



# CHANGING PERSPECTIVES

// Alternative Border Realities

**Barne Haferkamp. Karl Sandman.**

Marco Adelfio. Emilio Brandao. Shea Hagy.  
Chalmers University of Technology. Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering.





**Thank you whomever feels  
addressed.**

**Thank you whomever doesn't  
anyways!**

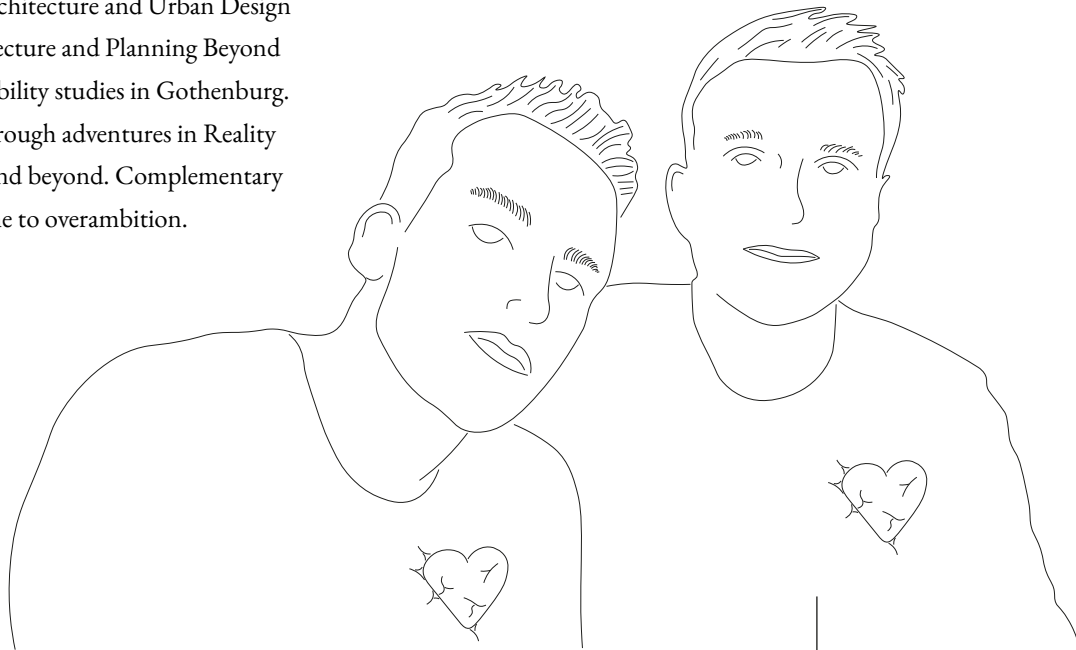
**Thank you.**



**Changing Perspectives**  
// Alternative Border Realities

Master's Thesis 2022.  
Barne Haferkamp. Karl Sandman.  
Chalmers University of Technology. Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering.  
Master's Program Architecture and Urban Design | Architecture and Planning Beyond Sustainability.  
Examiner Marco Adelfio. Main Supervisor Emilio Brandao. Co-Supervisor Shea Hagy.  
Thesis Direction Design Activism Beyond Borders.

**KABA.** Dreamteam. Forged during  
MSc. Architecture and Urban Design  
/ Architecture and Planning Beyond  
Sustainability studies in Gothenburg.  
Lived through adventures in Reality  
Studio and beyond. Complementary  
but prone to overambition.  
// EU



**Barne.** Wannabe philosopher.  
Educated through Bsc. Architecture  
studies in Siegen. Introduces world  
wide internship and volunteering  
experience within architecture. Full of  
ideas but with a tendency to overthink.  
// Germany

**Kalle.** Bon vivant. Learned his craft  
in Karlskrona during Bsc.Spatial  
Planning studies. Brings the experience  
of practise at municipality level within  
urban planning. Enduring performer  
but with a tendency to over question.  
// Sweden

## Booklet Briefing

**Group Work.** This thesis is written in a collaborative manner. Every thought, drawing and text arose from our personal discourse. Throughout the process we rotated tasks and aimed for equal distribution of the work.

**Flipbook.** The print out version of this report plays a crucial role for our outcome. Therefore we developed a Flipbook concept. It is essential that the reader follows the instructions presented in the table of contents to guarantee the intended reading experience.

**Colour Coding.** The three main chapters: introduction, reality and alternity each have a signature colour. The introduction is kept in black and white to emphasise its neutrality and mediate

between the two following chapters. The reality is in sand **brown** which commonly stands for fall and the melancholy associated with the approaching ending. The alternity seeks for contrast in a vibrant **green**, representing the hope of a new beginning. Throughout the booklet the third colour **red**, introduces the benchmark topic of border related death.

**Graphical Elements.** Maps, pictures and graphics are carefully displayed in order to portray specific perspectives. Especially maps, as on the cover page, can be purposely unconventional. Annotations with (\*) explain these intentions.

**Alternity, the.** Plural: alternities. This neologism is an opposition to reality. It stands for an alternative reality.



# CHANGING PERSPECTIVES

// Alternative Border Realities

## Abstract

Till's (2009) statement "*Architecture is political. Full Stop.*" (p.124), lays down the theoretical groundwork for this thesis. Challenging the proclaimed political inability of architectural practice, this work takes a strong political positioning against the current deterrent migration politics of the European Union (hereinafter EU) and the agency of architecture within.

This thesis explores a design approach which enables a speculative visualisation of the discussed social political spectrum of alternative EU external land border realities. It opposes the spatial dimensions of the current border reality, to these defined alternatives with a focus on migration perspectives.

The right to asylum is protected by international and European legislation. Nevertheless, border countries' national sovereignty is instrumentalized against migrants and their rights to prevent them from reaching the EU's territory. This manifests in inhumane fortifications along the border lines and even leads to illegal 'push backs'. A fortified EU effectively denies refugees their right to seek asylum which results in irregular migration with high fatality rates. The current situation violates the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU and must be confronted beyond the political discourse. Amongst others, the legislative opposition, consulting political foundations and human rights organisations are pushing for a paradigm shift in EU migration politics. Assorting migration as inevitable, they develop sustainable strategies for a humane approach. Facing this societal challenge, architects and urban designers must

finally commit to their social responsibility, being the ones planning the very spaces which directly or indirectly cause harm and death for migrants.

This thesis portrays multiple perspectives on migration politics out of a spatial point of view. The first chapter seeks to analyse and visually portray the current inhumane border situation, through detailed mapping of 'Fortress Europe' down to its constructional elements. The second chapter depicts spatial interpretations of alternative realities, based on varying perspectives in the internal social political spectrum and stakeholders with external migration experience. These visions are developed through graphical transcription of interviews with relevant people to ensure that the outcome reflects the views of affected social groups.

By contrasting the reality to its alternatives, this thesis aims to provoke discussions around the role of the architect in the challenging of current EU migration politics. Therefore this work becomes a discursive object in itself.

### Keywords

- ◆ Political Architecture
- ◆ Speculative Design
- ◆ Migration
- ◆ European Borders
- ◆ Alternative Reality

# List of References

- Allen, T. de Castro Dobbin, C. & Morten, M. (2018). *Border walls* (No. w25267). National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Auger, J. (2013). *Speculative design: crafting the speculation*. Digital Creativity, 24(1), 11-35. DOI: 10.1080/14626268.2013.767276
- Awan, N. Schneider, T. Till, J. (2011). *Spatial Agency: Other Ways of Doing Architecture*. Routledge.
- Bardzell, J., & Bardzell, S. (2013). *What is critical about critical design?* In proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on human factors in computing systems.
- Bautista, J. Rojas, A. (2021). *Frontex turning 'blind eye' to human rights violations, says former deputy*. The Guardian. Retrieved January 28, 2022, from <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/jun/11/frontex-turning-blind-eye-to-human-rights-violations-says-former-deputy>
- BBC. (2018, December 14). *Ceuta, Melilla profile*. Retrieved May 9, 2022, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14114627>
- Council of the European Union. (2004). *The Hague Programme: Strengthening freedom, security and justice in the European Union*. Retrieved January 27, 2022, from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A52005XG0303%2801%29>
- Defenders of Wildlife. (2022). *Border Wall*. Retrieved March 11, 2022, from <https://defenders.org/wall>
- De Genova, N. (2017). *The borders of "Europe": Autonomy of migration, tactics of bordering*. Duke University Press.
- Deutinger, T. (2018). *Handbook of Tyranny (3rd ed.)*. Lars Müller Publishers.
- Di Salvo, C. (2012). *Adversarial Design*. MIT Press.
- Dunne, A., & Raby, F. (2001). *Design Noir: The Secret Life of Electronic Objects*. Birkhäuser.
- Dunne, A., & Raby, F. (2013). *Speculative everything: design, fiction, and social dreaming*. MIT press.
- Edwards. (2021). *The high-tech 'makeover' of Europe's deadly border with Africa*. Rest of World. Retrieved February 9, 2022, from <https://restofworld.org/2021/replacing-razor-wire-with-surveillance-technology-in-melilla/>
- Euronews. (2022). *Poland starts construction of €350 million border fence with Belarus*. Euronews. Retrieved May 9, 2022, from <https://www.euronews.com/2022/01/26/poland-starts-construction-of-350-million-border-fence-with-belarus>
- European Digital Rights [EDRi]. (2021, March 10). *Eurodac database repurposed to surveil migrants*. Retrieved January 26, 2022, from <https://edri.org/our-work/eurodac-database-repurposed-to-surveil-migrants/>
- European Parliament. (2000, December 12). *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union*. Retrieved March 30, 2022, from [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text\\_en.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf)
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights [FRA]. (2020, December 4). *Migration: Fundamental Rights Issues at Land Borders*. Publications Office of the European Union. Retrieved February 09, 2022, from [https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/fra-2020-land-borders-report\\_en.pdf](https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2020-land-borders-report_en.pdf)
- Forensic Architecture. (2020a, May 8). *The Killing of Muhammad Gulzar*. Retrieved February 09, 2022, from <https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/the-killing-of-muhammad-gulzar>
- Forensic Architecture. (2020b, July 3). *The Killing of Muhammad Al-Arab*. Retrieved February 09, 2022, from <https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/the-killing-of-muhammad-al-arab>
- FRONTEX. (n.d.). *Who we are*. Retrieved January 27, 2022, from <https://frontex.europa.eu/about-frontex/who-we-are/foreword/>
- Gall, C. (2022). *Survivors of Deadly Night at Greek Border Say They Were Left to Die*. The New York Times. Retrieved April 11, 2022, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/world/europe/greece-turkey-migrants-deaths.html>
- Google. (n.d). *Google Maps*. Retrieved May 4, 2022, from <https://www.google.se/maps/>
- Harvey, D. (2000). *Spaces of hope (Vol. 7)*. Univ of California Press.
- Hampshire, J. (2016). *European migration governance since the Lisbon treaty: introduction to the special issue*. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 42(4), 537-553. DOI: 10.1080/1369183X.2015.1103033
- Hegel, G. W. F., & Miller, A. V. (1969). *Science of logic*. George Allen and Unwin.
- Hruschka, C. (2005). *From the Dublin Convention to the Dublin Regulation: The impact on EU third country cases in the UK jurisdiction*. Jahrbuch Für Recht Und Ethik / Annual Review of Law and Ethics, 13, 473-494.
- Human Rights Watch. (2021). *Frontex Failing to Protect People at EU Borders*. Retrieved January 28, 2022, from <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/06/23/frontex-failing-protect-people-eu-borders>
- International Organisation for Migration [IOM]. (n.d.b). *Missing Migrants Project*. Retrieved February 9, 2022, from <https://missingmigrants.iom.int/>
- International Organisation for Migration [IOM]. (2022). *IOM Concerned about Increasing Deaths on Greece-Turkey Border*. Retrieved May 5, 2022, from <https://www.iom.int/news/iom-concerned-about-increasing-deaths-greece-turkey-border>
- Jones, R. (2016). *Borders and Walls: Do Barriers Deter Unauthorised Immigration?* Migration Policy Institute.

