

Abstract

On March 1st, 2022, it was decided by the European Union to enact Council Regulation 2022/350 which prohibited certain Russian media outlets in the European Union. It was declared that these media outlets posed a harmful threat to European society, thus being a societal risk, which had to be resolved. This paper concludes that the European Union discursively have securitized Russian media, which then have enabled an increasing new form of European biopolitical governmentality. This reinforced governmentality now account certain knowledge being an existential threat to the health of the social body.

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The European prohibition of Russian media: An investigation of the recent biopolitical development in European governmentality

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How can it be observed that European governmentality has reinforced a new biopolitical agenda and how does this correspond with the liberal values of the European institution?

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Introduction

The European Union is a unique and fascinating construct. It symbolises a transcendence and development from a national to a supranational perspective, as European countries in unity attempt to define European values and objectives. What started as the European Coal and Steel Community (ECS) in the 1950's soon developed into the European Economic Community (EEC). It was a time of renewed interest in the aspects of cooperation across nations, especially in Europe, as cooperation was intended to be the replacement for yet another conflict. This was the start of European integration, as new institutions were created, fostering greater political, economic, and cultural ties between European countries. Thus, European integration also introduced the idea of a common European identity. The EEC was eventually replaced by the European Union (EU), which today represents the interests of 27 membering nations and approximately 447 million citizens (European Union 1, n.d.).

The framework of the European Union now encompasses a multitude of different institutions. Foremost, it is seemingly the objective of the European institutions to uphold and ensure the commitment to the agreements which have been constituted by European treaties. As such, European citizens are ensured that their respective countries and European institutions follow the common legislation which accounts for all European citizens. Secondly, it is the task of European institutions to promote and advance European cooperation, integration, and solidarity among member states. European legislation concerns multiple areas such as trade, economics, security, foreign policy etc. This means that European integration is in a continuous stance of development, as European policies constantly are negotiated and discussed between member countries. It is European health policy which holds an important aspect for this paper, where its primary principal claim is to: "Protect and improve the health of EU citizens" (European Parliament 1, 2022). It is the social health of European society, which is in focus throughout the paper, as it seemingly have included a new dimension.

In February 2022 Russia started its invasion of Ukrainian territory. Not long thereafter it was decided that the European Union would launch a series of sanctions, with the ambition to disrupt Russia in its current military operation. In reality, the European Union already did sanction Russia on multiple accounts, as a consequence of the 2014 Crimea conflict. However, within the new sanctions, there was the European decision to prohibit certain Russian media outlets within the Eurozone. It is this decision that the paper will investigate, as the decision presents a reinforced biopolitical dimension within European governmentality.

An essential aspect of this paper is the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union under the Lisbon Treaty from 2009. This specific charter ensures a range of human rights and values for European citizens and is a primary example of successful European integration, as the charter facilitates European law across national borders. It is undoubtedly of most importance that European institutions and European member countries always adhere to the principles of the charter, as the enactment of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 gave the charter a legally binding effect. Alongside this charter, the analysis will also investigate the 'public health' paragraph from the Lisbon Treaty, which also presents relevant notions for further analysis.

It is important that this paper present a theoretical framework. This framework will explore and define the theories and concepts which will be applied in the analysis section. The main component in the theoretical framework, as well as the primary theory throughout the paper, is the theory of biopower coined by Michel Foucault. Foucault is well-known for his studies on the connection between power and knowledge. It is the very specific biopower which seemingly holds a connection to the European decision to prohibit Russian media outlets. To fully grasp the theory of biopower it is also necessary to elaborate upon the concept of governmentality, as biopower is a theoretical function hereof. Furthermore, this paper will also include the theory of securitization which will hold a significant role in the analysis section. This theory is a central aspect and supplement to the understanding of biopower. It is the ambition that biopower in combination with securitization can provide the necessary insight to explain the recent development of biopolitics in European governmentality.

For the next section, this paper will present an empirical section. Herein the contemporary legislative framework of the European Union will foremost be explored, accounting for the different treaties which have relevance for European freedoms. Hereafter the section will elaborate upon a set of selected recent crises which have relevance for the development of European biopolitics. It is important to acknowledge that this paper will limit its research scope to explore only a few of the many recent European crises. The empirical section will devote its focus to elaborating upon crises which have happened after the creation of the Lisbon Treaty and the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the European Union in 2009.

The analysis will refer to the empirical data with the appliance of theoretical knowledge. However, the analysis will also apply the understanding of neo-functionalism and neo-liberalism, as to better understand European integration and hereof European governmentality. This is intending to provide a diverse analysis which in the end can provide a nuanced conclusion. It is not the argument of this paper that biopolitics never existed in the European

Union until now, there are multiple accounts of this which the empirical section will investigate. Neither is it the objective of this paper to prove that Russian media outlets spread disinformation or not, as is the argument of Von der Leyen (European Commission 2, 2022). This is an exceptionally important aspect to remember, as this paper cares little for whatever information or disinformation is presented by certain media outlets. The principle to which this paper agrees is the argument made by Noam Chomsky, namely that all media is biased to some extent. This is elaborated more upon in his work 'Manufacturing Consent: The political economy of the mass media' (1994). In agreement with Chomsky, this paper principally regards Russian media outlets on an equal basis with other media outlets.

It is the ambition of the paper to ask the following research question:

How can it be observed that European governmentality has reinforced a new biopolitical agenda and how does this correspond with the liberal values of the European institution?

It is the intention that the analysis should attempt to validate this argument. This will first be done by connecting the theoretical framework to the findings in the analysis, thus providing certain perspectives which can confirm a reinforced European biopolitical governmentality. I use the wording 'reinforced' as there is clear evidence that there already exists biopolitics within European governmentality. Therefore, it is the purpose of this paper to prove the emergence of a new 'reinforced' form of biopolitics within European governmentality which has to do with an expanded view upon the social health of European society.

It should be said that biopower normally is constituted as a positive power in governmentality. In this sense, it is also the objective of this paper to prove that biopower can be too overprotective, seemingly doing more harm than good. At the end of the paper, a conclusion will be presented, which will summarize the findings of the analysis and provide a definite answer to the research question.

As author and European citizen, I too am affected by the prohibition. Hence, I cannot help but also hold a personal ambition to investigate the matter in greater detail. As such, this paper is not solely objective, as it will include the arguments and somewhat opinions of the author.

Methodology section

This paper holds the research design of being a qualitative case study. Foremost, this paper is a case study as it investigates a certain historical development with the ambition of proving a theoretical development primarily concerning the construct of biopower (Lamont, 2015, p. 131). In other words, this paper is a case study as it seeks to investigate a certain string of events which have an outcome that I would like to prove and explain (p. 135). Therefore, it is the aspiration of this paper is to produce knowledge concerning the historical development of European governmentality in the context of biopolitics. Further, it is also the desire to broaden the theoretical understanding of biopower.

The general research approach of the paper is of a qualitative nature, as it encompasses the collection and analysis of contextually rich non-numeric data (p. 127 & 79). In connection with the paper being of a qualitative nature, this paper follows an abductive reasoning approach, thus including elements from the deductive and inductive reasoning, with the aspiration to discover and prove a theoretical proposition by empirical observation (Hassan, 2022) & (Lamont, 2015, p. 78). This paper is based on secondary data, as the qualitative data consist mostly of internet available sources. Much of the data which this paper refers to is official documents from European institutions in the form of European treaties and articles. Other data, which is collected and referred to are primarily dictionaries, peer-reviewed articles, newspaper articles, as well as sites and papers belonging to international organisations. All this data is chosen as it provides a deeper understanding of the social world (Lamont, 2015, p. 92) and explicitly European governmentality. The data which does not originate from official European institutions and nor is peer-reviewed by the academic society have been validated through the website mediabiasfactcheck.com, as to gain a better understanding of how this data to some extent is biased.

The examination of such textual data conforms to the approach of content analysis, as it is the ambition to see a biopolitical pattern within these datasets which have a correlation and explaining factor the development in European governmentality (p. 91). For content analysis it is essential to narrow the scope of the research paper, therefore it has been the intention to find only the most relevant sources and create a timeframe for investigation of biopolitical governmentality. It was decided that this time frame should start with the creation of the Lisbon Treaty, as it introduced the important Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union which became legally binding.

