



DISCUSSION PAPER

The EU as a Gated Community: Contextualising Events on the Poland-Belarus Border

Ömer Carullah Sevim

TRT WORLD
**research
centre**

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Ömer Carullah Sevim

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www.trtworld.com

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Introduction

The latest in an ongoing series of refugee tragedies has occurred on the Polish – Belarusian border. We have also seen and heard the stories of people who died trying to cross the English Channel¹, among many other stories of lives lost somewhere in the Mediterranean that were not deemed adequate for public consumption. The tragedy of refugees on the European Union's border with Belarus is only part of a broader crisis. The EU is openly blaming Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenko and has presented the situation as being the result of the irresponsibility of an authoritarian regime. Ursula von der Leyen, the President of the EU Commission, described the situation as "the instrumentalization of migrants for political purposes by Belarus"². Most of the mainstream European media has also used the same language³. Belarus' close ties with Russia have also been used to analyse the situation by both media and politicians⁴. Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki has openly pointed to Russia as the sponsor of Lukashenko's regime, calling on more support from NATO vis-à-vis both Russia and Belarus⁵. For his part, the Belarusian president stated in his interview with BBC correspondent Steve Rosenberg that "it is absolutely possible his forces helped migrants cross into Poland"⁶. In the same interview, although he did not accept the claim that he invited migrants to the Belarus border, he did mention EU sanctions on Belarus when talking about the migrant crisis, as if implying that should the sanctions be lifted he could bring an end the crisis for which he denies responsibility. At first glance, it may seem fair to read the situation as an extension of the crisis

between Belarus and the EU. However, Lukashenko did not ultimately create those migrants nor did he create the situation that forced them to choose such a journey in the first place.

This depiction of the current crisis on the Polish-Belarusian border is only partly true. Lukashenko, as he seems to readily admit, may be using the lives of migrants as a political instrument against EU, particularly as leverage vis-à-vis the bloc's sanctions on Belarus. Furthermore, the Polish PM's argument that Russia is supporting the Belarusian government and the resulting political tension is somehow related to the migrant crisis may be true. However, does blaming Lukashenko for the migrant crisis or pointing out Russia's hostile attitude towards the EU give us an adequate perspective for understanding the problem in which the events on the Belarusian border are only a part of?

It should be recalled that this is not the first time that we see a humanitarian migrant crisis on the EU border. There have been more than 1,600 deaths in 2021 and it is estimated that more than 26,000 migrants have lost their lives since 2014 in the waters off the EU⁷. Thus, it is worth analysing the migrant crisis on the Belarus – Poland border apart from the tension between the EU and Minsk. This paper will advance a frame that puts the EU migrant crisis in a broader picture. In this regard, it will explore three crucial overlapping paradoxes: the paradox between neoliberal economics and borders increasingly closed to migrants; the selective migration policies of the EU and the EU's strategy of 'outsourcing the problem'.

¹ A Death in the Channel, the blame game in the heart of Europe, explained. (2021, November 21). TRT World. <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/death-in-the-channel-the-blame-game-in-the-heart-of-europe-explained-52014>

² Von der Leyen, U. (2021, November 8). Statement by President von der Leyen on the situation at the border between Poland and Belarus. European Commission. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement_21_5867

³ Baudet, P. C. (2021, November 10). Comment le régime biélorusse instrumentalise les migrants. Le Monde. https://www.lemonde.fr/podcasts/article/2021/11/10/comment-le-regime-bielorusse-instrumentalise-les-migrants_6101575_5463015.html

⁴ Hebel, C. (2021, November 26). Lukashenko macht Flüchtlingen falsche Hoffnung »Wir werden alles tun, was Sie wollen«. Der Spiegel. <https://www.spiegel.de/ausland/alexander-lukaschenko-belarussischer-machthaber-besucht-migranten-a-eb4d9276-4ab3-4f58-b8ac-23d591769c95>

