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# Risk, Safety and Freedom of Movement: In Airplane and Ferry Passenger Stories in the Northern Baltic Sea Region

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## **Purpose:**

The purpose of this study is to map and analyse how travellers at an airport and on ferries experience, interpret and define the risk, safety and freedom of movement in the northern part of the Baltic Sea region with regard to the border agencies.

## **Design/Methods/Approach:**

This qualitative study is based on empirically gathered material such as field interviews and fieldwork observations on Stockholm's Arlanda airport in Sweden, and a Tallink Silja Line ferry running between Stockholm and Riga in Latvia. The study's general starting point was an ethno-methodologically inspired perspective on verbal descriptions along with an interactionist perspective which considers interactions expressed through language and gestures. Apart from this starting point, this study focused on the construction of safety as particularly relevant components of the collected empirical material.

## **Findings:**

The study findings suggest that many passengers at the airport and on the ferries hold positive views about the idea of the freedom of movement in Europe, but are scared of threats coming from outside Europe. The travellers created and re-created the phenomenon of safety which is maintained in contrast to others, in this case the threats from outside Europe.

## **Originality/Value:**

The passengers in this study construct safety by distinguishing against the others outside Europe but also through interaction with them. The passengers emphasise that the freedom of movement is personally beneficial because it is easier for EU citizens to travel within Europe but, at the same time, it is regarded as facilitating the entry of potential threats into the European Union.

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**Keywords:** passengers, identity control, construction of safety, field interview, construction of risk, fieldwork

## **Tveganja, varnost in svoboda gibanja: perspektive potnikov letalskega in trajektnega prometa severnega predela regije Baltskega morja**

### **Namen:**

Namen prispevka je predstaviti raziskavo, v kateri so avtorji analizirali izkušnje potnikov letalskega in trajektnega prometa severnega predela Baltskega morja. Cilj je ugotoviti in analizirati, kako potniki z vidika mejnega nadzora definirajo in interpretirajo tveganja, varnost ter svobodo gibanja.

### **Metode:**

Izvedena je bila kvalitativna metoda zbiranja podatkov, in sicer v obliki terenskega opazovanja in intervjuvanja potnikov na švedskem letališču Arlanda (Stockholm) in trajektni liniji Tallink Silja Line med Stockholmom, Rigo in Latvijo. V interakciji s potniki je bila kot izhodišče uporabljena etnografska metoda, ki se osredotoča na proučevanje verbalne in neverbalne komunikacije. Pri analizi zbranih podatkov so se avtorji primarno osredotočili na razumevanje zaznavanj potnikov glede varnosti.

### **Ugotovitve:**

Rezultati kažejo, da je veliko potnikov v raziskavi naklonjenih evropski ideji svobodnega gibanja, vendar jih je pri tem strah groženj, ki izvirajo iz zunanjega okolja Evropske unije. Avtorji ugotavljajo, da potniki varnost doživljajo in ocenjujejo v razmerju do drugih ljudi, njihova stališča pa so odvisna od dogajanja v zunanjem okolju – v konkretnem primeru so to grožnje, ki se pojavljajo za evropskimi mejami (npr. terorizem).

### **Izvirnost/pomembnost prispevka:**

Raziskava v prispevku pojasnjuje, kako potniki dojemajo varnost v potniškem prometu in kako oblikujejo oz. razvijejo to zaznavanje. Med analizo njihovih stališč se je pokazalo, da druge ljudi ocenjujejo glede na izvorno državo in jih kategorizirajo na "zunanje in notranje". Stališča glede varnosti oblikujejo tudi skozi izkušnje v tujem potniškem prometu. Potniki sicer poročajo, da imajo zaradi politike svobodnega gibanja veliko osebnih koristi, vendar pa menijo, da se s tem ustvarjajo nove ranljivosti in povečuje verjetnost varnostnih tveganj za Evropsko unijo.

**UDK: 005.934:[627.21+656.71]**

**Ključne besede:** potniki, ugotavljanje identitete, zaznavanje varnosti, intervju, percepcija tveganj, terenska raziskava

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

The Schengen regime implies the guaranteed free movement of passengers without document controls at national borders in all Schengen member states<sup>1</sup>. The

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<sup>1</sup> Some parts of this text were published already in the book *Project Turnstone: Freedom of Movement and Passenger Experiences with Safety and Border Control in the Baltic Sea Area*.

Schengen regime (as constituted today) was applied in 2007/2008 and currently includes all EU member states together with Iceland, Norway and Switzerland. EU nations that are not included are Bulgaria, Ireland, Cyprus, Romania, Great Britain and extended overseas territories<sup>2</sup> belonging to the member states (Yakhlef, Basic, & Åkerström, 2015a).

Citizens from several countries outside the Schengen area must have a visa to enter the EU and the Schengen area. Non-EU citizens, so-called third-country citizens, who have a residence permit in one of the Schengen countries may circulate freely in other Schengen countries for 3 months. However, they may need to register with the country's authorities upon entry and must have their passport and residence permit with them. Third-country nationals who do not need a visa to enter the Schengen area may move freely within the area for up to 3 months for each period of 6 months (Yakhlef et al., 2015a).

