

Between Borders

France, Germany, and Poland in the Debate on Demarcation and Frontier Crossing in the Context of the Schengen Agreement

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INTRODUCTION

The events of 1989 changed Europe. Protests and regime changes in Central and Eastern Europe, including the fall of the Berlin wall and the resulting end of the cold war, marked the beginning of a process that brought a fundamental reconfiguration of European social, political, economic, and cultural spaces. During this process, the nations of Europe negotiated new national and European identities within the broader culture of a newly unified Europe that was itself undergoing major revision.

The transitions in Central and Eastern Europe, including the former East Germany, were particularly intense. The simultaneous transitions of both political and economic systems meant that virtually every aspect of everyday life was changed for most individuals. One might argue that these institutional changes were the *short-term* result of the political transformation of 1989. Historical research, however, highlights that while the transformation may have come to a head in 1989, it was the result of convergence of a variety of long-term factors that were not restricted geographically to the countries directly participating in the social upheavals of 1989. Bearing in mind the experience and viewpoints of eastern *and* western Europe, we can analyze the meaning of the 1989 transformation in a broader context, taking into account not only institutional transitions but also the transition of patterns and structures of cultural communication and of mentalities.

These include changes that have yet to reach completion and forms of continuity that still persist today. This contribution elaborates the argument that such forms of long-term continuity lasting well after the transformative year of 1989 can best be explained from historical perspective.

Useful for discussing the meaning of the 1989 transformation in historical context is one debate that is highly symbolic for the present construction of Europe: the laws regulating cross-border movement within the context of the Schengen Agreement. This debate allows us to discuss the many forms of collective identity in Europe and to talk about what a national “boundary means to people, or, more precisely, about the meanings they give to it.” (Cohen 1985: 12) Reports on the implementation of the Schengen Agreement in 1995 and its eastward expansion in 2007 appearing in the French, Polish, and German print media are analyzed below using articles from six major daily newspapers.¹

WESTERN PLANS FOR A BORDERLESS EUROPE AND THE FALL OF THE “IRON CURTAIN”

After a long period of rigid boundaries in Cold War Europe, two processes fueled a heated debate about borders and demarcations beginning in the 1980s: the implementation of the Schengen Agreement in the context of European integration and the political and economic transformations of Central and Eastern Europe. The Schengen Agreement had its origins in Helmut Kohl and François Mitterrand’s decision in 1984 to create a border-free zone in what would become the Schengen area. One year later, the Schengen Agreement was signed by the governments of France, West Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands. It was considered to be the next logical step toward a single European market. The agreement’s implementation procedure took ten years, much longer than planned, and finally came into effect in early 1995. By 1997 the additional signatories of Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Austria were also on board. The Schengen area currently encompasses 26 countries.

1 | The newspapers are: *Le Monde* (LM) and *Le Figaro* (LF), the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (SZ) and the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ), *Gazeta Wyborcza* (GW) and *Rzeczpospolita* (RZ). All cited passages have been translated by the author.

The fall of the “Iron Curtain” fundamentally changed the preconditions upon which the elimination of border controls in Western Europe was founded. Within a very short time span, Europe’s eastern border was no longer clearly defined, leading both to hopes for a unified “Europe without borders” and to concerns about future migration patterns and lowered security. German unification had opened up the eminent possibility that a future Europe would comprise both western and eastern European space. Karl Schlögel referred to the year 1989 as a spatial revolution (“Raumrevolution”) (Schlögel 2006: 25).

This notable historic constellation raises the question of what happened when the long-term plans regarding the implementation of a “borderless” (Western) Europe within a single European market and a political union coincided with the unexpected fall of the “Iron Curtain.” What happened when the transformation processes of Central and Eastern Europe became relevant for Western European integration, which had until then not considered the issue of eastward expansion?

DEBATES ON THE SCHENGEN AGREEMENT IN 1995

The “Agreement between the Governments of the States of the Benelux Economic Union, the Federal Republic of Germany and the French Republic on the Gradual Abolition of Checks at their Common Borders” was signed in 1985. It formulated the plan to establish an unrestricted travel zone in the member states of the European Community. The Agreement was meant to send a signal for the then static process of European Integration. Its economic crisis, then often referred to as “Eurosclerosis,” was supposed to be broken with the implementation of the Single European Act in 1986. In 1990, the member states added the “Convention Implementing the Schengen Agreement.” In the process leading up to this convention, the new challenges presented by the fall of the Berlin wall had already become apparent. In December 1989, the government of the Federal Republic of Germany delayed signing the treaty, wishing to see a resolution of the question of whether East Germany would automatically become part of the Schengen area after the German reunification.²

2 | Cf. “Kabinett verschiebt Entscheidung über Schengen”, FAZ 15.12.1989: 1.

