

Masculinity, Race, and Border Politics: Investigating the Italy-Albania Migration Agreement through a Qualitative Lens

Entenela Ndrevataj

Supervised by: Prof. Robert Morrell

GRÓ GEST, University of Iceland

May 2025

Final assignment submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for post-graduate diploma in International Gender Studies at the GRÓ Gender Equality Studies and Training Programme.

© Entenela Ndrevataj

Reykjavík, Iceland, 2025

Acknowledgment

To my dear supervisor, Professor Robert Morrell, who throughout this journey has shown an extraordinary curiosity and willingness to learn from me - when it should have been the other way around. Without your support, the completion of this work would not have been possible. Thank you from the bottom of my heart! Meeting you has truly been one of the most wonderful surprises of this entire journey.

To the team at GRO GEST, especially Guðrún and Svanhildur Anja, who made our presence here possible through countless emails and an overwhelming amount of bureaucracy - my gratitude goes to you! This experience has truly been life - changing for me. I will forever cherish these days.

To all the feminist sisters I have met here - and to Reyan - your presence made even the darkest days shine brighter than the sun.

To my mother and sister, who always support me in my journey of blooming and growing wings - may you take pride in me, as I finally begin to recognize the person I long aspired to be.

And most importantly, to all the people who are othered, segregated, labeled, and violated across endless borders: you are strong, and you are resilient. One day, we shall overcome these walls. And to everyone out there smashing those walls - keep going. In unity we trust!

List of abbreviations

EU	European Union
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
IOM	International Organization of Migration
NGO	Non-governmental organizations
FRONTEX	European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Border
SIS	The Schengen Information System
EES	Entry/Exit System

Abstract

This research will investigate the intersection of masculinity and racism as central factors that have influenced the designation and implementation of two male-detention centers in Albania for migrants from the Global South, under an agreement with the Italian government. The agreement is framed by Italian political representatives as a measure to halt irregular migration, while presented as a step that brings Albania closer to European Union. This agreement, that targets specifically male migrants from the Global South, shows again the alienation of black and brown men on basis of racialization and masculinity. To further investigate these dynamics, the research will involve interviews with various stakeholders from both Albania and Italy, including migrants from the Global South, human rights advocates, and activists who have publicly engaged with the migration deal and raised concerns about the risks posed by the detention centers. The findings will contribute to the ongoing public discussion by focusing on the masculine traits associated with migrant men, highlighting how these factors shape societal perceptions and influence border politics.

Keyword: *Albanian-Italian deal, male immigrants, masculinity, racism, European Union*

Table of content

List of abbreviations	4
1. Introduction	7
1.1 Background of the research.....	7
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	7
1.3 Research questions.....	8
1.4 Research objectives.....	9
1.5 Hypothesis.....	10
1.6 Methodology and data collection.....	10
1.7 Relevance of the study.....	11
1.8 Ethical and security consideration.....	12
2. Theoretical Review: Concepts of International Migration	13
2.1 Understanding Migration: Definition and Types.....	13
2.1.2 The Conceptual Foundations of the Global North and Global South.....	15
2.2 Literature Review: Main Theories of Migration.....	16
2.2.1 From Theories to Practice: Migration Control and the Rise of Walls.....	20
2.2.2 European Union Border Control through Surveillance.....	22
2.2.3 European Union border Control through Externalization Policies.....	23
2.2.4 Externalizing Borders: The Albania - Italy Migration Deal.....	25
2.2.5 Masculinization, Racism, and Externalization of Borders through the Lens of Albania – Italy Migration Deal.....	27
3. Albania at the Crossroads: Border Politics, Power, and the Politics of Belonging	29
3.1. From Irregular Migrants to EU Border Safeguards: The Changing Role of Albania.....	29
3.2 From Margins to Enforcers: Albania's Complicity in Externalized Border Regimes.....	30
3.3 Activism in a Complex Landscape: Between Ideals and Political Realities.....	31
Bibliography	32

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the research

In recent decades, migration from Global South countries towards Europe has increased as a result of many factors, such as economical ones, ongoing conflicts, access to information and climate change implications. As millions of individuals seek protection and better opportunities, European Union (EU) has faced significant pressure to manage and regulate this movement. The EU response has intensified over time, with increased measures in border control through walls and fences, usage of intelligence, creation of different unions working in borders while aiming at externalizing migration management. Externalization in this research proposal is used as a concept to refer to the delegation of responsibility for border enforcement by EU to prevent migrants, from reaching EU borders.

This study will explore further the concepts of racialization and masculinization of male Global South migrants - who are disproportionately criminalized - as central to the Global North border protection measures. This approach to migration reflects broader trends in the securitization of borders. Migration is framed not only as a humanitarian concern but also as a security threat, shaped by racial and gendered approaches that influence how migrants are perceived and treated.

1.2 Statement of the problem

In November 2023, Georgia Meloni, the Prime minister of Italy and Edi Rama, the Prime minister of Albania held a joint press conference in Rome¹ that was concluded with the signing of a bilateral Protocol or Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on migration management.² During that press conference, Meloni and Rama presented the establishment of two detention centers located in Albania for Global South migrants rescued at the Italian shore,³ introducing a fast-track procedure outside EU.⁴ All male migrants caught at Italian seashore were deemed to be

¹ Kryeministria. "Prime Minister Rama meets with Italian PM Meloni in Rome." Accessed April 28, 2025

² Sergio, Carrera, Guiseppa Campese, and Colombi Davide. "The 2023 Italy-Albania protocol on extraterritorial migration management". Papers on Liberty and Security in Europe, 2023.

³ Italian Government Presidency of the Council of Ministers. "President Meloni's press statement with the Prime Minister of Albania." Press release, November 6, 2023.

⁴ Italian Government Preseidency of the Councilil of Ministers. "President press statement".

transferred to Albania, while women, children and other vulnerable groups remain in Italy for asylum processing.⁵

This move represents a significant shift in terms of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Italy, in the last three decades, has been the main migratory destination for Albanian citizens, who often followed irregular routes to reach Italy and its currently home to one of the largest Albanian diasporas in the world.⁶ The new deal, however, positions Albania, not as sending state but as an external enforcer of Italian border - a EU member state. The general narrative between governmental representatives highlights good regional cooperation, while Meloni praised Albania as a European country.⁷

This discourse, moving beyond political narrative, has distinct gendered nuances. Male migrants and female migrants are represented differently in public discourse, reinforcing the feminization of female immigrants and the masculinization of male immigrants. While female immigrants generally are viewed through a lens of vulnerability, often portrayed “as victims who need to be saved”, male racialized migrants are mostly associated with violence, security threat and sexual misconduct in public discourse.⁸

This research project will explore how such gendered and racialized framings are embedded in the Italy - Albania migration agreement and interrogates the broader implications this has for bordering practices, state power, and the feminization/masculinization of migrants. It also examines how political discourse through securitization shape public perception of migrants and how these narratives are intertwined with geopolitics and EU externalization strategies.

1.3 Research questions

This study is positioned within the fields of masculinity and racial studies, with a specific focus on the experiences and representations of male migrants. By examining how gender and race intersect in migration policies, the research aims to unpack the broader socio-political

⁵ Italian Government Presidency of the Council of Ministers. “President Meloni’s press statement”.

⁶ Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali. “*The Albanian Community in Italy*”. 2023.

⁷ Media and Information Agency. “Joint press conference of Prime Minister Rama and Prime Minister of Italy Giorgia Meloni.” Press release. 2024.

⁸ Harriet Gray, & Franck, Anja. K. “Refugees as/at risk: The gendered and racialized underpinnings of securitization in British media narratives”. *Security Dialogue*, Vol 50,3. (2019): 275-291.

implications of these frameworks. To achieve this, the study will employ a qualitative research approach, utilizing semi-structured interviews with a range of stakeholders involved in the Italian-Albanian migration deal.

These stakeholders include male migrants who are directly affected by the policy, as well as activists, journalists, and policymakers engaged in migration debates. By gathering firsthand data, this research seeks to provide a critical analysis of how migration control mechanisms are shaped by gendered and racialized perceptions. Through a qualitative approach that aims to collect first hand data, we will try to answer three main research questions:

1. How do the male-only detention centers in Albania reflect and reinforce notions of masculinity?
2. How does the racialization of male migrants from the Global South influence the Italy - Albania detention center policy?
3. How does the construction of detention centers in Albania reflect the EU's strategy of border securitization beyond its territory?

1.4 Research objectives

The general objective of this research is to explore how masculinities and racism converge in the shaping of migration policies, with a particular focus on the Italy-Albanian agreement to establish male-only detention centers for migration from the Global South. Particularly, the study has the following sub-objectives:

1. To analyze how the establishment of male-detention centers in Albania reflect prevailing societal notions of masculinity, particularly in the context of migration control.
2. To examine the ways in which racialized perception of male migrants from the Global South shape the design and implementation of the migration policy.
3. To investigate Albania's political positioning as a host country for these detention centers, exploring how this role reflects its relationship with European Union's policies in managing migration from the Global South.

1.5 Hypothesis

Based on existing literature review dealing with migration, border control, racialization and masculinity, this study proposes several hypotheses, which will be further explored through research questions. These hypotheses will be explored through open-ended interviews with different stakeholders, reflecting racialization and masculinization of migration policies and border restrictions for Global South migrants and Albanian's role in European border policies.