Freedom of movement aims to provide mobility rights within the EU and the Schengen area for its citizens, as well as to facilitate travel and border crossing. In addition, the EU is an example of a "network state" in which border control can occur within societies and not just at regional borders (Castells, 2000; Guiraudon & Lahav, 2000; Rumford, 2006). The main purpose of eliminating borders within the Schengen area in 2007 was to abolish encounters with physical barriers and border guards. Although passport controls are no longer used in the Schengen territory for EU citizens, border checks are still practised at three levels: 1) mobile police controls; 2) joint patrols and border police cooperation; and 3) administrative requirements enforced on European citizens and third-country nationals. Identity checks are permitted in border zones connected to the border. National legislative frameworks regulate the sizes of the border areas in which identity checks can be performed. These bodies of legislation vary between countries; in some cases, checks can only be carried out within the border area and in others within the entire territory (Faure Atger, 2008).

Temporary border controls may be imposed in the Schengen area or at its borders with other member states during certain types of events: expected events (e.g., major sporting events), unpredictable events (e.g., terrorist attacks) or when a lack of control of external borders is anticipated<sup>3</sup>. Although Schengen states have abolished internal borders, external borders are controlled to ensure the security of citizens and travellers. Challenges faced by border authorities in the Schengen area concern differences in legalisation, restrictions regarding providing other organisations with information, and each organisation having different authorities or working methods. These obstacles can be eased and overcome through closer day-to-day work, education, and interpersonal exchange (Yakhlef, Basic, &

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2 *Overseas territories belonging to member states not included in the Schengen regime are the Portuguese Azores Islands, Canary Islands, the Spanish exclaves of Ceuta and Melilla in Africa, the overseas territories of France, Norway's Svalbard, the Danish autonomous territory Greenland, the Faroe Islands (not part of the EU), and overseas Dutch autonomous regions of Aruba, Curacao, Saint Maarten, Bonaire, Saba, and Saint Eustatius.*

3 *Following the large influx of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers into Europe in 2015, Germany decided to start temporary border controls along its borders with Austria to regain control. During the same period, also Sweden and several other European countries decided to start temporary border controls along their borders with neighbouring countries.*

Åkerström, 2015b, 2015c). Several border authorities in the Schengen area have cooperation agreements allowing some border officers to conduct surveillance and follow suspected criminals across the border to another Schengen country in certain circumstances.

## **2 GLOBALISATION, RISK AND FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT**

In recent decades, the social sciences have been interested in re-conceptualising and re-interpreting the meaning of border crossing and the social and political dimensions of border management. Borders are no longer seen as lines on a map dividing nations, but as dynamic spaces and networks of importance to culture, politics and security (Pickering & Weber, 2006). Much scholarly work by sociologists, anthropologists and political scientists has focused on the experience of border crossing with regard to restrictions, passport controls and security limitations (Rumford, 2006), but also on the increasing global flow and movement of people, goods and ideas (Wonders, 2006).

### **2.1 Globalisation**

One of the key features of globalisation is mobility (Wonders, 2006), and migration is one of the most important consequences of globalisation (Tirman, 2004). Globalisation is characterised by 'flows', a growing awareness of units and scales, and the boundaries of regions. Globalisation is also defined as a package of transnational flows of people, production, investment, information, ideas and authority (Tsing, 2000). As exchange between people and nations intensifies across borders, the nature and meaning of citizenship have also changed (Brysk & Shafir, 2004). Although borders and passports are not 20th century inventions, the firm division of borders and worldwide regulation of migration as we know them did not exist before the early 20th century (Dauvergne, 2004). Increased mobility between nation states in a globalised society requires new border regulations that old territorial borders cannot achieve (Rumford, 2006). As borders are multiplied and reduced, their function is diminished or increased and the quantitative relationship between border and territory is overturned (Balibar, 1998). Some borders are encountered as non-boundaries and for some people, such as those within the EU, they are now easier to cross (Rumford, 2006).

### **2.2 EU Enlargement and the Freedom of Movement**

According to the researcher Scott (2005), the EU can be understood in terms of a shift from nation-state-centred modernity to a new multivocal and multiscaled world, a world that has many different meanings. This is due to the EU's complex geopolitical project and transnational cooperation, allowing interdependence and multipolarity. In theory, the EU allows for a political community based on several exemplifications of citizenship and a sense of multiple identities (Diez, 2002). Dating back to the end of the Second World War, the idea of the EU emerged as

a vision of a peaceful, united and prosperous Europe. According to the official EU website, the end of the Soviet Union in Europe made the Europeans close neighbours. The *Single Market* with 'the four freedoms' was created in 1993, causing the free movement of goods, services, people and money. The 1990s also saw increased awareness of security issues and consciousness of how 'Europeans can act together when it comes to security and defence matters'.

Contemporary sociological research of border politics focuses on notions such as social networks instead of societies, and border zones instead of borders (Nederveen Pieterse, 2004). Mobility (Urry, 1999), scapes (Appadurai, 1990), flow and fluids (Rumford, 2006) are key metaphors for understanding modern life in a "world in motion" (Rumford, 2006). In some cases, the diffusion and networking of borders have, in Rumford's (2006) opinion, led to the renewed importance of land borders. The border areas and border spaces, especially regarding the EU, have seen an increased need for protection and defence (Pickering & Weber, 2006). The concept of EU borderlands has been promoted in the last decade due to the creation of the EU's neighbourhood policy. The purpose of this neighbourhood policy is to develop friendly relationships with countries to the east and south of Europe that are unlikely to become candidates for formal agreements (Delanty & Rumford, 2005). A good relationship with neighbouring countries is beneficial in economic and social terms, increasing opportunities for networking and cooperation (Rumford, 2006). This is also an issue in which the rigid borders between the EU and surrounding countries are not as clear-cut because cooperation occurs despite the external border. The sociologist Bauman (2002) argued that, in global space, borders are transformed into "extraterritorial frontier lands". Similarly, the philosopher Balibar (1998) regarded the contemporary view of borders as diffuse as one in which countries can become borderlands. Therefore, entire nations and the EU itself can be interpreted as borderlands and zones of mobility and transition without territorial fixity (Balibar, 2004).