Abolishing Internal Border Controls

On March 26th, 1995, the Schengen Agreement officially came into force. In France, the plan to abolish border controls attracted much harsher criticism than in Germany. Facing the upcoming presidential elections, many French politicians publicly opposed the opening of the borders or argued for delays.³ Their opposition coincided with a general concern regarding further immigration to France across the common borders of the Schengen area. The government was afraid of losing sovereignty and control. Opponents were criticized, however, on the grounds that by not entering the Schengen Agreement, France would risk losing influence over European politics.⁴

While newspapers in Poland and Germany had already heralded the opening of common borders (Stabenow 1995: 1; Pomianowski 1995a), French newspapers referred to the date as the beginning of a progressive implementation of the Schengen Agreement in a “probationary phase.”⁵ As a reaction to bomb attacks in Paris in 1995, among other factors, the French government waited another year to open its borders entirely to the members of the Schengen Treaty (Prantl 1995a: 4).

New “countervailing measures” were also part of the European discourse, especially in German newspapers. Articles focused on conflicts over the right of national police officers to cross borders in “hot pursuit” of crime suspects (Münster 1995: 8). A possible increase in drug trafficking from the Netherlands was also a matter of debate especially in France.⁶

Constructing a Common External Border

Member states were concerned about the new common external borders of the Schengen area. France in particular considered the borders in the Mediterranean regions of Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Greece to be a

3 | E.g. Philippe de Villiers (“A l’extrême droite et à l’extrême gauche, les limites du consensus”, LM 22.03.1995); Jacques Chirac (“Chirac et les accords de Schengen”, LF 07.04.1995: 7); Jean-Marie le Pen (“Le Pen: ‘Contrat pour la France’”, LF 05.04.1995: 7).

4 | Cf. “Rückzug von Europa?”, FAZ 01.7.1995: 2.

5 | “Schengen, une convention en marche”, LF 24.03.1995: 10; Bresson (1995).

6 | Cf. “Coke en stock aux Pays-Bas”, LF 05.05.1995: 12-C.

long-term security threat for Schengen-area citizens.⁷ For many French and German politicians such as Jacques Chirac or Manfred Kanther, the main common goal was to prevent “illegal immigrants” from entering the Schengen area.⁸

Most concerns regarding irregular immigration and increasing crime rates focused on security along the eastern border of united Germany. Erich Inciyan, in *Le Monde*, referred to this as the “most sensitive external border of this new Schengen area” (Inciyan 1995) because it represented the new common border to Eastern Europe. “Sleep well, brave Europeans! German policemen will watch over your security at the borders,” wrote Philippe Bernard (1995) in *Le Monde*.

The Schengen Agreement was often criticized on the grounds that the new European situation differed radically from the conditions under which the Agreement had been signed in 1985.

The Schengen Agreement, initiated in 1985 when the Iron Curtain demarcated the eastern border of Europe, was implemented in the completely different context of heavy migratory pressure from Bulgaria, Romania, Russia, and Turkey (ibid.).

The German newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* commented on this French concern: “Some people still dream of the old definite boundaries, at least in the east” (Wenz 1995: 8). Although German newspapers generally emphasized high standards of security at the eastern border of Germany (ibid.), the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* expected “between 5 and 15 million immigrants,” especially from Eastern Europe (Zimmermann 1995: 13). For the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, these fears contributed to delays in the implementation of the Schengen Agreement.

The fact that it took almost ten years to forge the first model of a core Europe is not only attributable to normal European infighting but also to the fall of the Berlin wall, which stoked fears of millions of westward-moving immigrants moving out of

7 | E.g. “Les exclus de la libre circulation”, LM 25.03.1995; “Espace Schengen: l'auberge espagnole”, LF 03.05.1995: 16-D; “Espace Schengen: le trou noir albanais”, LF 27.04.1995: 12.