Jordan, R. (2018). *How would a border wall affect wildlife?* Stanford Earth Matters Magazine. Retrieved March 11, 2022, from <https://earth.stanford.edu/earth-matters#gs.tbhpuj>

Lefebvre, H. & Nicholson-Smith, D. (1991). *The production of space*. Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

Maguire, A. French, D & O'Reilly, D. J. (2016). *Residential segregation, dividing walls and mental health: a population-based record linkage study*. Journal of Epidemiol Community & Health, 70, p. 845–854.

Miessen, M. (2011). *The Nightmare of Participation*. Sternberg Press.

Mitrović, I. (2015). *Introduction to speculative design practice*. Introduction to Speculative Design Practice, 8-23.

Mitrović, I., Auger, J., Hanna, J., & Helgason, I. (Eds.). (2021). *Beyond Speculative Design: Past–Present–Future*. Foresight.

Mutz, D. C & Simmons, B. A. (2022, January 19). *The psychology of separation: Border walls, soft power, and international neighborliness*. 119 (4). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2117797119>

Office of the Historian. (n.d.) *Purchase of Alaska, 1867*. Retrieved May 9, 2022, from <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1866-1898/alaska-purchase>

Pavlidis, P. Karakasi, M.-V. (2019, September). *Greek land borders and migration fatalities – Humanitarian disaster described from the standpoint of Evros*. Forensic Science International (Vol. 302). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.forsciint.2019.109875>

Schmitz, F. *Greece tightens its border with Turkey amid 'tough but fair migration policy'*. Deutsche Welle. Retrieved May 9, 2022, from <https://www.dw.com/en/greece-tightens-its-border-with-turkey-amid-tough-but-fair-migration-policy/a-59209772>

Stop Border Violence [SBV]. (n.d.). Retrieved March 2, 2022, from <https://www.stopborderviolence.org/#project>

Tharp, B. M., & Tharp, S. M. (2018). *Discursive design: critical, speculative, and alternative things*. MIT Press.

Tharp, B. M., & Tharp, S. M. (2013). *Discursive design basics: Mode and audience*. Nordes, 1(5).

The Funambulist. (2014, July 28). *A cartographic manifesto against partitions and borders*. Retrieved April 28, 2022, from <https://thefunambulist.net/editorials/%d7%91%d7%99%d7%aa-%d9%85%d9%86%d8%b2%d9%84-a-cartographic-manifesto-against-partitions-and-borders>

Till, J. (2009). *Architecture depends*. MIT press.

United Nations [UN]. (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. Retrieved February 11, 2022, from [https://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E](https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E)

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR].

(n.d.a). *Asylum and Migration*. Retrieved May 09, 2022, from <https://www.unhcr.org/asylum-and-migration.html?query=migration>

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR]. (n.d.b). *The 1951 Refugee Convention*. Retrieved January 26, from <https://www.unhcr.org/1951-refugee-convention.html>

Ward, M. (2019, July 23). *Critical about Critical and Speculative Design*. SpeculativeEdu. Retrieved January 25, 2022, from <http://speculativeedu.eu/criticalabout-critical-and-speculative-design/>

Wapner, J. (2019, March 28). *Do Walls Change How We Think?* The New Yorker. Retrieved March 10, 2022, from <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/annals-of-inquiry/do-walls-change-how-we-think>

Wapner, J. (2020). *Wall Disease - The Psychological Toll of Living Up Against a Border*. The Experiment.

Willermain, F. (2016). *The European Agenda on Migration, One Year On. The EU Response to the Crisis Has Produced Some Results, but Will Hardly Pass Another Solidarity Test*. Retrieved January 28, 2022, from <https://www.iemed.org/publication/the-european-agenda-on-migration-one-year-on-the-eu-response-to-the-crisis-has-produced-some-results-but-will-hardly-pass-another-solidarity-test/>

**All images in this publication are produced by the authors, except for the following:**

Figure 1. Reuters. (2021, November 14). *Polish PM calls for 'concrete steps' from NATO amid Belarus border crisis*. Retrieved April 1, 2022, from <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/polish-police-say-group-50-migrants-broke-through-belarus-border-2021-11-14/>

Figure 2. Morocco World News. (2015, January 15). *Morocco Tightens Control of its Borders With Ceuta and Melilla*. Retrieved April 1, 2022, from <https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2015/01/149492/morocco-tightens-control-of-its-borders-with-ceuta-and-melilla>

Figure 3. Reuters. (2021, August 21). *Greece completes border wall extension to deter potential Afghan migrants*. Retrieved April 1, 2022, from <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/greek-pm-turkeys-erdogan-will-discuss-afghanistan-friday-2021-08-20/>

Figure 4. Daily Sabah. (2020, March 1). *Greece resorts to violence, seeks Western support as thousands turn up at border*. Retrieved April 1, 2022, from <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/greece-resorts-to-violence-seeks-western-support-as-thousands-turn-up-at-border/news>

**All interviews in this publication are personal communication of the authors. Relevant statements are accessible as audio files through QR codes (p.61):**

Interview 1. Activist. (2022, March 2).

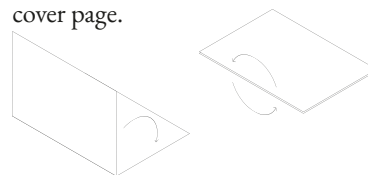
Interview 2. Academic. (2022, March 29).

Interview 3. Migrant. (2022, March 29).

# INSTRUCTIONS

**Flipbook.** This concept is designed to provide the reader with the experience of actively changing perspectives. It divides the reality from its alternities and is meant to emphasise the shift. The concept entails no attached appendix and an unconventional positioning of the references. It is important to follow the instructions thoroughly.

**I.** The first two chapters are read in left-to-right directionality. After the reality chapter the reader reaches a double page with a graphical fact: endless red dots. Here the reading instruction **”Close & Flip”**, indicates to close the booklet and flip it to its back cover page.



# INTRODUCTION

◆ Political Position	.10
◆ Background	.10
◆ On Migration Journey	.10
◆ Aim	.11
◆ Relevance	.11
◆ Migration Glossary	.12
◆ Research Question(s)	.13
◆ Theoretical Framework	.15
◆ Methodology	.18
◆ Delimitations	.18

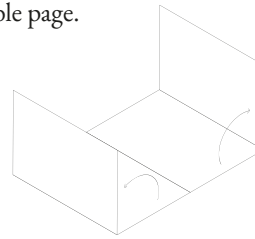
# REALITY

◆ Political Foundation	.25
◆ Fortress Europe	.26
◆ Spanish Exclaves	.29
◆ Shield of Europe	.37
◆ Border Crossings	.43
◆ Borders of Tyranny	.51



**III.** The unfolded fact page reveals the centrepiece of this booklet. The heart found here marks the end of the thesis.

**II.** Now upside down, the reader continues with the alternity chapter. This chapter leads back to the aforementioned fact page at the centre of the booklet. The now readable instruction **”Open Up”** invites the reader to unfold the double page.



# HEART

- ◆ Reflective Discourse .75
- ◆ Graphical Manifesto .76

# ALTERNITY

- ◆ Written Manifesto .54
- ◆ Political Discourse .59
- ◆ Interview Series .60
- ◆ Sama’s Journey .61
- ◆ EU Perspective .63
- ◆ Abolition Perspective .67
- ◆ Migration Perspective .71





// European Border

*\* out of the **internal** European Perspective [Figure 1],*  
the secrecy around border infrastructure and personnel is characterised by the censorship in the image.

**What do we want?** This thesis is an exploration. We want to understand how we can take a strong political position framed within an architectural master thesis. Us both being children of the EU, we share an interest in political discourse and the democratic decision making processes. We decided to engage within the field of migration politics and their violent spatial manifestations around EU borders. We aim for discursive participation towards a paradigm shift, within our given academic boundaries and beyond.

The following first chapter explores the bases of this thesis. It explains our understanding of migration, describes relevant terms and places the focus point within this vast field. This work's research aim is framed in the following research question(s). The theoretical framework, takes a position within critical architecture, explains this thesis relation to the UNSDGs and explores relevant design tendencies. This leads to the methodological approach and the delimitations of this work. and towards our defined research question(s).



## Political Position

We must stop migration related deaths in and on the way to Europe. The current reality of EU external borders is intolerable. Migrants who desperately try to reach the EU's grounds in order to apply for asylum, are mistreated and forced on deadly detours. We must change the current EU border politics and enforce the European fundamental rights for everyone. We are not questioning fundamental rights in this thesis, but the noncompliance of today's border situations.



## Background

The EU is a unique transnational democracy. In the aftermath of two world wars this political construct brought us peace, wealth and hope. The preamble of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU reads: *"the Union is founded on the indivisible and universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity"* (European Parliament, 2000, p.8). Nevertheless, Brussels bureaucracy is often accused of arrogance and political remoteness. The leading institutions are disconnected from the reality of relevant socio-political topics, especially the further the distance to the western epicentrum of power.

The 2015 migration peak led to an increase of fortification efforts along the EU national border lines. Forcefully preventing the ones seeking refuge from entering the liberal union. Migration politics are a topic of ongoing political discourse and target to attempts of reformation. Opinions on change exist in all societal areas and vary drastically.

## On Migration Journey

This map shows a fictional migration land route from Afghanistan to Germany. The journey is based on mapping (Google, n.d.) of geographical and infrastructural possibilities, assuming a direct route. The necessary border crossings are indicated. Migration

journeys are individual experiences and therefore the exact routes vary. This works narrative takes inspiration from R\*\*\*'s [Interview 3] migration journey, without exactly representing it to ensure her privacy.

**Trigger.** Circumstances that lead to the life changing decision of leaving everything behind and fleeing.

*Afghanistan //*

**National Border.** The first border to cross is one's own. Due to political persecution and unstable situations it can be extremely hazardous for one's life and freedom.

*Afghanistan // Iran*

## Aim

This work aims to visually analyse the deadly spatial results of the current EU migration and border politics and speculatively visualise the possible spatial results of opposing perspectives. It is the goal to unmask today's often hidden cruelty amongst irregular migration and to develop visions of alternative border realities. The ultimate goal is to engage in and contribute to the necessary political discourse for an alternative border reality out of the designer's perspective.



## Relevance

The right to asylum is protected by international and EU legislation (European Parliament, 2000; UNHCR, n.d.b). The moment someone enters the territory of any EU state they hold the right to apply for asylum and their application must then be assessed. Nonetheless, inhumane border architecture and other acts of deterrence like 'push-backs' prevent entry on a daily basis. These controversies are not in alliance with our fundamental values and rights. Ultimately the rejection of stigmatised groups of migrants, leads to life threatening detours on desperate attempts to reach Europe (De Genova, 2017). The ongoing loss of human lives in the Mediterranean ocean being the best example for the unbearable injustice (IOM, n.d.b).