### 2.3 Risk in a Globalised Society

The global age has seen a rise in global mobility (Dauvergne, 2004), but also restrictions, laws and regulations to monitor this mobility (Wonders, 2006). Several scholars, including Bauman (2002), see the 9/11 terrorist attack as the symbolic end of an era followed by the increased dominance of territorial power and border security. Since the EU's enlargement in the early 1990s, the aim has been to facilitate cross-border and transnational cooperation. The EU security policy aims to avoid political confrontation, environmental threats and destabilisation of regional conflicts. This can be achieved through intense cooperation in the areas of justice and home affairs, security and defence. Cooperation in these areas involves controlling illegal migration flows and the trafficking of human beings, combating terrorism and preventing organised crime (Scott, 2005).

The social construction of risk has dominated social and political consciousness in the 21st century and ideas of global insecurity have developed through terrorism, epidemics and pollution (Denney, 2005). Risk has also become a major part of everyday life in relation to food, sunlight, travel and everyday

objects that have become potential health risks. The word “risk” could easily be changed to “danger” in political debate. Historically, the word danger has been associated with the concepts of nature and culture, dangers from which society must be protected (Denney, 2005). A well-known approach to risk in sociological theory is the perspective of the “risk society” (Beck, 1992; Zinn, 2006), focusing on technical and environmental risks as unforeseen consequences of industrialisation. Approaches to risk within cultural studies often refer to the work of the anthropologist Douglas (1966) who argues that risk is a culturally given way of responding to threats to the boundaries of a society, group or organisation. Douglas claims that a society that is threatened will respond by regulating its boundaries and increasing social control regulating those boundaries. Thus, risk is understood as a way of maintaining social order (Douglas, 1966) linked to group formation and identity construction by distinguishing between self and other (Zinn, 2006). This perspective has been criticised for being an oversimplification, and scholars have tried to overcome the functionalistic view of risk by focusing on the complex processes in everyday life (Lash, 2000; Tulloch & Lupton, 2003). Foucault’s (1991) approach to governmental risk is seen as a way of shaping and controlling populations and governing societies. Risk is characterised by an uncertainty about the outcome, and risk-taking can have both a positive and negative impact. Uncertainty is a product of existing knowledge and new information (Zinn, 2006). Contemporary notions of risk are characterised by the urge to conquer uncertainty and, therefore, “security in all aspects” is a marketable and desirable commodity (Denney, 2005).

### 3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHODS

Project Turnstone is a European collaborative project partly funded by the European Commission. The project’s main objective is to increase control in the Baltic Sea area by reducing cross-border crime (Swedish Police, 2014)<sup>4</sup>. The background of the project is EU and Schengen enlargement, the abolition of

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<sup>4</sup> Project Turnstone is a transnational European project receiving grants from the EU Commission. Co-beneficiaries of the grant (in addition to the Stockholm Country Police, Border Division) are Helsinki Police (F), The Gulf of Finland Coast Guard District (F), Police and Border Guard Board (EE), Riga Board of the State Border Guard of the Republic of Latvia (LV), State Border Guard Service at the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, Coast Guard District (LT), the Swedish Coast Guard District (SE), and Lund University, Department of Sociology (SE). The duration of the project is 24 months, starting in January 2014 and terminating in December 2015. The project’s purpose is to enhance law enforcement cooperation between border agencies (police, border police, border guard, and coast guard organisations) in the participating countries following enlargement of the Schengen area in 2007/2008. The enlargement resulted in changes concerning international cooperation and created a greater need for new models of cooperation between border agencies. The initiators also stated the growing mobility of organised mobile criminal groups and illegal immigration as prime reasons for further developing law enforcement cooperation. The objectives of Project Turnstone, as stated in the grant application, are to: 1) increase mutual trust between the border agencies and their officials on all levels; 2) increase and streamline day-to-day cross-border cooperation between the border agencies; 3) increase interaction between law enforcement agencies and the academic community; 4) create effective and adaptable work methods while safeguarding the right to freedom of movement; and 5) improve social and cultural knowledge between and within the border agencies (Yakhlef et al., 2015a, 2015b).

internal border checks, and the implementation of freedom of movement. The abolition of borders is argued to serve as a possible security risk, and the absence of borders makes it more challenging to detect and stop criminals during border controls (Faure Atger, 2008). Borders previously governed and monitored by passport controls must now rely on cooperation between border officers, who need to adapt to new methods of working. The nations participating in Project Turnstone are Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. In addition, a research group from the Department of Sociology at Lund University, Sweden, is participating in the project. Within the framework of Project Turnstone, the research group is tasked with implementing two related studies. The first focuses on cooperation between the police, coast guard and border officers, whereas the second study focuses on airplane and ferry passengers' experiences with border crossings and freedom of movement (Yakhlef et al., 2015a, 2015b). The present study is an attempt to provide passengers' perspectives regarding the border crossings of the collaborating partners. Based on mainly qualitatively, but also quantitatively, gathered interview material, the purpose of this study is to map and analyse how travellers, such as airline passengers and ferry passengers in Stockholm, Tallinn and Riga experience, interpret and define safety, risk and the freedom of movement in the northern part of the Baltic Sea region. For the purpose of this study, 200 passengers (100 airline passengers at Stockholm Arlanda airport and 100 passengers on two Tallink Silja Line ferries travelling between Stockholm, Tallinn and Riga) were interviewed between June 2014 and April 2015. The research questions are: (1) How do travellers in the region describe safety and risk in association with the freedom of movement? (2) How do travellers describe freedom of movement in association with border checks carried out by the border police agencies?

