

Suffering of Animals on Wires

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Animals being victims is one of the recurring themes in local discourses related to **fences and wires**, especially those along the Hungarian-Croatian and Slovenian-Croatian borders. For a time, after the installation of these barriers in 2015, the media often reported on the suffering of wild animals that became entangled in the wire and died, and for whom the **fence** also “blocked their natural pathways and migration” and thus endangered their ability to feed and reproduce. The professional literature also notes that border barriers have an extremely negative effect on wild animal populations, and not only in the aspects visible at first glance, their deaths on the wires themselves, the obstruction of movement and changes in animal behavior, but also in terms of long-term genetic changes and reduced vitality of animal populations due to their limited movement (Safner et al. 2021). A paper dealing with the direct impact of only one of the border barriers in the local area, the one between Hungary and Croatia, on wild animals and on the connectivity of habitats, cites 64 wild animals: deer, roe deer, and wild boar; found entangled or killed “due to razor wire fence” in the period from the installation of the barrier in September 2015 until the end of 2017 (Safner et al. 2021: 276; cf. also Linnell et al. 2016). In relation to the animals and the locations with the barriers, the literature also mentions the impossibility of rescuing wild animals that have become entangled in the wire because it is not placed on the border line itself, but, for example, a few meters into the territory of another country, in this case Hungary in relation to Croatia. In addition to animals, border barriers also directly affect landscapes and play a part in their transformations, turning “public spaces and nature” into “impenetrable zones” (Perić 2021). And while the negative impact of erecting fences on the animal world is certainly great and important, it is also, when compared to the impact of the practice on people on the move – and to some extent in accordance with different discourses of animal themes (cf. **wild animals; Candy; Pablo**) – extremely emphasized and perpetuated. When looking at the Slovenian-Croatian border, the same could be said about the impact of erecting fences on the lives of the local population: Although it is justified to bring attention to this issue, it sometimes completely ignore what fences, walls and wires do to people on the move.

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Literature

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