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August – 1 September 2017, Athens, Greece**

Session:

**Research Stream, RN11- Sociology of Emotions, Emotion in
Organizations 1: Gender**

Time: Thursday, 31/Aug/2017: 11:00am - 12.30pm

**Location: PANTEION University of Social & Political Sciences 136
Syggrou Avenue 17671 Athens, Greece**

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“Acting Like a Man”: Emotion Management in Police and Border Guard Work

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Conventional views of the police support a norm of emotion management. Aspiring police officers are taught not to show pain or fear and to display an image of control and assertion. If failing to convey such emotions officers might be considered too weak or simply not “man enough” for the job. This is also the case concerning border guarding and border police conduct. This study draws on data gathered during the study of a partly EU financed collaboration project with the purpose of decreasing and preventing trans-boundary criminality in the Baltic Sea area. The participants included police and border guard organizations from Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and lasted for two years (2014-2015).

This qualitative study is based on empirical material such as field observations and interviews with participating (male and female) police and border officers. Initially, the focus of the study was international collaboration and collaboration obstacles. The findings suggest that the officers mostly valued informal interaction (such as after-work socialising) in order to gain trust in collaboration partners. An important part of this interaction consisted of police banter, joking, and of telling stories. As most of the participating officers worked in intelligence (or information exchange) they often joked about stereotypical images of “crime fighting” and of the lack of action that their work entailed. Additionally, the findings suggest that joking, bantering or teasing were strategies of handling emotionally challenging situations and of coming to terms with contrasting opinions regarding the clichéd “masculine” image of police work.