Two border settings were used to collect the material: 1) Tallink Silja Line ferry terminals in Stockholm, Riga and Tallinn, and two Tallink Silja Line ferries; and 2) Stockholm Arlanda airport in Sweden. The settings (airport and ferry terminals) comprise examples of different ways of handling and demanding security checks.

At the Tallink Silja Line ferry terminals in Stockholm, Tallinn and Riga, passengers can check in using self-check-in machines or at the check-in counters. Passengers then receive their tickets (which also act as the cabin key). To board a ferry, passengers scan the card/ticket at the security gates where a Tallink Silja Line staff member is available to assist passengers. Before boarding the ship, passengers are greeted at the entrance by a ferry guard and Tallink Silja Line staff members who may ask to see the passengers' tickets. There is no official security check or identity control before travelling with the Tallink Silja Line ferries to Tallink or Riga.

At Arlanda airport, all passengers (including EU and Schengen citizens) must go through airport security, showing their carry-on luggage and boarding cards. The aim of this procedure is to find objects forbidden on board the aircraft. The Arlanda airport website states that the process is fast and smooth as long as the passengers are prepared. The website also lists a few suggestions for going through airport security efficiently, such as having your boarding card easily accessible and placing loose objects in the plastic bins provided. Since passport-free travel

has been expanded, EU citizens travelling to other EU countries do not go through a border check upon arrival. However, airlines still require a valid passport or ID card before a flight because they are only responsible for boarding passengers with valid information regarding their identities. Therefore, passengers are recommended to always bring a valid passport or ID card when travelling. Passengers travelling outside the EU must go through border and passport controls.

The methods adopted for this study were semi-structured interviews and fieldwork observations at Stockholm Arlanda airport in Sweden, a Tallink Silja Line ferry between Stockholm and Riga, Latvia, and a Tallink Silja Line ferry between Stockholm and Tallinn, Estonia. The choice to use interviews and observations was based on the research questions' focus on the passengers' personal opinions and experiences. An advantage of doing long-term fieldwork among the people being studied is that trust can be built and interviewees can tell researchers about their experiences in a more open and honest way than they might in a structured interview. For the present study, extensive fieldwork and close, repeated interactions with passengers were not a viable option or inappropriate for the purpose of the study. However, personal interactions with the people being studied gives the opportunity to closely look at what they say, do and how they create meaning (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995).

For the current study, 100 ferry passengers and 100 airport passengers were interviewed. The ferry passengers were interviewed on five occasions during two different journeys on two different Tallink Silja Line ferries between Stockholm and Riga, and Stockholm and Tallinn in 2014 and 2015. Airline passengers were interviewed on five occasions at Arlanda airport in Stockholm, Sweden in 2014 and 2015. Each interview lasted approximately 5 to 15 minutes, and all interviewees were randomly chosen. Passengers were only asked to participate if they did not appear to be very busy or, for example, were eating, reading or engaging in conversation with companions. At Arlanda airport, passengers waiting for connecting flights or who seemed unoccupied in waiting areas were asked to participate. At the Tallink Silja Line ferries, passengers were more prone to be engaging in activities such as visiting restaurants or nightclubs, shopping, or having drinks at some of the available bars or pubs. Therefore, ferry passengers walking on the deck or waiting for friends or family at various meetings points were asked to participate. The respondents varied in age and nationality. For the present study, we did not interview children or people under the age of 18 years; when in doubt about a person's age we did not conduct the interview. The interviews were conducted in Swedish or English. The researchers constructed a list of questions regarding safety and freedom of movement in the Baltic Sea area. An interview guide was designed in which different topics the interviewer wanted to address during the interview were noted. The questions were designed to be appropriate while interviewing airline travellers and ferry passengers and encouraged the interviewees to articulate their answer rather than answering "yes" or "no". The interviews were initiated by a short introduction to the study and the researcher asking for permission to interview the selected passenger. A dictation microphone was not used during any interviews. Instead, the researchers

took notes and subsequently noted important impressions from the interview and from the answers provided. The researchers also noted what language the interviewee spoke and if he or she revealed or indicated their nationality.

A list of similar interview questions was used at both Arlanda airport and the Tallink Silja line ferries. The questions were slightly modified to fit the different security checks at the airport and ferry terminals. The interview questions were:

1. Is this a business trip, leisure trip, or are you visiting friends or family?
2. Have you been asked to show your passport during this trip?
3. If yes, how did you experience this?
4. Have you passed through the security gate during this trip?
5. If yes, how did you experience this?
6. Do you think there should be more security and more control of travelling passengers?
7. Can you describe your experience with freedom of movement?
8. Do you feel safe on this journey?
9. Have you experienced anything suspicious that might interest the authorities?
10. Would you like to add something more to our conversation that you find important?

