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With the generous support from the Center of European Studies (CES) I was able to conduct on-site primary research for my doctoral dissertation. In this project, I analyze the EU's security measures as an instrument of social regulation. To do so, I focus on two relevant Chapters of the body of EU laws, Chapter 23 (Judiciary and Fundamental Rights) and Chapter 24 (Justice, Freedom and Security), which together set out the EU's accession criteria for the "independent and efficient" functioning of the judiciary and the "professional, reliable, and efficient police organization" (European Commission, 2012). I also evaluate each country's accession processes and outcomes drawing on governmental and institutional reports, case law, legislative debates and interviews with governmental and institutional officials, and quantitative data on policing cooperation.

The main question underlying this project is: What is the relationship between the mandatory application of EU laws, the restructuring of public and private policing, and the strategic aims of economic integration? This analysis aims to contribute to a better understanding of the interaction between national and supranational governmental institutions, the effects of supranational governance on the national security apparatus, the role of public and private policing – including their interaction with society. In short, this project examines the political rationality embedded in the European Integration process.

In order to provide responses to the above question my research requires, in part, interaction with both EU officials and national (non-EU) officials. The support provided through the CES Graduate Travel-Research Fellowship allowed me to conduct the EU component of this research. In November of 2015, I traveled to Brussels and met with representatives from The Council, DG HOME, DG JUST, and DG NEAR. The interviews I conducted here offered a rich and nuanced account of the inner workings of the organized crime and cyber crime related police cooperation between the EU, its member states and candidate states.

In addition to having had the opportunity to gain such valuable insight from EU practitioners and experts, I was also able to attend the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) Conference: "European week for fighting organized crime." This two-day event added a further layer of nuanced insight into my understanding and theorizing of the relationship between public and private sector cooperation in the area of organized crime.

Last, but not least, this research trip proved particularly fruitful by allowing me to establish connections beyond the scope of this trip itself. Some of my research participants have put me in contact with colleagues, practitioners and experts in a number of the nation states that I am yet to conduct interviews in. This is invaluable for the next stage of my research, which is also in-part supported by the same CES grant. Thus, the generous funding from the Center for European Studies has been, and still is, crucial for my doctoral research, for which I am ever grateful.