

Polish Authorities Towards Refugee Crises

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Abstract : This article analyzes the actions of Poland's ruling party facing two refugee crises. These crises emerged almost one after the other within a few months. The first concerned irregular migrants from various countries, including the Middle East, seeking to cross the Polish border from the territory of Belarus. The second was caused by Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. I aim to show the evolution of the discourse and law towards immigrants and refugees by the party Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (PiS, ang. Law and Justice), which has been in power in Poland since 2015. The authorities, in power since 2015, have radically changed its anti-immigrant discourse towards the exodus of civilians from Ukraine. Research questions are the following: What were the roots of the refugee crises in Poland in 2021 and 2022? What legal or illegal measures were taken in Poland to deal with the refugee crises? The methods of qualitative source analysis and process tracing. From the first days of the war in Ukraine, not only was aid organised for Ukrainians, but they were also given access to public services and education. All refugees were granted temporary international protection. At the same time, the basic physiological needs of those on the Polish-Belarusian border were ignored. Moreover, illegal pushbacks were used against those coming mainly from the Middle East, pushing them into the territory of Belarus, where they were often subjected to torture and inhumane treatment. The Polish government justified such treatment on the grounds that these people were part of a 'hybrid war' waged by Russia and Belarus using migrants. Only Ukrainians were treated as 'real' refugees in the analyzed crises at the Polish borders.

Keywords : refugee, irregular migrants, hybrid war, migrants

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