At Arlanda airport, 18 people who were asked to participate declined for various reasons, such as not having the time, being tired, or needing to rest after a long journey. On the Tallink Silja Line ferries, all 10 passengers who declined to participate in the study expressed language difficulties as the reason for not wanting to participate.

The material was documented in the Swedish and English languages. We did this on the same day to ensure the qualitative documentation of details and comments in the field notes/transcription. By making comments in the field notes/transcription, we created a categorisation of data (Silverman, 1993). When encoding the statements, we identified markers of risk, safety and freedom of movement in the empirical material. Empirical sequences presented in this study were categorised in the material as “risk in society”, “safety in society” and “freedom of movement”. Our choice of empirical examples was guided by the study’s purpose, i.e., to analyse how travellers at an airport and on a ferry experience, interpret and define risk, safety and freedom of movement in the northern Baltic Sea region with regard to the border agencies.

## **4 RISK AND SAFETY**

The perception of risk has to be managed case-by-case, and the phenomenon of risk is both actual and socially constructed (Zinn, 2006). Researchers argue that risk is entwined in processes of identity formation and group construction (Tulloch & Lupton, 2003; Zinn, 2006). Therefore, people’s associations with power, adjustments and emotions should be considered when making sense of how people manage and understand risk (Zinn, 2006). In this study, there was no opportunity to collect such contextual or complex data from the passengers, but it is important to bear in mind that risks are not experienced or talked about

in a vacuum. The purpose of this chapter is to analyse how travellers in the Baltic Sea region describe safety and risk regarding border checks carried out by border authorities at Stockholm Arlanda airport and for Tallink Silja Line ferries travelling between Stockholm, Riga and Tallinn.

According to the ferry passengers, the lack of security checks before boarding a ferry is convenient for personal comfort and makes travelling quick and easy. On the other hand, some passengers felt uneasy that it is possible for people to travel on the ferries unnoticed by the authorities, and that safety might be compromised because of the lack of security checks. Passengers who requested more control mainly highlighted threats to society, such as terrorism, criminality and illegal migration, rather than ferry accidents, encountering violent persons or thefts. Similarly, passengers at Arlanda airport focused on security issues damaging society and did not mention airplane accidents. The airport passengers regard security control as an annoying but necessary part of travelling, and most had positive experiences of passing through security checks and in encounters with airport staff. Ferry and airline passengers shared the view that the risk or threat when travelling in Sweden and other northern European countries is generally low. Many emphasised the great trust in Swedish and European authorities regarding safety regulations. Simultaneously, safety measures were considered to be stricter in countries outside of Europe. Passengers frequently compared the safety measures with those in other countries they had visited, such as the United States, Australia, Mexico and Spain. Passengers explain this by arguing that there must be a bigger need for amplified security measures in those areas, whereas others claim that the security procedures at Arlanda airport do not measure up.

### 4.1 Passengers at Arlanda Airport

All but one of the 100 passengers interviewed at Arlanda airport estimated that they were safe during their travels. Sixty-four of the passengers travelled for pleasure and 35 for business. When asked if they had noticed anything suspicious during their travels, only four people claimed to have seen anything out of the ordinary. In those cases, the travellers had detected unattended luggage or notified airport staff about unattended bags. At Arlanda airport, all passengers travelling out of Europe must show their passports. Schengen travellers do not need to go through passport controls. At Arlanda airport, 52 interviewees had shown their passports by the time of the interview and 48 interviewees had not been asked to show their passports. Experienced travellers regarded passport control as routine and 50 interviewees were ambivalent, unsure about the positive or negative aspects of passport controls or did not see any problem with showing their passports. Thirty-five interviewees had a positive experience with passport controls and deemed it a necessary or useful procedure. However, 15 interviewees emphasised the importance of passport controls; some thought it is necessary for all travellers to show their passports and regarded a high level of airport security as vital.

At Arlanda airport, security checks of personal belongings and carry-on luggage are mandatory for all travelling passengers. Therefore, all interviewed

passengers experienced this process. Twenty-one of the interviewed passengers found the security checks necessary and 16 found them to be exaggerated, but 65 of the interviewed passengers had no opinion about this or saw it as a 'necessary problem that you just have to go through'. However, most passengers were positive about the experience and the efficiency of the airport staff. A few passengers raised the issue of balancing security and personal integrity. Two passengers stated that it was necessary to balance the individual's right to personal integrity with maintaining a high level of security. "Considering the way the world looks today", one passenger said, "we must have strict controls even if it affects individuals". Too much surveillance made the passengers feel uneasy, questioning the benefit of it in the long run. An important issue raised by the passengers was how security could be increased without violating personal integrity. "Out of fear I am pro more security" one passenger stated, "but considering personal integrity I also say no [to more security]".

Sixty-three interviewees at Arlanda airport experienced the level of security checks as sufficient and 13 passengers did not offer a positive or negative answer regarding the security level. Many interviewees were experienced travellers and saw airport security as a necessary part of their travel routine, although several mentioned it was sometimes "uncomfortable" and "unpleasant".

Twenty-four interviewees at Arlanda airport wanted greater security and safety control. One passenger mentioned that safety was more important than anything else, even more important than personal integrity. Several interviewees discussed security controls in symbolic terms, claiming that it provided them "with the sense of safety". Others argued that the abolition of passport controls would result in chaos and that it is necessary to know who is travelling. This necessity stems from "threats that get more visible all the time" according to one passenger. Several interviewees talked about ambiguous threats from outside Europe but rarely specified what these threats are. Others mentioned terrorism, illegal immigration and cross-border criminality as potential risks.