The paper follows an interpretive research design, as the presented research question is situated within the understanding of how a particular theory and case constitutes a biopolitical development in European governmentality. Hence, the paper is deeply engaged with the ontological meaning of biopower, in the context of European governmentality, as the paper seeks to understand the development of a certain social construction within European society (p. 43). As such, the theoretical framework helps with analysing and interpreting the collected data in a holistic manner.

It is a limitation to the paper that the research question also has a personal effect on the author, thus making this paper somewhat subjective to the opinions of the author. Furthermore, as much of the collected data esteem from European institutions, this paper conforms mostly to the information which is provided from a European perspective. It has been exceptionally time consuming to find the various European legislative documents and even more difficult to understand the complex data provided herein. However, I believe that the findings within this paper present some very interesting results, which can be relevant for the European citizen.

Theoretical Framework

This section will first present the Foucauldian perspective on the interconnectedness between power and knowledge. Hereafter governmentality will be presented, which is the method by which the strategy of biopolitics is conducted. Governmentality and biopower will hold a significant relevance in the analysis, as the two will complement each other in investigating European governmentality. Biopower remains a relatively undefined theory, as it was mostly explored and defined at the lectures of Foucault. As a result, the theory is still in somewhat development and open for interpretation, which is exactly what this paper will attempt to present. However, biopower is a complex form of power. The theoretical framework will present the basis of biopower, while the analysis will attempt to prove a new dimension within a biopolitical governmentality. Securitization is another important aspect which is very interconnected with biopower. Therefore, this section will also explore how securitization is a discourse method which supplements biopower by framing certain phenomena. Thus, it is the ambition that the theory of securitization can provide a deeper insight into European governmentality and be the justification for the emergence of a new form of reinforced biopolitics.

Power & Knowledge – Michel Foucault

Michel Foucault is esteemed for his studies on power and knowledge, which is a central aspect in much of his research. He explores how knowledge is not neutral but shaped by power relations, therefore making his social theory quite complex. It is an interdisciplinary approach with the aspiration to uncover how power operates at all levels of society and how this affects the construction of knowledge. Foucault argues that power produces and operates through specific forms of knowledge, while knowledge is a product of power relations. In other words, power establishes the conditions to produce knowledge, whereas knowledge legitimizes and reinforces power structures. As such the two imply each other and are dependent on one another (Foucault, 1975, p. 26-27).

It is therefore the principle of Foucault that power is not necessarily a negative notion, nor is it solely exercised from above by a sovereign authority. Power is dispersed and operates on multiple levels, throughout social relations and by various actors in different contexts. That is also why Foucault introduces the notion of productive power, as he argues that power not only represses but can be positive and productive (Foucault, 1975, p. 163). Hence, it can be argued that power shapes and produces a social reality. Power can generate and organise institutions with the ambition to create knowledge and or social norms etc. This notion is explored throughout his book 'Discipline and Punish', especially with his examples on how power functions in disciplinary institutions (Foucault, 1975, p. 23-26 etc.). It can be said that Foucault challenged the traditional understanding of power, as he believed that power is much more nuanced with the potential of being both repressive but also productive and thus positive. This is one of the prominent arguments in his book 'The History of Sexuality: Volume I' (1978), as Foucault presents his main theoretical basis for biopower (p. 139). It is this definition provided by Foucault that this paper will use as its main theoretical approach in the analysis.

Governmentality

It is foremost necessary to define the concept of Governmentality, as biopower is an extension hereof because it is a strategy within governmentality. Hence, governmentality is a concept which supplements the functioning of the theory of biopower.

Michel Foucault is seemingly the one who first coined the concept of governmentality. It is the neologism from what he originally called 'government rationality'. The study of governmentality was first introduced in Foucault's lectures between 1978 and 1979 (Burchell,

Gordon & Miller, 1991, p. 1). However, it is in the lecture by Foucault called 'Security, Territory, Population' (1977-1978) wherein he presents some very concrete definitions of the concept of governmentality, as he elaborates:

"First, by governmentality, I understand the ensemble formed by institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, calculations, and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific, albeit very complex, power that has the population as its target [...] and apparatuses of security as its essential technical instrument" (p. 108).

With this statement, it is the understanding of this paper that Foucault defines governmentality as being the art of governing, as different power instruments are used to regulate and thus control the population. Governmentality in the modern sense represents the development into an administrative state, which presents the power and ambition to manage and shape the behaviour, attitude, and conduct of the population. Foucault mentions 'apparatuses of security' as being a main component of Governmentality, which symbolises the technical instrument for the functioning of governmentality. These are seemingly the various instruments of surveillance and control, which are used to ensure the conduct of the population and therefore the desired governmentality.

What finally can be said about governmentality is that it only exists as the governed individuals are actively participating in their governance, thus accepting to follow the rationality of the government (governmentality). In other words, the governed only participate and accept their governance as the governmentality corresponds to their individual wants; thus, it can be said that governmentality is answerable to ethics (Burchell et al., 1991, p. 48) & (Foucault, 1977-1978, p. 108-110.). I believe that this is an important aspect, as governmentality then is a constant factor which is negotiated between the government and the governed.

Biopower

Michel Foucault has widely been recognized as being the first scholar to coin biopower. He first referred to it in his lectures at Collège de France in the late 1970s with his lecture 'The Birth of Biopolitics' (Foucault, 1978-1979). Foucault himself admits that he did astray from the original intention of the lecture, as he began exploring other areas than the study of biopower (p. 185). Foucault delivers more detailed verses of biopower in his work 'The

History of Sexuality: Volume 1' (1978), although the theory still isn't systematically developed, which creates room for interpretation. Nonetheless, the information which is derived from here is still sufficient to gain an acceptable understanding of biopower and what Foucault might have meant by this.

It is elaborated by Foucault that "[...]the ancient right to take life or let live was replaced by a power to foster life or disallow it[...]" (Foucault, 1978, p. 138). In other words, Foucault argues that modern society evolved into replacing the old power to kill with a newer power dimension which focused on the preventive aspect of regulation. It is the power to foster life or disallow it which presents the new form of power that is biopower. It is an argument from Foucault that death principally has been hindered by biopower, as society made rules against it. Thus, society has assigned itself the new and higher objective of administering life by preventing threatening aspects to it (p. 139). It is argued by Foucault that biopolitics seemingly gained momentum as new inventions were made to improve public health. As Foucault elaborates, techniques were presented for "achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations" (p. 140), which illustrates that biopower is deeply implanted in the framework of society. In retrospect, biopower in this regard might have suffered a spill-back in integration, as some societies conform to the governmentality of allowing their citizens to choose to end life (Schmitter & Lefkofridi, 2016, p. 3). This constitutes another interesting research question, however, this is sadly not the focus of this paper.

It can be said that biopower is a strategy of regulation which specifically seeks to influence and extend health and thereby the productivity of the population. For Foucault, this aspect presents that biopower is a positive form of power, as it intends to extend the durability and existence of an entity. It is seemingly the argument of Foucault that this biopolitical ambition developed through a historical process. Here life emerged as the object of political strategies, as it now was regulation which was the strongest power aspect of society (Foucault, 1978, p. 138).

Foucault elaborates that there exist two dimensions within biopower. The first dimension is the: "anatomy-politics of the human body" (Foucault, 1978, p. 139). This dimension focuses on direct individual regulation, which involves disciplinary techniques and mechanisms which target the physical body. This dimension of power is concerned with shaping and disciplining individual bodies to comply with societal norms and expectations. These norms and expectations of society are, as earlier elaborated, that the individual should be healthy and therefore productive (p. 139). The second dimension is the extension of the first, being the main principle in this paper, which introduces a shift in focus from the

individual to a broader societal perspective, thus, being the health of society. As it is elaborated by Foucault, individual supervision applied to society becomes the "regulatory controls: a bio-politics of the population" (p. 139). It is the introduction of biopolitics, which involves strategies and techniques intending to manage and administrate the health of a population thus society. Hence, it can be said that biopolitics is a strategy applied in governmentality which seeks to extend health and longevity then fostering a population that contributes to the stability and functioning of the same society.