Hypothesis 1: Male-detention center for Global South migrants caught at the Italian seashore reflect and reinforce masculinities by constructing migrant men as violent and security threat

Hypothesis 2: Racialization of Global South migrants has influenced the designation and implementation of the detention center policy by Italian government in Albania

Hypothesis 3: Albania's hosting of migration centers illustrates how the EU utilizes its positional power to outsource externalization policies to non-member states in order to manage migration beyond its borders.

1.6 Methodology and data collection

This research will adopt a qualitative methods approach to further investigate the intersection of racialization and masculinities in the designation of Italy-Albanian migration deal and investigate further into Albania's role in the externalization of European border practices. Taking into consideration the political and socio-cultural sensitivities surrounding this topic, qualitative methods are suitable in capturing lived experiences and emotions, discursive constructions that cannot be captured by quantitative methods.

In terms of data collection, the primary method will be semi-structured and interviews with different stakeholders. This approach will allow a flexible, yet a systematic exploration of all relevant themes, allowing the conduction of follow-up questions based on the participants response. This adaptability is particularly important for deeper insights into individual perspectives and unpacking of complex issues like racialization, masculinity and EU border politics.

The semi-structured the interview schedule will be carefully prepared in advance for all interviewees. The questions will be designed specifically designed to suit the needs and perspectives of different target groups, including migrants from the Global South residing in Italy, representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and human rights organization based in Italy and Albania, experts on migration, gender or EU enlargement policies and journalists and legal advocates engaged with migration and border issues. To ensure inclusivity and accessibility, and considering the transnational dimension of the research interviews will be conducted both in person and online, depending on the location and availability of participants.

The process of data collection is especially important to me, as it reflects my values and stands towards this topic. As a feminist activist and a researcher coming from a country that has experienced many waves of migration for decades now, I bring both personal and academic investment to this research. My engagement with feminism and migration topics shaped a critical understanding of the racialized and gendered dynamics in terms of Italy – Albanian migration deal.

This positionality, not only helps in designing carefully the questions, but also enhances my sensitivity during interviews, particularly when engaging with vulnerable or marginalized participants. My familiarity with the socio-political context in Albania and Italy, along with the network in both these countries, will facilitate access to different actors in obtaining important information for the research. Rather than neutrality, I acknowledge that my perspective is part of the research process – one that seeks to amplify the voices of the excluded ones from the dominant narrative.

1.7 Relevance of the study

The racialization of brown and black men from Global South and the way racialization is often interlinked with narratives of security threat – has long fueled border fortification and adaptation of new restrictive measures. This dynamic it's not new and has already generated a huge interest in the academic sphere. However, we can assume that Albania – Italy migration deal introduces a new layer to this already tense and politicized discourse on migration.

What is new in this context is the symbolic role of Albania in this agreement. A country that is marked by mass migration after 1991, having as main destination Italy, is now positioned

as a “EU friend” in helping manage the migration crisis, reinforcing thus Europe’s external borders. The gendered nature of the deal, underscores the importance of investigating further how masculinity, race and geopolitics are intertwined in contemporary migration policies. By analyzing this deal, the study will not only address a gap in research in a freshly adopted measure, but will also offer insights into how racialized masculinities are being managed in EU borders.

1.8 Ethical and security consideration

Given the sensitive nature of the research, which involves discussions on migration, racialization, and masculinity in the context of detention centers, ethical and security considerations are a crucial part of this project. Participants’ anonymity and confidentiality will be strictly protected throughout the research process. Informed consent will be obtained from all interviewees, with the right to withdraw at any point without consequences.

Special care will be taken when interviewing migrants or individuals from marginalized communities, ensuring that no harm—psychological, social, or legal - comes to participants as a result of their involvement. Additionally, considering the potential political sensitivities around the Italy - Albania migration deal, all data will be securely stored and pseudonymized. The researcher will also remain attentive to power imbalances and approach all conversations with a feminist and human rights-centered ethic of care.

2. Theoretical Review: Concepts of International Migration

In order to properly understand the main concepts of this thesis - namely migration, the masculinization and racialization of the migration deal with Albania and Italy - we will start by situating it in a broader context of migration in the world and how migrants are portrayed in the mainstream discussion. This research considers the Albanian - Italy deal designated for male Global South migrants only as a global trend that racializes and reinforces nations of masculinity, that leads to securitization and fortification of borders.

We will introduce the terminology and different concepts in migration narrative placing emphasis on the differences between migration and refugees and why it matters to use the proper wording when addressing the Italian - Albanian agreement. The literature section will deal with main theories of migration and how practices in controlling migration have changed over the years in EU as a representative of Global North, particularly having in focus the migration crises in 2015.

2.1 Understanding Migration: Definition and Types

In order to properly understand the migration dynamics, it is important to identify the most relevant concepts used to refer to the movement of people from one place to another. Migration as a word is originated from the Latin word “migrare” which means to “to move or settle/shift”.⁹ Migration/migrants, according to International Migration Organization (IOM), are generally accepted as umbrella term reflecting common law understanding of a person who moves away from his or her place of origin, whether within the country or across international borders, temporarily or permanently, for different reasons.¹⁰

Within this broad framework, two of the most commonly used concepts, particularly in demographic analyses, are international and internal migration. International migration happens when people leave their origin birth country to live for a considerable amount of time in another host country.¹¹ A short-term international migration amounts a period of stay between three months and 12 months, while a long-term migration involves a period of stay of at least one

⁹ Ignou The people's university. “*Meaning and concepts of migration.*” 309 – 322.

¹⁰ International Organization of Migration. “*Key migration terms.*” Accessed April 29, 2025.

¹¹ UN Expert Group on Migration Statistics. “*Final Report on Conceptual frameworks and Concepts and Definitions on International Migration.*” April 7, 2021.

year.¹² Internal migration occurs when people move within the same country, while rural - urban migration specifically refers to the internal movement towards urban areas within the same country.¹³

Building upon these distinctions, two additional terms that are widely used in migration discourse are concepts like, “emigrants” and “immigrant”. A person who departs from their country of origin to settle in another country is regarded as an emigrant by their country of birth and as an immigrant by the receiving or host country.¹⁴ In addition to voluntary migration, international migration also includes forced migration, which refers to individuals who are obliged to leave their countries as a result of war, conflict or persecution.

These people first have to go through a procedure of applying for international protection and while their request is being examined, they obtain the status of an asylum-seeker.¹⁵ If their claim is accepted, they are officially recognized as refugees.¹⁶ According to International Refugee Convention adopted in 1951, refugees are people who are unable to return to their country of origin as a result of well - founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.¹⁷

When discussing terminology, further concepts referring to international migration have surfaced, especially when referring to what is mostly branded in public discussion as “irregular migrants” or “undocumented migrants”. According to IOM, the term “migrant in an irregular situation” is “a person who moves or has moved across an international border, and is not authorized to enter or to stay in a state pursuant to the law of that state and to international agreement to which that state is a party.”¹⁸

Irregular migration is often driven by structural forces such as conflict, economic inequality and climate change. However, irregular migration it is also shaped and intensified by

¹² UN Expert Group on Migration Statistics. “*Final Report*”, 5-6

¹³ International Organization of Migration. “*Fundamentals of migration*”. Accessed April 29, 2025.

¹⁴ International Rescue Committee. “*Migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants: What’s the difference?*” June 22, 2018

¹⁵ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. “*Who is an asylum-seeker?*” Accessed April 29, 2025.

¹⁶ UNHCR. “*Who is an asylum seeker?*”

¹⁷ UN General Assembly, *1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 189, p. 137, 28 July 1951.

¹⁸ European Commission. “*Irregular migrants, definitions.*” Accessed April 29, 2025.

restrictive state policies, including border management systems, visa regimes and other regulations, that determine who is allowed to enter the border and in what conditions.¹⁹

2.1.2 The Conceptual Foundations of the Global North and Global South

The terms Global South and Global North are widely used in contemporary academia and general political discourse, both concepts used to describe various countries of the world in terms of poverty, wealth, power and development. These concepts, not only reflect a geographical division, but also refer to historical and socio - economic hierarchies that have evolved as a result of historical development like colonialism, industrialization and globalization.

The term “Global South” refers to the regions of Latin America, Asia, Africa and Oceania.²⁰ The origin of the term “Global South” can be tracked back in the late 20th century, gaining prominence in the 1980s and 1990s as an alternative to earlier labels such as “Third world” or “developing countries.”²¹ This term, politically appearing unbiased, was introduced to integrate these societies into the capitalistic developing world, but reflected geo - politics that was centered in the Global South and prescribed particular models as economic growth and political dispensation.²²

The Global North concept refers to regions of Western Europe, North America, Japan, South Korea and Australia – all countries with high levels of economic development, technological advancement and global influence, that influenced the global order.²³ These nations historically benefited from colonialism, industrial capitalism, and imperial expansion, positioning them at the center of global political, economic, and cultural power. As a result, they continue to dominate international institutions and shape global policies.²⁴ In this research project, EU serves as a representative of Global North.

¹⁹ King, Russell. “Theories and Typologies of Migration: An Overview and A Primer.” *Malmö Institute for Studies of Migration, Diversity and Welfare*. (2012): 1 – 43.