8 | Cf. “Justizministerin verspricht verständlichere Gesetze”, SZ 30.03.1995: 2; “Chirac: Abkommen eventuell neu aushandeln”, SZ 07.04.1995: 7.

a shaken-up Eastern Europe. These fears remain, most especially in Germany, and have resulted in a lack of confidence in “Schengen” (Münster 1995: 8).

According to the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, the need for a stricter surveillance of the German-Polish border resulted from the collapse of the Warsaw Pact and from subsequent changes in Central and Eastern Europe. It would have been necessary to tighten border controls for Germany’s Eastern neighbors with or without Schengen, but now that the German-Polish border was the common external border of the Schengen area, stricter controls were even more important (Bannas 1995a: 2).

In its attempt to explain fears concerning the controls at the German-Polish border, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* emphasized that “the poor and the rich part of Europe” meet at this border (Bannas 1995b: 3). The equating of the former “Iron Curtain” with a “prosperity border” was also apparent in French newspapers:

Until 1989, this border was of interest to no one. It only served to separate two socialist states. Today, its rough terrain is a convenient door for our poor cousins from Eastern Europe who are drawn to the West and its plenty (Bernard 1995).

Polish newspapers discussed the new border situation in terms of border traffic issues and delays at border crossing points (Pomianowski 1995a; Alterman et al. 1995: 2). In view of the general significance of the Schengen Agreement, the *Rzeczpospolita* explained that Central and Eastern European states were being kept outside the common space that “was reserved for the members of the European Union.”⁹ The newspaper also argued that the fear of chaotic situations at border crossing points was accompanied by “xenophobia and negative stereotypes” regarding the citizens of the neighboring states (Pomianowski 1995b). Indeed, Polish citizens no longer needed a visa to enter the Schengen area as a tourist, but some Poles still complained about having to wait in the line of “non-EU citizens” while crossing the German-Polish border (Lentowicz/Sadowska 1995). The *Rzeczpospolita* quoted Poles who felt “discriminated against because they were treated as potential thieves” (Pomianowski 1995a.) or who “first had to prove they were not criminals” (ibid.).

9 | “Schengen zamknięte dla Polski”, RZ 29.04.1995.

French and German newspapers reported on the Polish reaction to new restrictions at the German-Polish border similarly. “Poland offended”¹⁰ was the headline of an article in *Le Monde*, and the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* associated the Polish situation with the time before 1989 with a headline “Grumbling Behind the Curtain” (Rüb 1995: 6). According to these two newspapers, Poles felt like they were being treated as “second-class citizens”¹¹ because, as non-EU citizens, they had to pass the border in waiting lines separate from those for Schengen citizens, possibly being subject to stricter controls. The *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* argued that the Poles felt “humiliated because when entering Germany in Görlitz, Poles are not treated like Germans or French but like Russians” (Bannas 1995b: 3). The *Süddeutsche Zeitung* quoted Janusz Tycner, a journalist of the Polish newspaper *Prawo i Życie*: “For Germany,” he complained, “the Poles are much like Turks. The Germans treat the French much more respectfully” (Heims/Flottau 1995: 3).

The Symbolic Value of the Schengen Agreement: A Story of Failure?

In an interview with the German radio station *Deutschlandfunk* in 1995, Manfred Kanther, then Minister of the Interior, pointed out the official position of the German government: “The Schengen Agreement was ‘an agreement on freedom of movement within Western Europe and an agreement on external security.’”¹² Print media reports about the abolition of passport controls at the Western European borders in 1995 were ambivalent. On the one hand, German newspapers in particular expressed hope that the Schengen Agreement would serve as a model for the future of a unified Europe (Stabenow 1995:1). The opening of the internal borders was a “notable achievement” (Münster 1995: 8.) for the European integration process.¹³ On the other hand, newspapers criticized the removal of border controls for several reasons. First, in the eyes of German and French journalists, it had taken too long to open the borders. *Le Monde* called this process “ten years of hesitancy” (Bresson 1995). The delay of the

10 | “La Pologne s’offusque”, LF 27.03.1995: 2.

11 | “La Pologne s’offusque” 1995: 2; Rüb (1995: 6).

12 | “Schengen startet ohne Chaos”, SZ 27.03.1995: 6.