Previous acts of violence performed by terrorist organisations, such as the IS<sup>5</sup>, or the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States, were mentioned or emphasised by eight passengers as evidence of the need for increased security measures. However, a few passengers did not see security checks as sufficient enough for preventing terrorist attacks, with one interviewee stating: "Security checks are not logical since anyone can perform an attack in the underground or anywhere else where there are no security checks". Passengers identified threats targeting society, such as terrorism and illegal activity, placing risk into a larger societal context. No passengers mentioned the possibility of personal accidents when asked about safety or risk in the context of travelling, although some might connect accidents as a result of terrorism.<sup>6</sup>

Further, five passengers stated they felt uneasy about the increased use of technology and machines at airports. These passengers placed less trust in

5 *IS (a group referred to as the Islamic State) seized territory in Syria and Iraq in 2014 and is notorious for its brutal actions (including mass killings, abductions and beheadings).*

6 *No passengers mentioned recent airplane accidents, such as the two Malaysia Airlines flights crashing or disappearing in 2014, or the Germanwings plane crashing in the Alps in 2015.*

technological safety equipment than in human security officers. In the passengers' experience, machines often malfunctioned and there were not enough staff present to assist and guide passengers through security checks. Passengers requested more information about procedures and more explicit signs about what is expected from passengers. Insecurity made the passengers feel uncomfortable and uneasy.

### 4.2 Tallink Silja Line Passengers

A vast majority of the ferry passengers interviewed found it convenient and comfortable not to have to go through security checks or passport controls before boarding a ferry. All but two of the 100 ferry passengers felt safe on the ferries. The interviewees who expressed doubt did so because they "did not know who was travelling on the ferries" and had sometimes encountered "strange people" on the ferries. However, even passengers who felt safe often expressed opinions regarding safety and "the risk of not knowing who is travelling". Even though passengers felt safe, some confessed they might feel "even safer" if they knew that the authorities had more knowledge about the passengers who were travelling. No ferry passengers mentioned any objections regarding checking in individually at the self-check-in counters or passing through an automated ticket barrier when boarding a ferry.

Only two interviewees had seen anything suspicious during their journey on the ferries, such as people acting strangely or people exchanging a sum of cash. Eight passengers wanted more security on the ferries, whereas 88 passengers regarded the security as sufficient. Four passengers did not provide a definite answer. Similar to the Arlanda airport interviewees, the potential risks mentioned by ferry passengers were cross-border criminality and illegal immigration; however, terrorism was not explicitly mentioned as a threat. Seventeen passengers indicated threats or risks but did not specify what kind of risks frightened them. One passenger mentioned that she "did not know who her neighbours were" and that anything could happen if there is no control. Five passengers had heard that many criminals travelled across European borders. The interviewees did not mention ferry accidents as a potential risk<sup>7</sup>.

### 4.3 Comparing Nations and Security

When asked about safety procedures, a total of 31 passengers at Arlanda airport and the Tallink Silja Line ferries compared the security measures in Sweden to those in their home countries or places they had previously or recently visited. Arlanda airport and Tallink Silja Line passengers wanting more security saw the safety measures in Sweden as insecure and inadequate. One passenger claimed that staff working at Oslo airport in Norway regarded Arlanda as an insecure airport and that passengers travelling from Arlanda to Oslo had to be checked

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<sup>7</sup> *The Baltic Sea ferry Estonia disaster in 1994 that killed 852 people was not mentioned by any interviewed passenger.*

again more thoroughly. Other passengers claimed there was much better security in Russia, Australia and Mexico because of the harsher procedures and stricter control of both luggage as well as passengers.

Passengers with a negative view of security checks and passport controls saw the security measures in Sweden and Scandinavia as relaxed and non-threatening. Security checks in the United States, Great Britain, Germany, Australia, Afghanistan, Mexico, Spain and countries in Africa and Asia in general were mentioned as being harsh and uncomfortable for travellers. Interviewees who mentioned these nations saw their security measures as violations of passengers and argued that the “fear” of terrorists and attacks in these countries justifies the strict security measures. However, several passengers explained they did not see security measures and strict control as a guarantee of safety: “people will commit terrorist attacks or commit crimes despite the controls”, one Arlanda airline passenger said. Passengers argued that there was “less risk involved when travelling in Europe” than when travelling outside Europe. Another aspect of these findings is passengers’ alleged trust in Swedish or Northern European authorities. Nineteen passengers at Arlanda airport and the Tallink Silja Line ferries explicitly mentioned they felt safe in Sweden and neighbouring countries. Sweden and other countries around the Baltic Sea area were generally regarded as safe, and passengers did not experience any uneasiness or fear while travelling. As mentioned by Zinn (2006), uncertainty regarding the future is used to create opportunities for action, but strategies that do not lead to definite solutions may cause uncertainty instead. Passengers echoed this argument, claiming they felt safer travelling in the northern parts of Europe than in the previously mentioned countries with intensified security measures. Thus, increased action regarding security measures may cause insecurity and vagueness instead of a greater feeling of trust and safety according to passengers.

