



Routledge Borderlands Studies

REMAPPING SECURITY ON EUROPE'S NORTHERN BORDERS

Edited by

Jussi P. Laine, Ilkka Liikanen and James W. Scott



Remapping Security on Europe's Northern Borders

This book critically analyses the changing EU-Russian security environment in the wake of the Ukraine crisis, with a particular focus on northern Europe where the EU and the Russian Federation share a common border.

Russian involvement in conflict situations in the EU's immediate neighbourhood has drastically impacted the European security environment, leading to a resurgence of competitive great power relations. The book uses the EU-Russia interface at the borders of Finland and the European North as a prism through which interwoven external and internal security challenges can be explored. Security is considered in the broadest sense of the term, as the authors consider how the security environment is reflected politically, socially, and culturally within European societies. The book analyses changing political language and concepts, institutional preparedness, border governance, human security, migration, and wider challenges to societal resilience. Ultimately, the book investigates Finland's preparedness to address new global security challenges and to find solutions to them on an everyday level.

This book will be an important guide for researchers and higher-level students of security, border studies, Russian and European studies, as well as policy-makers looking to develop a wider, contextualised understanding of the challenges to stability and security in different parts of Europe.

Jussi P. Laine is an Associate Professor of Multidisciplinary Border Studies at the Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland. Currently, he also serves as the President of the Association for Borderlands Studies.

Ilkka Liikanen is a Professor of Border and Russian studies at the Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland.

James W. Scott is a Professor of Regional and Border Studies at the Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland.

Routledge Borderlands Studies

Borderlands are spaces of transition between cultures, societies and states. Often, like in the case of the US and Mexico, they are understood as static territorial lines and buffer zones, subservient to the development of states and state territories. However, borderlands can also be fluid and ambiguous spaces, moulded by processes of economic and political integration or shifting geopolitical dividing lines. Moreover, borderlands cultures can be found far from borders, in cities, multicultural neighbourhoods and diasporic communities. They also exist as both future-oriented geographical imaginations and imaginaries with profound historical roots. Today, globalisation, integration and new transnational forms of communication change the complex inter-relationships between state, society, space and borders. Consequently, borderlands become more and more places in their own right, reflecting broader supranational patterns of political, economic and social change.

With this series we encourage inter- and multidisciplinary investigation on borders and borderlands throughout the world. We engage with the political, social and historical richness of borderlands, reflecting their unique (geo)political and cultural significance in contexts of colonial rule, nation-building and integration. The Series will explore, among other things, shifting social and political relations and place-related identities that emerge in borderlands, as well as cross-border interaction and the historical memories of every-day life at borders. With this series, we will both contribute to the rich tradition of North American and European borderlands studies and provide a forum for new growing interest in research on borderlands in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

For more information about this series, please visit: <https://www.routledge.com/Routledge-Borderlands-Studies/book-series/BORDERLAND>.

The Gambia-Senegal Border

Issues in Regional Integration

Mariama Khan

Debating and Defining Borders

Philosophical and Theoretical Perspectives

Anthony Cooper and Søren Tinning

Refugee Encounters at the Turkish-Syrian Border: Antakya at the Crossroads

Şule Can

Remapping Security on Europe's Northern Borders

Edited by Jussi P. Laine, Ilkka Liikanen and James W. Scott

Remapping Security on Europe's Northern Borders

Edited by
Jussi P. Laine, Ilkka Liikanen and
James W. Scott

First published 2021
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© 2021 Jussi P. Laine, Ilkka Liikanen and James W. Scott

The right of Jussi P. Laine, Ilkka Liikanen and James W. Scott to be identified as the authors of the editorial material, and of the authors for their individual chapters, has been asserted in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Laine, Jussi, editor. | Liikanen, Ilkka, editor. | Scott, James Wesley, 1956- editor.

Title: Remapping security on Europe's northern borders / edited by Jussi P. Laine, Ilkka Liikanen and James W. Scott.

Description: Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY : Routledge, 2021. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020049797 (print) | LCCN 2020049798 (ebook) | ISBN 9780367560966 (hardback) | ISBN 9781003096412 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: National security--Europe, Northern. | National security--Finland. | European Union countries--Relations--Russia (Federation) | Russia (Federation)--Relations--European Union countries. | Finland--Relations--Russia, Northwestern. | Russia, Northwestern--Relations--Finland. | Finland--Boundaries--Russia (Federation) | Russia (Federation)--Boundaries--Finland. | Security, International. | Geopolitics.

Classification: LCC UA646.85 .R46 2021 (print) | LCC UA646.85 (ebook) | DDC 355/.033048--dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020049797>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020049798>

ISBN: 978-0-367-56096-6 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-0-367-56100-0 (pbk)

ISBN: 978-1-003-09641-2 (ebk)

Typeset in Goudy

by Taylor & Francis Books

Contents

<i>List of illustrations</i>	vii
<i>List of contributors</i>	viii

Introduction: Changing dimensions of the Northern European security environment	1
JUSSI P. LAINE, ILKKA LIIKANEN AND JAMES W. SCOTT	

PART I	
Remapping security political environments	19
1 Russia and the European Union: Different dimensions of security and cooperation	21
VLADIMIR KOLOSOV AND ALEXANDER SEBENTSOV	
2 Neighbourhood and the West: Shifting key concepts of Finland's geopolitical positioning	41
ILKKA LIIKANEN	
3 "Foreign Agent" as an internal representative of the West in Russia's geopolitical discourses	62
VEERA LAINE AND KRISTINA SILVAN	