It is said by Giorgio Agamben (1995) that: "Foucault's death kept him from showing how he would have developed the concept and study of biopolitics" (p. 4). On that account, it is essential to acknowledge that biopower still is in a state of development, as is seen by the definitions and comments provided by scholars such as Agamben and Robert Esposito (2004). However, this paper will focus on the Foucauldian definition and understanding of biopower and hereafter present its own moderations to the theory of biopower. Foucault's dimensions within biopower highlight the different levels at which power operates in society. It is the ambition of this paper to investigate biopolitics from a broader perspective, as it is the argument that the European Union conform to a new understanding of biopolitics.

It can be said that biopower holds a large influence in European governmentality already. Biopolitics is initiated in the many physical health regulations which is decided at European level. An example of this could, for example, be the various European restrictions on tobacco (European Commission 1, 2023). It is stated by the Commission that 650.000 Europeans die every year because of tobacco use, thus being one of the most dangerous threats to ill health for European citizens (European Commission 6, 2009). As such, the theory of biopower is foremost a strategy which subjectifies the biological embodiment of the individual. What this paper will attempt to argue still, is that the physical health aspect of biopolitics has been replaced with a reinforced focus on the health of the social body. It is conceivably the European prohibition of Russian media which have signified this new reinforced biopolitical dimension. This notion presents a correlation to the theory of securitization, which the next section will explore.

Securitization Theory - Ole Waeber

Ole Waeber provides a very essential theory for this paper, namely the securitization theory. It is elaborated by Waeber (1996) that:

"Security is a practice, a specific way of framing an issue. Security discourse

is characterized by dramatizing an issue as having absolute priority. Something is presented as an existential threat: if we do not tackle this, everything else will be irrelevant" (p. 106).

In other words, it can be argued that Waever defines security as being a discourse method by which a certain phenomenon is securitized. As such, the phenomenon which is securitized presents an existential threat to society, which allows society to conform to extraordinary decision-making and action. This is the essential understanding of Waever's securitization theory, as it principally is a speech act. Hence, it can be said that security necessarily isn't an inherent feature of certain events but rather a socially constructed concept. Thus, security issues are the result of discursive practices that frame them as existential threats to the continued functioning and hereby survival of society.

Important for the Waever's theory of securitization is the participation of the referent object being securitized. It is explained in more detail by Barry Buzan alongside Waever in their work "Security: A new framework for Analysis" (1998). Herein it is said that it is of most importance for a successful securitization that the presented threat gains enough resonance among the object of securitization (p. 25). To put it in another perspective, for the allowance of the state to invoke emergency measures, the population must grant the right to do so. If there is no acceptance among the population, it can only be categorised as a securitizing move – not that an object has successfully been securitized. That is exactly the distinction between a securitizing move and successful securitization. The referent object will only accept securitization if they agree with the presented existential threat, thus giving society extraordinary powers to solve the problem by any given means.

Securitization theory is a constellation which can reveal security constructions and how they are justified. Therefore, the theory can help to gain an understanding of when something transforms from being not a security matter to suddenly being securitized. This is an important aspect concerning how certain knowledge might have been securitized by the European Union. It is the ambition to prove this in the analysis, as securitization in connection with biopower can provide answers.

Empirical Section

This section will first present the empirical material regarding the current legislative framework of the European Union concerning European health policy, human rights and other freedoms. This will be explored by investigating the earlier and contemporary treaties which

include such relegated material. However, this will primarily be an investigation of the Lisbon Treaty from 2009 and the relegated Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Hereafter the empirical section will turn its focus to elaborate upon some selected crises in the European Union. It is necessary to investigate these crises as they each seemingly present an increased form of biopolitical integration, which then influences European governmentality. The biopolitical development from these events will be explored further in the analysis section of the paper. It is important to highlight that the empirical section only will elaborate upon some of the most recent crises within Europe since the creation of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009. This is to limit the scope of the paper, as to focus primarily on the recent development in European biopolitics, with the most recent development being the prohibition of Russian media signifying a new more reinforced biopolitical power. Therefore, the empirical section will also elaborate upon the prohibition in greater detail.

Before the empirical section can commence, I find it necessary to briefly elaborate upon the complexity of the European institutional framework. 1. The European Council is the main political institution of the European Union, which now encompasses 27 member nations that define the overall political direction of the EU. Here the leader of each nation is represented. 2. The Council of the European Union is one of the two institutions entrusted to the law-making process and part of the executive branch. It consists of one minister from every member nation and is part of the law-making process thus negotiation. 3. The European Parliament is the second part of the law-making process, as legislation here is debated and supervised. It consists of elected citizens from every member nation. 4. The Commission serves as the primary executive body of the European Union, which initiates the process of law-making and enforces laws and policies. Every member nation contributes with one commissioner who is bound to serve by oath to the general interest of the EU rather than their nation respectively (Citizens information, n.d.) & (Council of Europe 1, n.d.)

European legislative framework concerning health and free speech

The European Union is a construct which symbolises the creation of an institution which facilitates and develops European standards and rules. In other words, countries have agreed to establish a supranational institution where European legislation complements and sometimes overrules national legislation.

The first European legislative approach came with the Treaty of Paris in 1951, which established the European Coal and Steel Community alongside certain rules and procedures.

Hereafter came many other treaties and amendments, which eventually created the European Union as we know it today. Through these agreements, European integration was developed and advanced, as countries began accepting European standards in their national legislation. It is these agreements which serve as the legislative European framework, which enables the functioning and governmentality of the European Union (European Union 2, n.d.).

The latest European treaty to establish the current legislative framework of the European Union came with the creation of the Lisbon Treaty in 2007, which all 27 EU member countries signed and two years later ratified. The Lisbon Treaty amended the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and the Treaty Establishing the European Community (TEC), the latter also being renamed "The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). Thus, both treaties were included in the consolidated structure and text of the Lisbon Treaty (Jens-Peter Bonde, 2009, p. 3). It could therefore be said that the purpose, among others, was for the Lisbon Treaty to streamline and simplify the framework of the European institution (Ray, 2022).

When the Lisbon Treaty first proposed was proposed in 2007 most member states chose to ratify the treaty already in 2008. However, Ireland did not, as the country had held a referendum which rejected the treaty. This endangered the implementation of the treaty, as it had to be unanimously accepted among European countries. Although in 2009 Ireland held another referendum, which eventually saw the treaty becoming a reality. Poland and the Czech Republic were also hesitant to sign the treaty. Poland secured opt-outs on social issues, while the Czech Republic had to validate the treaty through its national court system to ensure that the treaty did not violate the country's constitution. Thus, in the end, all 27 member countries agreed to ratify the Lisbon Treaty, which came into force on the 1st of December 2009 (Ray, 2022).

With great importance for this paper, the Lisbon Treaty also includes the 'Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union' (Jens-Peter Bonde, 2009, p. 198). This charter was first proposed at the Council of Nice in 2000 but it first became legally binding with the entry of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 (Ray, 2022). Initially, a convention was created with the task of formulating the Charter, which was to be completed before the Council summit in Nice in 2000. This convention encompassed multiple layers, as many different actors were invited to have their influence on the treaty. It was the task of the former President of the Federal Republic of Germany to resolve the different wishes and in the end, make a draft which was acceptable for all European countries. This also explains the carefully selected wording used in the charter (Gerbet, 2016, p. 1). The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

is a document that confirms the fundamental values of European citizens. The Charter of Fundamental Rights in the European Union includes six chapters: 'Dignity', 'Freedoms', 'Equality', 'Solidarity', 'Citizen Rights' and 'Justice'. At the start of the charter, there exists a preamble which justifies the ambition of both Europe and the creation of the charter: "The peoples of Europe, in creating an ever-closer union among them, are resolved to share a peaceful future based on common values". In other words, it is the natural development of Europe which encourages further integration between European countries.

Within the Lisbon Treaty, there are two treaties which form the constitutional and functioning basis of the European Union. The first one being: 'The Treaty on the European Union' (TEU), which outlines the general principles and objectives of the EU, such as the establishment of a common foreign and security policy and the creation of the Euro currency (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, n.d.) The second one being: 'The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union', which includes the legal framework and rules for the functioning of the EU, such as the internal market, competition, environment, health etc (Jens-Peter Bonde, 2009, p. 50-51).