⁵ Hebel, C. (2021, November 25). Gestrandet, durchgefroren, verprügelt. Der Spiegel. <https://www.spiegel.de/ausland/migranten-in-belarus-das-doppelte-spiel-des-diktators-alexander-lukaschenko-a-297bfd36-6e09-48fd-a7fa-8fcb921bea7>

⁶ Fritz, P. (2021, November 24). Die Illusion vom Ende der Belarus-Krise. Welt. <https://www.welt.de/politik/ausland/article235250280/Migrationskrise-in-Polen-Die-Illusion-vom-Ende-der-Belarus-Krise.html>

⁷ 'Stuur Nederlandse militairen naar Pools-Wit-Russische grens'. (2021, November 17). De Telegraaf. <https://www.telegraaf.nl/nieuws/185966307/stuur-nederlandse-militairen-naar-pools-wit-russische-grens>

⁸ BBC News. (2021, November 30). Poland PM urges 'wake up' to destabilisation by Russia and allies - BBC News [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwHprAz19II>

⁹ BBC News. (2021, November 23). Belarus leader Lukashenko tells BBC the country may have helped migrants into the EU - BBC News [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZdxBOOnVgnY&ab_channel=BBCNews

¹⁰ Migrant deaths in European waters not new, over 1,600 have died this year. (2021, November 25). Euro News. <https://www.euronews.com/2021/11/25/migrant-deaths-in-european-waters-not-new-over-1-600-have-died-this-year-iom>



Hungarian soldiers controls the border at Zakany. (Arpad Kurucz - Anadolu Agency)

Two of a Kind: Globalization and Neoliberalism

We live in a world that is more interconnected than ever. The climate crisis can be regarded as an extreme example of how the destinies of peoples are tied to each other. We have also witnessed the development of important international organizations, such as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, etc. In this respect, Anthony Giddens, in his famous introductory book *Sociology* states that "today, the social and economic forces leading to a single global capitalist economy appear to be irresistible" (Giddens, 2006 p.415). From this particular perspective, an argument can be made for the increasingly irrelevancy of national borders.

The Covid-19 pandemic can be seen as another indicator of the fact that borders today are paradoxically both more porous and more rigid than in previous eras. A virus that spreads through human-to-human contact has reached almost every country from its origin point in China, and caused the death of millions of people in a short period. On one hand, we have seen a virus that spread around the world in a very short time, and on the other, every day we see tragic stories of people trying,

often in vain, to cross national borders in search of what they believe to be a better life. The irony of how a virus that depends on human mobility to spread can cross borders unimpeded while the most vulnerable people in our global society cannot should not be overlooked. Every day, millions of people travel to other countries, and tens of thousands of vehicles that carry both people and goods cross international borders. Can it be said that the reason behind the crisis on the Polish border is merely a lack of appropriate documentation that would, if possessed, allow these people to enter the EU? Is it only a matter of (il)legality? To answer this question sufficiently, it is necessary to look at the other side of the coin.

It cannot be seen as a coincidence that most of the people at the Poland-Belarus border are from Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria⁸, three of the countries that have been most affected by international intervention in the last two decades. In other words, international politics has international results. In this respect, the current migrant crisis cannot be read as only a security or border issue.

⁸ Belarus border crisis: How are migrants getting there? (2021, November 26), BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/59233244>