PART II	
Security on and beyond national borders	83
4 Implementation of European Union security strategies in the context of Integrated Border Management	85
SARI LINDBLOM AND JOONA CASTRÉN	
5 The geography of threat perceptions of Russian borders	100
AAPPO KÄHÖNEN	

vi *Contents*

6	Confusing compass points of human security – Finnish perspectives JUSSI P. LAINE	115
7	Finland, the European Union, and the strategies of the Northern region ALINA KUUSISTO	138
PART III		
	Geographies of migration and everyday security	159
8	Images of Finland, Europe and the West among asylum seekers JONI VIRKKUNEN AND MINNA PIIPPONEN	161
9	To go or not to go?: Finland's Russian speakers discuss the Immortal Regiment march in Finland OLGA DAVYDOVA-MINGUET	181
10	Welfare state, competition state, security state: Nationalism in nation-state responses to crossborder mobilities PAULI KETTUNEN	201
	Epilogue: Finland and the borderland identity – implications for foreign and security policy TEIJA TIILIKAINEN	221
	<i>Index</i>	232

Illustrations

Figures

4.1 Implementation of EU security strategies in the context of IBM	89
6.1 The most important issues facing Finland (2019)	124
6.2 The most important issues facing the EU (2019)	124
6.3 The most important issues individuals are facing (2019)	125
6.4 The most important issues facing the EU, by the respondents' age (2019)	127
6.5 The most important issues facing Finland, by self-defined social class (2019)	130
6.6 The most important issues at the individual level, by the level of education (2019)	132

Tables

4.1 Border security practices	94
6.1 What do you think are the two most important issues facing the EU at the moment? Top 10 (Max. 2 answers, annual averages)	126
6.2 What do you think are the two most important issues facing Finland at the moment? Top 10 (Max. 2 answers, annual averages)	128
6.3 What do you think are the two most important issues you are facing at the moment? Top 10 (Max. 2 answers, annual averages)	131

Contributors

Joona Castrén is a doctoral student at the Finnish National Defence University. His research examines the complexity of the European security environment and cooperation on complex threats.

Olga Davydova-Minguet is an Associate Professor at the Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland. Her research focuses on the transnational politics of memory, media use of Russian speakers in Finland, and the images of Russia in Finland.

Aappo Kähönen holds the title of Docent of Political History at the University of Helsinki and serves currently as the Chair in Finnish Studies at the Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Canada. His research focuses on the Finnish-Soviet relations and foreign policy in the context of state building.

Pauli Kettunen is a Professor Emeritus of Political History at the University of Helsinki, Finland. He has written extensively on social movements, welfare states, labour relations, nationalism, globalisation, and the conceptual history of politics.

Vladimir Kolosov is a Professor and the Director of the Russian Academy of Sciences Centre of Geopolitical Studies at the Institute of Geography at Moscow State University. His research interests lie in the fields of political geography and geopolitics.

Alina Kuusisto works as a postdoctoral researcher at the Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland. Her main research interests are related to regional history in the 1800s and 1900s.

Jussi P. Laine is an Associate Professor of multidisciplinary border studies at the University of Eastern Finland and holds the title of Docent of Human Geography from the University of Oulu, Finland. He also serves as the President of the Association for Borderlands Studies.

Veera Laine is a PhD candidate at the University of Helsinki and a Research Fellow at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs. Her

interests include contemporary nationalism(s) in Russia, Russian media and civil society, and conceptual history.

Ilkka Liikanen is Professor of Border and Russian studies at the Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland. He has studied nationalism, political mobilisation, and borders. Liikanen specialises in the study of political language and conceptual history.

Sari Lindblom, PhD, serves as the Head of Research at the Finnish Border Guard under the Ministry of Interior of Finland. Her research interests include border security, EU politics, and the issues of trust.

Minna Piipponen works as a Researcher at the Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland. Her recent research focuses on irregular migration and Russia.

James W. Scott is Professor of Regional and Border Studies at the Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland. His research interests and numerous publications cover regional development policy, geopolitics, border studies, and transboundary regionalism.

Alexander Sebentsov is Senior Research Fellow at the Centre of Geopolitical Studies, Institute of Geography, Russian Academy of Sciences. His research interests include border area development, and the geography of uncontrolled territories and unrecognised states.

Kristiina Silvan is a PhD candidate at the University of Helsinki and a Research Fellow at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs. Her interests include Russian and Belarusian domestic policy and social movements, politics, and society in Central Asian states.

Teija Tiilikainen is the Director of the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats (Hybrid CoE) in Helsinki. Previously, she served as the Director of the Finnish Institute of International Affairs. Dr Tiilikainen also served as Secretary of State at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland from 2007 to 2008.

Joni Virkkunen works as the Research Manager at the Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland. His research focuses on regional cooperation in EU-Russian relations and transnational migration in Russian and post-Soviet contexts.



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

Introduction

Changing dimensions of the Northern European security environment

Jussi P. Laine, Ilkka Liikanen and James W. Scott

One of the main messages of this still new Millennium is that realist geopolitics is back with a vengeance. It is of course debatable whether “hard power” geopolitics actually ever disappeared from the scene, and its role is obviously key in any discussion about the darkening of optimistic visions of a post-Cold War order based on multilateralism and cooperation. Be this as it may, the multiple challenges facing global society appear to make thinking about international relations in realist terms unavoidable. It appears that the European Union (EU) itself, a champion of soft power, is now reconsidering its own positionality within the world system. As Commissioner Thierry Breton stated in a communication of 10 September 2020: “The era of a conciliatory or naïve Europe that solely relies on the virtue of its soft power is behind us. We are now seeing the dawn of a Europe that is determined to defend its strategic interests” (Breton, 2020). Breton also called for “a powerful and geopolitical Europe” that would be able to protect its economy, democracy and information space while avoiding debilitating geopolitical dependencies.