It is worth mentioning that European countries already prior had ratified two treaties which also attempted to outline European health and human rights. In 1950 European countries ratified the treaty 'Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms', which commonly is referred to as the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Furthermore, in 1975 European countries also ratified the 'Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe', which commonly is known as the Helsinki Final Act (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 1, 2023). However, both these treaties are not technically a part of the European legislative framework, as they are separate from the European institution.

The Helsinki Final Act is an international treaty which is related to the 'Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which is an intergovernmental organisation. Similarly, the ECHR treaty is also an international treaty, as it is related to the Council of Europe, which is a separate organisation from the EU institution (Liberty Human Rights, 2022) & (Gerbet, 2016, p. 1). It was seemingly a desire from the European institution to create its own legislation concerning human rights and public health policy which then could be incorporated into the European framework. Thus, it can be said that it partially was the ambition of the Lisbon Treaty to ensure human rights and public health for European citizens, as the legislation in the treaty would be legally binding to any European country.

The 2010 Debt Crisis in the EU

Around the year 2010 the European debt crisis emerged, which presented a severe financial reality for many European countries, thus threatening the stability of the Euro currency and by extension the Union itself. This crisis came in the aftermath of the global financial crisis of 2008, which eventually spread to financial institutions around the world. The basis of the crisis was that the framework of the European Union created a monetary union without a fiscal union, as member states could plan their own national budgets. It was here in 2010 revealed that this structure was grave mistake in European integration, as some countries had pursued irresponsible economic fiscal policies and now faced the consequence hereof. In short verses, these countries had been borrowing currency at a low rate for many years, as to supplement their national budget. When the 2008 global financial took effect, it inflicted severe economic damage on these countries. It suddenly became very expensive to borrow currency, as well as increasing already existing debt and the immediate demand for the debt to be repaid (Kenton, 2021).

The Euro is a shared currency, as many countries in the European Union have chosen to integrate a common monetary policy. This meant that the instability of the Euro in a few countries presented a greater instability to the general currency of the Euro. As such, it can be said that it was the Framework of the European banking system which was to blame for the crisis, as European integration had not yet considered the consequence which irresponsible fiscal policies could have on the entire monetary union (Kenton, 2021).

It was agreed that the European Union had to interfere to stabilize the affected economies, thus ensuring the overall stability of the Euro currency and by extension the European framework. Hence, new European institutions were created such as the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), which has the objective to: "overcome financial crises and to maintain long-term financial stability and prosperity" (European Stability Mechanism, 2016). In other words, the ambition of such institutions was to secure fiscal discipline among European countries and introduce economic reforms (European Commission 4, n.d.). Hence, it could be said that the Euro debt crisis created further integration in the European banking sector.

It is well known that the Euro debt crisis especially affected Greece, which at the time faced numerous economic challenges. For years Greece had underreported its worrisome economic budget deficit, which meant that the country now stood on the edge of economic default. It was demanded by the EU that countries such as Greece should follow certain

austerity measures to receive further European bailouts. If they chose not to, it would principally mean that there would be give no more bailout packages thus throwing the country into an economic wasteland. These bailout packages were foremost to repay the different banks which requested immediate action, many also being European banks. The austerity measures which were demanded were with the ambition to make Greek economy healthier in time, as it was to cut public spending and increase taxes. However, in 2015 Greece came onto a collision course with the European Union, as it elected a government opposed to further austerity measures and bailout packages (Traynor et al., 2015). Therefore, in 2015 the country considered leaving the European Monetary Union (EMU) entirely. Nonetheless, Greece remained a part of the EMU and slowly began to show signs of recovery (Kenton, 2021). The crisis transformed the governmentality of the European Union, as the European decision to demand further austerity measures from Greece was a sign of a biopolitical governmentality, which will be explored further in the analysis.

The 2015 Migration and Refugee Crisis in the EU

The Migration and Refugee Crisis that unfolded in 2015 presented a significant challenge to the European Union, as more than a million asylum seekers came to the European borders. The scale and intensity of the crisis put immense pressure on European countries, particularly those located along the Mediterranean routes and bordering conflict zones. The lack of a unified and coordinated response among European countries exacerbated the situation, leading to chaotic scenes at border crossings, overcrowded reception centres, and inadequate humanitarian assistance. This all stands clear in my memory at least, as it was presented as such in the media at the time (Ceresani, 2022).

It was the response of the European Union to strengthen the 'European Border and Coast Guard Agency', commonly known as Frontex. It had already existed since 2004 when it was established by the European Commission, as the expansion of the union seemingly required a new form of border control and security. It was during the worst years of the crisis between 2015-2016 that the agency was strengthened, as the Commission proposed an organisational restructure and further expansion (Ceresani, 2022).

It is stated by Frontex that it: "Together with the Member States, ensure safe and well-functioning external borders providing security" (Frontex, n.d.). In other words, the agency is involved with areas such as border management, surveillance, and control to prevent irregular migration and thus secure the external borders of the EU (Ceresani, 2022). Frontex is in close

cooperation with national authorities on these matters and also coordinates joint operations, deploys personnel and equipment, and provides technical assistance to member states in managing border crossings and handling migration flows. Frontex's role is therefore not only to protect borders but also to ensure the process, identification, and differentiation of migrants, as well as the providing humanitarian assistance and protection for those in need. As a final remark, it is elaborated that Frontex was "The European Union's first uniformed law enforcement service, (which) [...] has transformed into an operational arm of the EU" (Frontex, n.d.). With the re-launch of Frontex, the EU attempted to address the challenges posed by the migration crisis. As such, it can be said that the reorganisation of Frontex furthered European biopolitics, as Frontex symbolised a new form of protection for the 'health' of the European society. This will be explored further in the analysis as well.

The 2020 Covid-19 Crisis in the EU

This crisis signifies a very concrete biopolitical development, as European health policies were integrated to new extents. It is difficult to fully grasp the full picture of this crisis, nonetheless, this section will attempt to elaborate upon some of the most relevant observations which will be further elaborated on in the analysis.

The Covid-19 pandemic introduced the European Union to a new form of crisis. It posed many challenges for the European construct, while on the other hand, it could be said that it also enabled further integration into European public health. In response to the crisis, the European Union introduced several measures to address the many challenges which came with it. It was agreed at the European Council that there would be four priorities as a response to the Covid-19 crisis: 1, "limiting the spread of the virus". 2, "ensuring the provision of medical equipment". 3, "promoting research for treatments and vaccines". 4, supporting jobs, businesses, and the economy" (European Council 1, 2023). As the Covid-19 outbreak took effect in Europe, it was agreed between European countries in March 2020 to coordinate restrictions on travel. This wasn't a decision which was imposed by the EU - but guidelines and strong advice were facilitated by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), seemingly with the hope of temporarily restricting European travelling (European Council 2, 2023). Most notably, it was agreed at the Council and Parliament to create a digital Covid-19 certificate. This would have the objective to confirm the status of European health, by proving vaccination, negative test result or earlier contraction of the disease. This is still in effect lasting until the 30th of June 2023 (European Council 1, 2023).

Another significant development in the integration of European health policy came with the cooperation concerning the distribution of vaccines, where a joint distribution initiative was launched. With this strategy, the European Commission negotiated through and with the power of the European single market, thus securing contracts with vaccine manufacturers on behalf of European countries. Regular meetings were held among the EU leaders and health ministers, concerning the sharing of information and coordination on vaccines (Deutsch & Wheaton, 2021). It's important to note that the response to the Covid-19 crisis varied greatly among European countries, reflecting the diversity of national healthcare systems and policy approaches. However, the task of the European Union to provide coordination, support, and facilitate cooperation was enlarged on a massive scale, as many new health initiatives and decisions were suggested and regulated at a European level.