This ongoing spiral of dehumanising EU borders needs to be broken. It is the responsibility of us Europeans, speaking the citizens and politicians, to find alternatives on behalf of vulnerable others. This topic requires interdisciplinary efforts on multiple levels. Architects and urban designers can not proclaim their innocence, being the ones defining the very space that supports inhumanity.

**Foreign Border.** Many border crossings can follow. Always accompanied by uncertainty and risks due to the exposure of one's vulnerability and statelessness. For many the journey ends here, before reaching the external EU borders.

*Iran // Turkey*

**External EU Border.** Supposed safety destination. Entry prevention leads to desperate crossing attempts at any cost. This results in European land and sea borders being the deadliest in the world (IOM, n.d.).

*Turkey // Greece (EU)*

Focus  
Point



## Migration Glossary

**Migration.** The act of resettlement. This term can be used for human, animal or even data related movement.

**Migrant.** Every person resettling. This practice is as old as humankind and an effective life preserving mechanism of adjustment. The term is often used with prejudices towards certain religious or national origins (UNHCR, n.d.a).

**Refugee.** A person attains the legal status of a refugee if they fall under the internationally acknowledged 1951 Refugee Conventions or corresponding national adaptations. With the status comes the right to apply for asylum and therefore seek international protection (UNHCR, n.d.a).

**Immigrant.** Every person that successfully survived the migration process, immigrated into the new environment.

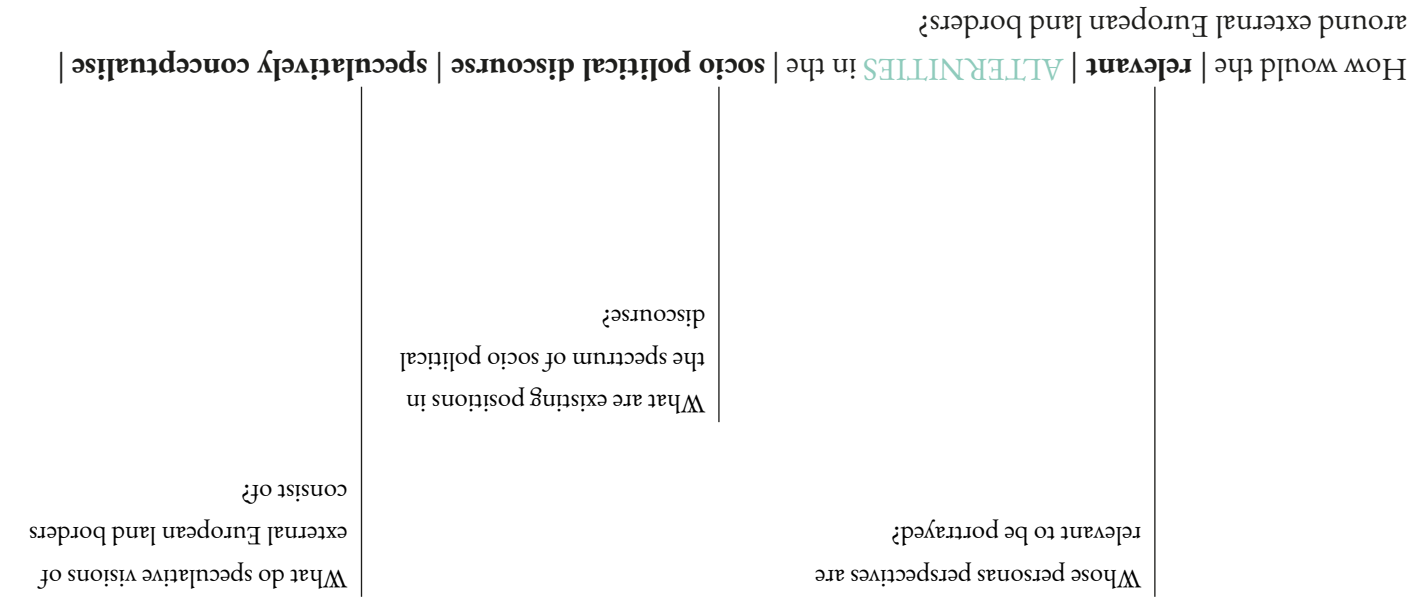
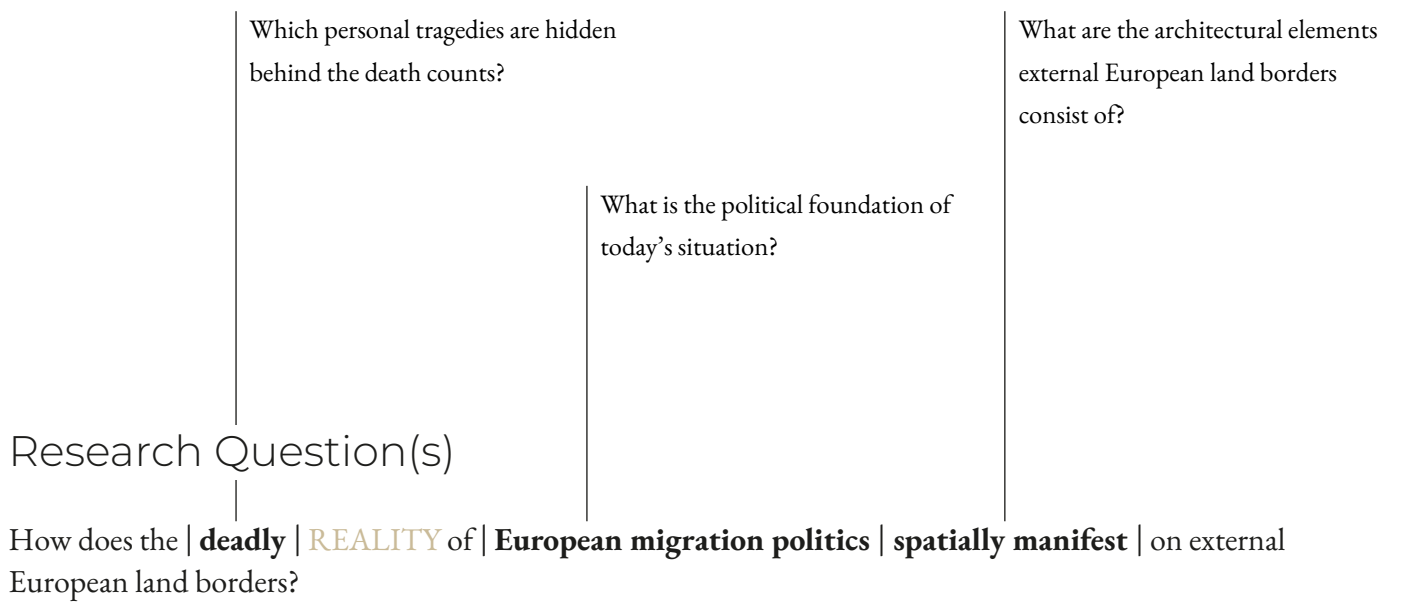
**Regular Migration.** A pre-assessed right of entry allows regular migration on safe routes. This can be through a refugee status, granted visa or based on visa free agreements.

**Irregular Migration.** Denial of entry can lead to irregular

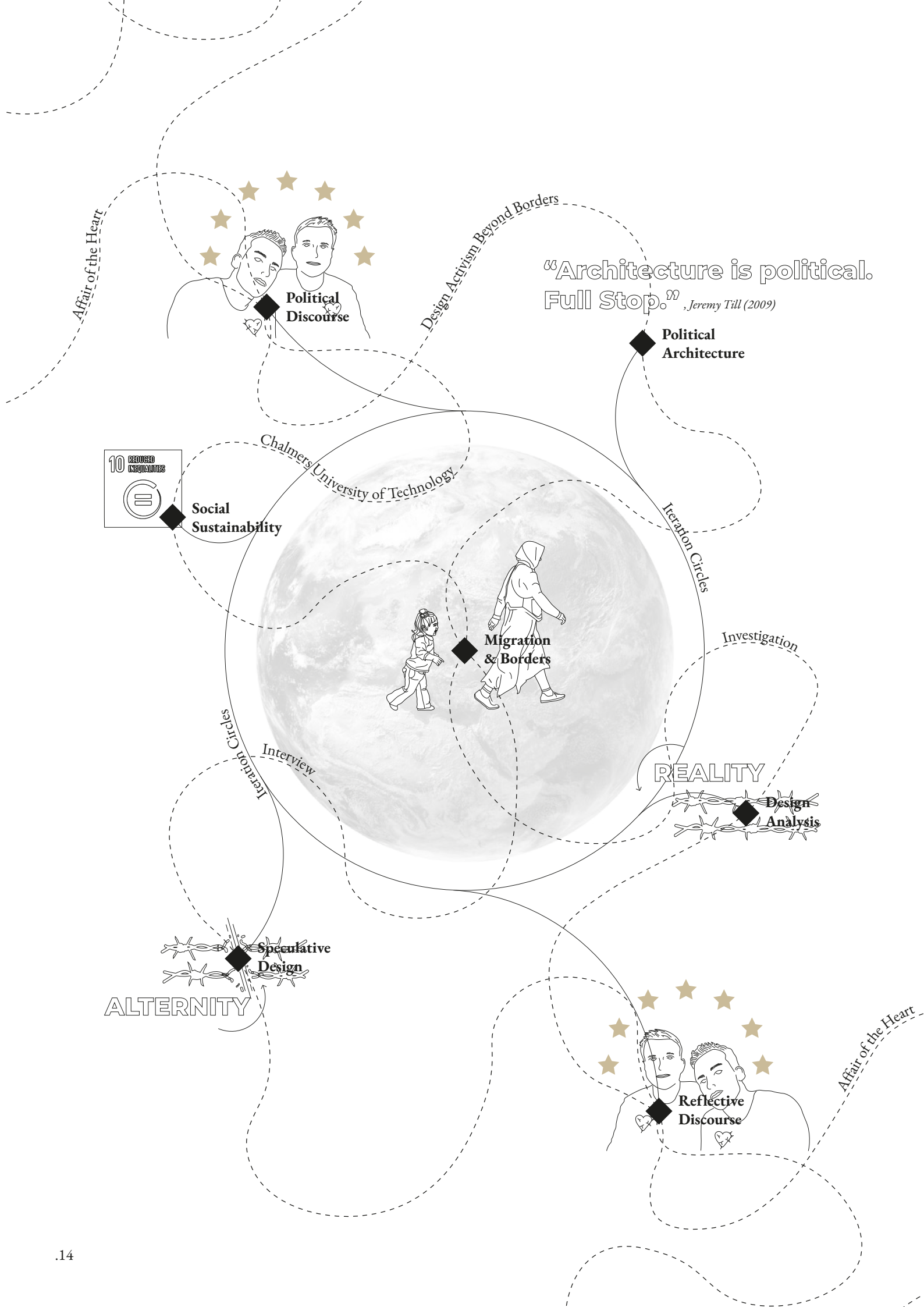
attempts of migration. The often confused term illegal solely refers to single actions and is not applicable. The fatality of irregular migration attempts is this thesis focus point.