Possibly, Breton’s thoughts on EU international actorness reflect a certain “common sense” positionality given the present global disorder. However, the notion of a drastic change in international relations can hardly summarise post-Cold War experiences in all corners of Europe. From the perspective of the European North, there is, at this point, an obvious need to study in detail the outcomes of earlier policies and evaluate in what sense EU policies have offered adequate solutions and in what sense they are in need of renewal. Furthermore, common sense also requires that the increasing complexity of security and its inextricable links with issues such as social welfare, health, human rights, social justice and climate change be part of the conversation regarding EU actorness. Put simply, the EU’s goal has been – or at least is said to be – one of achieving a global governance that matters. As a step in this direction, cooperation and regional dialogue continue to be part of the EU’s (geo)political identity and its regional and global role. And yet, it is far from clear how and to what extent principles of multilateral and multilevel cooperation are to be upheld by “a powerful and geopolitical Europe”.

2 Introduction

In the North, as well as within the whole of the EU, the security environment is dominated by a resurgence of competitive great-power relations that have clouded the prospects of a rule-based international order. The aggressive politics of the Russian Federation have hampered the search for a more productive EU-Russia relationship and complicated everyday economic and social interaction. Mechanisms targeted at greater local and regional-level cooperation between Russia and European partners have also been affected by sanctions, counter-sanctions and rhetoric of a return to confrontational Cold War type settings. Despite these realities, we suggest that regional responses to shifting security settings, regional cooperation initiatives, such as the so-called Northern Dimension, and the peculiarities of Finnish-Russian relations have much to tell us about the prospects for multilevel human security in Europe and beyond. Indeed, there is undoubtedly a need to balance the tension between geopolitical realism and pragmatic dialogue.

This contribution to the Borderlands Studies Series explores the nexus between security, regional cooperation and borders, whereby borders are understood here in political, social and cultural and, ultimately, discursive terms. The specific approach to European borderlands developed in this volume builds on the (geo)political salience of “non-core” cross-border relations – in this case, the Northern reaches of the EU-Russian “neighbourhood”. As elsewhere, in the European North geopolitics, borders and migration have coalesced in ways that exemplify complex “intermestic” security environments; domestic and international policy concerns are not only inextricably interlinked, they are co-constitutive of each other. This is evidenced strikingly by such issues as regional cooperation, border management as well as the humane treatment of refugees. Related to this, we will also provide a “northern” reflection on the multifaceted and networked nature of *human security* – security that encompasses much more than protection from physical harm or defence of national territoriality. The concept of human security as promulgated by the United Nations (2009) defines threats as both physical and perceptual – a threat can be an objective context of geopolitical risk but can also result from socio-economic, cultural, health-related and social tensions emerging from a lack of welfare and a diminished sense of social cohesion. Perceptual aspects also draw attention to links between security and information and heightened sensitivities to cybercrime, radicalisation processes promoted by social media and the manipulability of public sentiment through misinformation and false news.

This book is largely based on the results of Multilayered Borders of Global Security, a three-year (2016–2019) research project funded by the Council of Strategic Studies at the Academy of Finland. The central aim of the project was to elaborate on specific perspectives that contribute to reconceptualisations of security as something socially embedded, contextual and both regionally and historically contingent. Eschewing an a priori objectivisation of national concerns, geopolitical interests and security

imperatives, this volume also highlights the (geo)political salience of Finland within EU-Russian relations and Finland's active role in developing these relations as an EU Member State. The individual contributions to the volume elaborate on different drivers of change in security-related practices and conceptualisations. Drawing partly on the results of the Kone Foundation funded project Northern Dimensions of European Union Actorness – The Case of Finland and Russia, the chapters develop analyses of the discursive framings of threat and social resilience that are specific to Finland and Russia. Together, the chapters shed new light on conflict, negotiation and cooperation within the context of competing EU and Russian projects to build international roles. As indicated above, the various chapters address security in the broadest sense of the term, recognising that it is not limited to inter-state relations. Thus, when approaching the consequences of changing EU-Russia relations as reflected at European, particularly Finnish, borders, we engage in a multilevel analysis of how changes in the global security environment are reflected in political language, threat perceptions, border management, the experiences of migrants and diaspora communities as well as in attempts to maintain regional cooperation.

The overall structure of the volume reflects this multilevel perspective by focusing on three interlinked themes. First, we focus on changing scenarios and conceptual re-mappings of the European and Finnish security environment. This involves depicting major trends in the ways different actors interpret the geopolitical setting and related security threats. For example, at the level of discourse and contemporary framings of geopolitical contexts, particularly in the aftermath of the Ukraine crises, we see a return to ideas that distinguish “East” from “West” in political, historical and cultural terms. Secondly, we address the questions of institutional preparedness and changing scenarios of security at the Finnish border. EU membership has profoundly changed the context of Finnish foreign and security policy, and on the level of border governance, global and local phenomena are intertwined in new ways. This is directly reflected at both the level of the formulation of EU common foreign and security policies and the defining of the scope of practical management of borders and cross-border interaction. Both are apparent, for example, in the visible and ongoing discussions within the EU and its member states on the role of Frontex, the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin Regulation as instruments of border governance.