²⁰ Dados, N., & Connell, R. (2012). The Global South. *Contexts*, 11(1), 12-13. Nour Dados and Raewyn Connell. “The Global South”. *Saga Journal*. 11. No 1 (February 2012): 12-13.

²¹ Arif Dirlik. “Global South: Predicament and Promise”. *Global South Studies Center, University of Cologne*. Vol. 1, no 1. 12-23.

²² Dirlik. “Global South: Predicament and Promise.”

²³ Chitadze, Nika. “The Global North-Global South Relations and their reflection on the World Politics and International Economy.” *Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 8, No 1. (2019): 42-51.

²⁴ Lewis, Colin M. “Capitalism, Imperialism and the Emergence of an Industrialized Global Economy.” In *Evolutions of Capitalism: Historical Perspectives, 1200-2000*, edited by Catherine Casson and Philipp Robinson Rössner, 127-55. Bristol University Press, 2022.

2.2 Literature Review: Main Theories of Migration

Migration is a fundamental aspect of human history, deeply integrated in the development of societies since prehistoric times. Archaeological and historical evidence shows that human populations have migrated for tens of thousands of years, pushed by factors such as environmental factors, conflict, trade, exploration, and the search for better living conditions.²⁵ From early human dispersals out of Africa to ancient trade routes across Asia and Europe, migration has continuously shaped civilizations.²⁶ However, it was only during the 19th century, particularly with the profound societal changes brought by industrialization in the Global North, that migration began to be studied systematically.²⁷

Industrialization, happening in the latter half of the 19th century, profoundly transformed everyday life across Europe and North America. The rapid expansion of factories, rail networks and large-scale economies, redirected location of job opportunities. As a result, huge numbers of people moved from less developed places towards the city, in pursuit of better economic opportunities.²⁸ These widespread patterns of movement sparked interest in understanding why people migrate, by creating groundwork for the earliest systematic studies of migration.

One of the first to take on this task was English-German cartographer Ernst George Ravenstein, who analyzed census data from the United Kingdom (England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland) as early as 1840. Population movements inspired Ravenstein to study human migration that led him to develop the theory “Law of migration”, and this represents one of the first attempts to provide a theoretical framework of migratory trajectories of people.²⁹

Ravenstein explains in his theory that migrants tend to move only short distances and in stages, from villages to small towns, and from small towns to bigger industrial cities for economic reasons.³⁰ Ravenstein utilizes two main concepts in elaborating his theory: the concepts of

²⁵ Bellwood, Peter. “The Relevance and Reality of Ancient Migration,” in *The Relevance and Reality of Ancient Migration*, 1 - 16. Wiley Blackwell, 2013

²⁶ Castles, Stephen, Mark J. Miller, and Giuseppe Ammendola. “The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World.” *American Foreign Policy Interests*, Vol 27, No 6. (2003): 537-542.

²⁷ Castles, Miller and Ammendola. “The Age of Migration”

²⁸ Bairoch, Paul and Gary Goertz. “Factors of Urbanization in the Nineteenth Century Developed Countries: A Descriptive and Econometric Analysis.” *Urban Studies*, Vol. 25. No. 4 (1986): 285-305.

²⁹ Bairoch and Goertz. “Factors of Urbanization”

³⁰ Rees, Philip and Nik Lomax. “Ravenstein Revisited: The Analysis of Migration, Then and Now.” *Comparative Population Studies*, Vol. 44 (2019): 351-412.

absorption and dispersal. The country of absorption refers to the destination country, that has greater population than the original inhabitants. The country of dispersal refers to the country that has a lower population than the original inhabitants as a result of migration.³¹

Friedrich Ratzel, a German geographer proposed a different approach towards migration. Prominent in the late 19th century beginning of 20th century, Ratzel used the term migration to refer to all living creatures, considering them as natural phenomenon.³² He introduced the concept of Lebensraum (living space), paralleling human societies with other organisms, and explaining that expanding territory to accommodate growth is natural tendency in all species.³³

Continuing the attempts to understand migration, the early 20th century produced other theories that tried to shed light on causes of migration. Sociologist Robert E. Park, in his publication in the book "The city" conceptualizes the city as a social laboratory that is shaped by the movement and settlement patterns of populations, including migrants.³⁴ In the city, one has to adopt, negotiate and reconstruct their identities.³⁵ Other authors like Robert Kenzie, in the same book, compare the city as a human ecology, where migrants, like organisms in nature, adapt to their new environment in the way that influences the structure and evolution of the city.³⁶

Other contributor to the migration field, like the scholar Everett S. Lee, continued the work of Ravenstein. He published in 1966 the theory of migration, which is based on push and pull factors, what he considers "positive" and "negative" factors.³⁷ These factors are associated with the area of origin, the area of destination, intervening obstacles and personal factors.³⁸ Negative conditions like poverty, unemployment, political instability from the place of origin can become an incentive for people to leave. On the other side, positive attributes like job

³¹ Rees and Lomax. "Ravenstein Revisited"

³² Ratzel, Friedrich. "Lebensraum: a biogeographical study." *Journal of Historical Geography*, (2018): 59 – 80.

³³ Ratzel. "Lebensraum: a biogeographical study"

³⁴ Park, Robert E. "The city: Suggestion for the investigation of human behavior in the urban environment" in the *The City*, edited by Morris Janowitz, 1-47. The University of Chicago, 1925.

³⁵ Park. "The city: Suggestion for the investigation of human behavior in the urban environment"

³⁶ Kenzie, Robert. "The ecological approach to the study of the human community" in the *The City*, edited by Morris Janowitz, 63-79. The University of Chicago, 1925.

³⁷ Lee, Everett S. "A theory of migration." *Population Association of America*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1966): 47-57

³⁸ Lee. "A theory of migration."

opportunities, safety or improved quality of life can pull migrants.³⁹ When elaborating further on intervening obstacles, Lee's argues that distance is one of the main obstacles, but not only, as the conditions vary between different people.⁴⁰ Finally, Lee takes into account personal factors like awareness, personal contacts or sources of information which are not universally available.⁴¹

Whilst Lee offered a new approach in migration studies by considering more factors that push individuals to move from one destination to another, other theories went further into discussing the interconnectedness of various factors. Akin Mabogunje, a Nigerian geographer, published the "Theory of Rural-Urban Theory" in 1970. His work was inspired by the rapid urbanization and socio - economic transformation occurring in post-colonial Africa during 1960-1970. He observed that the existing theories largely developed in the Global North failed to adequately reflect the complexities of rural-urban migration in African context.⁴²

"Theory of Rural-Urban Theory" developed by Mabogunje introduced a framework that conceptualizes migration as a dynamic system, influenced by various factors. Central to this theory is the feedback mechanism; positive feedback can stimulate further the migration process, while negative ones might halt it.⁴³ Other actors like the government or social organizations might influence this system by either enhancing or restricting the freedom of movement and integration process.⁴⁴ Additionally, the environmental context that provides job opportunities, political stability and better social conditions, plays a role in the decision - making process of migration.⁴⁵

In the same year, another significant theory by John Harris and Michael Todaro regarding migration emerged: "The neo-classical theory" appeared out of analysis in developing countries.⁴⁶ Harris, a British economist, and Todaro, an American economist worked and lived in African countries. Their theory emerged during a period when many newly independent countries in the Global South, such as those in Africa and Latin America, were grappling with the

³⁹ Lee. "A theory of migration."

⁴⁰ Lee. "E theory of migration"

⁴¹ Lee. "A theory pf migration"

⁴² Mubogunje, Akin L. "Systems Approach to a Theory of Rural-Urban Migration". *Geographical Analysis*, Vol. 61 (2018): 59 - 80.

⁴³ Mubogunje. "Theory of Rural-Urban Migration"

⁴⁴ Mubogunje. "Theory of Rural-Urban Migration"

⁴⁵ Mubogunje. "Theory of Rural-Urban Migration"

⁴⁶ Boston University Arts & Sciences. "Remembering Economist John Harris." Accessed April 29, 2025.

economic legacies of colonialism, which left them dependent on the economic systems of the Global North.⁴⁷

According to this theory, individuals make decisions to migrate based on the expected income differential between rural and urban areas, considering wage levels and the probability of securing urban employment.⁴⁸ The model highlights that perceived economic opportunity, rather than actual job availability, is what drives migration. Additionally, it recognizes the dual structure of urban labor markets, with limited high - wage formal jobs and widespread low-wage informal work.

Almost a decade later, Michael J. Piore, an American economist, introduced the theory of dual labor-market theory. Piore's theory, developed in the context of post-World War II economic growth in Western Europe and North America, opposed the prevailing notion that migration was solely driven by push factors such as poverty, unemployment, or instability.⁴⁹ Instead, he argued that migration was primarily a result of pull factors, specifically the need for foreign labor in the industrialized economies of the Global North. He opposes the belief that immigration is caused by push factors like wages or unemployment, but by pull factors like the need for foreign workers.⁵⁰

While theories in the 20th century focused mostly on economic factors, more recent theories focus on mobility, viewed as a complex, multi-directional, and often temporary flow of people, goods, ideas, and services. "The Mobilities paradigm" analyses all various forms of movement, including labor migration, leisure travel, and even virtual mobilities.⁵¹ This theory takes into consideration the impact modernity and technology in the freedom of movement, making it fluid and often cyclical.⁵²

⁴⁷ McGowan, Patrick J. "Economic Dependence and Economic Performance in Black Africa." *The Journal of Modern African Studies*

⁴⁸ McGowan. "Economic Dependence and Economic Performance in Black Africa."