**Death.** An irregular migration journey towards Europe often ends fatally. The most common causes are drowning and freezing, due to geographical and climatic challenges in unfamiliar environments. Exposure is forced upon migrants through political agenda and border architecture. Throughout the thesis the numbers and geolocation of incidents presented is based on the International Organisation for Migration (hereinafter IOM) Missing Migrants Project database counting dead and missing migrants (IOM, n.d.).

**‘Push-Back’.** This unconventional term frames the action of authorities and executive powers forcing unwanted migrants back over the borderline. The denial of entry effectively prevents asylum application, which is a violation of international human rights (FRA, 2020).







# Theoretical Framework

A major challenge in defining the theoretical framework is to transition the political discourse into the academic structure of a master thesis. We know what we stand for but need to find our academic frame to represent our stance appropriately. Delimitations are imposed through the strong beyond sustainability orientation of Chalmers teaching culture and the thesis direction theme of Design Activism Beyond Borders.

**Beyond Sustainability.** In regards to sustainability, the framework of the internationally acknowledged United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (hereinafter UNSDGs) sets a clear direction. At large the UNSDGs primarily work towards a general prevention of forced migration (UN, 2015). Seeing migration as inevitable, this thesis finds few convergence points with the Agenda 2030. Nevertheless, the UN (2015) defines in “Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries” (p.21) the subtarget number seven, which aims for safe migration and the implementation of according policies. The therefore defined indicators consider the amount of supporting policies on the legislative site, as well as the percentage of refugees and number of casualties and disappearances on the migrating side.

This work focuses on the spatial relation of occurring death and disappearance along the European external land borders. The underlying vision for zero death migration primarily needs the aforementioned legislative development, which then could result in a humane, structured and ethical approach to migration. Ultimately leading to a different typology of border architecture altogether.

We are addressing this rather socio political development goal in an indirect way. Therefore not affecting the numbers of casualties of migrants directly, nor changing the legislative parameters. We aim to participate in the political discourse around the topic of migration. We wish to contribute by provoking a paradigm shift through curated information and visualisation.

**Architecture Depends.** From the design activism point of view the ideology of Till (2009) provides the necessary framework in regards to political architecture. The statement “Architecture is political. Full Stop.” (p.124), argues against the

widely proclaimed neutrality of architectural practice. Lefevre & Nicholson-Smith (1991, Chapter 2) famously defined social agencies influencing the production of space early on. They see politics as one main agent for space and space as inherently political. Furthermore, drawing the socio-political relation to societies shaping space and being shaped by it. Till (2009, pp. 122-124) and Awan et al. (2011, p.41) critique that even though the relation between politics and space seems clear, architects often lack political positioning. Till (2009) finalises with a call for a practise of contingency in the field of architecture with the ideal of

*“Architects modestly bound to the earth but with the vision, environmental sense, and ethical imagination to project new (social) spatial futures on behalf of others.”* (p.195)

Disassembling this quotation, the (social) spatial clearly draws back to Lefevre & Nicholson-Smith’s (1991, p.26) stand on the societal and political depth of architecture. Working on behalf of others is justified by Till (2009, Chapter 10) within the ethical responsibility of architects to social contribution. Relevant for this thesis is envisioning alternative futures. Harvey’s (2000) dialectical utopianism introduced the necessity of transforming what is given, in order to avoid the pitfalls of contradictions in utopian work. Which Till (2009, Chapter 11) refers to while relating visionary abilities in an architect’s work back to the real world. Using Hegel’s (1969, as cited in Till, 2009, p.38) definition of contingency as “unity of actuality and possibility” (p. 545), Till (2009, Chapter 11) additionally argues for the implementation of visionary parts in architectural manners and for formally criticised independence under a general acknowledgement of dependence.

Till (2009) offers an ideological background for architects and critically embeds architecture in the social structures of our western societies. Factors like democracy and capitalism seem to be a given. Elements that Harvey (2000, Chapter 1), following the Marxist education, was willing to question and address through utopianism. Nevertheless critiquing a general apolitical stand while highlighting the interconnection of society and space.



This thesis takes the request for a strong political stand in behalf of others literally. This work strongly suggests an urgent paradigm shift in European migration politics on behalf of irregular migrants who continuously lose their lives on the way to and in Europe. The question remains which theoretical design framework offers the opportunity of political investment in the sense of Till (2009) while handling the threat of utopianist irrelevance. The following speculative design tendencies chronologically form the bases for the KABA design framework. A chronological analysis:

**Critical Design.** Speculative design was first introduced by Dunne & Raby (2001, p.58) explaining the term critical design in relation to electronic objects. Their definition is a curated critique, which challenges the given order. Shifting the perspective from the purpose of design to the purpose of designing. Which results in a research through design methodology based on alternation of the given context. J. Bardzell & S. Bardzell (2013) deem their approach as hypocritical towards the inherent system. They find the focus on opposition towards the capitalistic and technocratic system to be limiting, whilst acknowledging the opportunities of critical practice.

**Adversarial Design.** Di Salvo (2012, Chapter 1) proclaims a more radical political positioning, defining agonism as the base of adversarial design. Agonism means the chance for advancements through ongoing political confrontation. This political design aims solely at the discursive influence within itself.

**Speculative Design.** Simultaneously Dunne & Raby (2013) introduce the field of speculative design. Evolving out of their critical design perspective they oppose speculative against traditional design positions in their A/B manifesto (p.VII). They argue for the use of imagination to envision alternative realities (p.189). These are meant to raise questions and portray differing imperfect possibilities. A methodology that Auger (2013, Chapter 3) defines as alternative presents. Redirecting the often far reaching speculative time span to an alternate reality. Being thus more approachable for the intended audience and questioning past decisions in order to spark discussions about present realities.

**Discursive Design.** B. Tharp & S. Tharp (2013, 2018)

classify discursive design as a comprehensive concept behind the aforementioned fields. They identify the underlying aim for impact on an intellectual level as commonality. As communicators, B. Tharp & S. Tharp (2018, Chapter 8) define discursive objects, embodying the debated topic. Connecting to the related critical architecture debate, they acknowledge the risk of a self referencing intellectual enclosure of the practice (B. Tharp & S. Tharp, 2018, Chapter 21), which mirrors Till's (2009) critique towards the self proclaimed independence of architects. B. Tharp & S. Tharp (2018, Chapter 21) argue for discursive design with the necessity of proactive engagement for wide reaching change and restructuring impulses. Proclaiming the designer's iterative ability to engage in relevant topics as a necessary contribution to progress.

**Beyond Speculative Design.** Ward (2019) summarises critiques toward the previously presented practice of critical and speculative design in four points: firstly, the privileged position of white western designers who are mostly recognized for the application of the design theories; secondly, the actual reached audience and the non coherence between intended discursive outreach and actually achieved discourse; thirdly, the actual criticality towards underlying societal issues, which often seems to get lost in the created impact; fourthly, the aforementioned time frame of speculation to be too far stretched into the future and therefore irrelevant for current problems. These points should nowadays be considered in any beyond speculative design practice.

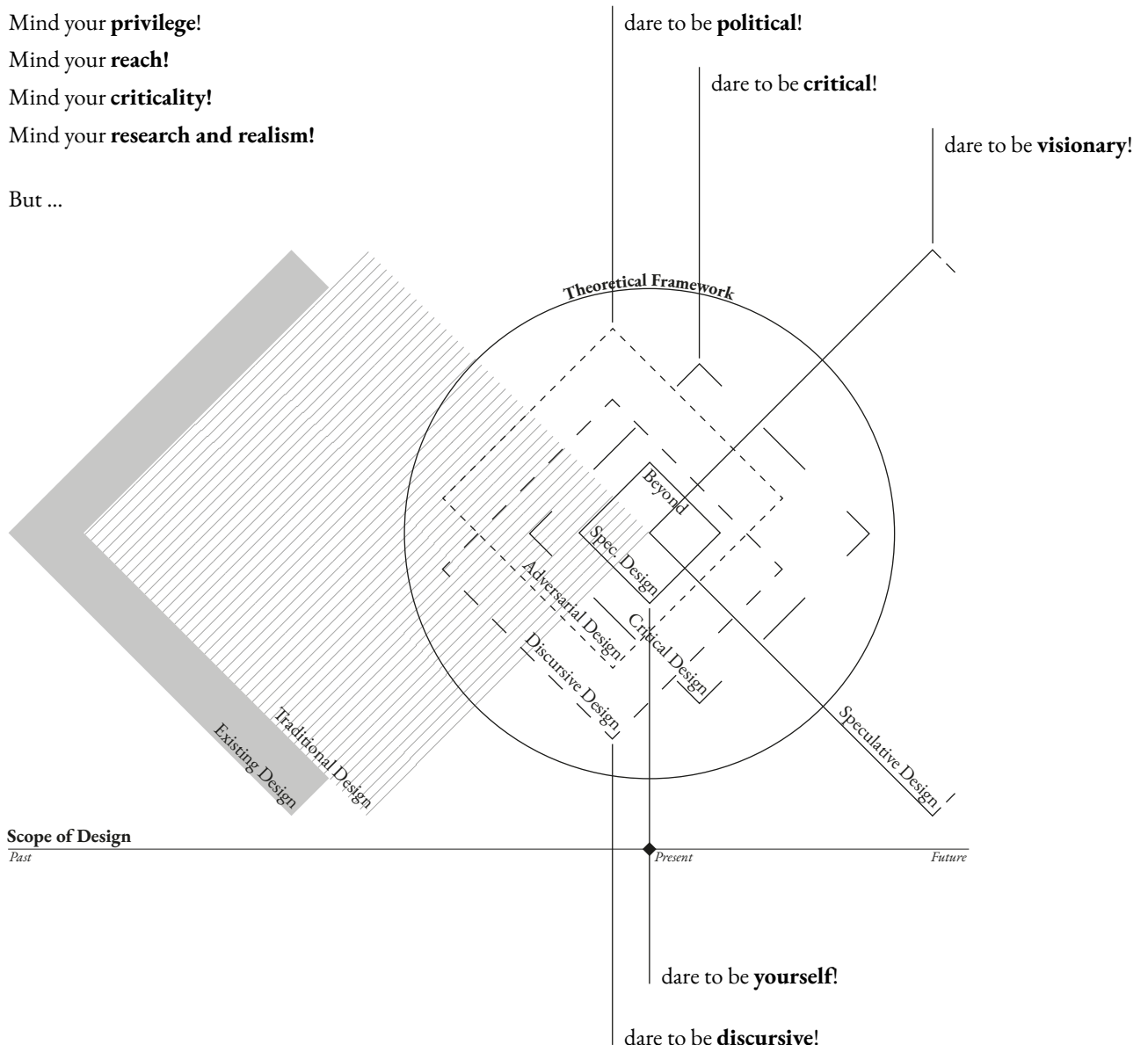
Mitrović et al. (2021), including Ward as author, research the state of speculative design. Validating the critical perspectives, they develop a redirecting guideline for the speculative design field. While Mitrović et al. (2021, Chapter 3) emphasise the cultural value of speculative practice, they state that the methodology itself is hard to frame. The educational and professional understanding of speculative design and the closely related critical and adversarial terminologies are not consistent. All together being mainstreamed and often leaning to a better commercialisable dystopian version, they seem to lose their formerly inherent discursive and critical values.

Mitrović et al. (2021, Chapter 6) continually see urgency for action against the main societal, ecological and systematic threats we are facing. If executed in a socially driven bottom up process, speculative design is able to address these menaces. The

methodology of creating alternative realities is used to challenge the analysed existing problems. In their concluding design principles list, they frame a purposeful and thoughtful process addressing present topics in all their complexity and aim for local-based, participatory action. The final appeal is to engage in this field as a designer which “is a duty, not a privilege” (p.211).