The third level of our approach concerns human security, migration and everyday challenges to societal resilience. More specifically, we ask how emerging migratory processes at European borders and within Russia and the post-Soviet space affect Finland. Within this context we also examine the impact of Russian migration and diaspora policies through analysis of media, information and organisational networks of immigrant groups. Russian-speakers in Finland, for example, now face twofold pressure in which they are instrumentalised by Russian foreign policy (governance of compatriots) while at the same time securitised in Finland due to their

4 Introduction

transnational ties. As part of this discussion, Finland's threat preparedness and threat response capacity are also touched upon, not only in terms of security and control of borders, but also in relation to the internal consequences of migration and diaspora policies. Here the question is ultimately about human security, the resilience of Finnish society in general and how the Finnish welfare state is able to address new global challenges at an everyday level.

The approach: human security, borders, neighbourhood

The European security environment has experienced dramatic change in the past two decades, particularly since the Ukraine crises and the annexation of Crimea in 2014. This has had negative consequences for EU-Russia relations in general and a direct political and social impact also in the European North. In the study of international relations, the annexation of Crimea led to immediate re-assessments of European security parameters which, in turn, quickly led to conclusions to return to Cold War settings (e.g. Black and Johns, 2016; Legvold, 2016). In regard to the European North, attention has been largely directed to questions about the balance of military-technological power in the Baltic Sea area and the Arctic (Conley and Rohloff, 2015; Dahl, 2018). The position of militarily non-allied Finland (and Sweden) and the long Finnish-Russian border, behind which lie major concentrations of Russian land troops, were suddenly interpreted as potential geopolitical soft-spots (Major and von Voss, 2016; Pyykönen, 2016). Attention has also been focused on the implications of frozen EU-Russia relations and particularly on the sanctions introduced in economic relations with Russia (Romanova, 2016).

As important as these considerations are, the long-term and broader political consequences of, as well as the reasons for, the present geopolitical disorder deserve more attention. This involves careful investigation as to how the resurgence of competitive great-power relations has affected broader perspectives of European integration and the applicability of EU strategies for building relations with its neighbours (see Makarychev, 2020). The Ukraine crises and their aftermath have not only deeply affected the geopolitical balance in the post-Soviet space but fundamentally changed the prospects for alternative geopolitical visions that the EU has been promoting since the end of the Cold War. However, the failure of the EU (and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)) to limit deepening East-West divisions has also contributed to a return of zero-sum game geopolitics, and this needs to be recognised. Whatever the underlying causes of the present situation there is an obvious need for a reassessment of the aims and means of EU policies, especially in northern regions where the EU and the Russian Federation share a common border. Indeed, the question of borders, *both territorial and social*, has also taken on a new significance with “hybrid warfare” and the increasing role of misinformation within the security equation.

Our contributions to this debate provide views from the European North and the perspective of a “small state” (Finland) that has gradually developed policies that for the most part eschew mainstream realist (and big-state dominated) statecraft. In this, Finland’s participation in subregional cooperation across complex borders is a concrete example of how an alternative geopolitics as originally promulgated by the EU might be constructed. For this reason, we operate from the assumption that the “Northern Dimension” of EU-Russia relations offers an insightful window on changing security environments as well as the prospects for future continued regional dialogue. As indicated above, the approach we develop in the book is centred on a number of cross-cutting themes that provide evidence of the ways in which security can be and is being reconceptualised in the current geopolitical contexts. These are briefly discussed below and include: political language, links between borders, migration and security and Neighbourhood as a concept and policy.

Political language – imaginaries and framing concepts

The study of political language reveals how official discourse manufactures consensus; it also helps us contextualise the ways in which societal challenges are framed in order to achieve specific goals (Skinner, 2002; Wiesner, Haapala and Palonen, 2017). Such analysis can highlight similarities and contrasts between political language employed by the EU and Russia. Moreover, when freed from the constraints of nation-state centred approaches, political language can also be understood, for example, as a process of framing risk and security (i.e. securitisation) at the everyday level and beyond the traditional workings of formal governance (Petersen, 2011). Through mapping and interpreting conceptual change it is possible to investigate the EU’s shifting positionalities with regard to its normative aspirations and practices as well as how it is perceived externally as a geopolitical actor. This can be done, among other things, by analysing changes in the political vocabularies and rhetoric of the EU as well as of Finnish and Russian actors as part of mutual interdependencies in the process of shaping a post-Cold War international order.

As part of our analysis we indicate that one apparent recent trend is a re-emergence of the concept of the “West” in the discussion on European Neighbourhood and Finnish security policy. This is also evidenced by the significance attributed to the West in Russia’s political vocabulary as a self-evident concept describing a unified hostile security political bloc. One of the ambitions of our project has involved an unpacking of the hidden and unspoken meanings in (geo)political language and the motives for discursive shifts. As part of this, we have monitored the consequences of and alternatives to confrontational geopolitical framings of security in terms of EU regional cooperation policies and Finland’s position in the broader security political environment. Another ambition along these lines has been to

critically analyse how EU neighbourhood policies can be construed as an alternative to traditional state-centric approaches to security and as a means of overcoming Cold War divisions. We also suggest that through an analysis of political language we can better assess the overall significance of more pragmatic and de-centred subregional cooperation initiatives such as the Northern Dimension in the maintenance of EU-Russia dialogue.

Borders, migration and security

As stated above, this book provides an analysis of interwoven external and internal security challenges through the prism of political, social and cultural borders. At a very basic level, borders serve to protect national societies from external threats while maintaining conditions to retain their economic sustainability. While threats associated with political borders have received much media attention, particularly in the past decade, the link between security and socio-political and socio-cultural borders has received far too little attention. This is regrettable as rules, values, conventions and formal and informal institutions are among the basic structural elements that are constantly produced and reproduced within systems and that create boundaries around societies, making national societies recognisable (Scott and Sohn, 2018). Through border-making (bordering) processes, the identities, values and interests of local communities are defined, often in relation to the “other” and that which is perceived as “external” (Laine, 2016). For this and other reasons, border-making in terms of creating socio-cultural distinctions – and thus also divisions within society – is also at the core this approach. In terms of received understandings of security, borders are an interface between domestic concerns and wider interstate and intercultural contexts.