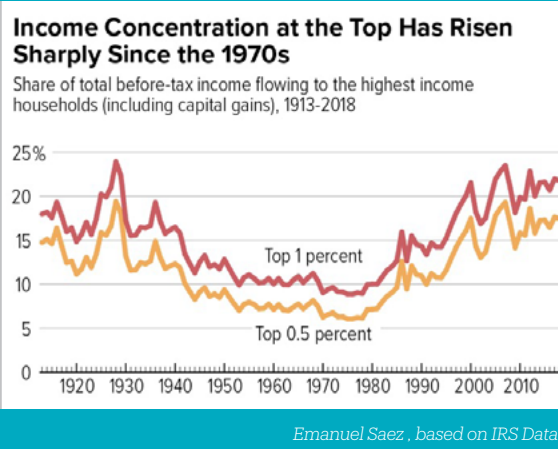
Although the degree of connectivity is higher than at any point in human history, Zygmunt Bauman (1998) said that "globalization divides as much as it unites" and added that the ability to move across borders is one of the main sociological bases of today's social stratification. The ability to move, in this regard, refers to the ability to join the competition in the global market and lack of this ability entails being destined to carry the burden of the effects of globalization in a specific locality. Today, most people make their living under the conditions that the global division of labour has chosen for them. This situation leads us to another fact, namely that the international division of labour is what is behind the mentioned stratification. An important aspect of this fact is that most of the production process has shifted from developed countries to developing countries because of the cheaper labour costs (Gunter and van der Hoeven, 2004). This is one of the most salient elements of globalization. In other words, global capital is in a constant search for cheaper costs of production and it can flexibly address this demand with cheap labour costs around the globe. For Bauman:

"Flexibility of the demand side means freedom to move wherever greener pastures beckon, leaving the refuse and waste spattered around the last camp for the left-behind locals to clean up; above all, it means freedom to disregard all considerations except such as 'make economic sense'. What looks, however, like flexibility on the demand side, rebounds on all those cast on the supply side as hard, cruel, impregnable and unassailable fate: jobs come and go, they vanish as soon as they appeared, they are cut in pieces and withdrawn without notice while the rules of the hiring/firing game change without warning – and there is little the job-holders and job-seekers may do to stop the see-saw." (Bauman, 1998 p.105)

Since the 1980s, capitalism has evolved into what we today call neoliberalism. This new form of capitalism signifies mainly a free-market-oriented economic regime. After the Great Depression and WWII, a system of social safety nets was put in place in western countries, and as a result, income had been distributed more equally than previous decades (see figure 1). However, in the 1980s, with the Reagan administration in the US and Thatcher in the UK, an important shift

took place. In this regard, neoliberalism represented a move towards a decrease in the intervention of the state in the economy. Social policies gave way to the rule of the free market (Abramovitz, 2012).

Figure 1: The change in the income share of the top 1 percent and 0.5 percent in the USA.⁹



Chile represents what many point to as the neoliberal experiment *par excellence* (Crouch, 2011). There are strong indications pointing to the CIA's active involvement in the 1973 coup in Chile¹⁰ that led to a decades long military rule in the country. This junta regime used Chicago school economists, aka the "Chicago Boys", who were known for their neoliberal ideology, as advisors (Moffit, 1977). In the following years, the number of countries that were effectively coerced to following a neoliberal development path increased, with international organizations such as the IMF, OECD, World Bank and World Trade Organization, prioritizing the neoliberal agenda (Harvey, 2006). For example, in the late 1970s, the OECD started to promote free market economy and privatization and the World Bank decreased its support to government projects in developing countries and increased its support to the private sector (Crouch, 2011).

This top-down 'liberalization' represents a paradox, one that runs parallel with what we have seen on the Belarusian border. Although neoliberalism is premised

⁹ Stone, C. et. al. (2020, January 13). A Guide to Statistics on Historical Trends in Income Inequality. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. https://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/a-guide-to-statistics-on-historical-trends-in-income-inequality#_ftn39

¹⁰ Bonnefoy, P. (2017, October 14). Documenting U.S. Role in Democracy's Fall and Dictator's Rise in Chile. New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/14/world/americas/chile-coup-cia-museum.html>

on a reduction of state intervention in the economy, the objectives of neoliberal thinkers could not have been pursued without significant state intervention. Moreover, it is a process that continues until today and can be seen in the fact that national borders are increasingly open to the flow of global capital, where it often settles in locations with cheaper labour, but those same borders are effectively shuttered for migrants seeking the relative advantages of labour markets in the EU.