**KABA Design.** This assembly of simultaneously evolving design fields, with overlaps and self declared inaccurate borders sets the overall theoretical and design frame for this work. Taking the critics of over twenty years of research and practice into account and acknowledging the indefinability, which might cater to Till’s (2009, Chapter 2) demand to disillusion the order of modernity. Our main take-aways are to: be

critical, question the political background, imagine alternative presents, create a discursive object and define our framework ourselves. Addressing Ward’s (2019) critique, our clear white western privilege shall be challenged by changing perspectives. Therefore this work is not portraying our own perspectives but rather relevant perspectives within the existing discourse, while being aware of our bias in the interpretation process. The presented speculative scenarios emerge of a participatory process with representative persons. Furthermore, this thesis aims to exceed the academic reach of publication, in order to achieve the necessary scale of discursivity. To meet the appeal for socio-political urgency, this work depicts the crucial topic of migration in the scope of alternative realities avoiding utopianist irrelevance.



# Methodology

Executing this framework in an orderly manner seems as improbable as defining a suitable terminology. Mitrović (2015) defines the methodological approach to be whatever seems appropriate at any given moment. Although, distinguishing two basic concepts concerning the temporal classification of the speculation of being either focusing on a possible future or creating an alternative reality. Ward (2019) adds the ideals of inclusiveness in a thoughtful holistic approach of speculative practice, advising to design the desired discourse and therefore the societal value of the outcome. Combining these conceptual directions this work envisions an alternative reality to the current EU border situation through relevant stakeholders perspectives, which are opposed to the actual situation.

**Reality.** The first chapter builds the case of the current border reality analysed through a designer's perspective. Inspired by Deutinger's (2018, Chapter 2) illustrating methodology, which confronts the reader with precise architectural sections and elevations. This provides a neutral graphical representation of the cruelty that borders around the world consists of. Deutinger (2018) presents facts from which the reader should autonomously realise the inhumane cruelty. This thesis aims to achieve similar fact based representations of EU borders, mapping from the EU scale down to the architectural border elements through the indicator of dead and missing migrants (IOM, n.d.b).

This work then draws geolocational and spatial relations of reported migrants' death on the prepared blank canvas of EU external land borders. An architectural methodology which Forensic Architecture (2020a, 2020b) utilizes to uncover cases of murdered migrants. Not having the technical data processing abilities, this work contains their analysed cases and adds spatial reflections to these stories. Stepping away from the method of neutral representation, it adds a layer of tragedy behind migration related fates. Actively changing the point of view from an uninvolved internal EU perspective to the violent reality of external experiences.

**Alternity.** The second chapter explores different perspectives on alternating realities of external European land borders. Acknowledging Ward's (2019) critique, this thesis portrays

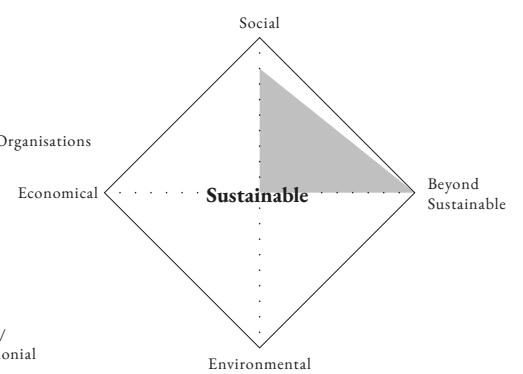
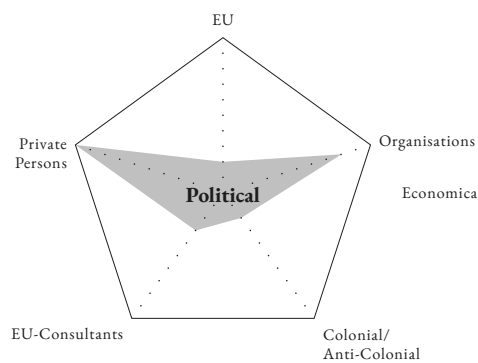
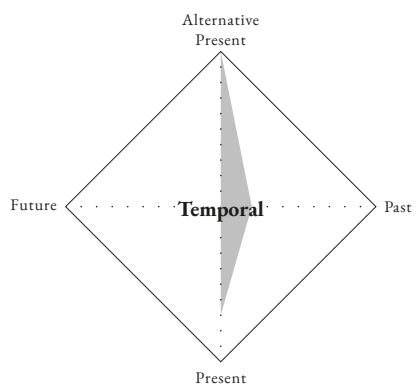
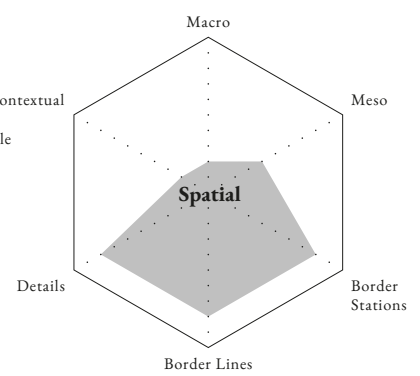
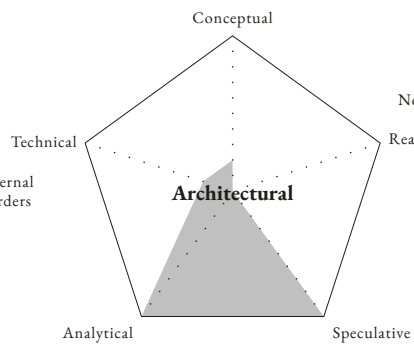
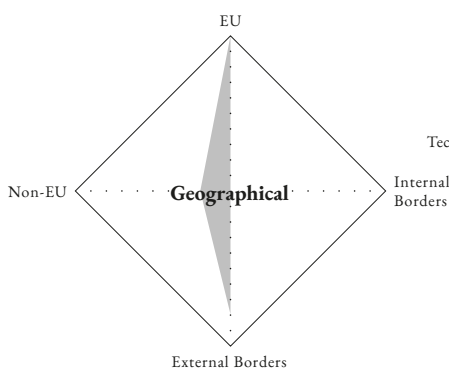
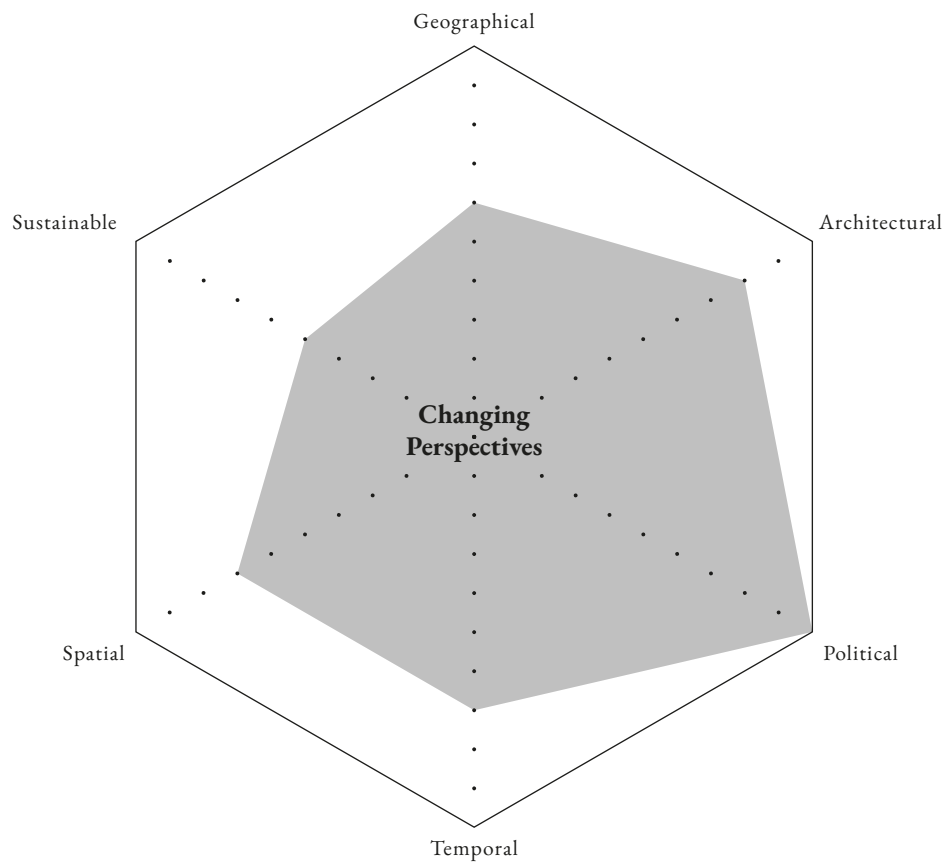
speculative visions of relevant stakeholders. The primary methodology is interviews, in which spatial constellations of political positions in border regions are developed. These speculative sessions create alternative scenarios through discourse, in which the political and contextual limitations stay unconsidered. This raw material for alternative border scenarios is graphically transcribed into feasible pictures, depicting oral statements into spatial visualisations. Thus, a similar medium of graphical communication as in the preceding analyses of reality is created.

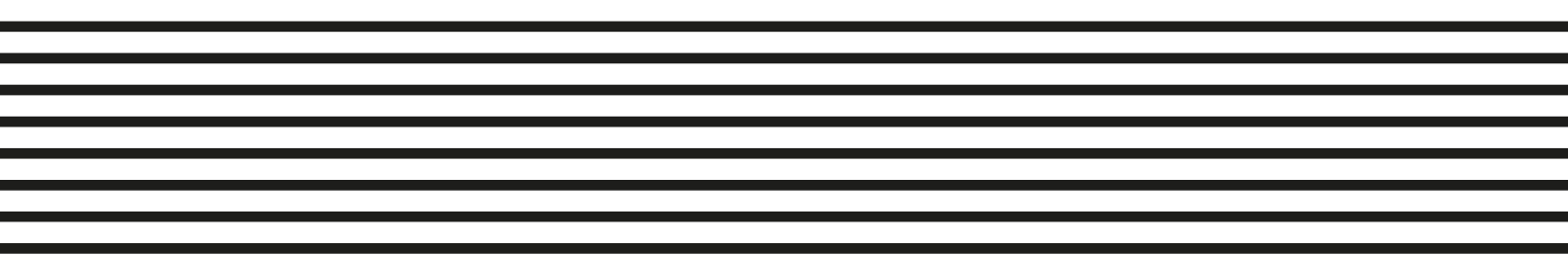
These scenarios are fragmentary visions based on the interviewees opinions and therefore of subjective nature. The curated points of views are meant to be conflictual and decline consensus. In interviewing and transcribing, our personal bias influences the graphical results significantly. In the case of the rejected interviews the scenario relies on public statements to draw spatial intentions. Miessen (2011) critiques participatory processes in architecture to be aimed towards definite consensus and therefore leading to insignificant results. The proposition of "conflictual participation" advises architects, with the aim of making a change in the political arena, to be "Running down the corridor with no fear of causing friction or destabilising existing power relations..." (p. 249). Accordingly, this work visualises the ongoing conflictual political discourse on behalf of relevant perspectives to intensify the necessary reflection on a societal level, ultimately instrumentalizing this thesis to challenge the existing power system.