The 2022 Ukraine Crisis – The prohibition of Russian media in the EU

The invasion of Ukraine started on the 24th of February 2022 when Russia ordered its troops to cross the Ukrainian border. Yet, the origin of the conflict can be traced back to early 2014. At the time there were large protests in Ukraine against the country's president Viktor Yanukovych. He had rejected a proposal for deeper economic integration with Europe, which angered much of the Ukrainian population, as this signified the choice to grow closer relations with Russia. As the protests escalated, Yanukovych chose to leave the country in February 2014 and a new pro-EU government was elected. Only a month after, Russia decided to take control of the Ukrainian Crimea region. It was argued by Russian President Vladimir Putin that the invasion was launched to protect the minority of Russians in the territory. Hereafter a referendum was launched in the Crimea region on whether it wanted to be a part of the Russian Federation. It was a majority who voted for it, although the voting process wasn't recognised by many countries. This meant that the region now technically was Russian territory, at least from a Russian perspective. More unofficial referendums were held in various parts of Ukraine, which also sparked more hostility between the two countries (Center for Preventive Action, 2022).

As the invasion in 2022 was launched, the conflict was quickly denounced by many countries and officials around the world, although with various measures. The European Union provided a swift answer already on the 27th of February. Here President Ursula von der Leyen held a speech which illustrated European support for Ukraine, as many sanctions

were presented against the Russian regime. Among these sanctions was the decision to prohibit certain Russian media outlets, as well as their subsidiaries in other languages:

"[...] in another unprecedented step, we will ban in the EU the Kremlin's media machine. The state-owned Russia Today and Sputnik [...] will no longer be able to spread their lies to justify Putin's war and to sow division in our Union. So we are developing tools to ban their toxic and harmful disinformation in Europe" (European Commission 2, 2022).

Following this statement, it was decided by the Council of the European Union on March 1st 2022 to adopt Council Regulation 2022/350 and Council decision 2022/351. In short verses, the difference between the two is that an EU regulation is a binding legal act that is directly applicable and enforceable in all member states, while an EU decision is a binding act that may be addressed to specific addressees or member states and is not generally applicable (European Union 4, n.d.). Throughout the paper, it will be the Council Regulation 2022/350 which will be referred to as the law which officially enacted the European prohibition of Russian media (Council Regulation 2022/350, 2022, p. 1) & (Council Decision 2022/351, n.d.)

Council Regulation 2022/350 amended the earlier Regulation 833/2014, which originated from the Crimea crisis and was first adopted in July 2014. In other words, Regulation 2022/350 therefore added extra paragraphs with new sanctions in an already existing regulation which in the first place was created to sanction Russia (Council Regulation 2022/350, 2022, p. 2).

With the Council Regulation 2022/350 and Council decision 2022/351, the Council followed Article 29 of 'The Treaty of the European Union' (TEU). Herein the Council decided to adopt sanctions, as it is stated that the European Union can impose restrictive measures against non-EU countries or individuals. Furthermore, the Council followed Article 215 of 'The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union' (TFEU), which was the concrete implementation of the regulation. Herein it is the more technical aspect of sanctions by import/export restrictions which are implemented (Javier Cabrera Blázquez, 2022.) & (EU Law 1 - Article 29, n.d.).

It is stated in Regulation 2022/350 (2022) that Article 2f would be inserted into the original Regulation 833/2014 just after Article 2e (p. 2), thus amending the original law text.

Article 2f is of the most importance, as this is the concrete wording which presents the prohibition of Russian media outlets:

Article 2f.

1. "It shall be prohibited for operators to broadcast or to enable, facilitate or otherwise contribute to broadcast, any content by the legal persons, entities or bodies listed in Annex XV, including through transmission or distribution by any means such as cable, satellite, IP-TV, internet service providers, internet video-sharing platforms or applications, whether new or pre-installed." (Council Regulation 2022/350, 2022, p. 3).
2. "Any broadcasting licence or authorisation, transmission and distribution arrangement with the legal persons, entities or bodies listed in Annex XV shall be suspended" (Council Regulation 2022/350, 2022, p. 3).

As can be seen in the Regulation 2022/350 from Annex XV (2022, p.4), it is the following media outlets that are referred to: RT-Russia Today English, RT-Russia Today UK, RT-Russia Today Germany, RT-Russia Today France, RT-Russia Today Spanish & Sputnik (Council Regulation 2022/350, 2022) & (Javier Cabrera Blázquez, 2022). Furthermore, on June 6th 2022 another three media outlets were added to the European list of prohibited media. These three were Rossiya RTR/RTR Planeta, Rossiya 24/Russia 24, and TV Centre International (Fathaigh, 2022).

Analysis

This section will foremost analyse how biopower is in connection with knowledge and how the prohibition of Russian media signifies a new dimension within European biopolitical governmentality. Thereafter the analysis will explore the empirical findings and attempt to prove that these crises constitute the foundation for increased biopolitics in European governmentality.

As earlier said in the paper, Foucault only elaborated upon biopower in short verses. Therefore, it is the ambition that this section can further develop the theory of biopower by presenting new perspectives on it. It is the objective of the analysis to investigate and validate the argument that European governmentality has reinforced a new form of biopolitics. The conclusion will be the section to provide a definitive answer to this question.

Knowledge functioning as of biopower & the securitization of knowledge

It is said by Foucault (1984) that the production of knowledge and by extension the truth is very intertwined with power dynamics (p. 72-73). In other words, it could be said that it is the production and dissemination of knowledge regarding certain phenomena which constitutes the process of governmentality through the strategy of biopower, namely, to influence and manage the health of the population and society. Thus, it is essential to recognize that knowledge and biopower are very interconnected, as knowledge serves as the key instrument by which biopower is exercised and a truth is established for society. This is also what Foucault (1984) elaborates, as he argues that knowledge and by extension the truth is a construct made by society:

"Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its "general politics" of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true." (p.72-73).

What Foucault here elaborates, being very important for the understanding of this paper, is that all societies produce its own 'regime of truth'. To put it in another perspective, it is the constraints of society that define the acceptable discourse, procedures, and mechanisms of establishing truth. Hence, truth is not an abstract or objective entity but rather it is actively produced and maintained through various forms of power and control. Each society thereby has its truth in the forms of which practices and discourse it accepts, determining what is considered true or false within a particular social order. In other words, power operates through the regulation and control of knowledge which defines what is acceptable as truth, according to Foucault. An example of this could, for example, be the European restriction on the accessibility to tobacco (European Commission 1, 2023). Here it could be said that European Governmentality creates a regime of truth, as it disallows certain forms of discourse and material. This rationality is accepted by society as it speaks to the common sense and most individual wants of European citizens, thus being a successful form of governmentality.

It is a perspective with the decision to prohibit Russian media outlets, as the European Union again creates a regime of truth by disallowing a certain form of accessibility. The rationale also speaks to the common sense of the European society, being justified by the European president Ursula Von der Leyen, as explored in the empirical section. Herein it is said that the reason for the prohibition is that Russian media "spread lies" and are "harmful" (European Commission 2, 2022). The exact justification is also elaborated further in the concrete Regulation 2022/350 under Article 8:

"Those propaganda actions have been channelled through a number of media outlets under the permanent direct or indirect control of the leadership of the Russian Federation. Such actions constitute a significant and direct threat to the Union's public order and security" (Council Regulation 2022/350, 2022).

With this statement and the prior statement from Von der Leyen, this paper argues that Russian media have been securitized. This because Russian media is presented as a fundamental threat to the stability of European society. This argument can be furthered, as the Russian media outlets therefore is a threat to the social health of European society. In other words, the European Union is anxious of how Russian influence through media will affect the social health of European society, as "disinformation" can cause havoc in European society (European Commission 2, 2022). There are many definitions to the concept of disinformation, therefore it is also seemingly a vague expression in the eyes of this paper. If one were to include a short definition to disinformation, it constitutes the spread of false information which, contrary to misinformation, is knowingly and intentionally spread (Dictionary, 2022). However, this concept can technically be applied to any media outlet, as in accordance with the arguments by Chomsky earlier explored in the paper (Chomsky, 1994). Therefore, this paper will not investigate misinformation or disinformation to any larger extent, as the paper finds this argument invalid. Instead, it would be much more interesting to speculate if European governmentality have initiated this prohibition as it is afraid to lose the narrative of the war. However, the focal point within this paper is to define the process of European governmentality, through the method of securitization, which have enabled and reinforced the biopolitical strategy of prohibiting media. This conceivably signifies an extensive transition in European governmentality.

