes the opportunitiy for a critical examination of EUROSUR's implications and the ethical considerations surrounding its use. Engineers and operators may become as Marcuse describes "passive consumers" of the technology, without fully engaging in the broader social and humanitarian dimensions of border management. This phenomenon also aligns with Feenberg's concept of "impersonal domination".

The concept that EUROSUR operates within a "technosystem," a term coined by Feenberg, resonates strongly within the debate surrounding its implementation. EUROSUR is not viewed as a neutral entity; rather, it actively shapes and perpetuates associations made in public discourse regarding migrants and perceived threats. By functioning within this technosystem, EUROSUR becomes intertwined with broader ideological structures that reinforce the European Union's power dynamics and political goals.

However, critical theory also sheds light on aspects that are not fully reflected in the debate about EUROSUR. For instance, Adorno and Horkheimer argued that technology primarily emerges from capitalist motives. In the debate around EUROSUR, it's not explicitly framed as being used for surveillance with a capitalist intention. However, one can argue that the involvement of the private sector and the security industry in utilizing EUROSUR suggests that capitalist interests could contribute to its perpetuation.

With regard to the initial question of whether EUROSUR functions primarily as a security measure or is perceived as a threat to migrants, it is clear that the security aspect is particularly favoured by the EU. However, as the critical debate showed, this emphasis on security comes at the expense of migrants, which means that EUROSUR is seen more as a threat to their rights and well-being.

In conclusion, it can be said that the examination of Critical Theory, which can already look back on a 100-year history, remains relevant in contemporary contexts. The approaches of the theorists united in Critical Theory also play a role in current debates, as this work has shown. Concepts such as analysing power relations or the consequences of the use of technology in society can still be used to understand and question societal and political phenomena.

5.2. Filling The Research Gap And Suggestions For Future Research

In this work, the discourse surrounding a surveillance system in the European context was analyzed. The thesis addressed the literature gap, which left the broad debate around EUROSUR through the lens of Critical Theory largely unexplored. Although it was possible to draw on various sources in both English and German, the study faced limitations as it could not include sources such as reports or newspaper articles from different EU countries with varying languages. Therefore, it is suggested for further research to continue examining the discourse as it is conducted in the different member states, not being limited to English and German sources.

Further, it would also be interesting to examine surveillance systems in other countries, zooming out of the European context. In this regard, attention could be directed towards the systems in the USA, where surveillance seems more stringent and regulated. Under the Biden Administration, the controversial surveillance system has been expanded, monitoring more than 180,000 immigrants (Bhuiyan 2022). For research purposes, it could be insightful to look not only at border surveillance but also at how immigrants are monitored after they have already entered the country. In this context, the use of the "SmartLink" App becomes relevant which is

used by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to collect information on migrants' location, communication, and personal data (Bhuiyan 2022). It could be analyzed in terms of its implications for human rights, its contribution to surveillance capitalism, and how it is perceived in the public discourse.

Similar to EUROSUR, a critical analysis of US surveillance systems could show how these technologies contribute to reinforcing existing power imbalances, restricting individual freedoms and controlling social groups such as migrants. The debate on surveillance in the USA could also reveal parallels with EUROSUR, for example in relation to the effects on migration or its tendency to pursue a policy deterrence. Overall, a comparative critical analysis could help to identify patterns and trends that transcend national borders and offer a more global perspective on the challenges and opportunities of surveillance technologies.

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Appendix - List of Data

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