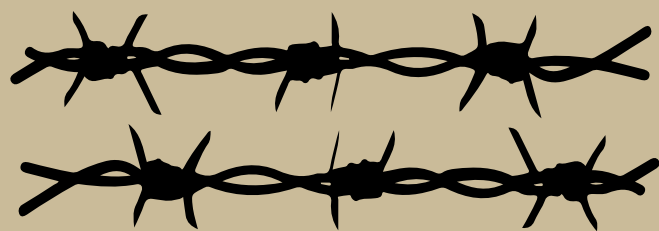
**Heart.** The thesis ends in a reflective discourse. This method visualises the ongoing reflectional discussions we, as the authors, are having throughout the process. It is not a conclusion but rather our understanding of the previously presented, a non conclusive self critical reflection and manifestation for a political reorientation.

## Delimitations

This graphic depicts the relevant focuses and delimitations of this thesis. Full indication means focus point, while no indication means outside of the scope.





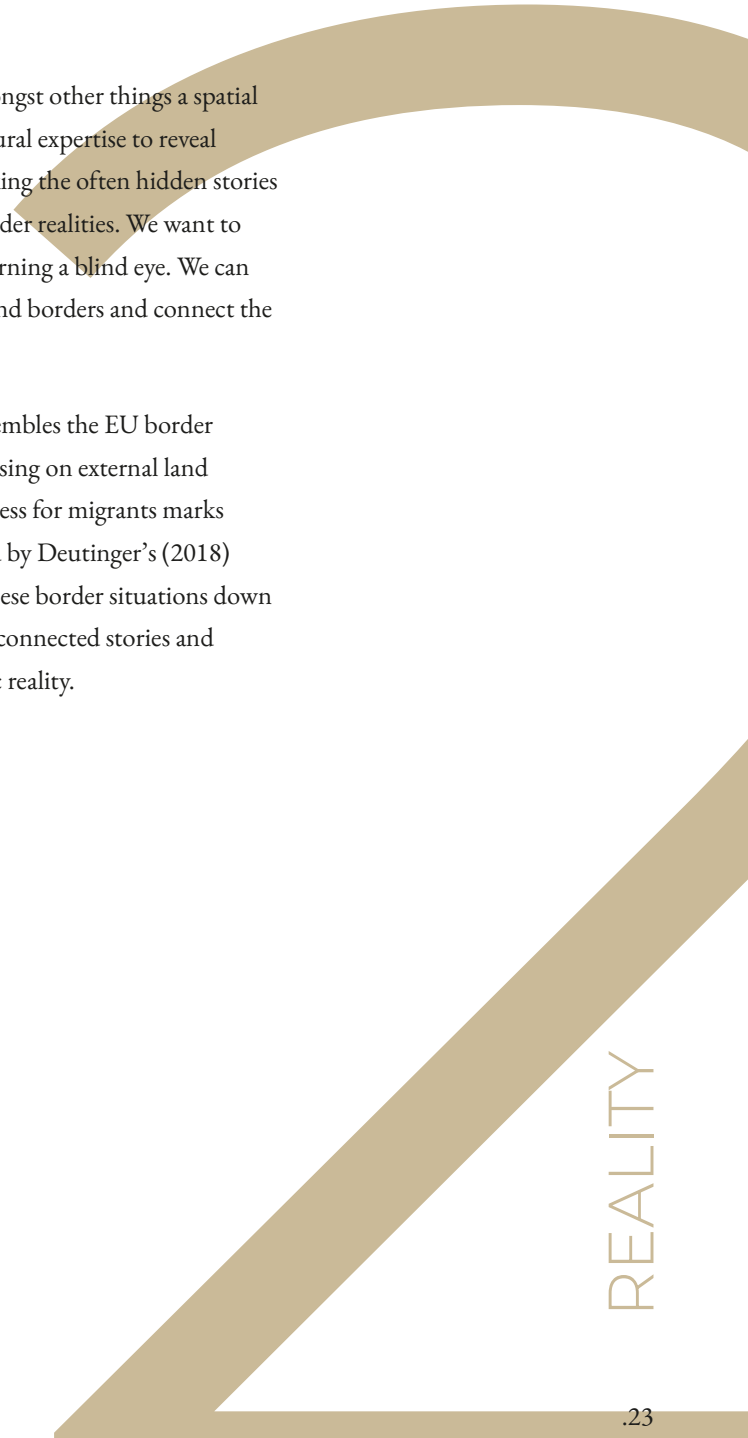


Which personal tragedies are hidden  
behind the death counts?

What is the political foundation of  
today's situation?

What are the architectural elements  
external European land borders  
consist of?

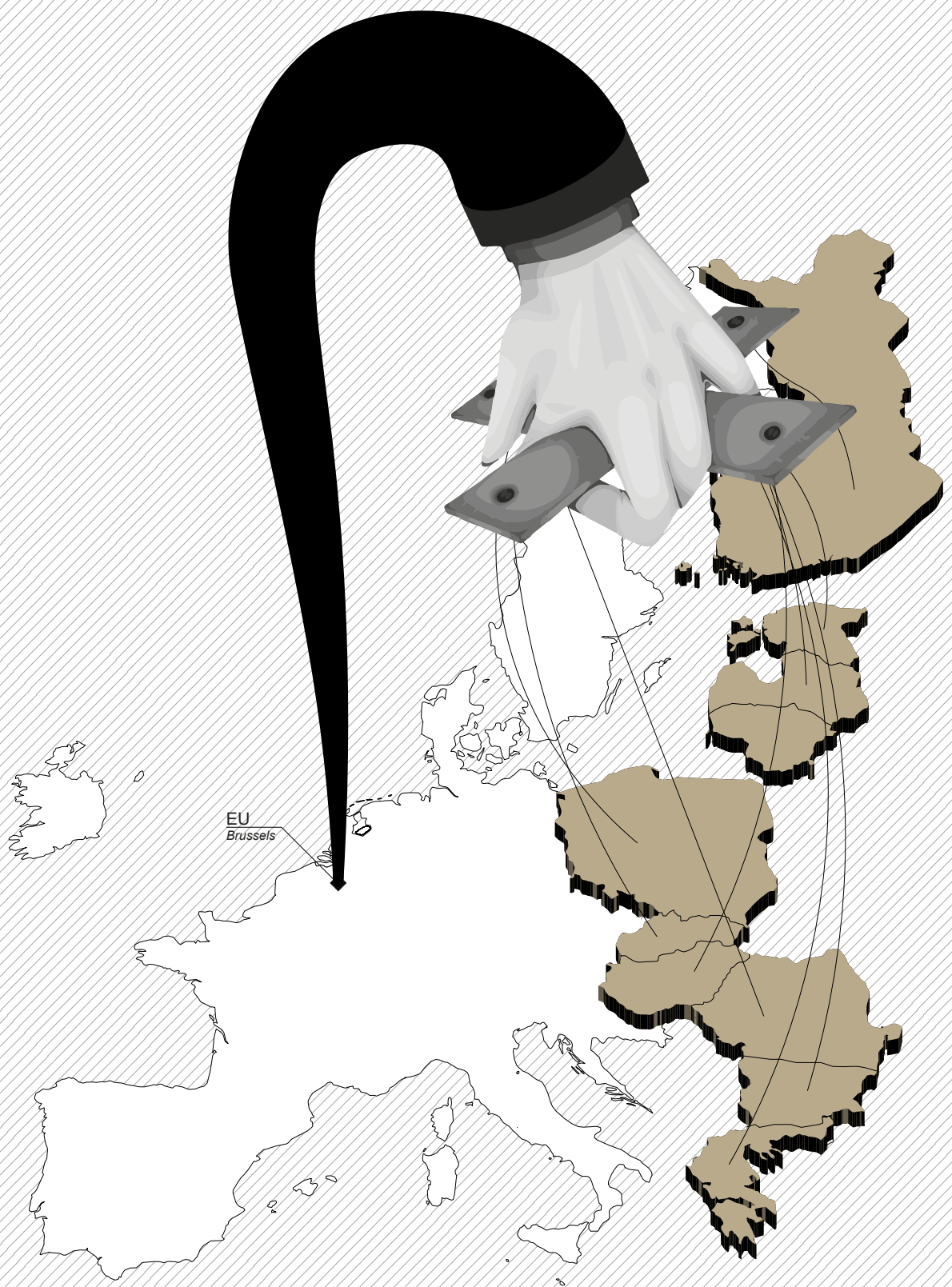
How does the | **deadly** | REALITY of | **European migration politics** | **spatially manifest** | on external  
European land borders?



**What can we do?** This thesis is amongst other things a spatial analysis. We aim to use our architectural expertise to reveal injustice. We feel the need of unmasking the often hidden stories and destinies behind our current border realities. We want to challenge the common practice of turning a blind eye. We can spatially analyse our most relevant land borders and connect the hidden stories.

The following second chapter disassembles the EU border composition on different scales, focusing on external land borders. Herein the reported deadliness for migrants marks further investigation points. Inspired by Deutinger's (2018) Handbook of Tyranny, we analyse these border situations down to the scale of detailed sections. The connected stories and annotations complement the horrific reality.





## Political Foundation

The foundation of the current border architecture lies within the framing prevailing political system. In order to understand the spatial manifestations it is crucial to understand the political background first. In the exceptional case of the EU, two legislative levels affect the external land border situation. The final execution of political decisions happens on a national level. EU member states decide what is built or done on their territories. The European Parliament seeks to give a leading political direction, lacking a direct mandate for execution. Nevertheless, EU politics are highly influential due to their supporting or penalising abilities towards executing states. Given the far reaching impact of EU migration politics, this work therefore focuses on Union level. The following depicts relevant politics, actors and policies that shape the current EU migration politics.

**EU Politics.** The evolution of EU migration politics starts with the international efforts to introduce protective measures in favour of refugees. The term refugee and allocated rights were defined in the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol (UNHCR, n.d.b). This definition is the basis for asylum politics, which translated into spatial configurations, is the origin for structures on and around external land borders. From urban morphologies down to border architecture elements, everything relates to the preceded socio political definition and decisions upon migration.

In the case of the EU the underlying political system affects the national sovereignty of each member state and the transeuropean efforts and agreements of the Union. The Schengen area plays a special role in this. This “passport-free” zone of the EU consists of 22 EU countries and 4 non EU countries and allows free movement between its member states. It is the EU Member States’ responsibility to protect the external borders of the EU (FRA, 2020, p.9). This elevates EU countries’ borders at the fringe of European territory to common EU borders.

**Common European Asylum System.** The Common European Asylum System (hereinafter CEAS) sets standards for asylum procedures. As part of CEAS, the Dublin III regulations prevents people from applying for asylum in multiple EU-states

(Hruschka, 2005, p. 474). These Dublin deportations return asylum seekers to the EU-country of first entry, which increases pressure on southern external border states such as Greece (Hampshire, 2016, 538). Eurodac, as a supporting tool, is the European data bank of asylum procedures. It stores fingerprints and facial recognition information of asylum seekers and has been criticised for violating fundamental rights related to the surveillance the system provides (EDRi, 2021).

**Frontex.** In fear of terror attacks the European Agency for Management of External Borders (hereinafter Frontex) was established throughout the Hague Programme in 2004 (Council of the European Union, 2004). This EU agency monitors the external borders and supports border control and migration management (Frontex, n.d.). Frontex was vastly criticised for failing to intervene when human rights violations occurred, allegedly even actively supporting ‘push backs’ (Human Rights Watch, 2021; Bautista & Rojas, 2021).