In Regulation 2022/350 (2022) it is stated under Article 4 that: "Russia is grossly violating international law and [...] undermining European and Global security and stability"

(p. 1). This confirms a securitization discourse method where Russian influence is securitized, thereby technically all its affairs including its media outlets. European society seemingly participates and accepts the European governmentality to sanction Russia by all means necessary. The reason for this is exactly to be found in how Russian media discursively is presented as a threat to the stability, thus social health, of European society. This allows European governmentality to conform to all measures which it deems necessary to solve this existential crisis. As such, in reference to the arguments from Waever, Russia have been securitized in many aspects, thus revealing the factor which allows the entrance of a reinforced European biopolitical governance strategy.

It was explored in the theoretical section that biopower often has been associated with the regulation of physical health. This is seen with the various regulations which the European Union have introduced on wares that are deemed harmful to the physical health of European society, such as tobacco explored earlier in the paper. This biopolitical strategy is therefore an example of how biopolitics indeed is a strategy which aims to extend life, even though it restricts individual freedom. Biopower in this sense can be very useful for society, as it optimises the endurance and life expectancy of the population. To that extent, biopolitics must be recognised as a useful and positive strategy within governmentality in many aspects. That being said, this paper still disputes European biopolitical governmentality, as it is contested that it has transitioned into a new phase.

It is stated in the Lisbon Treaty under the paragraph regarding Public Health that: “Union action [...] shall complement national policies [...] towards improving public health, preventing physical and mental illness and diseases, and obviating sources of danger to the physical and mental health” (p. 121). Hence, it is already written into the Lisbon Treaty that the European Union caretakes the prevention of dangers to European health. Although, it is the argument of the paper that the caretaking and prevention of danger to European health have surpassed its original meaning. Knowledge is now regarded by European governmentality as being a primary part for the continued health of European society, therefore indifferent knowledge can constitute a threat to the social health of European society. As such, European governmentality have assigned itself the biopolitical objective, through securitization, as to defend the health of the social body and prevent any dangers to it.

In this sense, it can be said that European governmentality creates its own regime of truth, as certain knowledge is securitized therefore being a threat to the social health of European society. In other words, social health has become a construction of European governmentality which principally predefines a truth for the European society. The prohibition

of any media is arguably an attempt to gain control of the output and construction of knowledge and determine a truth. Hence, might it even be argued that the European governmentality to some extent introduces the acceptance of censorship? Knowledge and truth are constantly shaped, reinforced and redefined through the different state apparatuses of the European Union. Therefore, truth is notably something which never can be fully discovered, as the truth, in reality, is constituted as being somewhat artificially constructed by society. This is elaborated by Foucault: "[...] it's not a matter of a battle 'on behalf' of the truth, but of a battle about the status of the truth [...]" (Foucault, 1972-1977).

European governmentality foremost confirmed the truth that tobacco is a physical health risk for European society. Now European governmentality confirms that certain knowledge is a threat to social health of European society. Herein lies the complexity of biopolitical justification, namely that both regulations have been introduced by an identical biopolitical governmentality. To put it in another perspective, the justification for introducing the prohibition on Russian media is first and foremost the same as the justification to regulate tobacco. Both policies present a bio-political justification in which limitations are introduced to protect the health of European society. However, it is the argument of this paper that the decision to restrict knowledge presents far greater complexity than restrictions on physical health. Thus, it is important to distinguish the paradox in enforcing these different biopolitics, as there is a major fundamental different in tobacco regulation compared to knowledge restriction. This notion will be further explored throughout the analysis.

The production of knowledge constitutes the basis for the establishment of truth. When European society is restricted in the accessibility to knowledge it then interrupts and influence the truth. In this regard, it might be said that the truth has been somewhat collectivised and standardized by the European Union, which now demands that European society conform to its regime of truth. This presents a severe paradox within liberal governmentality. It is elaborated by Kurt Iverson & Joe Painter that: "liberalism asserts the sovereignty of the free individual, yet government requires that individual behaviour be regulated and modified" (as cited in Jeremy, 2007). European and national legislation contain the many principles of liberalism, for all that, might these principles have been disregarded by European governmentality in the decision to protect the health of European society? Further, the acceptance of this governmentality might also confirm that the liberal principles also have been disregarded by European society.

In this sense, it is interesting to observe the argument by Foucault (1978) that: "Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a

position of exteriority in relation to power" (p. 95). One might therefore ask the question of how biopolitics has been reinforced in European governmentality, seemingly without more resistance from European society? It seems strange that a limitation on the liberal principles can be accepted by European society, as it principally is a breach of the Charter of Fundamental Values of the European Union, which also will be explored later in the analysis. It can be concluded that the answer to this lies within the discursive securitization applied in European governmentality.

It is the argument in European governmentality that certain knowledge poses a threat to the social health of European society. However, this paper will contest this logic. Instead, the continuous thriving of European social health will only exist if European society is allowed to construct a somewhat individual truth. To do so, it is essential that European society have accessibility to all knowledge, as to collect the many perspectives there are to form a nuanced truth. This is exactly the highest form of social health which society can establish, in the eyes of this paper. So even though the prohibition of Russian media is justified to protect social health of European society, it is the argument that the prohibition instead degrades and damages the general health of European society.

Accelerated biopolitics through crises & European integration

This section will foremost investigate how biopolitics have accelerated in European governmentality because of recent crises. In this sense, it is important to analyse how European integration have transformed into allowing an increased European biopolitical governmentality. It is the argument that recent different crises have furthered a biopolitical integration concerning European public health and principally created the foundation for the contemporary reinforced biopolitical governmentality.

The creation of the European Union marked a new era that furthered European integration and therefore presented a new governmentality. Many new policy areas were incorporated into the institutional framework, as explored earlier in the paper. This increased integration in all areas can be observed in the Lisbon Treaty, where the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union also was enacted (Jens-Peter Bonde, 2009, p. 121) It could be argued that the predecessor to the European Union, namely the European Coal and Steel Community (ECS), served as the first example of integration according to a neo-functional construct. The later development into the European Union was seemingly more of a neoliberal construct, however shaped by a process referring to neo-functionalism. Both

these integration theories can help to understand the development and functioning of the European Union.

Neo-functionalism takes the approach that regional integration is driven by the so-called spill-over effect, where integration in one area leads to increased integration in other areas, creating a cycle of deeper integration. Neo-functionalism also emphasizes the role of supranational institutions and multi-level governance (Troitiño & Chochia, 2012, p. 4-7).

Neo-liberalism foremost emphasizes limited government intervention and the general belief that economic freedom will serve as the basis for greater economic and social progress. It therefore strictly conforms to non-interference and that concentration of power should be centred with expertise individuals or organisations, therefore holding the general public unaccountable for interference with matters such as economy, especially as the free market is an essential notion for neo-liberalism (Taylor, 2016) & (Manning, 2022).

Foremost, the process of developing into the European Union could be explained by a neo-functionalist approach, as the spill-over effect presented an increased integration from one area to many other areas. Supranational institutions such as the European Commission were created and now symbolised the ambition to promote and advance the integration progress. Especially the spill-over effect can reveal the development in European governmentality, as health policy was an area which became deeper integrated over time. Therefore, the spill-over effect also holds responsibility for an increased biopolitical governmentality (Troitiño & Chochia, 2012, p. 4-7).

At the same time, the neoliberal approach also accounts for the development into the European Union and what it now symbolises. The creation of the European Single market is an example of this, which signifies economic freedom. Furthermore, the delegation of power to European institutions signified a change likeminded to neoliberalism, as elites now could engage in “decision-making beyond national scale” (Taylor, 2016).

According to neo-functionalism, deeper integration will occur because social interest demands it, as the benefits for society can be increased. However very important according to neo-functionalism is that integration will create problems which only can be solved by introducing even deeper integration (p. 6). As such, the spill-over effect symbolises a cycle of never-ending integration, as integration constantly will occur to amend the problems it creates. From a European perspective, it can be argued that the integration transition from the EEC to the EU happened as the spill-over effect presented new policy areas which would be beneficial for cooperation and amend problems which European integration already had created (Troitiño & Chochia, 2012, p. 7). However, it can be argued that European institutions are the

elites which conform to taking decisions on behalf of the public. The European Central bank (ECB) conforms to the ideas of neoliberalism, as it principally is an independent authority which decides on monetary policy on behalf of the European society. It can therefore be said that the European institution is a construct which should ensure non-interference from the public, as the ECB is an elected institution independent of democratic decision making. Thus, the creation of the European Union is conceivably an example of both neo-functionalism and neo-liberalism in the eyes of this paper (Troitiño & Chochia, 2012 p. 3) & (Manning, 2022).