## 5 FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

When asked about their opinions regarding freedom of movement, 17 ferry passengers and 15 airline passengers mentioned the risk of “external threats” or “the wrong people” entering the EU or their home countries due to the freedom of movement. Classifying people and creating stereotypes implies a bureaucratic management of identity (Herzfeld, 1993). The classical sociologist Weber (1964) suggested that bureaucracy is the outcome of modernity and, as a rational system, it is the most effective way of organising. Nation states must establish a set of national categories in order to define who belongs and who does not belong, who is inside and who is outside. Similarly, interviewees at both Arlanda airport and at the Tallink Silja Line ferries expressed concerns that unwanted persons could travel freely because of the freedom of movement. Thus, passport controls are seen as tools for detecting those who do not belong and are considered to pose threats to the EU. However, none of the passengers mentioned the intensified control at EU external borders as a possible solution to this threat. In their opinion, even people included in the EU may pose a threat to their countries if they have

a criminal background or illegal reasons for travelling. Four airport passengers and five ferry passengers identified travelling criminals or cross-border crime as potential threats to their home countries. Only two airport passengers mentioned illegal migration as a risk factor and potential harmful threat. A few interviewees mentioned the potential risk of the creation of “fortress Europe”<sup>8</sup> excluding some people from travelling to the EU.

Drawing on the work of the anthropologist Douglas (1966), Herzfeld (1993), who is also an anthropologist, claimed that the production of bureaucratic indifference is based on the notion that outsiders who are ambiguous and “matter out of place” must either be incorporated into or rejected from the system. Citizenship is a classificatory device, and the creation of the European identity entails both inclusion and exclusion of the other (Shore, 2000). In Shore’s (2000) argument, the European identity is carefully designed around ideas of a shared European culture and a progressive future. Passengers were generally positive regarding the freedom of movement concerning neighbouring countries. Swedish passengers mentioned that it seemed to work fine in Sweden and with the neighbouring Nordic countries but were doubtful that it should include additional countries, European or otherwise. In passengers’ perspectives, the risk was increased further away from their home countries, especially outside of Europe.

Concepts such as self, neighbours, family and kinship are powerful symbols used to include and exclude people and to establish who belongs and who does not belong (Douglas, 1970; Herzfeld, 1993). Symbolic concepts such as family and kinship have played roles in the creation of the EU according to Shore (2000), who sees the emphasis on culture in EU politics as proof that culture in this case is inseparable from the questions of power. Nevertheless, 66 airport passengers and 63 ferry passengers<sup>9</sup> had a positive attitude to the freedom of movement. Passengers who were positive about the freedom of movement mentioned security in, for example, the United States as a “nightmare” and “too much”. A majority of passengers were positive regarding the freedom of movement because it facilitates travel within the EU for EU nationals. A few people also emphasised that the freedom implies responsibility. “It is important that everyone cherishes this freedom and takes responsibility for it”, one passenger claimed. Several European passengers acknowledged that freedom of movement is a privilege for those who can enjoy it. Otherwise, few passengers mentioned injustice or the fortification of Europe regarding the freedom of movement.

A number of passengers who generally expressed a positive attitude to the freedom of movement also added comments about the complexity of the system. They stated several benefits of EU members living, working and travelling freely in Europe, but also highlighted security issues as a cost. Twenty-one ferry passengers and seven airport passengers saw the freedom as a problem or a potential

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8 Chris Shore discusses the concept of “Fortress Europe” in *Building Europe: the Cultural Politics of European Integration*, 2000, pp. 79–80.

9 Sixteen of the 100 ferry passengers interviewed and 27 of the airline passengers interviewed had no opinion or did not provide a positive or negative answer regarding freedom of movement.

threat. Both airline and ferry passengers opposed to the freedom of movement claimed that political instability and “the current situation in the world”, as one ferry passenger explained it, could disturb the freedom of movement, making it a potential threat. One passenger at Arlanda airport highlighted the need to sacrifice personal integrity for security reasons. Another interviewee argued that dishonest people could exploit the freedom of movement and engage in cross-border criminality. Several Tallink Silja Line passengers mentioned increased cross-border criminality as a potential outcome of the freedom of movement. The lack of security checks concerned passengers, claiming that “everyone and everything can come in without anyone knowing about it”. An interviewee on the Tallink Silja Line ferry to Riga described how “it might not be comfortable for some people to have control and check passports”.

Common issues described by the airline and ferry passengers were uncertainty regarding EU and Schengen border crossing and security checks. In sociological research, risk is often associated with uncertainty (Zinn, 2006), and a lack of knowledge regarding border regulations, laws and the rights that passengers enjoy causes insecurity and confusion for travellers. During the interviews with the passengers, it was clear that few had extensive knowledge about freedom of movement or the rights they have as EU citizens. Although information about security checks, passport regulations and the freedom of movement can be obtained online, many passengers were unsure of what the freedom of movement actually means. Several passengers denied its existence because they always brought their passports while travelling and were often asked to show them. Thirteen of the 100 ferry passengers interviewed had been asked to show their passport at the ferry terminals in Stockholm, Riga or Tallinn, or on the ferries. Eighty-seven passengers had not been asked to show their passports, but some had been asked to show their tickets. A majority of those who had been asked to show their passport did not find this annoying because they saw it as a common practice associated with travel.

