

European Master's Degree in Human Rights and Democratisation  
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**The prominence of the body as an instrument of border control.  
Assessing the age of unaccompanied  
migrant children in the European Union**

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ABSTRACT

The premises of the research are rooted in the debate about human rights of migrants and securitisation of borders in the European Union. In this context the body is in the spotlight, since a key component in the reinforcement of external borders has been represented by the growing use of biometric data that is derived from the human body. The paper aims at investigating how and to what extent the human body is considered as an instrument of border control in the European Union. After providing an overview on the relevant EU legislation, the paper explains which human rights implications are entailed by the use of biometrics in the management of migration and asylum. It then introduces the case study of age assessment for unaccompanied migrant children, illustrating in particular the human rights that can be at stake with regard to medical age examinations. Through the analysis of the selected case study it makes clear the crucial role that the human body plays in the strategies of border control. Eventually the paper argues that, through the deployment of such techniques, states are expressing their power on the body of migrants in order to exclude and not to include them.