Closely linked to our understanding of border-making processes is the securitisation of specific things and persons. Securitisation can be defined as the political and social framing of threat (Balzacq, 2005) and it is particularly salient insofar as threat is framed in ways that emphasise national and cultural identities and “otherness” (see Browning and Joenniemi, 2016). Within this context, the role of information and its production and spreading is vital. The utility of employing a bordering perspective lies in detecting language, imagery and maps that suggest the existence of an inherent and often antagonistic difference between groups and individuals based on beliefs, values, ethnicity and other aspects of identity (see Vaughan-Williams and Pisani, 2020). Bordering can be identified in the discourses and information circulating in social and more traditional media. Studies of media sources targeting Finnish and German Russian speakers give, for example, ample evidence of a media politics of cultural identity fed by transnational “media diets” (Standish, 2017). Moreover, when we talk of borders and border security, questions relating to mobility and migration immediately arise. In the present context of restrictions on mobility and border controls as well

as more popular threat perceptions, migrants and asylum seekers are frequent targets of securitisation practices.

Partly as a result of long-term migration pressures and the more immediate refugee crisis in Europe, threat scenarios have proliferated in which asylum seekers and migrants are portrayed as not only challenging the political bases of the EU but the very foundations of European civilisation itself (Vertovec, 2011). As a result, mobility and migration are now prominent geopolitical categories in terms of popular discourse and media representations (Vollmer and Kayankali, 2018). However, popular imaginaries of mobile migrants are often based on assumptions of threat to national identity and local ways of life. One of the most remarkable aspects of these threat discourses is their basis in fear and negative stereotypes rather than in more rational assessments of risk and social burdens. In any case, these imaginaries could prove highly damaging to the EU, both as a multicultural society and as a political actor seeking to promote regional stability and more humane policies towards refugees and asylum seekers.

The real-world significance of socio-political bordering is exemplified by the propagation and manipulation of distrust and fear as a means of promoting the cross-border influence of interests inimical to the EU. These perceptions of threat require commensurate counterstrategies and responses. A further example provides ample evidence of what is at stake. The website *Rufi.ry*, registered in March 2017, and the National Union of Organizations of Russian Compatriots in Finland (OSORS) represent a quite straightforward vehicle for promoting Russia's interests and state ideology. It is evident that in order to promote a "positive image of Russia" and counter criticism of Russia's policies and political leadership, *Rufi* politically instrumentalises historical memory and national identities. Following Russian state-dependent media as well as media agents close to the Russian government, these Russian-Finnish information vehicles appeal to conservative and anti-migration narratives in the name of resisting Russophobia.

Neighbourhood – the geopolitics of regional cooperation

The EU's geopolitical actorness has emerged gradually as a result of the consolidation of its political community. It has taken the form of development aid, a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), a Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), a Neighbourhood Policy and Eastern Partnership and a variety of legal interventions. A vital element in legitimising EU policies is the introduction of alternative notions of sovereignty in order to move towards a new post-Cold War international order (Haukкала, 2010). For better or worse, the idea of a European Neighbourhood has been presented as a prime example of the new "post-Westphalian" politics that aimed at turning the focus of international relations from military safeguarding of territorial integrity to mutual promotion of programmes of

territorial cooperation (e.g. Linklater, 1998). In constructivist theories of international relations, the concept of neighbourhood has stood as a symbol for introducing new principles of pooled and shared sovereignty and an alternative to spheres of influence. Officially, the EU has aimed for a regional cooperation project that is based to a significant extent on the co-creation and co-ownership of policies between the EU and its regional partners. Since the mid-1990s, this has included the creation of mechanisms that have been targeted at greater Russian participation in European structures of territorial cooperation. Although it excluded Russia, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) of 2004 summarised this pattern of building EU external relations policies and introduced the key concepts for elaborating it further.

However, the momentum of an alternative EU geopolitics, as embodied by the notion of neighbourhood, has encountered formidable obstacles and the EU's present crisis is thus simultaneously a crisis of its "alternative" geopolitical identity. Recent events have made these questions all the more salient. Tuomas Forsberg and Hiski Haukkala (2016) have characterised EU-Russia relations as the "partnership that failed". They also point out that the 2014 Ukraine crisis and its repercussions were only the culmination of a process that had long since lost momentum. From the start, Russian refusal to join the ENP damaged the geopolitical credibility of this project, but it still offered a powerful vision and practicable conceptual tools for overcoming this problem. In the present situation, this orientation has been more or less marginalised, and the visions of European neighbourhood have been replaced to a large extent by rhetoric of the return of the Cold War and East-West confrontation. From the perspective of the European North, there is, at this point, an obvious need to study in detail the experiences of earlier policies and evaluate in what sense ENP has offered and still offers adequate conceptualisations of the trends in international relations and in what sense its tasks are in need of renewal.