**European Agenda on Migration.** Following the refugee crisis in 2015 the EU launched the European Agenda on Migration, a long term strategy for handling migration within the EU. Immediate results were the externalisation of migration control through agreements with transit countries such as Turkey or Libya, extended competences and resources for Frontex and increased efforts for border securitization externally as well as internally. In short further fortifications on multiple levels. The bespoke transit countries as well as Frontex are accused of human rights violations and the closure of safe routes dramatically increased the number of dead and missing migrants forced to take more and more dangerous routes (Willermain, 2016).

**Fortress Europe.** EU migration politics originated in efforts to protect refugees and the wish for common asylum systems. This drastically transitioned into overprotective fortification projects and border security ambitions. Driven by heated discussion and national solo efforts, seemingly endless resources are directed towards deterrence of unwanted migration. Killing the ones we wanted to protect while hiding behind growing walls, earned Europe the title Fortress.

# Fortress Europe

## approx. 1000 km Fortification

This map shows fortifications on EU external land borders. It is based on satellite imagery (Google, n.d.) and contains additional border information (FRA, 2020). No other sources unless referenced in the map.

### Reflective Questions:

- ◆ Can we deduce that the main reasons for fortifications are either fear of invasion from Russia or a fear of irregular migration?
- ◆ Broken down by the death per metre of fortification, what makes the borders of Spanish exclaves so deadly?
- ◆ Should Spain even have remaining territories on the African mainland in the 21st century?
- ◆ What makes the Balkan area so deadly for irregular migrants?
- ◆ Why do we glorify the fortifications as Shield of Europe and associate protection with it?

- XXXX EU & Schengen
- //// Schengen
- \\ EU
- Partial/Full Fortification
- - - - Migration Routes



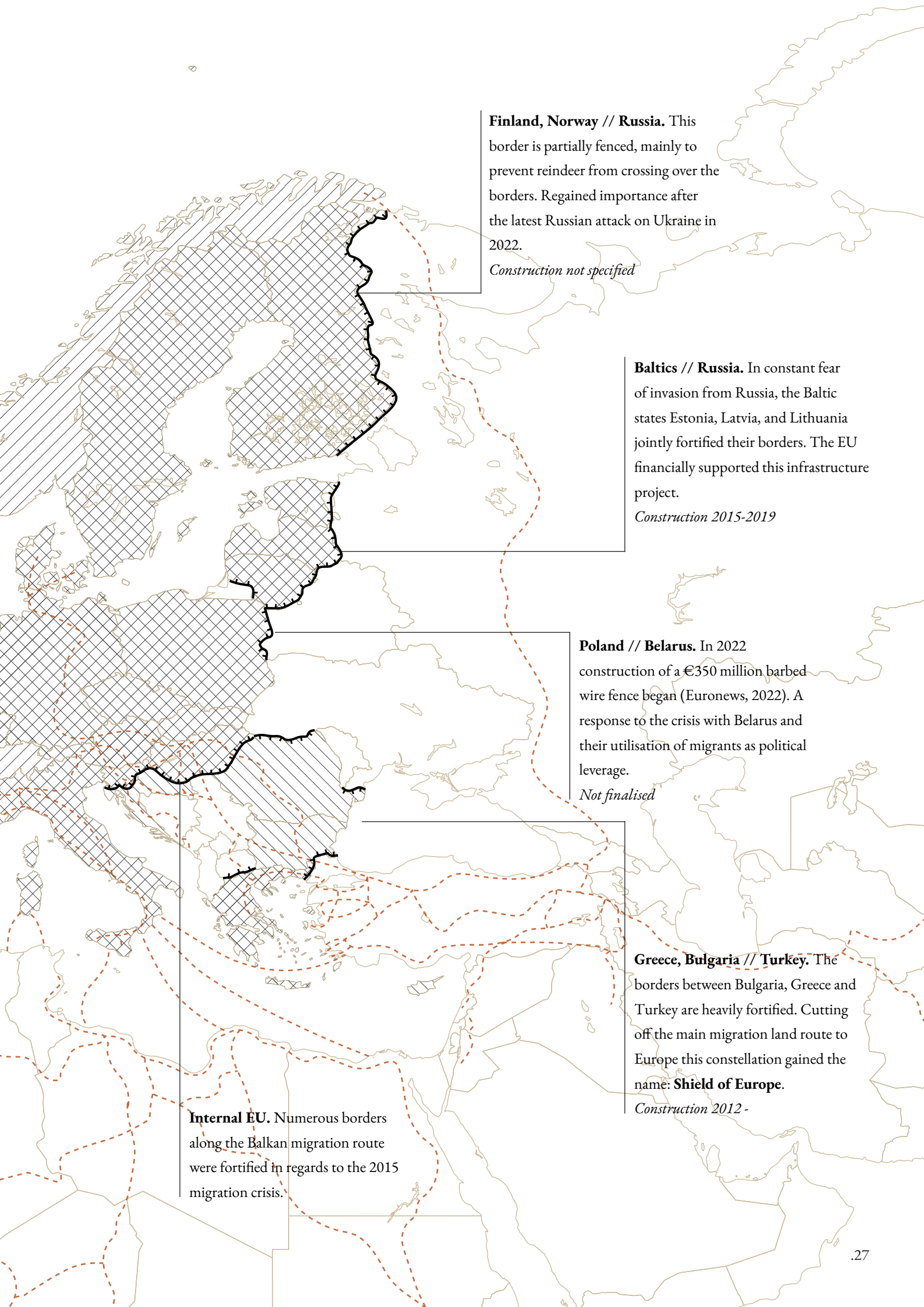
1000 km

**France // UK.** Jointly constructed between the UK and France, this border barrier shuts off the Channel Tunnel in Calais, thereby preventing migration to the UK.

*Construction 2015-2016*

**Spain // Morocco.** The **Spanish Exclaves** of Ceuta and Melilla are heavily fortified towards Morocco. They are the only European land borders on the African continent.

*Construction 1996 - 2020*



**Finland, Norway // Russia.** This border is partially fenced, mainly to prevent reindeer from crossing over the borders. Regained importance after the latest Russian attack on Ukraine in 2022.

*Construction not specified*

**Baltics // Russia.** In constant fear of invasion from Russia, the Baltic states Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania jointly fortified their borders. The EU financially supported this infrastructure project.

*Construction 2015-2019*

**Poland // Belarus.** In 2022 construction of a €350 million barbed wire fence began (Euronews, 2022). A response to the crisis with Belarus and their utilisation of migrants as political leverage.

*Not finalised*

**Greece, Bulgaria // Turkey.** The borders between Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey are heavily fortified. Cutting off the main migration land route to Europe this constellation gained the name: **Shield of Europe.**

*Construction 2012 -*

**Internal EU.** Numerous borders along the Balkan migration route were fortified in regards to the 2015 migration crisis.





Spain // Morocco

*\* out of the **internal** European Perspective [Figure 2],  
the secrecy around border infrastructure and personnel is characterised by the censorship in the image.*



## Spanish Exclaves

These Spanish territories are remnants of Spanish colonialism, with Melilla conquered in the 15th century and Ceuta in the 17th century (BBC, 2018). Amongst a few islands and mini territories in Morocco the two cities of Ceuta and Melilla are part of Spain and therefore the EU. This creates the abstruse situation of EU external land borders on the African continent, which should be untenable. Morocco has valid territorial claims on these exclaves. If sold for the price that Alaska was sold to the US (Office of the Historian, n.d.), the resurrection of those should cost 3.083,73 \$, inflation-adjusted. This would be a step towards territorial decolonisation of the African continent, meaning the return of territories that have been colonised. Meanwhile the two exclaves remain destinations for migrants attempting to reach the EU (BBC, 2018).

The exclaves have the longest history of fortification and are currently among the deadliest in the EU (IOM, n.d.). Therefore this thesis further analyses its spatial composition. The border architecture evolved over the years and was recently elevated to an approximately 10 metres fence height along the stretches most used by migrants. This extension was deemed necessary to compensate for the removal of controversial concertina wires, which caused life threatening injuries. Furthermore, thermal cameras and improved motion detection systems with facial recognition were installed at the border crossings (Edwards, 2021). The causes for death and missing migrants related to the crossing of this border vary from drowning, violence and the lack of medical aid after border architecture related injuries (IOM, n.d.).

# Exclave Ceuta

7,5 km Fortification,  
constructed 1996 - 2020

This Map shows border infrastructure on Ceuta's external land border, and indicates spatial relations of such. It is based on satellite imagery (Google, n.d.), contains additional border information (FRA, 2020, p. 13-15) and mapping of dead/missing migrants (IOM, n.d.).

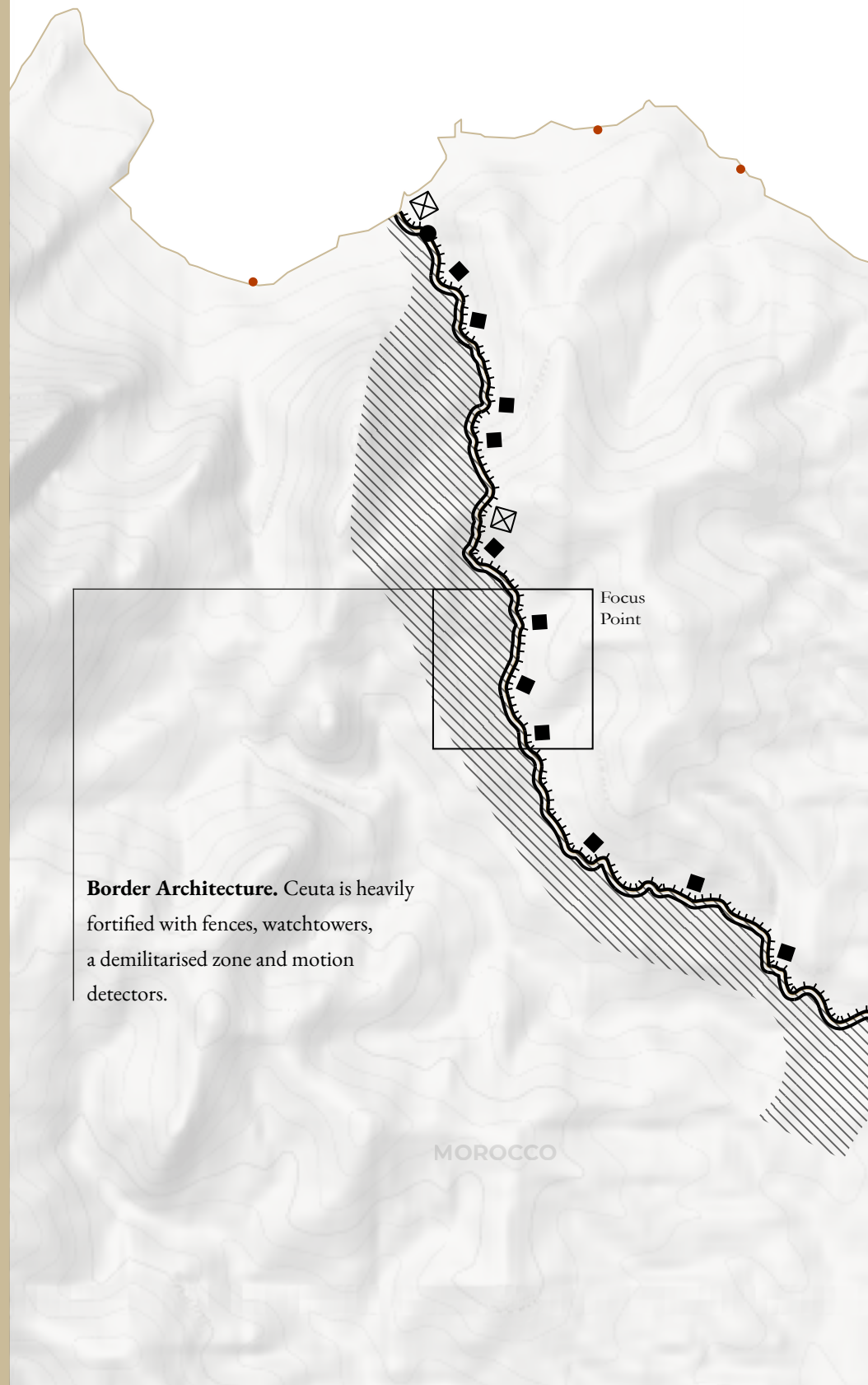
## Reflective Questions:

- ◆ Could the fortifications be viewed as a growing disease taking more and more space?
- ◆ Is the heavy fortification forcing irregular migration attempts to take the risky sea route?
- ◆ If this short sea route is already that deadly how many lives are lost on the longer routes across the mediterranean sea?