⁴⁹ Piore, Michael J. "The dual labor market: Theory and implications" in the *Social Stratification, Class, Race, and Gender in Sociological Perspective*, 435 - 438. Routledge, 2001.

⁵⁰ Piore. "The dual labor market: Theory and implications".

⁵¹ Sheller, Mimi and John Urry. "The New Mobilities Paradigm." *Environment and Planning*. Vol. 38, No. 2 (2006): 207-226.

⁵² Sheller and Urry. "The New Mobilities Paradigm."

2.2.1 From Theories to Practice: Migration Control and the Rise of Walls

Theories developed during the last two centuries, including the recent ones that highlight the role of globalization and technology in shaping migration trends, are crucial in understanding the movement of people from one place to another. While many theories have tried to identify why are the main push and pull factors, many countries from the Global North have employed different policies and implemented migration management strategies, in order to halt migration. For the sake of this research proposal, we will only deal with general measures taken from EU countries, as a representative of the Global North.

In this research project, we consider populism as the main driver behind the stands of EU in halting migration. Populism, as defined by Cas Mudde, is an ideology that divides people into two groups; “the pure ones” against the “the corrupted elite”, while arguing that the politics should represent the general will of the people.⁵³ This definition positions populist politicians as heroes fighting an organized agenda. According to researcher Anna Kravesta, crises are preconditions for populists to come into power, and if that crisis does not exist, “*it would have been invented by populist politicians*”.⁵⁴ Through populism, many political leaders create security issues, fear, uncertainty and crises, leading in reproducing the identity they claim to protect.⁵⁵ The identity the populists proclaim to protect comes in antagonistic form to the other group, in this case migrants, which brings as a result new measures of securitization.

One of these measures includes the construction of kilometers of walls and fences, in order to prevent migrants from reaching Europe. After the ending of the cold war, Spain was the first country to build walls in 1990, as a measure to halt migration from Morocco and other African countries.⁵⁶ Following the eastward enlargement in 2004, the EU acquired two additional fences.⁵⁷ The situation took another turn in 2015, in - what came to be known as the “migration

⁵³ Mudde, Cas. ‘The Populist Zeitgeist’, *Government and Opposition*, Vo. 39, no. 4 (2004): 541–63.

⁵⁴ Kravesta, Ana. “Balkan Migration Crises and Beyond.” *Southeastern Europe*, Vol. 45, No. 2, (2021): 173-203.

⁵⁵ Brubaker, Rogers. “Why populism?” *Theory and Society*, Vol 46, No. 5 (2017): 357-385.

⁵⁶ Dupont, Pier L. “Migrant worker policies and national privilege: A UK case study.” *Deusto Journal of Human Rights*.

⁵⁷ Lang, Golder I. “Walls and Fences at the EU’s External Borders and their Monitoring”, in *The Law of Schengen: Limits, Contents and Perspectives after 40 Years*, edited by Philippe De Bruycker, Fabian Lutz, Jorrit Rijpma, Daniel Thym. Edward Elgar, 2024.

crisis” in Europe - with more than a million migrants and refugees came to Europe.⁵⁸ The EU countries responded to this crisis by building more walls. Within less than a decade, from 2014 – 2022, the total stretch of border barriers along the EU expanded from 315 kilometers to 2,048 km.⁵⁹ Other reports compared the walls built by these countries with the infamous Berlin wall,⁶⁰ that divided West and East Berlin at the start of the cold war. EU walls are now six times longer than the Berlin wall. The data show that by 2022, 12 European Union countries have built walls or barriers.⁶¹

While borders of nations have historically been protected to identify the sovereign limits of a state, the construction of walls in the EU reflects a different political and ideological purpose: securitization and discouragement. According to European Parliament, two are the main reasons for building border walls: To stop irregular migration and to combat terrorism.⁶² These walls are being built in regions where national identity is questioned, and the freedom of movement of certain groups is perceived as a threat.

In 2015, Hungary constructed fences along its borders with Serbia and Croatia in response to the surge of migrants.⁶³ Austria followed by building temporary fences on its border with Slovenia.⁶⁴ Slovenia also erected fences with Croatia to control migration flows in the Balkans.⁶⁵ Bulgaria and Greece built fences along their borders with Turkey to curb irregular migration. Spain used fences in its North African enclaves, Ceuta and Melilla, to control migration from Morocco.⁶⁶ Poland started constructing fences along their borders with Belarus to manage increasing migrant numbers.⁶⁷ This growing trend in some of the EU countries shows that the walls symbolize efforts to prevent migrations from the Global North.

⁵⁸ European Parliamentary. “*The EU's external borders Key trends and developments*”. Accessed April 29, 2025.

⁵⁹ Ciesnik, Sonya. “Europe Finds Appeal in Border Fences Once Again.” *InfoMigrants*. February 16, 2023.

⁶⁰ Benedicto, Ainhoa R and Pere Brunete. “*Building walls: Fear and securitization in the European Union*.” Centre Delàs d'Estudis per la Pau, 2018.

⁶¹ Benedicto and Pere. “Building walls: Fear and securitization”

⁶² European Parliament. “*Walls and fences at EU borders*”. Accessed April 29, 2025.

⁶³ Korte, Kristina. “Who Is the Animal in the Zoo? Fencing In and Fencing Out at the Hungarian-Serbian Border. A Qualitative Case Study”, *Journal of Borderlands Studies*

⁶⁴ “Austria erects fence on Slovenia border.” *Deutsche Welle*. July 7, 2015.

⁶⁵ “Slovenia starts erecting razor wire on Croatia border.” *Aljazeera*. November 11, 2015.

⁶⁶ Ayed, Nahlad and Stephanie Jenzer. “Spain built fences 20 years ago to keep migrants away. Here's how that worked out”. *CBC News*. September 25, 2018.

⁶⁷ Nahmen, Alexandra V. “Poland's Belarus border fence: A controversial deterrent.” *Deutsche Welle*. January 18, 2025

2.2.2 European Union Border Control through Surveillance

After 2015, EU countries have put a big emphasis in strengthening EU external border control using not only walls, but also technology, while safeguarding the freedom of movement within internal border of EU countries.⁶⁸ European Border and Coast Guard Agency, known as Frontex, founded in 2005, was reinforced more than a decade later.⁶⁹ Through the adoption of Regulation 2019/1896,⁷⁰ Frontex was granted with the extended power in terms of conducting joint operation at external borders, coordinating search and rescue missions, assisting in the return of irregular migrants and support in border surveillance and intelligence control.⁷¹

Border surveillance and intelligence control has been significantly enhanced with the development of new technologies, including the advanced data-sharing mechanisms among EU member states. The Schengen Information System (SIS), established in 1995, was renovated in 2013, adding additional features of technological border control. What came to be known as SIS II, introduced new biometric identification along with photography and fingerprints that were already in the system. Those new biometric identifiers include facial images, palmprints and DNA profiles.⁷²

In the same year, The European Border Surveillance System (Eurosur) was introduced, operating under Frontex. Same as SIS, Eurosur implies the usage of technology to halt irregular migration, to prevent cross – border crimes and protect migrants' lives.⁷³ Eurosur uses drones and satellites to collect information on refugees that use irregular methods to enter EU. Each EU member state has created a National Coordination Center that shares real time mapping information with Frontex and other border monitoring units.⁷⁴

⁶⁸ European Council. *28 EUCO Final Conclusions*. Brussels, August 28, 2018.

⁶⁹ European Council. *Final Conclusions*.

⁷⁰ European Union. *Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 November 2019 on the European Border and Coast Guard and Repealing Regulation (EU) No 1052/2013*. Accessed April 26, 2025.

⁷¹ "New Frontex Regulation Comes into Force." *Frontex*, December 4, 2019.

⁷² European Data Protection Supervisor. *Opinion on the Proposals for Two Regulations Establishing a Revised Schengen Information System (SIS II)*. May 2, 2017.

⁷³ European Commission. *EUROSUR*. Accessed April 26, 2025.

⁷⁴ International Team for the Study of Security Verona (ITSS Verona). "European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR) and Its Problematic Impact on the Rights of the People on the Move." *ITSS Verona*. Accessed April 26, 2025.

In addition to Eurosur, the European Union has also developed Entry/Exit system (EES) for Global South citizens, to enhance border management.⁷⁵ The EES, same as other measures, includes the usage of technology by replacing the stamping methods with electronically recording of entry and exit from EU countries. Additionally, it collects personal data, travel document details, biometric information such as finger prints and facial images.⁷⁶ Like SIS and Eurosur, the EES forms part of the broader strategy to use digitalization for border control, ensuring monitoring of migration flows. In addition to that, other policies known as externalization policies, have been implemented.

2.2.3 European Union border Control through Externalization Policies

Before examining the EU externalization policies, it is important to acknowledge the broader context of mobility and border control in international level. With the emerge of the nation-state, the concept that people could simply move freely across borders is now outdated. Today, all countries have measures and policies that control who enters their territory and under what conditions. Such control is framed under the national interest, particularly in limiting the costs of irregular migration. While national interest as a concept is widely accepted, the EU approach to integrate non - EU countries will be examined under externalization policy concept.