Three ferry passengers who were selected to show their passport expressed confusion as to why they had been chosen and felt they were being targeted. Not knowing the reason for this made them feel uneasy and wonder if they looked suspicious. Passengers did not seem to have knowledge regarding exception rules for passport checks at border areas in EU territory. The seemingly random control of passports was confusing according to the interviewees, and some requested more systematic procedures instead of ad-hoc controls. Passengers wanted to know when they might be asked to show their passport. Some believed that either everyone or no one should be asked to show their passport. However, the EU and Schengen agreement regarding the freedom of movement does not support systematic passport controls. On the other hand, Arlanda airline passengers were more positive or indifferent regarding passport controls. In general, passengers did not appear to be well informed about the rules and regulations regarding the freedom of movement and would benefit from more information.

## 6 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this article is to analyse airline and ferry passengers' experiences, interpretations and definitions of safety, risk and the freedom of movement in the northern Baltic Sea region. Based on empirically, and partly qualitatively, gathered material, including field observations and interviews with passengers at Arlanda airport and at Tallink Silja Line ferries, we have described: 1) how travellers in the region describe safety and risk connected to the freedom of movement; and 2) how passengers describe the freedom of movement in connection with border checks carried out by the border police agencies.

The findings suggest the interviewed passengers are positive regarding the idea of freedom of movement in Europe but scared of threats from outside Europe. Many claim that freedom of movement in the Schengen area is a safe practice regarding Europe and the Nordic countries. Passengers identified political and collective threats, such as terrorism and cross-border criminality, but did not mention airplane or ferry accidents as possible risks. Freedom of movement is generally described as a potential risk for society instead of for the individual person; for example, terrorism is not talked about as a personal risk but more as a general phenomenon. All but three interviewed passengers claimed they felt safe during their travels, but many also added they might feel safer if there were passport controls for all travellers. The interviewees in this study seem to construct safety by distinguishing others outside of Europe, establishing categories of insiders and outsiders. Many passengers in the study emphasised that the freedom of movement is personally beneficial because it is easier for EU citizens to travel within Europe. Passengers also experience insecurity regarding the rules and regulations on border crossing and concerning the freedom of movement.

The vast majority of the interviewed passengers (197 out of 200 interviewees) claimed they felt safe during their travels. Only two ferry passengers interviewed had seen anything suspicious on their journey, mostly people acting in a strange manner. Ten ferry passengers wanted greater security at the ferries, whereas 90 passengers regarded security as sufficient. Despite the high level of security experienced by passengers, many added comments about how they would feel safer if there were more control, especially on the ferries. Potential risks mentioned by ferry passengers were cross-border criminality and illegal immigration. Ferry passengers did not explicitly mention terrorism as a potential threat. An important issue raised by the passengers at Arlanda airport is the balance between passengers' personal integrity and maintaining a high level of safety. The reason for maintaining a high security level, according to the passengers, is because of threats from outside Europe. Some passengers had trouble categorising these ambiguous threats, whereas others mentioned terrorism, illegal immigration and cross-border criminality as potential risks. A few passengers did not see security checks as sufficient enough to prevent terrorist attacks and generally identified threats targeting society, such as terrorism and illegal activity, placing risk into a larger social context.

The majority of passengers were positive regarding the freedom of movement because it facilitates travel within the EU for EU nationals. Sixty-six airport passengers and 63 ferry passengers saw it as a great benefit, facilitating travel and socioeconomic relations among European countries. Several passengers stressed that freedom of movement comes with responsibility and saw the opportunity to live, work and travel freely in Europe as a privilege. However, the interviewees also mentioned the lack of security and the risk of terrorism or travelling criminals taking advantage of open internal borders. Twenty-one ferry passengers and seven airline passengers saw the freedom as a problem or a potential threat, enabling people who “do not belong” to travel more easily. Passengers use classificatory devices (Douglas, 1966) to distinguish between those who belong (European citizens) from the outsiders who do not belong and who may be threats to Europe. Sweden and the other Northern European countries are considered safe compared to the rest of Europe and nations outside of Europe. Thus, a European identity, or a sense of inclusion, seems to be inscribed in the passengers’ consciousness. Passengers’ discussions of risk and safety imitate the social and political consciousness in the 21st century (Denney, 2005) and is influenced by previous events, such as terrorist attacks, news regarding illegal migration to Europe, and cross-border criminality. Passengers focus on political, criminal or ambiguous threats, ignoring accidents or malfunctions for reasons other than terrorism.

Despite the risks mentioned, the majority of interviewed ferry passengers found it convenient not to have to go through security checks, and only three interviewees wanted more ferry security. All passengers interviewed at Arlanda airport had passed through the security check, and many airport travellers generally regarded passport control as an everyday routine. Sixty-three interviewees at Arlanda airport experienced the security checks as sufficient, 24 wanted more security, and 13 had no opinion or did not offer a positive or negative answer regarding the security level. Several passengers had positive experiences with the effectiveness of airport staff. Five passengers mentioned uneasiness about the increased use of technology and their trust in technological safety equipment at airports being less than their trust in human security officers.

Despite the generally positive attitudes to the freedom of movement, several passengers highlighted the ambiguity and inconsistency of passport regulations. Risk is characterised by an uncertainty regarding an outcome, which in itself is a product of existing knowledge and new information (Zinn, 2006). Uncertainty about procedures and rules caused insecurity among travellers. Passengers requested more information about procedures and more explicit signs about what is expected from passengers at border crossings. In addition, few passengers had extensive knowledge regarding the freedom of movement and the different rules and regulations applied by the EU. Since one of Project Turnstone’s objectives is to increase public experience with security without compromising the freedom of movement and efficient measures against cross-border criminals, passengers’ construction and understanding of safety requires further study.

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