It is the argument of this paper that integration is somewhat accelerated because of crises. It can be said that the following crisis which will be explored pressured for a more immediate integration, as new institutions were created or strengthened with almost immediate effect, being a supplement to the spill-over effect. To this, there exists a clear reference to securitization, as a phenomenon discursively is presented as a crisis. It enables European governmentality to enact extraordinary decision-making and in these crises furthering a biopolitical governmentality to different extents. Hence, it could be argued that European societies accepted biopolitics as to solve these crisis immediately by all means necessary, as the crisis was discursively securitized by the European Union.

An example of this can be seen with the Euro debt crisis in 2010, which is explored in the empirical section. Foremost, the creation of the Euro currency was a primary example of European integration. However, the already existing integration regarding monetary policy was revealed to have flaws, as the crisis struck in 2010. Therefore, further integration occurred, as to supplement the flaws which were not amended by earlier integration, in accordance with the spill-over effect from neo-functionalism. New institutions were created which demanded more cooperation on monetary policy and disciplining of fiscal policy. As explored earlier, the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) was a result of this alongside other institutions such as the Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM) (European Commission 4, n.d.) & (European Stability Mechanism, 2016). To summarize, the spill-over effect from neo-functionalism served as a primary facilitator in furthering European integration.

Greece proved a somewhat contradiction to the spill-over effect. When further austerity measures were demanded on Greece, the country chose to elect a government opposed to further EU influence and austerity. As explore in the empirical section, the possibility of Greece leaving the EMU entirely came to question. This contrasted with the spill-over effect, which instead symbolised a spill-back effect, as integration now was threatened because a member state rejected to “deal with a policy at the supranational level” (Schmitter & Lefkofridi, 2016, p. 3). In the end Greece chose to conform to the demanded austerity

measures, as to avoid “humanitarian and fiscal disaster” (Daley & Kanter, 2015). Herein lies the advancement of European biopolitics, or at least the revealment of a European biopolitical strategy. The threat from the European Union to refuse further bailouts was an attempt to force Greece to accept austerity measures. Because if Greece would leave the EMU, it would threaten the stability and social health of European society. Therefore, it is a development in European biopolitics, as European governmentality prioritised the health of the general European society over a single member country. In other words, it was the biopolitical reasoning from the European Union that either you are with us, or you are against us (Daley & Kanter, 2015)

The migration and refugee crisis in 2015, explored in the empirical section, is another example of advancements in European biopolitics. It could be said that the crisis furthered European biopolitics with the expansion of the European institution Frontex. This institution was immediately strengthened and further integrated into the framework of the European Union, ensuring the effort on border control and immigration management. Frontex conform to the development of a biopolitical approach, as the organisation caretake the social health of European society per se by ensuring the stability of European borders. In concrete terms, the institution is involved with the governance of migration and border control, as it combines surveillance and risk assessment to regulate migration flow and thus security. Therefore, the migration crisis also was securitized, as migration proved a threat to the social health of European society. In other words, European governmentality conducts a biopolitical strategy through Frontex, as the institution manage the social health of European society by excluding indifferent entities from outside the European Union. In this regard, it might be said that the migration crisis created a greater biopolitical focus on protecting the internal social health of the European society.

The Corona crisis in 2020, explored in the empirical section, provides the most concrete examples of an increased biopolitical development. Although many of the health initiatives were enacted by national law, it was facilitated by the European Union with strong recommendations. During the crisis years, European societies integrated various health policies with European recommendation. Most notably it was agreed to create a European digital covid certificate. This is a clear example of an increased biopolitical governmentality, as the management of the population's health had reached a new digital era. The health of European society was now under surveillance and monitored regularly, which complies to the very principles of biopower. It might be said that the creation of the certificate marked a new transition in the participation of European citizens in their governance. The certificate was

hastily adopted seemingly without much critique, which reinforced the general acceptance of biopolitical governmentality not only in Europe but in many other parts of the world too. This because the rationality of enforcing the certificate was presented as a solution to the crisis (European Council 1, 2023) & (European Council 2, 2023). As a result of the corona crisis, the European Union also launched Regulation 2021/522 which established the EU4 Health Programme lasting from 2021 until 2027. The programme has a budget of approximately 5 billion euros and aims to "boost the EU's preparedness for major cross-border health threats" with various measures and instruments. One of these measures is the "increased surveillance of health threats", which confirms an increased development in European biopolitics (EU law 2 - Public Health, n.d.). This paper agrees that many of these instruments proved efficient to solve the corona crisis, however, it is the argument that these instruments created the foundation for further integration concerning health policy and hereof development in European biopolitical governmentality.

It is interesting to observe how European society have responded to the crisis management of European governmentality. It is clear that the 2022 Ukraine crisis has had the latest impact. As was stated by Von der Leyen, Europe show an unwavering support for Ukraine in all aspects (European Commission 2, 2022). With the latest Eurobarometer survey, it was revealed that European society indeed reaffirms European governmentality, as numbers indicate a general satisfaction and agreement with European governmentality. What is striking in this survey is that astonishing 67 percent of European citizens support the prohibition of Russian media (European Union 3, n.d.). Therefore, it is principally 67 percent who accept a diminishment on their liberal rights.

There are also examples of people opposing and questioning this prohibition and governmentality. Many articles investigate this notion; however, it is most interesting observe the critical question directed to the Minister of Justice at the Danish parliament. A question was raised by an opposing political party concerning the prohibition of Russian media. This question concerned the specific Council decision 2022/351 and Council Regulation 2022/350, both of which are elaborated further in the empirical section. The question sought to investigate how the Minister of Justice would justify the Council's regulation. In specifics, it was asked whether or not the regulation was in accordance with the Danish Constitutional Article 77, and if the European institution even have the competency to decide on such matters (Folketinget Retsudvalget, 2022).

The Danish Constitutional Article 77 states:

"Any person shall be at liberty to publish his ideas in print, in writing, and in speech, subject to his being held responsible in a court of law. Censorship and other preventive measures shall never again be introduced" (Constitution of Denmark, Lexnet, n.d.)

In the end, the answer from the Justice Minister concluded that the European Council regulation/decision does not conflict with the Danish constitution. However, with the evidence presented by this paper, it could be argued that the prohibition principally does conflict with both European and Danish legislation.

Violations to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

The following section will investigate the principal violations to the Lisbon Treaty, primarily concerning the articles presented in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. It is the ambition that this section can identify and comment upon contradictions in the context of how the prohibition of Russian media conflicts with certain articles. As such, this section will attempt to showcase that the liberal values within the Lisbon Charter principally have been disregarded.

It is important to note that the legal justification from the European Union for the prohibition is justified in the 'propaganda for war' law article under Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). It is an international treaty and not part of the European framework, although with all European member states having ratified the treaty (with some reservations), it binds the European Union. Thus, with the enactment of the ICCPR, it is prohibited by European law to advocate for war and supporting it, which then is the exact European justification for the prohibition of Russian media (Baade, 2022). However, in this regard it could be argued that the propaganda for war article is quite inadequate. What actually constitutes propaganda for war? It might be said that the European Union also initiates in propaganda for war, as it deliberately promotes its efforts in supporting the Ukraine war effort by supplying tanks and ammunition (European Parliament 2, 2023). Anyhow, the enactment of ICCPR justifies the bypassing of any legislative hinderance in the Lisbon Treaty. However, this paper will still commence its investigation on the principal violations to the Lisbon Treaty.

As explored in the empirical framework, the Lisbon Treaty combined multiple treaties to form one new and seemingly more simplified treaty. Herein are to be found many articles

which establish the many rights in European society. First being important for this paper is the section on Public Health in the European Union (Jens-Peter Bonde, 2009, p. 121). In this section in Article 1 is one of the fundamental questions which this paper investigates:

"Union action [...] shall complement national policies [...] towards improving public health, preventing physical and mental illness and diseases, and obviating sources of danger to the physical and mental health" (p. 121).