In the context of this paper, this economic shift has further importance. Georg Fülberth, in his book *A Short History of Capitalism*, describes this latest neoliberal stage of the system through seven basic changes. Five of these seven changes mainly describe the establishment of a "world economy" and are directly related to globalization as Fülberth himself states. These five changes are the dissolution of Soviet Union, the rise of the international finance market, internationalization of production, the rise of transnational investments, and acceleration of distribution of goods around the world (Fülberth, 2014 p. 265). In other words, neoliberalism and globalization are highly related processes in the contemporary context.

One key aspect of this embeddedness of globalization and neoliberalism is mentioned above. Global capital has gained the flexibility to benefit from the world labour market, however, it was not the only capital side of the coin that has gained flexibility. We have also seen the rise of the most "colourful" and multicultural cities in human history, especially in the countries of the global north. Saskia Sassen (2008) underlines that the need for low-wage workers increased in economic centres after the 1980s. "Global cities are also sites for the incorporation of large numbers of lowly paid immigrants into strategic economic sectors" according to her (ibid., p. 459). Data also supports this analysis. Proportionately, immigrants participate in economic activity with more low-wage works than non-immigrants (Devine 2020; Matha et al. 2011).

Although the migration waves that accompanied the decolonization process are an important factor behind the rise of the multi-ethnic character of many European countries, they were not the only reason. Large-scale labour migrations to north-west Europe over the last fifty years is another significant factor. Foreign workers were needed for more labour-intensive manufacturing jobs, as well as construction, mining, and agriculture. Large numbers of workers from countries such as

Turkey, Greece, Spain, Italy, Morocco were recruited in those sectors (van Mol and de Valk, 2016). In this regard, several bilateral agreements were signed between developed and developing countries. Thus, while it can be said that the EU borders have been open to many, contrary to what we have observed in recent years, it is important to note that this openness was in parallel with economic need. The need was not only for unskilled labour. Developed countries also promoted policies to attract skilled labour. In this respect, brain drain should be mentioned as another important impact of migration that has deepened the inequalities in the global division of labour (Solimano, 2001). These migration movements have become an important face of a so-called multicultural dream and a globalized world. In this regard, ironically, borders are places that may be very transitional and impermeable at the same time.

Paradoxically, neoliberalism has to suspend its own principles in order to sustain itself. For example, it promises a smaller state but realized perhaps its most prominent experiment through a coup and the installation of a military regime. Moreover, flexible borders are important for private investors to travel around the globe, but these borders are not open to labour in the same way that they are to capital or the individuals who represent it.



A screen grab captured from a video shows Iraqi migrants end up at the Polish border crossing as Polish security forces take measures on the Belarus-Polish border on November 15, 2021 in Grodno, Belarus. (Belarus State Border Committee - Anadolu Agency)

Who's In and Who's Out? The EU Borders

The idea and understanding of borders has varied throughout history. In this respect, the emergence of nation-states was an important turning point for changing border regimes. Before modern nation-states, walls like the Great Wall were not like today's borders that determine strictly who belongs and who is excluded. They were rather part of a defence system that did not directly signify the border of a state (Giddens, 1985 p. 51).

The establishment of the Schengen zone in 1985 represents another important development that established a new kind of border regime established during the era of 'liberalization', which effectively removed border restrictions between the Schengen member states. In the following decades, the new border regime was accepted by 26 European states. This was an important turning point for the establishment of a concept of European borders (Jeffrey, 2017).

The main function of the Schengen zone is to allow citizens of the member states to travel freely within the determined area. This was complemented with the fortification of the EU's external borders. The first border wall was built on the Moroccan-Spanish border, in the cities of Ceuta and Melilla, the only African territory that borders the EU Schengen area. The Ceuta wall was built in 1993 and the one in Melilla was built in 1996 (Benedicto and Brune, 2018). One of the first clashes at the border of Ceuta and Melilla occurred in September 2005. At least 5 people were killed and more than 40 wounded by security forces¹¹. The fortification of Europe has continued ever since. The latest EU wall is being built by the Polish government on the Belarusian border. It will be added to the other 15 EU border wall already in existence.

