

The Long Summer of Migration

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The mass and visible movement of refugees and other migrants in 2015 through Greece, Macedonia, Serbia towards the European Union and countries like Austria, Germany or Sweden is called different names, most often the (European) migrant or refugee crisis. In addition to these both personalizing and threatening terms (New Keywords 2016: 16-22), the term humanitarian crisis was also used at the time, which, having in mind the mobilization potential of humanitarian discourse, was promoted by non-governmental organizations active in the field of asylum and human rights. With Balkanist connotations to a degree, the movement in question, as well as the events surrounding it, is sometimes, as noted in the literature (Hess and Kasperek 2022; Minca and Collins 2021: 2), simply called the **Balkan route**.

Bernd Kasperek and Marc Speer (2015) introduced the term “the long summer of migration” in an article in which they summarize the events and tendencies that culminated in the September march of thousands of refugees from the Keleti railway station in Budapest towards Austria and the opening of the Austrian and German borders for them also. By mobilizing the phrase long summer, the metaphor of the long summer as a period of change and upheaval, the authors designate the migrant movements as turning points and potentially formative in the long term. The term “long summer of migration”, instead of the threat and destruction implicit in the term crisis, refers to the freed mobility and broad social solidarity during those months, the relative suspension of controls along the routes of mass migrant movement, and the relatively free crossing of external, internal and **externalized** borders of the EU on these routes.

Almost exemplifying the ideas about the **autonomy of migration**, during the long summer of migration, borders, ideas and positions within the **European migration regime**, and the EU itself, were collapsing and reshaping under the force of human mobility. However, after Hungary closed its borders to refugees in September 2015, redirecting their movement to Croatia, the long summer of migration transitioned into the “great autumn of migration” (Hameršak and Pleše 2017: 102), in which the independent, self-organized migration movement was funneled into a **corridor**, i.e. **mobile detention**, with **profiling** and **pushbacks** quickly becoming an integral part of it.

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Literature

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