

# Securitising COVID-19 in an Environment of Low Political Trust: The Case of Hong Kong

Presented by Dr Dionysios STIVAS



## Abstract

Securitisation was a common practice of governments during the first phases of the COVID-19 outbreak. To successfully securitize the pandemic, the governments should convince their citizenries about the magnitude of the alleged threat. Trustworthy governments should be able to securitize the pandemic more effortlessly than non-trustworthy ones. Hong Kong, our case study, is unique because the government managed to control the pandemic in a context of extremely low political trust. This paper examines the extent to which trust in the government and smart technologies influenced the securitization and management of the COVID-19 pandemic in Hong Kong. The results of this study suggest that under certain circumstances, governments can successfully manage a health-emergency even when they do not enjoy high levels of political trust.

## Speaker Bio

Dr. Stivas completed his bachelor's degree in International Law at The Hague University, The Netherlands. Subsequently, he acquired a master's degree in European Laws from Maastricht University, and a second Master of Arts in International Relations and Diplomacy of the European Union from the College of Europe in Bruges. In 2020, he finalized his Ph.D. in Government and International Studies at Hong Kong Baptist University. Since then, Dr. Stivas held the positions of Research Fellow and part-time Lecturer at Hong Kong Baptist University and the Chinese University of Hong Kong. At Hong Kong Baptist University, he was the principal project coordinator of a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence and a Jean Monnet Module.

Dr. Stivas joined the Department of International Studies of Xi'an Jiaotong Liverpool University as an Assistant Professor in September 2023. His current research focuses on the public management of Covid-19 in Europe and Asia from the perspectives of political trust and security studies. His most recent single-authored and co-authored research articles were published in the academic journals *Mediterranean Politics*, *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, *Cogent Social Sciences*, and *Asian Survey*.



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