Border externalization refers to practices where countries from the Global North, try to manage and control migration before migrants even reach their own borders, by moving asylum processing, detention, or other migration-related controls to neighboring countries or sending states in Global South.⁷⁷ One case of externalization policies is the EU - Turkey deal, that started in 2015 and was finalized in 2016.⁷⁸ Turkey is geographically one of the main countries of entry for migrants seeking to enter Europe. The route is known as the Eastern Mediterranean route. Syrian refugees, along with migrants from Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan use this route to enter Europe through Turkey.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ European Commission. *Entry/Exit System (EES)*. Accessed April 26, 2025.

⁷⁶ European Commission. *Entry/Exit System*.

⁷⁷ Stock, Inka, Ayşen Üstübcü, and Susanne U. Schultz. "Externalization at Work: Responses to Migration Policies from the Global South." *Comparative Migration Studies*, Vol. 7, no. 1 (2019): 1-19.

⁷⁸ Council of the European Union, "EU-Turkey Statement, 18 March 2016," *Consilium*, March 18, 2016,

⁷⁹ Council of the European Union, "EU-Turkey Statement"

Through this EU - Turkey deal, Turkey gained several important advantages, in exchange for curbing number of migrants entering EU. The EU promised €6 billion through the Facility for Refugees in Turkey to improve services like education, healthcare, and housing for Syrian refugees. Politically, the agreement aimed to revive Turkey's EU accession talks and strengthen its role as a key partner for Europe in managing migration. The EU also pledged to speed up visa liberalization for Turkish citizens, provided Turkey met certain conditions. Finally, the EU agreed to resettle one Syrian refugee from Turkey for every Syrian returned from Greece.⁸⁰

In 2015, EU signed the EU - Niger Understanding⁸¹ to curb the number of migrants transiting through Niger - mainly migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa - who crossed into North Africa (especially Libya) and used the Central Mediterranean route to reach Italy or Malta.⁸² Financially, the EU has allocated funds in different fields like border control and security forces, but also in governance, education, employment as a method to curb migration. From 2015 to 2022, EU funded 19 projects with a cost of EUR 687 million.⁸³

In 2016, Italy, a member state of EU, signed a MoU with Libya, in building detention centers to control migration flows along the Central Mediterranean route.⁸⁴ This MoU, which has been renewed in 2023, delegated sea border control, search and rescue to Libyan authorities. Under this MoU, migrants would not be transferred to Italy but instead returned to Libya.⁸⁵ Many international human rights NGOs have criticized the detention centers in Libya for inhuman treating of returnees, describing it as crimes against humanity.⁸⁶ According to UN Independent Fact - Finding Mission on Libya, migrants faced "murder, enforced disappearance, torture, enslavement, sexual violence, rape and other inhuman acts".⁸⁷

⁸⁰ "What is the EU-Turkey Deal?" *International Rescue Committee*. April 26, 2021.

⁸¹ Arhin-Sam, Kwaku and Laura Lambert. "Niger - The Gate to the Sahel." *Brot für die Welt*, 2022

⁸² European Commission. "Migration Partnership Framework: A New Approach to Better Manage Migration." March 2, 2017.

⁸³ Arhin-Sam, Kwaku and Laura Lambert. "Niger - The Gate to the Sahel." *Brot für die Welt*, 2022

⁸⁴ Vari, Elisa. "Italy-Libya Memorandum of Understanding: Italy's International Obligations." *Hastings International and Comparative Law Review*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (2020).

⁸⁵ Zambiasi, Diego and Emanuele Albarosa. "Externalizing rescue operations at sea: The migration deal between Italy and Libya." *Journal of Economic Geography*, ol. 25, No. 1 (2025): 41-58

⁸⁶ Human Rights Watch. "Italy Reups Funding to Force Migrants Back to Libya.", February 1, 2023.

⁸⁷ United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. "Libya: Evidence of Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Committed Since 2016." October 13, 2021.

EU attempts to curb migration by putting an emphasis on externalization policies continued. In 2023, Spain representatives from the government held a meeting with Morocco's counterpart, and pledged to continue the measures to curb migration towards EU.⁸⁸ In 2025, Spain allocated EUR 2.5 million to Morocco, to reinforce border control, including joint patrols and intelligence sharing.⁸⁹

In 2023 and 2024, EU continued its externalized policies in controlling migration outside its borders. In 2023, EU representatives held a meeting in Tunisia and signed a MoU to halt migration. EU politicians provided a budget of EUR 1 billion to help Tunisia control migration towards EU borders.⁹⁰ In March 2024, EU signed a EUR4.7 billion agreement with Egypt, positioning Egypt a partner in fighting migration towards European borders.⁹¹

2.2.4 Externalizing Borders: The Albania - Italy Migration Deal

In an effort to reduce migrant arrivals on its shores and enhance border security, another MoU was signed outside EU countries. Italy signed an agreement with Albania in 2023.⁹² This agreement foresaw the establishment of two detention centers; one for disembarkation and identification procedures, and the other for following procedures.⁹³ These detention centers are exclusively for male migrants from the Global South which Italy lists as safe countries,⁹⁴ with a capacity to host up to 36,000 asylum seekers per year.⁹⁵

The detention centers, constructed a year later, are located in Lezha, near the port town of Shengjin in the northwest of Albania.⁹⁶ According to this deal, asylum procedures will be carried out in Albania and the migrants who do not meet the criteria for refugee status will be returned to their countries of origin directly from Albania.⁹⁷ The whole process was designated to be carried out by Italian authorities. The deal explains that the staff workers in the detention

⁸⁸ "Spain and Morocco Strengthen Cooperation on Migration." *La Moncloa*, February 2, 2023.

⁸⁹ Bathke, Benjamin. "Morocco raises migrants' jail time over Melilla stampede". *Infomigrants*, July 6, 2023.

⁹⁰ "EU, Tunisia Sign €1 Billion Deal to Fight Illegal Migration." *Deutsche Welle*, July 16, 2023.

⁹¹ "EU Seals €7.4bn Deal with Egypt in Effort to Avert Another Migration Crisis." *The Guardian*. March 17, 2024.

⁹² Giordani, Carlotta. "Italy-Albania Agreement on Migration: From the Fiction of Non-Entry to Functional Entry." Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP), June 2024

⁹³ Giordani, Carlotta. "Italy-Albania Agreement on Migration"

⁹⁴ Ministry of Labour and Social Policies. "International Protection: Updated List of Safe Countries of Origin." *Integrazione Migranti*, March 5, 2024.

⁹⁵ Elezi, Elona. "Has Italy's Albania Migrant Deal Completely Failed?" *DW*, April 9, 2024.

⁹⁶ Nadeau, Barbie Latza. "Italy to Send Migrants to Albania under Controversial New Deal." *CNN*, October 9, 2024.

⁹⁷ "What is the Italy-Albania asylum deal?" *International Rescue Committee*, October 15, 2024.

centers would be Italians, including police workers. The Italian government, initially budgeted around EUR 700 million, but in total it has exceeded EUR 1 billion.⁹⁸

The prime minister of Italy, Meloni, in many of her speeches praised Albania as an ally of EU. "The truth is that Albania already acts as if it were a European Union Member State, even though it isn't formally, making choices that are perfectly in line with the principles of solidarity and cooperation that form the basis of the European family", she said in a press statement during a visit in Albania.⁹⁹ In the same speech, Meloni affirms that EU countries have shown extended interest in this agreement which she describes as "a model", by adding further that 15 out of 27 European countries have signed an appeal to the European Commission, requesting to follow this model.¹⁰⁰ Ursula von der Leyen, European Commission president praised important initiatives to combat irregular migration, by considering Albania - Italy agreement "an out-of-the-box thinking".¹⁰¹

On 16th of October 2024, the first naval vessel carrying the first migrants from the Global South landed in Albania. It contained 16 migrants, 10 from Bangladesh and 6 from Egypt, both countries Italy has designated as safe.¹⁰² All of them were sent back to Italy, as the Court of Rome declared that the repatriation to their country of origin could lead to the breach of international law.¹⁰³ The second attempt to make the agreement functional was made in November 8th, 2024. A group of 8 migrants were sent to Albania, but in the following day one of them was returned to Italy after being deemed vulnerable.¹⁰⁴ Again, the remaining migrants were sent back to Italy, after the Rome Court of Appeal ruled that the migrants cannot be held in the detention centers until the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg determines whether the countries of origin of the asylum seekers are deemed safe for deportation.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁸ "What is the Italy-Albania asylum deal?" *International Rescue Committee*.

⁹⁹ "President Meloni's Press Statement with Prime Minister Rama during Her Visit to Albania." *Governo.it*, November 6, 2023.

¹⁰⁰ "President Meloni's Press Statement with Prime Minister Edi Rama"

¹⁰¹ Cook, Lorne. "EU's von der Leyen Backs Italy's Migration Deal with Albania as 'Example of Creative Solutions.'" *The Independent*, November 8, 2023.

¹⁰² Kaval, Allan, and Jean-Baptiste Chastand. "Italy Sends First Group of Asylum Seekers to Albania." *Le Monde*, October 15, 2024.

¹⁰³ Bellamy, Daniel. "First Batch of Migrants Sent to Albania Must Be Returned, Italian Court Rules." *Euronews*, October 19, 2024.