13 | See also: “L’espace Schengen a des ratés”, LF 27.03.1995: 2.

agreement's implementation symbolized the inability or the unwillingness of national governments to advance the goal of European unification:

This could have been an historical moment, but all efforts are being made to ensure that it does not become one. There will be no ribbon-cutting. The preoccupation with security and the mistrust of national authorities have run the dynamics into the ground and have spoiled the festivities (ibid.).

Heribert Prantl, writing for the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, even called the Schengen Agreement a “lie”: “No European promise has been broken more often than the promise of a borderless Europe” (Prantl 1995b: 4). He supported his case by stressing that this “borderless Europe” only existed for some European citizens and therefore had created “a first-class and a second-class Europe” (ibid.). He was not referring to Central and Eastern Europe but rather to those EU member countries who were not part of the Schengen Agreement. Furthermore, he criticized stricter controls at the external borders as the construction of a “Fortress Europe.” Meanwhile, internal border controls still existed in the form of “mobile controls” (ibid.). Prantl stated that the Schengen Agreement exposed the undemocratic nature of decision-making in the European Union. Moreover, the *Schengen Information System* was criticized for collecting the personal data of EU citizens and distributing this data among several countries. In an article in *Le Monde*, Philippe Bernard pointed out that the promise of free movement inside the Schengen area had a negative “corollary: closed external borders and tighter immigration controls.” In addition, Schengen had served as a “justification” for a more restrictive policy towards foreigners and asylum seekers (Bernard 1995).

Le Monde commented on the border opening as follows: “The moment has been historical but it reminds us of historical events that frighten us.”¹⁴ Adopting a Central and Eastern European perspective, German newspapers wondered whether Schengen's eastern border had created “new division of Europe” (Rüb 1995: 6).

1989 ALL OVER AGAIN? THE ABOLITION OF THE EASTERN BORDER CONTROLS IN 2007

As we have seen, prejudices as well as worries about immigration and rising insecurity – especially with regard to the Eastern borders – found expression in the print media during the implementation of the Schengen Agreement in Western Europe in 1995. In 2007, when Poland and other Central and Eastern European countries joined the Schengen area, similar patterns of argumentation regarding the security of the Eastern European border were apparent.¹⁵ From the longer-term perspective of today, we see that Western stereotypes and the idea of a divided Europe still persist. At the same time, the discourse in Poland reflected its dilemma of maintaining its orientation to the West and the European Union while simultaneously maintaining a relationship with its eastern neighbors.

The Symbolic Value of the Schengen Enlargement 2007

In 1995, the Schengen Agreement was signed by Secretaries of State in the little town of Schengen in Luxembourg (Ruber 2007:2), but on December 21st, 2007, high level European politicians gathered to hail the opening of the Eastern borders. The Polish and the Czech Prime Ministers, Donald Tusk and Mirek Topolánek, the President of the Council of the European Union, José Sócrates, as well as the German Chancellor Angela Merkel and her Minister of the Interior, Wolfgang Schäuble, commemorated the date at the border crossing point between the German Zittau and the Polish Porajów.¹⁶ At the Austrian-Slovakian, the German-Czech, the Polish-Czech and the Polish-Lithuanian borders, barriers were symbolically removed or even sawn through.¹⁷ José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, referred to the expansion of the Schengen area as “the highlight of a process that had started with the fall of the Berlin

15 | “Wie einst im November ‘89”, SZ 21.12.2007: 6.

16 | “Europa, einig Schengenland”, FAZ 22.12.2007: 2.

17 | “Tag der Symbole”, SZ Bayern 21.12.2007: 33; “Europa, einig Schengenland”, FAZ.:2; Więcko.2007.

wall” (Ruber 2007: 2) “Today is a truly historic moment,”¹⁸ declared Angela Merkel on December 21st, and Donald Tusk associated this date with a “triumph of freedom, which is a fundamental European value” (Kokot/Harłukowicz 2007). “For us, it is the return to Europe,” explained the Polish Minister of the Interior, Grzegorz Schetyna.¹⁹ “Today, the boundaries have disappeared. Poland has become a free country again” (Celińska 2007). For Władysław Bartoszewski, the implementation of the Schengen Agreement was also “the natural outcome of the policy pursued by Poland since 1994 to join the Union” (Chauffour 2007: 10).