Table 1: List of the European walls

BUILDING COUNTRY	COUNTRY AGAINST WHICH IT IS MADE	STARTING YEAR	REASONS
Spain (1)	Morocco (Ceuta)	1993	Immigration
Spain (2)	Morocco (Melilla)	1996	Immigration
Greece (3)	Turkey	2012	Immigration
Slovakia (4)	Internal cities: Kosice, Velka Ida, Ostrovany	2013- under construction	Segregation, security
Bulgaria (5)	Turkey	2013	Immigration
Hungary (6)	Croatia	2015	Immigration
Hungary (7)	Serbia	2015	Immigration
Macedonia (8)	Greece	2015	Immigration
Austria (9)	Slovenia	2015	Immigration
Slovenia (10)	Croatia	2015	Immigration
United Kingdom (11)	France (port of Calais)	2015	Immigration
Latvia (12)	Russia	2015	Security, territorial tension, smuggling, immigration
Norway (13)	Russia	2016	Security, Immigration
Estonia (14)	Russia	2016-2017	Security, territorial tension, immigration
Lithuania (15)	Russia	2017	Security, territorial tension, immigration

Source: GlobalData

¹¹ Africans die in Spanish enclave (2005, September 29). BBC News <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4292490.stm>

The European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) was established in 2004 as the first uniformed service of the EU. It describes itself as “an essential part of Europe’s efforts to safeguard the area of freedom, security, and justice”¹². Details of the agency’s mandate were given as follows:

“To help identify migratory patterns as well as trends in cross-border criminal activities, Frontex analyses data related to the situation at and beyond EU’s external borders. It monitors the situation at the borders and helps border authorities to share information with the Member States. The

agency also carries out vulnerability assessments to evaluate the capacity and readiness of each Member State to face challenges at its external borders, including migratory pressure.”¹³

It is clear that migration is particularly emphasised in the above paragraph. It follows that, according to this view, migration represents a significant potential threat to the security of “the area of freedom, security, and justice” according to the first uniformed service of the EU. However, “freedom, security, and justice”, reference EU values that are arguably under threat due to the way the EU has chosen to deal (or not deal) with migration.

Outsourcing the Problem

The starting point of the migrant crisis in Europe dates back to 2011 when the Arab Spring and the conflict in Syria began. The number of migrants trying to cross European borders has increased since, and in 2015, it reached its peak. Since then, numerous subsequent crises have taken place, the most recent of which emerged on the Polish-Belarusian border. The tragedies on the Hungarian - Serbian and the Turkish - Greek borders are worth remembering in this context. The crisis on the Hungarian - Serbian border in 2015 was the first major refugee crisis on the borders of the EU following the outbreak of the Syrian war¹⁴. Hungary’s response was brutal. They built fences on the border and used violent tactics to turn back refugees. A report by OXFAM, the Belgrade Centre for Human Rights, and Macedonian Young Lawyer Association (2017) states that “Hungary and Croatia – both EU member states – have used brutal tactics, such as attack dogs and forcing people to strip naked in freezing temperatures”. Hungarian Prime Minister Victor Orban is often criticized for his illiberal discourse by other EU leaders. The EU even threatened both Hungary and Poland with financial sanctions as a consequence of their policies¹⁵.

However, as Ormsby (2017) states, it is also obvious that some EU members have tacitly supported Hungary’s role in preventing refugees from entering the EU. For example, French President Emmanuel Macron underlined the importance of protecting the external borders of the EU in his meeting with the Hungarian prime minister.¹⁶ A similar situation occurred on the Turkish - Greek border in 2020. Greece used violent tactics against refugees and thousands of refugees were pushed back violently by Greek forces¹⁷. In March of 2020, Ursula von der Leyen described Greece as the shield of Europe¹⁸. Ultimately, these incidents were merely intensified versions of the last ten years of a migration crisis that has caused thousands of deaths.