¹⁰⁴ "Migrant Returned from Albania to Italy Due to 'Psychiatric Issues'." *InfoMigrants*, November 9, 2024.

¹⁰⁵ "Gjykata kthen në Itali edhe grupin e dytë të emigrantëve që mbërritën në Shqipëri" [Court Returns Second

The last attempt to make the agreement functional was made in January 2025, when the Italian government sent a third ship containing 49 migrants apprehended on Italian coastline.¹⁰⁶ All migrants were sent back to Italy, after a Court of Rome decision, that gave the same reasoning as it had given in the previous instances.¹⁰⁷

2.2.5 Masculinization, Racism, and Externalization of Borders through the Lens of Albania - Italy Migration Deal

While traditional migration theories like “The Law of Migration” and other following theories, focused mostly on trying to understand push and pull factors, contemporary scholarship increasingly acknowledges the gendered dimension of migration. This gendered framework is essential in understating how migration policies are shaped and why certain groups of migrants – in particular men – are treated differently. As we look at the policies of externalization of borders, the role of gender and race becomes an important point of analysis.

Migration, especially in the context of externalized borders, is not merely about geographical lines and the crossing of them. The ways in which policies are operationalized reveal unequal processes that are deeply gendered and racialized. The migrant, especially the male brown or black migrant, is frequently depicted or constructed in society as embodying traditional masculine traits, such as dominance, aggression, or strength. This masculinization of the male migrant figure, leads to them being perceived as a security threat that is heightened by fears of terrorism, sexual assault, theft and other violence.¹⁰⁸ This narrative, fueled by media headlines and right - wing politicians, depicted migrants as “barbarian invaders”, or as “people carrying diseases and engaging in criminal behaviors”.¹⁰⁹

This masculinization is further complicated by the racialization of migrants from Global South in the EU. Following the incidents of sexual assault in Germany in 2015¹¹⁰ and the

Group of Migrants Who Arrived in Albania to Italy.] *A2 News*, October 5, 2024.

¹⁰⁶ Sinoruka, Fjori, and Tommi Siviero. "Italy Sends Third Ship Transporting Migrants to Albania." *Balkan Insight*, January 28, 2025.

¹⁰⁷ Xhabafti, Erion, and Llažar Semini. "Italy Sends Third Ship Transporting Migrants to Albania." *AP News*, January 28, 2025.

¹⁰⁸ Ward, Dalston G. "Public Attitudes toward Young Immigrant Men." *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 113, no. 1 (2019)

¹⁰⁹ Korac, Maja. "Gendered and Racialised Border Security: Displaced People and the Politics of Fear", *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, (2020)

¹¹⁰ Köttig, Michaela and Johanna Sigl. "Racist mobilisation and sexualisation in the 'refugee debate' in Germany."

terrorist attacks in France and Belgium, male migrants from the Global South became highly racialized within the dominant public narrative, led by the media.¹¹¹ Racialized male migrants from Global South are characterized by marginalization, sexism, transgression, and criminal behavior.¹¹² In this way, masculinized migrants, particularly from the Global South, are cast not only as undesirable but also as the “problematic” figures in migration discourses.

These racialized and gendered perceptions have significant implications for the externalization of borders. After providing a detailed literature review on migration theories and placing a focus on Global North measures, taking EU as a representative, this research project identifies its specific focus on Italy - Albania migration agreements. The proposed research aims to examine this deal through the lenses of racialization and masculinization of male migrants from the Global South. The externalization of borders in this context involves Italy's role in collaborating with Albania to manage migration flows, often through agreements that place the responsibility for border control outside of the EU's physical borders.

This strategy is shaped by racialized perceptions, where male migrants, particularly those from Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia, are framed as threats to national security and social stability. The masculinized narratives of these migrants - depicted as dangerous or criminal - reinforce exclusionary policies. By focusing on Italy's migration practices with Albania, this case study demonstrates how externalization not only controls migrant flows but also perpetuates racialized and gendered power dynamics, maintaining a system that marginalizes men from the Global South and casts them as the “other.”

Journal of Sociology, Vol. 56, No. 1 (2020), 69-83.

¹¹¹ Mirza, Daniel, Matthieu, Picault, Mamadou, Sacko and Ahmed Tritah. “Terrorism, Media Attitudes Towards Migration and Votes: Evidence from France.” *Laboratoire d'Economie d'Orleans*. 2025

¹¹² Korac, Maja. “Gendered and Racialised Border Security: Displaced People and the Politics of Fear”, *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (2020): 75-86.

3. Albania at the Crossroads: Border Politics, Power, and the Politics of Belonging

3.1. From Irregular Migrants to EU Border Safeguards: The Changing Role of Albania

Albania, a country located in the Western Balkans, in the Southeastern part of Europe, has been undergoing a transitional democracy since 1991, after the fall of one of the harshest dictatorial regimes in Europe. From 1944 to 1991, Albania was mostly isolated from the world, especially with the West,¹¹³ and freedom of movement - even within the country - was strictly controlled.¹¹⁴ As the last country in Europe to overthrow a dictatorship, Albania experienced several political changes, accompanied by large waves of migration toward Western Europe. The student protests that led to regime change were driven by the slogan “We want Albania to become like Europe,” a phrase that continues to echo in recent protests.

Italy, in fact, hosts the largest Albanian diaspora in the world.¹¹⁵ During the 1990s, Italian cinematography and art dominated Albanian television. Italy thus became a symbol of connection to the West, which had only been imagined during decades of isolation. Through the screen, people were able to access at least glimpses of a world they aspired to live in and belong to. From images to lived experiences, Albanians took dangerous routes to reach Italian shores.



Thousands of Albanians desperately seek to leave Albania and reach Italy, August 1991. Copyright: Luca Turi

¹¹³ Johnson, Marianne and Matraku Dervishi. “Doriana, Isolation in Albanian Economic” in *Research in the History of Economic Thought and Methodology*, Vol. 38 (2020): 112-119.

¹¹⁴ Human Rights Watch. “*Human Rights in Post-Communist Albania*.” 1996. Accessed 29 April, 2025.

¹¹⁵ International Organization for Migration. “*Migration from and to Albania*”. Accessed April 29, 2025

The 1990s were marked by major waves of migration, again mainly toward Italy and Greece - two neighboring EU countries.¹¹⁶ After the 2000s, large - scale migration became steadier, but remained continuous.¹¹⁷ Recent data show that more than 1.2 million Albanian citizens live abroad, accounting for 44% of the population.¹¹⁸ This brief context serves as an introduction to my long-standing interest in migration topics. Albania's migration trajectory and its position in relation to EU borders and policies have long captured my attention, both as a feminist activist and journalist.

I was particularly interested in 2023 proposal for the establishment of detention centers for migrants in Albania as part of a bilateral agreement with Italy. The proposal seemed to merge various threads: Europe's externalization of migration control through gendered and racialized policies; Italy - as a representative of the EU - undergoing a shifting political landscape; and Albania's role as both a gatekeeper and a subordinate partner. This intersection of national politics, international agreements, and human rights concerns served as an impetus for me to investigate further. The project, for me, is not simply academic; it is personal and political.

3.2 From Margins to Enforcers: Albania's Complicity in Externalized Border Regimes

As a journalist and a feminist activist from Albania, engaged in fighting social injustice, I have followed with concern how racialized and gendered logics of exclusion in the general migration narrative are shifting beyond EU borders. Although Albania has historically been a country of emigration rather than immigration, recent developments show that history sometimes doesn't repeat itself, but it can make you complicit - not as a passive observer - but as an active participant in enforcing the very border regimes and exclusionary practices we once struggled against.

In the broader context of global debates about border regimes, issues such as racism and gender come into play, and I often find myself reflecting on how these dynamics manifest within Albania's own political and social landscape. Albania's prolonged aspiration to join the EU appears to come with a willingness to serve as a laboratory for experimenting with policies of

¹¹⁶ Grabova, Persta Benard, Dosti and Elona Pojani. "Effects of economic crisis on migration - Evidence from Albania". *European Scientific Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (2013): 211 - 228.

¹¹⁷ Grabova, Persta and Pojani. "Effects of economic crisis on migration"

¹¹⁸ World Bank. "International mobility as a development strategy: Albania Country Report 2024." Accessed April 29, 2025.

migration management and border control - policies that might not be easily implemented within EU territory itself. Accepting such deals is often framed as a demonstration of loyalty and alignment with EU priorities, potentially accelerating Albania's path toward membership. This situation leads to bigger questions: How does the power imbalance (Italy as an EU representative) take advantage of less powerful countries (like Albania) in implementing policies that carry racialized and gendered implications?

3.3 Activism in a Complex Landscape: Between Ideals and Political Realities

Engaging with a topic such as the Italy - Albania detention centers agreement, while holding a background rooted in activism and journalism, inevitably comes with tensions. My commitment to social justice and human rights shapes the lens through which I view migration policies - often presenting a critical stance toward practices I perceive as unjust or dehumanizing. However, this very standpoint risks producing a skewed or overly one-sided narrative, particularly when the realities on the ground are complex and multi-layered.