In the aftermath of the Ukraine crises, the policy approach to ENP has often been presented as the leading example of the post-Cold War "epoch" that came to an end with the Russian annexation of Crimea and the Russian involvement in open military conflict in Eastern Ukraine. In extreme realist interpretations, ENP is a failed policy from an age of romanticism and naivety in international relations that, actually, invited Russia to use military means in its national interests (see Mearsheimer, 2014). Earlier studies have questioned this type of theories of epochal turns in international relations. It has been argued that at no point did the ENP ever reach a hegemonic position in post-Cold War politics – or even an uncontested role as the core of the international actorness of the EU (Laine, Liikanen and Scott, 2018). The principles of ENP were only gradually adopted as part of EU policies towards the end of the 1990s, and even after the official acceptance of the policy programme, the international actorness of the EU was characterised by competing rationales that derived from the disparate policy

formulation of the EU itself, NATO and the members states, especially the big member states (Liikanen, 2018). In this sense, the ENP never brought its project to fruition, and, in the end, would have wasted its potential in the test of “zero-sum game” geopolitics.

One major lesson that can be drawn from the present context of EU-Russia antagonism is that the EU’s vision of regional partnership can only prosper through fostering regional dialogue with the longer-term view of developing shared visions of political and social agenda-setting. This includes operating with a greater knowledge of post-Soviet political and social contexts as a basis for critical policy assessment. Ultimately, if we are to understand the EU’s policies of regional cooperation progressively, i.e. as based on mutual interdependence and multilevel society interaction, then the ideational basis for a regional “Neighbourhood” cannot be based on the external imposition of EU values but on equal co-definition and co-development.

Overview of the book

Part I: Remapping security political environments

The section begins with the analysis of Vladimir Kolosov and Alexander Sebestov regarding the evolution of Russian policies towards regional cooperation in the North Europe and Baltic region through the prism of official discourse. They focus on the Northern Dimension (ND) initiative because from the beginning it was conceived as a joint Russia-EU project. Moreover, the ND is considered to be an autonomous institution and a superstructure that encompasses other forms of regional cooperation. In interpreting official documents of Russia’s foreign ministry since the end of the 1990s, the authors make a distinction between different periods in the ND’s discursive framing. The ND has always been considered by Russian diplomacy, on the one hand, as an opportunity for depoliticised dialogue with the EU and, on the other hand, as a step towards a rapprochement between Russia and the EU. The authors also assess the impact of relations between Russia and the EU on the development of the ND and conclude that its present “crisis” has a partially discursive origin. The ND has as yet been unable to fulfil all its ambitious expectations and significantly contribute to more large-scale progress of Russian-EU relations, partly because multilevel cooperation in the framework of the ND is not exempt from the discursive dependence of sectoral and local actors on higher political levels. In the Russian view of things, the ND did not become a fully-fledged mechanism of Russia’s admission to the “European home” but has been transformed into a tool for a “soft” exclusion and othering. Moreover, as a result of the crisis of Russia-EU relations after 2014, the objective of “Europeanisation” has been completely removed from the agenda. Based on more than 20 interviews with high-level officials, experts and national

representatives in sectoral partnerships, the authors shed light on the institutional organisation of the ND and its relationship with other regional projects, such as the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) and the Arctic Council. They consider the impact of the current crisis on their activities. In the current conditions, it is particularly important successful compromises and mutual understanding are reached by national representatives at regular meetings as they can serve as a precedent for improved future cooperation. Kolosov and Sebestov then devote the remainder of their chapter to the problems of regional cooperation in the North Europe and Baltic region that are generated by national bureaucracies and the state of regional budgets in Russia. Special attention is paid to the coordination of the activity in this field at the federal level – between the foreign ministry and other governmental institutions.

In the next chapter, Ilkka Liikanen examines how the concepts of Neighbourhood and the West have been used in Finnish foreign policy rhetoric to depict the changing geopolitical environment and Finland's place within it. Following the tradition of conceptual history, the analysis aims to uncover conceptual shifts and identify the conflicting and competing framings of political space. Special attention is paid to how ideas of neighbourhood and the West are linked to broader competing mappings of Finland's security environment during and after the Cold War. In what context and for what purpose have they been employed? During the Cold War the neighbourhood concept was central to Finnish-Soviet relations as confirmation of a commitment to peaceful relations, and a guarantee that no security threat would be posed either directly or indirectly to the Soviet Union. Neighbourhood simultaneously gained significance as part of Finnish attempts to strengthen its international status, earning recognition for its particular economic and political system. Ultimately, the rhetoric of good neighbourly relations with the Soviet Union worked as a counterweight to agreements with the institutions of evolving Western European integration. Since its EU membership in 1995 Finland has also sought to employ the concept of the European neighbourhood to combine the tasks of promoting deepening European integration and building relations with the Russian Federation on alternative grounds to the Cold War East-West division. Since the Ukraine crisis Finland has been newly positioned as part of the West in Finnish foreign policy rhetoric. Liikanen concludes by discussing the degree to which this can be read as confirmation of the return of traditional interpretations of East-West confrontation, and to what degree it opens alternative readings of the post-Cold War West that are not opposed to the principles of European neighbourhood policies and the task of strengthening the EU's global role and multilateral rules-based international order.

Veera Laine and Kristiina Silvan complete the first part with an investigation of one of the key concepts of Russian security discourse, that of the "foreign agent" (*inostrannyi agent*). In this chapter, the authors analyse how