Most recently, a new phase of the crisis occurred on the Belarus-Poland border. Thousands of migrants gathered on the Belarusian side, seeking to cross into the EU. In response, the Polish government declared a local state of emergency¹⁹ and used violence against the migrants²⁰. There are cases in which even journalists were detained and tortured on the Polish side of the border.²¹

¹² Leggeri, F. (n.d.). Who We Are Foreword. Frontex. <https://frontex.europa.eu/about-frontex/who-we-are/foreword/>

¹³ Frontex. (n.d.). Who We Are Origin and Tasks. Frontex. <https://frontex.europa.eu/about-frontex/who-we-are/origin-tasks/>

¹⁴ Migrant crisis: Hungary’s closed border leaves many stranded (2015, September 15). BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34260071>

¹⁵ Zalan, E. (2021, November 23). EU Commission letters to Poland, Hungary: too little, too late?. EUObserver. <https://euobserver.com/democracy/153591>

¹⁶ Spike, J. And Corbet, S. (2021, December 14). Macron urges strengthening EU borders during Hungary visit. AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/europe-poland-hungary-emmanuel-macron-budapest-9c5e9987d3803f1d876cc38310a6190e>

¹⁷ Usul, A. S. (2021, November 21). Pushbacks, violence against migrants from Greek forces continue. Anadolu Agency. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/turkey/pushbacks-violence-against-migrants-from-greek-forces-continue/2426761>

¹⁸ EU chief says Greece is Europe’s shield in migrant crisis (2020, March 3). BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-51721356>

¹⁹ Poland declares state of emergency in regions bordering Belarus (2021, September 2). TRT World. <https://www.trtworld.com/europe/poland-declares-state-of-emergency-in-regions-bordering-belarus-49666>

²⁰ Human Rights Watch (2021, November 24). Belarus/Poland: Abuse, Pushbacks At Border. HRW. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/11/24/belarus/poland-abuse-pushbacks-border>

²¹ Pikulicka-Wilczewska, A. (2021, November 18). Polish forces intimidate media near Belarus border: Journalists. AlJazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/11/18/journalists-allegedly-blocked-from-reporting-poland-border-crisis>

Today, there are still thousands of migrants waiting on the Belarusian side in the freezing cold and there have even been discoveries of bodies of deceased migrants²².

Guy Verhofstadt, Member of the European Parliament and former Prime Minister of Belgium, while answering questions regarding violence against migrants by Polish authorities, emphatically stated that these issues are "the consequence of the fact that our member states are responsible for that and the European Union is not. So it's not a question of the European Union, it's a question of a lack of European Union, a lack of European migration and asylum policy"²³. From this perspective, the responsibility for the tragic images emanating from the EU borders falls on individual member states or actors like Lukashenko since the EU does not have a common policy.

On one hand, we see member states such as Poland, Hungary, and Greece not hesitating to use violence against migrants, and on the other, there are criticisms revolving around the selective application of EU values. For example, although he criticizes the EU for its policy ambiguity towards the migrant crises, Verhofstadt does not see the EU as being responsible for human rights violations. By effectively outsourcing its migration management to member states such as Greece, Hungary, and Poland, the EU can claim that its much vaunted values have not been violated, while at the same time block any migrant wave. This outsourcing arguably amounts to a deliberate ambiguity on the part of the EU. If the bloc was determined to enact policy in line with its supposed values, it would likely prove to be more difficult to prevent migrants from entering EU territory. Instead, the bloc's hesitation implicitly charges individual member states with the duty of acting as migrant police and prevents the EU itself from carrying this burden.