This project thus demands a careful balancing act: it requires holding space for critique without dismissing the broader political and social pressures that shape state decisions. For Albania, agreeing to host detention centers can be seen as a pragmatic step towards fulfilling long-standing aspirations for EU membership, economic investment, and geopolitical recognition. For Italy, the deal responds to domestic political demands for stricter migration control, reflecting racialized and gendered elements in these demands. Acknowledging these motivations does not equate to endorsing them, but it does mean engaging with them seriously.

The challenge lies in resisting the binary of victim versus perpetrator, of good versus bad state actor. Instead, this project attempts to trace how power flows and decisions are entangled across national borders, often leaving both migrants and host societies navigating difficult, ethically fraught terrain. While my activist commitments remain central, I aim to approach the topic with humility - recognizing the contradictions, compromises, and trade-offs that shape policymaking in the context of migration and border governance.

Bibliography

Books

- Bellwood, Peter. "The Relevance and Reality of Ancient Migration," in *The Relevance and Reality of Ancient Migration*, 1 - 16. Wiley Blackwell, 2013. https://os.pennds.org/archaeobib_filestore/pdf_articles/Books/2013_Bellwood.pdf
- Johnson, Marianne and Matraku Dervishi. "Doriana, Isolation in Albanian Economic" in *Research in the History of Economic Thought and Methodology*, Vol. 38 (2020): 112-119. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3459665>
- Kenzie, Robert. "The ecological approach to the study of the human community" in *The City*, edited by Morris Janowitz, 63-79. The University of Chicago, 1925.
- Lang, Golder I. "Walls and Fences at the EU's External Borders and their Monitoring", in *The Law of Schengen: Limits, Contents and Perspectives after 40 Years*, edited by Philippe De Bruycker, Fabian Lutz, Jorrit Rijpma, Daniel Thym. Edward Elgar, 2024. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4788881
- Lewis, Colin M. "Capitalism, Imperialism and the Emergence of an Industrialized Global Economy." Chapter. In *Evolutions of Capitalism: Historical Perspectives, 1200-2000*, edited by Catherine Casson and Philipp Robinson Rössner. Bristol University Press, 2022. <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:EU:7c433ec1-98ed-459c-b969-125c682e460a>
- Park, Robert E. "The city: Suggestion for the investigation of human behavior in the urban environment" in *The City*, edited by Morris Janowitz, 1-47. The University of Chicago, 1925.
- Piore, Michael J. "The dual labour market: Theory and implications" in *The Social Stratification, Class, Race, and Gender in Sociological Perspective* edited by David B. Grusky, 435 - 438. Routledge, 2001. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780429306419-69/dual-labor-market-theory-implications-michael-piore>

Journal articles

- Bairoch, Paul and Gary Goertz. "Factors of Urbanisation in the Nineteenth Century Developed Countries: A Descriptive and Econometric Analysis." *Urban Studies*, Vol. 25. No. 4 (1986): 285-305. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00420988620080351>
- Brubaker, Rogers. "Why populism?" *Theory and Society*, Vol 46, No. 5 (2017): 357-385. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11186-017-9301-7>
- Castles, Stephen, Mark J. Miller, and Giuseppe Ammendola. "The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World." *American Foreign Policy Interests*, Vol 27, No 6. (2003): 537-542. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10803920500434037>

- Chitadze, Nika. "The Global North-Global South Relations and their reflection on the World Politics and International Economy." *Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 8, No 1. (2019): 42-51. <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:EU:5fc1b92e-b456-4502-adf8-08b832fd5cd4>
- Dados, Nour and Raewyn Connell. "The Global South." *Contexts*, Vol. 11, No 1 (February 2012): 12-13. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epub/10.1177/1536504212436479>
- Dirlik, Arif. "Global South: Predicament and Promise." *Global South Studies Center, University of Cologne*. Vol. 1, no 1. 12-23. https://gssc.uni-koeln.de/sites/BiPoN/user_upload/9_GLOBAL_SOUTH_voices012015_concepts_of_the_global_south_Kopie.pdf
- Gray, Harriet & Franck, Anja. K. "Refugees as/at risk: The gendered and racialized underpinnings of securitization in British media narratives." *Security Dialogue*, Vol 50,3. (2019): 275-291. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010619830590>
- King, Russell. "Theories and Typologies of Migration: An Overview and A Primer." *Malmö Institute for Studies of Migration, Diversity and Welfare*. (2012): 1 - 43. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/260096281_Theories_and_Typologies_of_Migration_An_Overview_and_A_Primer
- Krasteva, Ana. "Balkan Migration Crises and Beyond." *Southeastern Europe*, Vol. 45, No. 2, (2021): 173-203. <https://doi.org/10.30965/18763332-45020001>
- Köttig, Michaela and Johanna Sigl. "Racist mobilisation and sexualisation in the 'refugee debate' in Germany." *Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (2020), 69-83. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1440783319882538>
- Korac, Maja. "Gendered and Racialised Border Security: Displaced People and the Politics of Fear," *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (2020): 75-86.
- Lee, Everett S. "A theory of migration." *Population Association of America*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1966): 4 - 7 - 5 - 7 . https://newdoc.nccu.edu.tw/teasylabus/1102265813001/3_ATheoryOfMigration_EverettLee.pdf
- Mabogunje, Akin L. "Systems Approach to a Theory of Rural-Urban Migration." *Geographical Analysis*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (1970): 1 - 18. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1538-4632.1970.tb00140.x>
- Mirza, Daniel, Matthieu, Picault, Mamadou, Sacko, and Ahmed Tritah. "Terrorism, Media Attitudes Towards Migration and Votes: Evidence from France." *Laboratoire d'Economie d'Orleans*. 2025. https://hal.science/hal-05007590v1/file/DR%20LEO%202025-06_merged.pdf

- Mudde, Cas. "The Populist Zeitgeist." *Government and Opposition*, 39, no. 4 (2004): 541–63. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/government-and-opposition/article/populist-zeitgeist/2CD34F8B25C4FFF4F322316833DB94B7>
- Ratzel, Friedrich. "Lebensraum: a biogeographical study." *Journal of Historical Geography*, 61 (2018): 59 – 80. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0305748817302475>
- Rees, Philip and Nik Lomax. (2020). "Ravenstein Revisited: The Analysis of Migration, Then and Now." *Comparative Population Studies*, Vol. 44 (2019): 351-412. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341384352_Ravenstein_Revisited_The_Analysis_of_Migration_Then_and_Now
- Sheller, Mimi and John Urry. "The New Mobilities Paradigm." *Environment and Planning*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (2006): 207-226. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epdf/10.1068/a37268>
- Stock, Inka, Ayşen Üstübcü, and Susanne U. Schultz. "Externalization at Work: Responses to Migration Policies from the Global South." *Comparative Migration Studies*, Vol. 7, no. 1 (2019): 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-019-0157-z>
- Vari, Elisa. "Italy-Libya Memorandum of Understanding: Italy's International Obligations." *Hastings International and Comparative Law Review*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (2020). https://repository.uclawsf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1844&context=hastings_international_comparative_law_review
- Ward, Dalston G. "Public Attitudes toward Young Immigrant Men." *American Political Science Review*, Vol 113, No. 1 (2019): 264–69. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055418000710>
- Zambiasi, Diego and Emanuele Albarosa. "Externalizing rescue operations at sea: The migration deal between Italy and Libya." *Journal of Economic Geography*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (2025): 41-58. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jeg/lbae022>

Media news article

- Ayed, Nahlad and Stephanie Jenzer. "Spain built fences 20 years ago to keep migrants away. Here's how that worked out". *CBC News*. September 25, 2018. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/migrants-spain-melilla-morocco-europe-1.4835930>
- Bathke, Benjamin. "Morocco raises migrants' jail time over Melilla stampede". *Infomigrants*, July 6, 2023. <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/45983/morocco-raises-migrants-jail-time-over-melilla-stampede>
- Bellamy, Daniel. "First Batch of Migrants Sent to Albania Must Be Returned, Italian Court Rules." *Euronews*, October 19, 2024. <https://www.euronews.com/2024/10/19/first-batch-of-migrants-sent-to-albania-must-be-returned-italian-court-rules>
- Ciesnik, Sonya. "Europe Finds Appeal in Border Fences Once Again." *InfoMigrants*. February 16, 2023. <https://www.infomigrants.net/fr/post/55913/europe-finds-appeal-in-border-fences-once-again>