The print media also commemorated the 2007 events. On December 21st, the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* proclaimed that the “last remains of the Iron Curtain” had vanished.²⁰ The entry of Central and Eastern European states into the EU was considered highly symbolic of an enhancement of the core values of freedom and equality in unified Europe.²¹ Finally, Polish citizens were given the same freedom of movement granted to East German citizens in 1990 (Veser 2007: 12). Indeed, western states were told to be pleased at the sight of their cheering neighbors (Bacia 2007: 1), who “had been deprived for decades.”²² Western Europeans, it was said, would always remember the importance of open borders for those whose characters “were shaped by the oppressive thought of potentially being locked behind the ‘Iron Curtain’ forever” (Bacia 2007:1).

The New Internal Border Between Germany and Poland

German and French newspapers foresaw problems arising from the new freedom of movement. The *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* declared, for example, that the accession of Central and Eastern European countries to the Schengen Agreement was an “historical event” (ibid.), but that “in the old member states, joy is limited.”²³ The new Schengen members had

18 | REGIERUNGonline: “Freie Fahrt durch 24 Länder”, URL: www.bundesregierung.de/nn_914476/Content/DE/Archiv16/Artikel/2007/12/2007-12-21-schengenerweiterung.html, 26.07.2011.

19 | “Offene Schlagbäume”, SZ 20.12.2007: 5.

20 | “Freie Fahrt für Europa”, SZ 22.12.2007: 5.

21 | E.g.: “Le défi de Schengen”, LM 21.12.2007; Chauffour (2007: 10).

22 | “Un espace unique pour 400 millions d’Européens”, LM 21.12.2007.

23 | “Seid umschlungen, Millionen!”, FAZ 20.12.2007: 1.

benefited from a “leap of faith,” and further controls were necessary (Bacia 2007: 1). *Le Figaro* expected “the accession of Poland to accelerate Western migration,” including potentially illegal immigration (Thedrel 2007).

According to Wolfgang Schäuble, new mobile border controls at Germany’s eastern border were more “intelligent” than old border controls.²⁴ From now on, life for criminals would become more difficult, “because they do not know where the police are.”²⁵ Nonetheless, fears of increasing criminality – often illustrated by the stereotype of the Eastern European car thief²⁶ – were expressed in demands to slow down implementation of full freedom of movement across the Eastern borders so as to create time to “install a few additional alarm systems,” as Joachim Herrmann, the Bavarian Minister of the Interior, suggested.²⁷

The old image of the “prosperity border” experienced a revival at this time, too, with a new focus on Poland’s eastern neighbors (Ruber 2007:2). Inside the Schengen area, as *Le Figaro* noted, it was expected that salary differentials would cause increased migration flows from east to west (Thedrel 2007). A well-known result was the decision to delay freedom of movement for Central and Eastern European workers in France until 2008 and in Germany until May 2011.

Polish newspapers were sensitive to German concerns. They claimed that most Germans feared things would “get dangerous because the Poles will come and steal” (Kokot/Harłukowicz 2007). The Polish press also raised its own concerns about the border opening. While it was described as “an epochal event” (Magierowski.2007: A-002), the *Rzeczpospolita* asked whether Poland would experience a loss of national identity or sovereignty (Ibid.; Brill 2007:3). Drug trafficking from the Netherlands to Poland also appeared on the list of possible future problems.²⁸

24 | “Wie einst im November ‘89” SZ 2007: 6.

25 | “Europa, einig Schengenland” SZ 2007: 2.

26 | Cf. Burger (2007: 3); “Seid umschlungen, Millionen!” FAZ 2007.

27 | “Tag der Symbole” SZ Bayern 2007: 33.

28 | “Zniknęły granice, pozostał przemyt”, GW 23.12.2007.

A BORDERLESS EUROPE OR A NEW “IRON CURTAIN”? THE EXTERNAL BORDER OF THE ENLARGED SCHENGEN AREA

In 2007, as a consequence of the enlarged Schengen area, Poland took over responsibility for controls along a large portion of the new external border. In order to support Poland in this task, a high-tech infrastructure funded by the EU and Germany was established. While the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* headlined “Thousands Celebrate the End of the German External Border,”²⁹ Grzegorz Schetyna warned the EU of isolating itself from its Eastern neighbors. The new external border should be tight, “but it must not become a new Iron Curtain.”³⁰ In 2009, an article in the *Gazeta Wyborcza* also predicted Schengen would become “for Poland’s Eastern neighbors a symbol of the EU’s growing isolation from the post-Soviet countries.” (Wojciechowski 2009) In fact, Poland had waited until the last possible moment in 2003 to tighten visa restrictions for Ukrainians entering Polish territory. In 2007, the *Gazeta Wyborcza* regarded these stringent conditions as “Schengen’s drawback (Wojciechowski 2007). The newspaper demanded that the Polish government stand up for visa-free travel for Poland’s eastern neighbors (ibid.).