the Kremlin has utilised the concept since the 2010s to control Russian civil society actors, simultaneously portraying the West as a threat to national security. They also argue that this legislation has served as a discursive bordering mechanism that maintains divisions between Russia and the West. The concept was introduced in 2012 when President Vladimir Putin signed a law obliging non-profit organisations that engage in political activities and receive funds from abroad to register as foreign agents. In late 2019, the State Duma expanded this legislation to cover individual actors. The ambiguous language of the law – and its nature per se – allows highly selective implementation, which has made the foreign agent law a flexible instrument for the Kremlin in controlling non-governmental organisations in the country. In their chapter they analyse the societal discussion about these concepts and about the implementation of the legislative acts in order to find out how much of a “foreign agent” a “Western” actor actually is. In contrast to the traditional vision of geopolitics, they draw on critical geopolitics theory that perceives geopolitics first and foremost as a discourse. Thus, they focus on how the concept of threats to Russia’s national security is produced and maintained in language. We study presidential addresses, media sources as well as federal-level key policy documents such as the Information Security Doctrine adopted in 2016; the National Security Strategy 2015; and the Foundations of Cultural Policy 2014. In the close reading of the material The conceptual change of the West in one particular sphere of the Russian security policy discourse is traced in a close reading of the material. The chapter argues that the recent Russian discourse on foreign agents is a clear example of interwoven external and internal security challenges. The concept has deep roots in Soviet and Russian history, and the layered meanings add to the political weight of the concept in contemporary use. The discourse on foreign agents reflects the complexity of Russia’s interpretation of the Western threat prior to the Ukraine crisis, but they also illuminate ongoing political contention within the country as well as the opportunities and limitations of the various actors within Russian civil society.

Part II: Security on and beyond national borders

Our focus on borders and security provides three complementary perspectives. Sari Lindblom begins the discussion with a focus on European and Finnish border management within a changing security situation. Her chapter deals with the relationship between national and supra-national border management and border control in Finland as a Member State of the EU. She also seeks to explain how this relationship has changed since Finnish EU membership in 1995 with regard to the institutional principles and remits of the Finnish Border Guard. Lindblom’s study consists of a conceptual analysis of documents and regulations issued by the European Commission together with documents relating to Europe’s 2003 Safety

12 Introduction

Strategy and its renewed Global Safety Strategy from the year 2016. In addition, her study consists of interviews with Finnish Border Guard specialists. The aim of this chapter is to indicate the extent to which Europe has become *safer* in terms of the normative goals set by the EU and Finland; it is also to investigate to what degree shared visions and cooperation between member states of the EU materialised as envisaged in the EU's Global Strategy. Finally, the chapter also offers a discussion in terms of future scenarios.

Aappo Kähönen offers a perspective on perceptions of threat that have been associated with Russian borders. In doing this, Kähönen analyses perceptions of threat from two main vantage points: 1) the general development of Russia–EU relations in 1991–2020, and 2) historical differences of state-building in multinational and national contexts. The first vantage point is covered by studying the limits and potential of the EU cross-border cooperation, established after the disintegration of the Soviet Union. This involves an acknowledgement that regional cooperation spaces can also be seen as contested geopolitical visions and questioning the extent to which the EU's neighbourhood policy been understood abroad, especially by Russia, as a new form of regionalism, a buffer zone strategy and/or a “civilising mission”. Russian border region policies from the 1990s to the late 2010s offer a case illustrating changing concepts and arguments on cross-border cooperation and the role of international relationships therein. In concluding, Kähönen relates his results to differences and similarities in legitimations of the state, either as an “empire-state” or a nation-state. He argues that because of the centrality of the integration paradigm for the EU, there has been a tendency to underestimate the historical significance of state-building and nationalism in Eastern Europe, not only with regard to the post-Soviet, but also the post-First and Second World War contexts. On the other hand, in the view of the Russian leadership the multinational foundation of the state is both a resource and a vulnerability. As long as the imperial or colonial heritage of the state is not recognised in Russian foreign policy, the relationship with its neighbour states will remain tense, the more so the more recently these states have separated from the Soviet Union/Russia.

Threat images are also at the centre of Jussi P. Laine's reading of the Finnish situation with regard to the East. While the narrative of the eastern threat has clear historical roots, it has gained an existential momentum of its own, becoming a mythologised and systemically maintained “autobiography” of sorts of the Finnish state – as an almost all-encompassing explanation of why things are the way they are. Threats, and particularly constructed images of them, have not only been one of the most compelling driving forces in politics but are also vital bonds in building and moulding national identity. While the threat from the East – posed in particular by the Soviet Union, later Russia – must not be downplayed, this chapter assumes a premise that it is not the heralded return of the Cold War rhetoric and

serious East-West confrontation, which are the most pressing Finnish security concerns, but rather the fragmentation of this familiar world view. In contrast to the previous – more alarming, but also more predictable, and hence manageable – threat perceptions, the contemporary Finnish security scene is characterised by increased unpredictability as well as a complex combination of traditional geopolitical challenges and new security threats that are not necessarily connected to inter-state relations. As the idea of security is constructed in relation to the threats perceived, the better knowledge of and ability to anticipate the latter leads to an increased feeling of the former. Finland's operating environment has changed remarkably since the Cold War era and the country's familiar security compass has been disrupted by the present context of multiple crises and diverse threats. Given this situation, a conscious effort is needed in order to escape the narrative straitjacket of the Eastern threat. In addition to adjusting the mere compass points, Laine also underlines the interwoven nature of external and internal security challenges that need to be properly balanced if the more comprehensive state of security is to be achieved.

Alina Kuusisto refocuses our attention on the borderlands context as exemplified by the ND and changing notions of “northernness” and cooperation. Regional categories such as the North are anything but apolitical or permanent. More often than not, they provide overlapping frames for policies, whose contents change over time. As in the case of ND policies, regional actors themselves tend to struggle with space and public visibility, and the goal of strengthening a region's profile is often a matter of conscious political strategy. Furthermore, as part of geopolitical strategies regions are defined on the basis of natural conditions, a common history and culture in a way which seeks to naturalise their existence, but which at the same time make them open to interpretation (see Mishkova and Trencsényi, 2017). In her chapter, Kuusisto examines the rationales of the debate around the ND, the reasons why it has almost completely halted and how different actors see the future of related EU policies. The main material is comprised of interviews with officials and politicians who are working or have worked on the ND, as well as speeches of representatives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and parliamentary debates on the ND. In this chapter, Kuusisto aims to discover why certain regional definitions operate better than others and to identify the factors which stabilise and/or marginalise these definitions in the context of geopolitical change.