- Cook, Lorne. "EU's von der Leyen Backs Italy's Migration Deal with Albania as 'Example of Creative Solutions.'" *The Independent*, November 8, 2023. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/albania-ap-italy-ursula-von-der-leyen-brussels-b2463983.html>
- Elezi, Elona. "Has Italy's Albania Migrant Deal Completely Failed?" *Deutsche Welle*, April 9, 2024. <https://www.dw.com/en/has-italys-albania-migrant-deal-completely-failed/a-71694722>
- "EU Seals €7.4bn Deal with Egypt in Effort to Avert Another Migration Crisis." *The Guardian*. March 17, 2024. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/mar/17/egypt-eu-deal-refugees-mediterranean>
- "EU, Tunisia Sign €1 Billion Deal to Fight Illegal Migration." *Deutsche Welle*, July 16, 2023. <https://www.dw.com/en/eu-tunisia-sign-1-billion-deal-to-fight-illegal-migration/a-66249005>
- "Gjykata kthen në Itali edhe grupin e dytë të emigrantëve që mbërritën në Shqipëri" [Court Returns Second Group of Migrants Who Arrived in Albania to Italy.] *A2 News*, October 5, 2024. <https://a2news.com/shqiperia/aktualitet/gjykata-kthen-ne-itali-edhe-grupin-e-dyte-te-emigranteve-ge-i1132497>
- Kaval, Allan, and Jean-Baptiste Chastand. "Italy Sends First Group of Asylum Seekers to Albania." *Le Monde*, October 15, 2024. https://www.lemonde.fr/en/europe/article/2024/10/15/italy-sends-first-group-of-asylum-seekers-to-albania_6729441_143.html
- Migrant Returned from Albania to Italy Due to 'Psychiatric Issues'." *InfoMigrants*, November 9, 2024. <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/64081/migrant-returned-from-albania-to-italy-due-to-psychiatric-issues>
- Nadeau, Barbie Latza. "Italy to Send Migrants to Albania under Controversial New Deal." *CNN*, October 9, 2024. <https://edition.cnn.com/2024/10/09/europe/italy-migrants-albania-centers-intl-cmd/index.html>
- Nahmen, Alexandra V. "Poland's Belarus border fence: A controversial deterrent." *Deutsche Welle*. January 18, 2025. <https://www.dw.com/en/polands-belarus-border-fence-a-controversial-deterrent/a-71333184>
- Sinoruka, Fjori, and Tommi Siviero. "Italy Sends Third Ship Transporting Migrants to Albania." *Balkan Insight*, January 28, 2025. <https://balkaninsight.com/2025/01/28/italy-sends-third-ship-transporting-migrants-to-albania/>
- "Slovenia starts erecting razor wire on Croatia border." *Aljazeera*. November 11, 2015. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/11/11/slovenia-starts-erecting-razor-wire-on-croatia-border>
- "What is the EU-Turkey Deal?" *International Rescue Committee*. April 26, 2021. <https://www.rescue.org/eu/article/what-eu-turkey-deal>

"What is the Italy-Albania asylum deal?" *International Rescue Committee*, October 15, 2024. <https://www.rescue.org/article/what-italy-albania-asylum-deal>

"Austria erects fence on Slovenia border." *Deutsche Welle*. July 7, 2015. <https://www.dw.com/en/austria-begins-erecting-fence-on-border-with-slovenia/a-18900764>

Reports

Arhin-Sam, Kwaku and Laura Lambert. "Niger – The Gate to the Sahel." *Brot für die Welt*, 2022 https://www.misereor.org/fileadmin/user_upload_misereororg/publication/en/human_rights/country-brief-migration-partnership-niger.pdf.

Benedicto, Ainhoa R and Pere Brunete. "*Building walls: Fear and securitization in the European Union.*" Centre Delàs d'Estudis per la Pau, 2018. <https://www.tni.org/en/publication/building-walls>

European Parliament. "*Walls and fences at EU borders*". Accessed April 29, 2025. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/733692/EPRS_BRI\(2022\)733692_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/733692/EPRS_BRI(2022)733692_EN.pdf)

European Parliamentary. "*The EU's external borders Key trends and developments*". Accessed April 29, 2025. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2023/745696/EPRS_BRI\(2023\)745696_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2023/745696/EPRS_BRI(2023)745696_EN.pdf)

Giordani, Carlotta. "*Italy-Albania Agreement on Migration: From the Fiction of Non-Entry to Functional Entry.*" Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP), June 2024. <https://www.eliamep.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Policy-brief-191-Italy-Albania-EN-final-1.pdf>.

Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociale. "*The Albanian Community in Italy*". 2023. <https://www.lavoro.gov.it/documenti-e-norme/studi-e-statistiche/albanian-community-2023>

Ministry of Labour and Social Policies. "International Protection: Updated List of Safe Countries of Origin." *Integrazione Migranti*, March 5, 2024. <https://integrazionemigranti.gov.it/it-it/Ricerca-news/Dettaglio-news/id/3785/Protezione-internazionale-aggiornata-la-lista-dei-Paesi-di-origine-sicuri>.

Sergio, Carrera, Guiseppa Campese, and Colombi Davide. "*The 2023 Italy-Albania protocol on extraterritorial migration management*". Papers on Liberty and Security in Europe, 2023. https://cdn.ceps.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/ASILE_Italy-Albania-MoU-Extraterritorial-Migration-Management.pdf

UN Expert Group on Migration Statistics. "*Final Report on Conceptual frameworks and Concepts and Definitions on International Migration.*" 2021

<https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/migration-expert-group/task-forces/TF2-ConceptualFramework-Final.pdf>

Website

Council of the European Union. "EU-Turkey Statement, 18 March 2016," *Consilium*, March 18, 2016, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/>.

European Commission. *Entry/Exit System (EES)*. Accessed April 26, 2025. https://travel-europe.europa.eu/ees_en.

European Commission. *EUROSUR*. Accessed April 26, 2025. https://www.edps.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publication/17-05-02_sis_ii_opinion_en.pdf

European Commission. "Migration Partnership Framework: A New Approach to Better Manage Migration." March 2, 2017. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/es/memo_17_135.

European Commission. "Irregular migrants, definitions". Accessed April 29, 2025. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/european-migration-network-emn/emn-asylum-and-migration-glossary/glossary/irregular-migrant_en

European Council. *28 EUCO Final Conclusions*. Brussels, August 28, 2018. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/35936/28-euco-final-conclusions-en.pdf>.

European Data Protection Supervisor. *Opinion on the Proposals for Two Regulations Establishing a Revised Schengen Information System (SIS II)*. May 2, 2017. https://www.edps.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publication/17-05-02_sis_ii_opinion_en.pdf.

European Union. *Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 November 2019 on the European Border and Coast Guard and Repealing Regulation (EU) No 1052/2013*. Accessed April 26, 2025. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019R1896>

Grabova, Persta Benard, Dosti and Elona Pojani. "Effects of economic crisis on migration – Evidence from Albania". *European Scientific Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (2013): 2011 – 228. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267865058_Effects_of_Economic_Crisis_on_Migration-Evidence_from_Albania

Human Rights Watch. "Human Rights in Post-Communist Albania." 1996. Accessed 29 April, 2025. <https://www.refworld.org/reference/countryrep/hrw/1996/en/33471>

International Organization for Migration. "Migration from and to Albania". Accessed April 29, 2025. <https://seeecadata.iom.int/msite/seeecadata/country/albania>

- International Organization of Migration. "Fundamentals of migration". Accessed April 29, 2025. <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>
- International Organization of Migration. "Key migration terms". Accessed April 29, 2025. <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>
- International Rescue Committee. "Migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants: What's the difference?" June 22, 2018. <https://www.rescue.org/article/migrants-asylum-seekers-refugees-and-immigrants-whats-difference>
- International Team for the Study of Security Verona (ITSS Verona). "European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR) and Its Problematic Impact on the Rights of the People on the Move." ITSS Verona. Accessed April 26, 2025. <https://www.itssverona.it/european-border-surveillance-system-eurosur-and-its-problematic-impact-on-the-rights-of-the-people-on-the-move>
- Italian Government Presidency of the Council of Ministers. "President Meloni's press statement with the Prime Minister of Albania." Press release, November 6, 2023. <https://www.governo.it/en/articolo/president-meloni-s-press-statement-prime-minister-albania/24195>
- "Italy Reups Funding to Force Migrants Back to Libya." *Human Rights Watch*, February 1, 2023. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/02/01/italy-reups-funding-force-migrants-back-libya>.
- Kryeministria. "Prime Minister Rama meets with Italian PM Meloni in Rome." Accessed April 28, 2025 <https://www.kryeministria.al/en/newsroom/rome-kryeministri-rama-takon-kryeministren-e-italise-giorgia-meloni/>
- "Libya: Evidence of Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Committed Since 2016." *United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights*. October 13, 2021. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2021/10/libya-evidence-crimes-against-humanity-and-war-crimes-committed-2016-un>.
- Media and Information Agency. "Joint press conference of Prime Minister Rama and Prime Minister of Italy Giorgia Meloni." Press release. 2024. <https://mia.gov.al/en/joint-press-conference-of-prime-minister-rama-and-prime-minister-of-italy-giorgia-meloni/>
- "New Frontex Regulation Comes into Force." *Frontex*, December 4, 2019. <https://www.frontex.europa.eu/media-centre/news/news-release/new-frontex-regulation-comes-into-force-S0luwe>
- "President Meloni's Press Statement with Prime Minister Rama during Her Visit to Albania." *Governo.it*, November 6, 2023. <https://www.governo.it/en/articolo/president-meloni-s-press-statement-prime-minister-rama-during-her-visit-albania/25963>.
- "Spain and Morocco Strengthen Cooperation on Migration." *La Moncloa*, February 2, 2023. https://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/lang/en/gobierno/news/Paginas/2023/20230202_spain-morocco-migration.aspx.

UN General Assembly. *1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 189, p. 137, 28 July 1951, <https://www.refworld.org/legal/agreements/unga/1951/en/39821> [accessed 29 April 2025]

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "Who is an asylum-seeker?", Accessed April 29, 2025. <https://www.unhcr.org/about-unhcr/who-we-protect/asylum-seekers>

World Bank. "International mobility as a development strategy: Albania Country Report 2024." Accessed April 29, 2025. <https://hdl.handle.net/10986/41929>