Outsourcing the problem is the main element in this regard. The EU has outsourced the problem to both member states - by pointing to their individual responsibility - and external actors such as the Libyan

Coast Guard²⁴, which have been documented abusing migrants²⁵. Fran Cetti (2014) states that "outsourcing and privatization enable member state governments to distance themselves from responsibility". Cetti's emphasis is on the use of privatized forces in managing borders, however, another face of outsourcing is the lack of a unanimous policy as mentioned above. In this way, the union separates itself from the actions of member states. Therefore, the policies of Hungary's Orban, actions of the Polish border forces or Lukashenko's use of migrants become easily responsible for the tragedies, effectively washing the EU's hands clean of the issue.

Fabrice Leggeri, Frontex's chief, says that "fundamental rights officers" will be recruited to monitor and report human rights violations against migrants. This is a positive step, however, given that he made these statements²⁶ in April 2021, it took at least ten years of tragedies and thousands of dead bodies to initiate such a basic step. This delay is an important indicator of the fact that procrastination itself is a policy that keeps migrants and responsibility at arms length and individualizes the problem by separating it from the general context.

²² Poland says another migrant found dead near Belarus border (2021, December 8). Deutsche Welle. <https://www.dw.com/en/poland-says-another-migrant-found-dead-near-belarus-border/a-60056480>

²³ DW News (2021, December 2). What happened to the EU's vaunted values? Guy Verhofstadt interview | Conflict Zone [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k8-M8Ky0ld8&ab_channel=DWNews

²⁴ European Commission (2017, January 25). Questions & Answers: Migration on the Central Mediterranean route. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/fr/MEMO_17_135

²⁵ NGO accuses Libyan coast guard of shooting at migrant boat (2021, July 1). Deutsche Welle. <https://www.dw.com/en/ngo-accuses-libyan-coast-guard-of-shooting-at-migrant-boat/a-58131432>

²⁶ France 24 English (2021, April 2). 'No evidence' of migrant pushbacks: EU border agency chief Leggeri [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vfekiw54vI&ab_channel=FRANCE24English



Migrants make their way after crossing the border at Zakany, Hungary October 16, 2015. (Arpad Kurucz - Anadolu Agency)

Conclusion

Understanding the context of the tragedies involving migrants is enhanced through a consideration of three parallel paradoxes: the paradox between the neoliberal orientation of the world economy and the maximum level state protection on borders; selective migration strategies; and a seemingly deliberate ambiguity in EU policy. These three paradoxes feed into each other, with each feeding off the other. In other words, they are all different faces of the same regime.

Firstly, the global economy benefits from the opportunities of a globalized world. Investors take advantage of localized cheap labour through the free flow of capital around the globe. However, this type of mobility is not an option for the migrants on the Belarus – Poland border. On the contrary, it is the inability for the would be labour to move that makes it possible for capital to exploit the world labour force. If labour could flow just like capital, cheap labour would effectively vanish. Borders, in this regard, function as the place where the state protects the 'liberal' economy. On one hand, neoliberalism decreases the role and power of the state and on the other, it needs the state's monopoly on violence to sustain itself. Secondly, the EU allows many people to come in and blocks many others. This selectiveness gives it the power to determine

who is included and who is excluded. Lastly, the EU continues to both explicitly and implicitly outsource the management of the current refugee crisis. This situation gives the EU the opportunity to benefit from the violence on its borders and at the same time keeps its hands "clean".

As Cetti (2014, p. 22-23) states that the "immigration policy of the EU "violently marking the neo-liberal world's zones of inclusion/exclusion" and "automatically designates the majority of forced migrants from the poor areas of the Global South as "illegal" mobile bodies, inherently unworthy of legal rights". In this sense, the EU resembles a gated community that offers its residents exclusive opportunities, hiring 'servants' from the outside when needed. However, it is not a self-sufficient community. If cheap labour is needed, then it invites it in. If cheap labour is needed outside, its capital seeks it out. Today, thousands of migrants are faced with violence on the borders of the EU. All of this is of course taking place in a globalized world and on the borders of a union that is supposedly the vanguard for human rights. Thus, while globalization has allowed for the free flow of good, capital and people, the latter is often exclusive.

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