This statement elaborates that European governmentality caretakes both the policy areas of physical and mental health, with the intention of preventing illness and sources of danger to them. As such, this statement confirms the appliance of a biopolitical governmentality. Furthermore, it is stated that European governmentality will monitor public health (p. 122) which also conforms to the principles of biopower. Monitoring is therefore a specific instrument by which European governmentality evaluates health threats, thereby even deciding on potential future health threats before they occur. As such, it has been decided by European governmentality that indifferent knowledge now constitute such a threat to the social health of European society.

With the aforementioned section, it can be said that Lisbon Treaty confirms a European 'health identity', as certain health policies and values are agreed upon between the European nations. However, in the principles section of the Lisbon Treaty, it is highlighted in Article 4 that the European Union must share the competence of caretaking safety concerns regarding public health with its member countries (Jens-Peter Bonde, 2009, p. 52). With this being one of the main principles of the treaty, it is clearly defined that the European Union does not fully decide on public health in national legislation. Rather, it is confirmed in the principles section in Article 6 that the European Union only can: "carry out actions to support, coordinate or supplement [...] the protection and improvement of human health" (p. 52). What can be understood from these two principles is that the European Union is meant as a supportive institution on the area of health policy. However, this definition could be contested in contemporary time, as European governmentality concerning health seemingly has developed.

Moving further into the Lisbon Treaty there are to be found the crucial paragraphs concerning the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (p. 198). The first section concerns Human dignity. Herein it is stated in Article 3.1: "Everyone has the right to respect for his or her physical and mental integrity" (p. 199). It could be argued that this no longer is the case. With the prohibition of Russian media, this paper holds the opinion that

European governmentality no longer respects individual mental integrity. Instead, European governmentality conform to creating its own regime of truth, thereby establishing a restricted and controlled European mental integrity. As such, it could be said that European society has been released from the responsibility of differencing between falsehood and truth, as European society no longer is entrusted to caretake its own social health. Instead, European governmentality decides what knowledge is best for European society, also in reference to neoliberalism, as experts (the EU) shield the dangers of indifferent knowledge to the popular accountability (Taylor, 2016). In section two under Freedom in Articles 10 & 11 there exist the most important notions which this paper argue is violated. These two articles hold the highest importance in the charter for the context of this paper.

Article 10,1:

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right includes freedom to change religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or in private, to manifest religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance (p. 200).

It can be argued that it is no longer possible for the European society to exercise freedom of thought. This is because European society no longer has the free accessibility to the elements by which knowledge is collected and truth is produced. Therefore, it is impossible to have freedom of thought, as knowledge and truth principally are produced and predecided by European governmentality.

Article 11,1:

"Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers" (p. 200).

Article 11,2:

"The freedom and pluralism of the media shall be respected" (p. 200).

To these articles it can be said that European society have become restricted in freedom of expression, as there now is a restriction to form an independent free opinion. This is because European governmentality interferes with the process of obtaining an opinion, meaning that

the opinion no longer is fully free. Thus, it is notably European governmentality which somewhat creates an opinion for the European society, as it is decided beforehand by the very same institution which knowledge should be perceived as acceptable. When certain knowledge institutions, in this case media outlets, have been restricted, it also hinders the impart of information. Thus, Article 11,2 also is violated, as the freedom and pluralism of media is disregarded. Moving forward to the next section, which concerns equality. Article 21 presents some very relevant perspectives on non-discrimination:

21,1: "Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited" (p. 202).

This paper argues that the prohibition of Russian media could be seen as a discrimination based on political beliefs. The prohibition of any selected media could principally be categorised as such. Because according to Chomsky, as earlier elaborated in the introduction, all media is biased to some extent. If that is the case, there is no ideal argument nor justification for prohibiting any media outlets. As is said by Von der Leyen in her speech from March 1st, the prohibition of Russian media is also based on the argument that the media outlets are "state-owned" by Russia, therefore also being a discrimination based on political belief. (European Commission 2, 2022). As a final remark, it is essential to investigate the fourth section which concerning solidarity. Herein it is stated in Article 35 that:

35: "Everyone has the right of access to preventive health care and the right to benefit from medical treatment under the conditions established by national laws and practices. A high level of human health protection shall be ensured in the definition and implementation of all Union policies and activities" (Jens-Peter Bonde, 2009, p. 204).

This Article arguably confirms a biopolitical governmentality in the European Union. Preventive health care is a right in European society; although, preventive health care has come to constitute a much more complex understanding. It now symbolises a new form as European governmentality now seeks to protect the social health of European society by regulating and restricting the knowledge it has access to. In other words, it is the ambition that the prohibition of Russian media will ensure a high level of social health and protection in

European society. However, in reality the prohibition is a paradox, as the decision diminishes the liberal rights which the very same charter ensures. Although, it can be argued that the European Union is a construct which symbolises a delegation of power to a higher authority, thus being a construct in the sense of neo-liberalism. The prohibition of Russian media might be a violation on the Charter; however, it can be argued that the prohibition still aligns with the core principles of the European institution. This because the European Union is an elected institution to caretake and decide on the main principles of the EU. As such, the European institution might always have conformed to a neo-liberal governmentality, which principally decides on the key principles for European society continuously (Taylor, 2016).

Conclusion

The paper recognises the Foucauldian argument concerning a shift in power dynamics and thereby a change in the technique of modern governmentality. The old governmentality concerning the power to take life or let live, often through punishment or execution, was in time replaced with the more modern governmentality of biopower.

European governmentality has always conformed to a biopolitical strategy, starting with the aspect of physical health. European health policy was then developed and extended, as the spill-over effect created new areas of integration within European health policy. This can be seen with the Lisbon Treaty, as it included the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. There have been introduced many regulations to prevent concrete physical actions which would prove ill-health of European society, such as the use of tobacco. However, this paper concludes that European governmentality now regard the health of the social body as being a primary factor within European public health.

Biopower is a preventive governmentality strategy, which encompasses mechanisms aimed at managing society and populations through disciplinary techniques. In other words, biopower goes beyond the simple act of eliminating those who do not conform. Instead, it seeks to shape and manage life in ways that align with certain societal goals and objectives such as a productive population and legitimate governance. Thus, biopolitics is a strategy which caretakes the social health of society. As such, European biopolitical governmentality accommodates to creating its own regime of truth, while excluding knowledge which is deemed indifferent to the social health of European society.

Securitization is a discourse method which justifies and allows an increased advancement in biopolitics. To put it in another perspective, the securitization of Russian media enabled the acceptance in European society to prohibit Russian media. This reinforced

European governmentality now defined knowledge as being the most important factor for the social health of European society. It is also important to conclude that securitization enabled a more extensive developing of biopolitics in times of crisis. As crises were securitized, it allowed European society to adopt new discourses and extraordinary measures to solve the crises, which then advanced European biopolitical governmentality to different extents. It is important to understand that biopolitics and securitization both complement each other, as the two are very interconnected in the context of this paper. To summarize, biopolitics is a European governmentality strategy with the ambition to extend and preserve the health of European society, whereas securitization is a discourse method used in European governmentality which justifies and supplements the biopolitical strategy.

The ideal proof and escalation of European biopolitics came with the recent prohibition of Russian media, which has reinforced a new way of understanding contemporary European biopolitical governmentality. The securitization of Russian media signified that Russian influence and knowledge posed a threat to the well-being and thereby social health of European society. Thus, securitization allowed European governmentality to extend its biopolitical strategy to protect the social health of European society by all means necessary. This presents a new form of biopolitics which shows a worrisome prospect. European governmentality now creates its own regime of truth, as it decides on what knowledge is perceived as correct with the ambition to ensure the social health of European society. However, it becomes clear that this presents a paradox within European liberal governmentality, as the restriction on free speech is a violation on the Lisbon Treaty, especially violating articles within the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

This paper will conclude that European governmentality indeed has reinforced a new biopolitical reality, which principally violates its own liberal values. However, European society partake in the rationality of their governance and most care little for the liberal paradox within European governmentality, as is seen with the Eurobarometer survey. Contemporary European governmentality is able to violate its own liberal principles as securitization have enabled extraordinary biopolitical decisions with the promised ambition to protect the social health of European society. Therefore, European governmentality goes against its own liberal values, as it regards the stability and social health of European society as being more important than the pluralism of media.

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