Part III: Geographies of migration and everyday security

Joni Virkkunen and Minna Piipponen begin the third section with an investigation of images of Finland, Europe and the West as conveyed by asylum seekers traversing the so-called Arctic Route from Moscow and the Russian North to Northern Finland in 2015 and 2016. The asylum seekers entered Finland after the route to Norway was closed. This route from Asia, Africa

and the Middle East to Moscow, Murmansk and, ultimately, the Schengen was clearly an alternative to the routes across the Central and Eastern Mediterranean. The majority of the asylum seekers on the Arctic route used Russia as a transit corridor. However, some of this group had a longer stay in Russia before joining the transit migrants to some of the most peripheral borders of Northern Europe. The motives for migrant and asylum-seeker journeys in irregular forms of migration are often viewed in a very straightforward way, as movement from point a to point b. In this thinking, asylum seekers are usually labelled as exploiters of the EU's generous asylum policies, and having a complete knowledge of both the asylum and social benefit systems of the EU. Yet, the Finnish and Norwegian discussions of the Arctic route revealed another theory: international migration as a political manoeuvre of the Russian state. In this view, migration through the Russian Arctic took place in a particular geopolitical setting where asylum seekers were just "guided" to the route without any own actorness. The results presented in the chapter show that images are constructed as an interplay of formal, popular and everyday geopolitics. The geographies of irregular migration are thus influenced and transformed, along with growing frustration among migrants in a particular time and place, by vague images that build on various pieces of information and rumours.

Olga Davydova-Minguet shifts the discussion from migration to the situation of dual citizens and diaspora communities. In her chapter she concentrates on the strained relationship between Finland's Russian-speaking minority and the public articulation of Russian and Finnish memory politics. Since the 2000s, Soviet-style commemorations of the Great Patriotic War have intensified in Russia and now form the core of Russian national imagery. According to this narrative, the contemporary Russian nation descends from heroes who fought on the battlegrounds and the home front and who suffered from Nazi atrocities. Soviet-time commemorative practices, symbolism and language have thus been reworked and accommodated to the new post-Soviet Russian reality. As part of this, a new commemorative movement, the Immortal Regiment, emerged in 2012 and became transnational in nature in 2015. Since 2017, on Russian Victory Day, the Immortal Regiment commemorative marches have been organised by pro-Russian civic organisations in Helsinki, as well as in other countries where Russian post-Soviet diasporic communities live. In Finland, however, these marches are highly controversial. A common Finnish interpretation of the events of World War II dwells on the perception of the USSR as an aggressor and the Finnish nation as a victim, and this popular interpretation downplays the issue of war-time collaboration between Finland and Fascist Germany. Celebrations of Finland's national day (Independence Day) are built upon heroic and victimised memories of the war; in popular and public memories, this image of the Finnish nation remains strong. The Immortal Regiment marches bring to the fore a conflictual situation brought about by the amalgamation of transnational migration, media and social movements with

memory politics and the challenges that they pose to the memory politics of “Western” countries which post-Soviet migrations target. In this chapter Davydova-Minguet first presents the “clash” of nationalised memory politics in the transnational space that is formed by flows of people, media, images and memories. She then focuses on an analysis of the online discussions of Russian-speakers in Finland in which participation in the Immortal Regiment march was discussed. (Non)participation in the march was reflected from various points of view that form understandings of the country and a sense of belonging.

Part III of this volume closes with Pauli Kettunen’s treatment of democratic welfare state nationalism as a factor in the definition of security practices. The Nordic model of social change and reform has been based on national efforts to cope with international economic, political and cultural interdependencies; a confidence in a virtuous circle between social equality, economic growth and widening democracy; collective and public regulation as a means of increasing individual resources and autonomy, and the notion of a strong national society as the framework of political agency, solidarity and conflict. All these aspects of the Nordic model have been challenged by the increased and intensified cross-border mobility of money, information, jobs and people. Analysing policy documents and available research literature, Kettunen discusses Nordic nation-state responses to these challenges. He argues that through responses targeted at offering attractive and competitive operational environments for globally mobile companies, investors and “international talent”, on the one hand, and to prevent the entry of unwanted people, on the other hand, old welfare-state institutions and discourses are modified to serve new competition-state and security-state functions. The democratic nationalism of the welfare state is thus challenged by what might be called nationalist strategies that seek competitiveness and security. The consequences of these developments are potentially far-reaching as “we group” definitions in all three nationalist options tend to provide a pre-given framework for xenophobic and racist right-wing ideas.

In the final contribution to this volume Teija Tiilikainen discusses the ways in which Finnish political identities – those of a small state as well as a borderland – have come to play a major role within the country’s post-Cold War foreign policy. She argues that it is these two historically grounded identities, rather than tropes of East-West balancing acts, that help explain the trajectories of Finnish foreign policy since the end of World War II. During the Cold War, the small state and borderland identities translated into a policy of neutrality between East and West, and an active role taken in international conflict-prevention and peace-mediation efforts. Finland’s affinity with Western values and a Western political and societal model was obvious, but for geopolitical reasons the country had to accommodate its Western international orientation to the interests of the Soviet Union. This then shifted after 1991, with Finland’s rapid adjustment to the EU’s common policies, and willingness to distance itself from its Cold War