

Review of Master Thesis

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Title of the Thesis: Poland's Border Policies: A Study of African Migrants at the Belarusian Border

In his master thesis, Esomike Emmanuel Chinedu addresses Polish border policies towards African migrants at the Belarusian border. The author's aim is to analyze the interplay "between security concerns and human rights obligations". Accordingly, after introducing the security and human rights approaches, the author presents an innovative human security approach that should better reflect the human rights of migrants. Using such a theoretical framework, the author wants to answer how – and whether – Poland fulfills international human rights standards when it comes to African migrants at the Belarusian border.

As for my evaluation of the thesis, I must first point out that this is the second version of the text. In order to respond to the previous criticism, we have agreed with the author on narrowing the scope of the analysis: this time the author claims to focus on Polish border policies towards African migrants at the Belarusian border. Despite the author's visible effort (and given the limited time), I am not sure whether he has fulfilled the expectations connected with the revised version of the thesis. To be more specific, I think that the author has done a lot of work with the amount of information he has gathered; I also think that the theoretical part of the thesis is much better compared to the previous version of the text. In this context, I believe that by introducing an innovative human security approach, the author has opened up space for a novel interpretation the discussed theme. However, I do not think he has used the theoretical apparatus appropriately in the analytical part of the thesis. From my point of view, the analytical part suffers from similar weaknesses as the previous version of the thesis: the author keeps adding more and more new information, which makes the text very incomprehensible. Consequently, it prevents the author from adequately using the conceptual apparatus he has declared to use in the

theoretical part. The author abruptly moves from the security approach to the human rights approach and to the human security approach, but in my opinion does not sufficiently show how the human security theory – which he subscribes – substantiates that Poland violates the human rights of African migrants. In sum, I fundamentally lack a better interconnection between the theoretical and practical parts of the thesis. Besides this general criticism of the text, I also have some “less serious” ones. First, I think that the author should have worked more diligently on the coherence of quotations. Second, the author is unclear when it comes to the time frame: he claims to focus on the current crisis at the Belarusian border, but he also often refers also to events as situations that happened before. Finally, he runs away from his defined object of interest, that is, African migrants at the Belarusian border, and mentions non-African migrants as well (for instance, on page 50, he mentions the case of Iraqi migrants).

My proposed final mark of the master thesis of Esomike Emmanuel Chinedu is D–E.

In Brno on August 20, 2024

Sylvie Bláhová