

Analyzing the Creation of EU Agencies: The Case of Frontex in EU Border Control Policy

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The paper explores why Agencies of the European Union (EU Agencies) were established through the case of the EU border control agency, Frontex. Existing literature on EU Agencies has contributed to it by identifying the balance between the delegation of power to the EU Agencies and the effective implementation of EU policies; however literature, which commonly employs the principal-agent model as the theoretical framework, often overly focuses on the state-centric processes and only takes Member States as the principals in the EU Agencies as the agents. Unlike this conventional view, this article argues that the European Commission has also had an influence on the agency creation process with its effect of agenda-setting and can be conceptualized as another principal. By tracing the historical process of EU cooperation on border management, the case study of Frontex highlights that, though Frontex was born in the process through which Member States exercised their influence and leverage, the effective introduction of the EU Agency-model by the European Commission helped Frontex to be accepted and created. In other words, Frontex, where the different actor's preferences converged, was constructed as the focal point by the European Commission.