On the other hand, Poles considered the Schengen Agreement an important step toward full membership in the European Union. It also strengthened the Polish state, in particular with regard to “illegal immigration.”³¹ This argument raises the question of whether Polish concerns about increased “illegal immigration” had been adopted from discussions in Western Europe. Although Poland is currently attracting more and more migration flows, the number of foreign nationals living in Poland is still extremely low and is estimated to range between 0.1 and 1.9 percent of the population.

Simultaneously, German newspapers transferred worries about “illegal immigration” from the old to the new external border. In Germany, the main political parties as well as the *German Police Trade Union* stressed that gangs of human traffickers in the Ukraine and Belarus posed a threat

29 | “Wie einst im November ‘89” SZ 2007: 6.

30 | “Offene Schlagbäume” SZ 2007: 5; this Polish fear of a “new Iron Curtain” was also discussed in the French and German media: Vesper (2007:12); Chauffour (2007: 10); Thedrel (2007).

31 | “Biernacki: wejście do Schengen zwiększa bezpieczeństwo naszego kraju”, RZ online, 21.12.2007.

to Europe.³² *Le Figaro* also announced in December 2007: “Our borders are open for 75 million Eastern Europeans.”³³ The “pressure of migration,” especially in Southern and Eastern Europe, would not decline (Fauvet-Mycia 2007). Ikka Leitinen, Head of the Warsaw-based EU agency *Frontex*, added to these concerns by stating that in the future more immigrants would be able to enter the European Union secretly from the east.³⁴

However, in the opinion of Christine Fauvet-Mycia (*Le Figaro*), the Schengen Agreement is best seen as a concept, drawn up before the fall of the “Iron Curtain,” that has managed to survive over the years (Fauvet-Mycia 2007). This is “a great challenge” for unified Europe (Kovacs 2007). Frédéric Fritscher made a plea in *Le Figaro* not to be afraid of a new “massive wave of ‘Polish Plumbers’” or of “illegal immigrants” (Fritscher 2007: 14). He explained the importance of the new “borderless Europe” as follows: “Schengen, in this sense, is a first step proving that we are able to live in this freedom, an unexpected gift of the fall 1989” (ibid.).

CONCLUSION

The historical break of 1989/90 contributed decisively to a change in the meaning of the Schengen process. Starting in 1985 as a technocratic process mainly ignored by the public, it kicked off a passionate discussion about identity, belonging, differentiation, and security.

With regard to concerns about border crossing, French and German newspapers were influenced by general fears of increased migration to the European Union. The French discussion was more intense in 1995, when France had to open its own borders, than in 2007, when border controls in Eastern Europe were abolished. Polish newspapers focused on the perception that Poland had finally achieved equal rights within Europe in 2007. The border opening illustrated the highly symbolic value of borders in Poland. At the same time, however, worries about a loss of national sovereignty, recently achieved, appeared in Polish debates. With reference to the new external borders of 2007, newspapers made use of the image of a “new Iron Curtain.” By citing fears of a divided Europe, the

32 | “Offene Schlagbäume” SZ 2007: 5.

33 | “Nos frontières s’ouvrent à 75 millions d’Européens de l’Est”, LF 20.12.2007.

34 | “Offene Schlagbäume” SZ 2007: 5.

reports revealed that the problem of geographic borders in a unified Europe had reanimated old thought patterns. In this context, negative stereotypes were again exposed and seem to have only slightly changed during the past twenty years. When the German-Polish border opened in 2007, Wolfgang Schäuble noted that the concerns of an increasing crime rate in Western Europe were “fully understandable,” but that these concerns had “also existed when the border controls between Germany and France were abolished.”³⁵ As we have seen, these fears of 1995 had also been focused on Europe’s eastern borders and those who live behind them.

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35 | “Europa, einig Schengenland” *FAZ* 2007: 2.

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