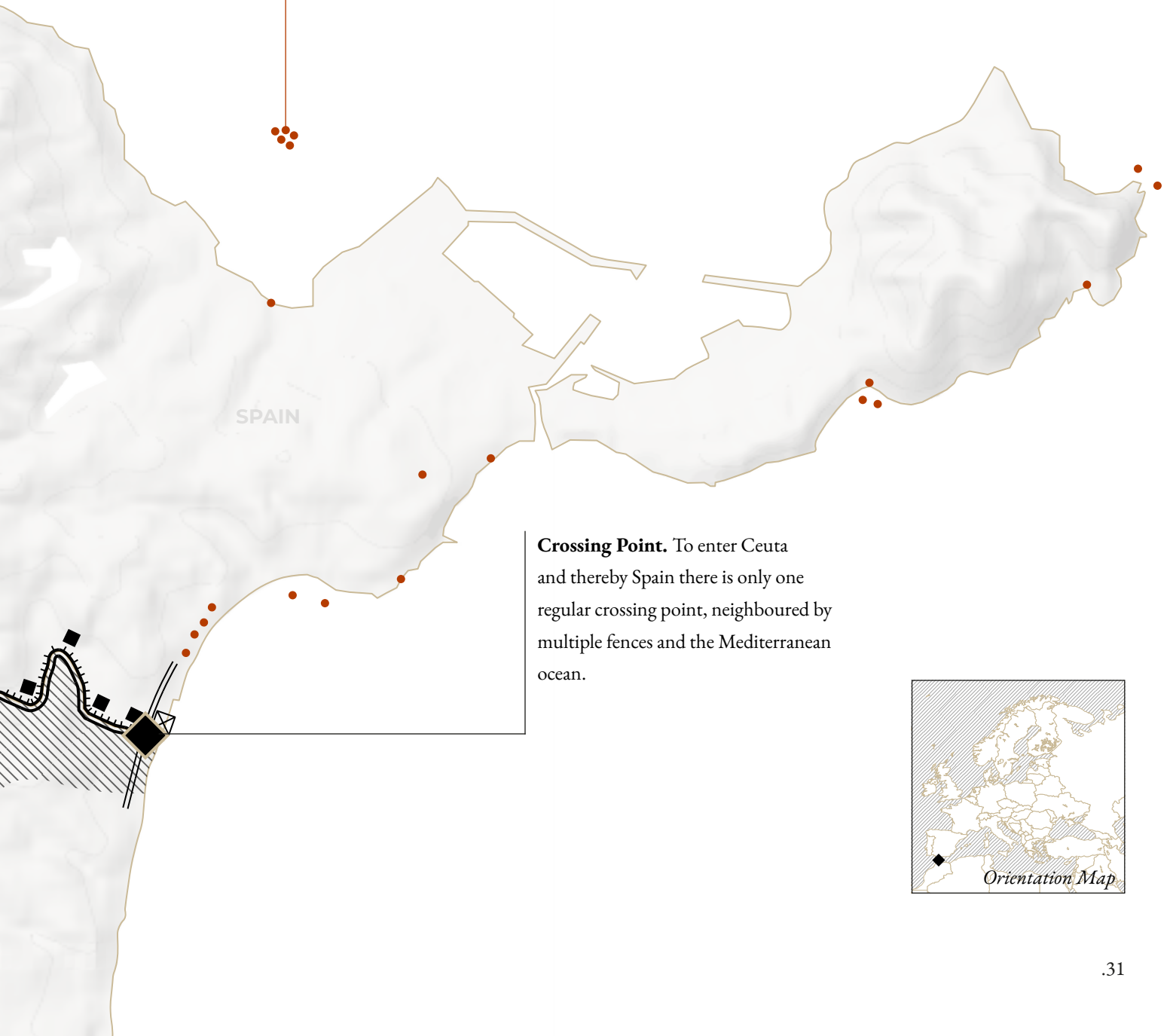
-  Restricted Zone
-  Fence
-  Road
-  Border Station
-  Larger Guard Tower
-  Guard Tower
-  Missing/Dead Migrant



1 km



**Death at Sea.** As a result of the heavy fortification of the border, people are forced on detours, either swimming or in boats, with catastrophic results.



**Crossing Point.** To enter Ceuta and thereby Spain there is only one regular crossing point, neighboured by multiple fences and the Mediterranean ocean.





# Exclave Melilla

**10,5 km Fortification,  
constructed 1996 - 2020**

This Map shows border infrastructure on Melilla external land border and indicates spatial relations of such. It is based on satellite imagery (Google, n.d.) and contains additional border information (FRA, 2020) as well as mapping of dead/missing migrants (IOM, n.d.).

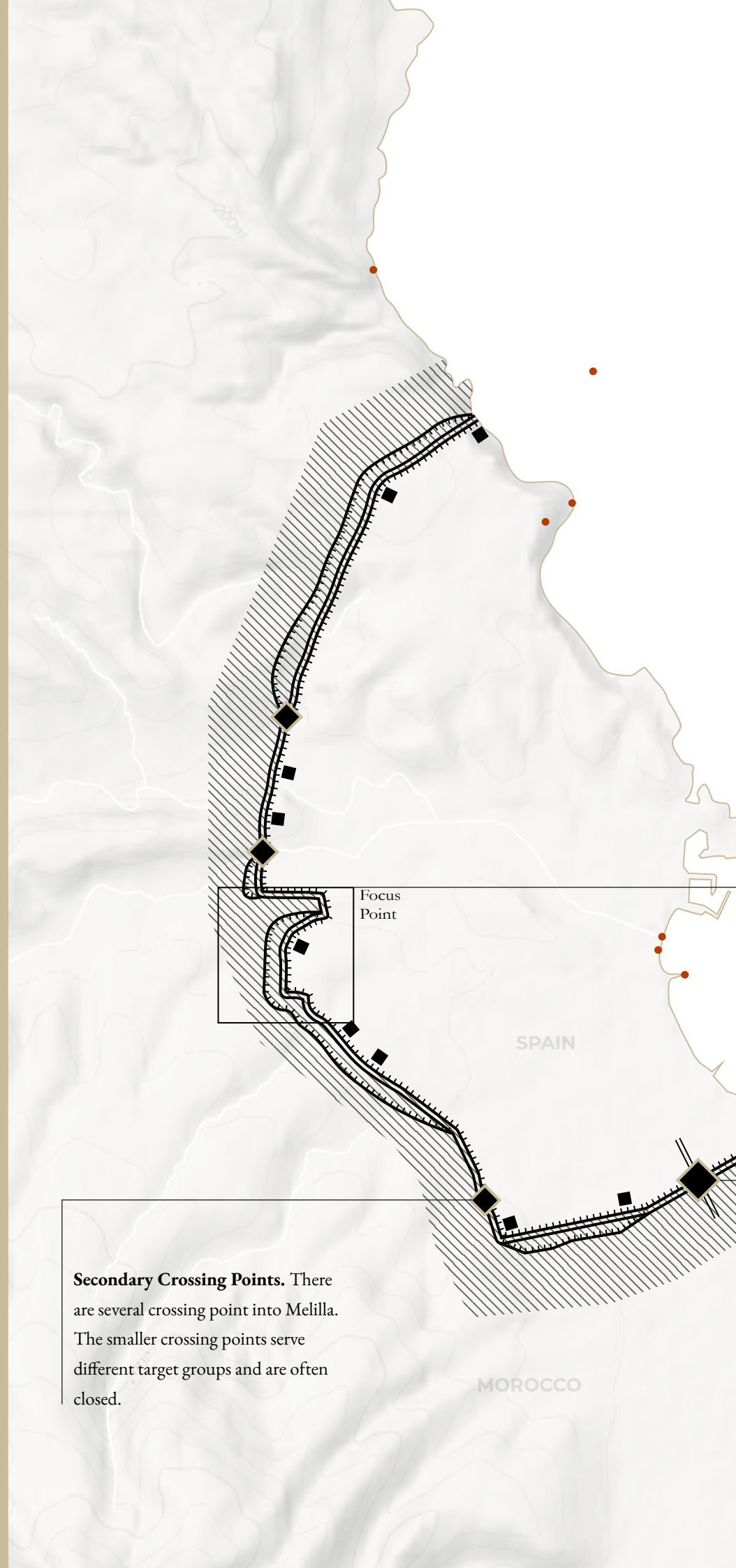
## Reflective Questions:

- ◆ Could the fortifications be perceived as a prison on the vast shore of Morocco?
- ◆ What is Spain's right to build bunker-like structures on Morocco territories?
- ◆ Why does Morocco add layers of border fortification?


-  Restricted Zone
-  Fence
-  Road
-  Border Stations
-  Guard Tower
-  Missing/Dead Migrant



1 km

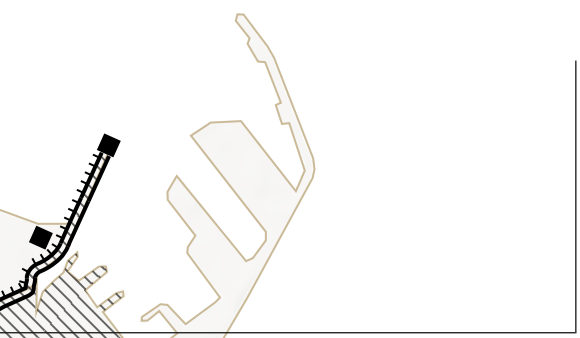



**Secondary Crossing Points.** There are several crossing point into Melilla. The smaller crossing points serve different target groups and are often closed.



**Border Architecture.** Similar to Ceuta the border to Melilla is heavily fortified with tall fences, motion detection, watch towers and patrol routes.

**Death at Sea.** Just like in Ceuta, the heavy fortification results in the loss of human lives, commonly evident by bodies of migrants floated ashore.



**Primary Crossing Point.** There is one main crossing point into Melilla. A fenced pathway guides migrants by feet along the road into border control.



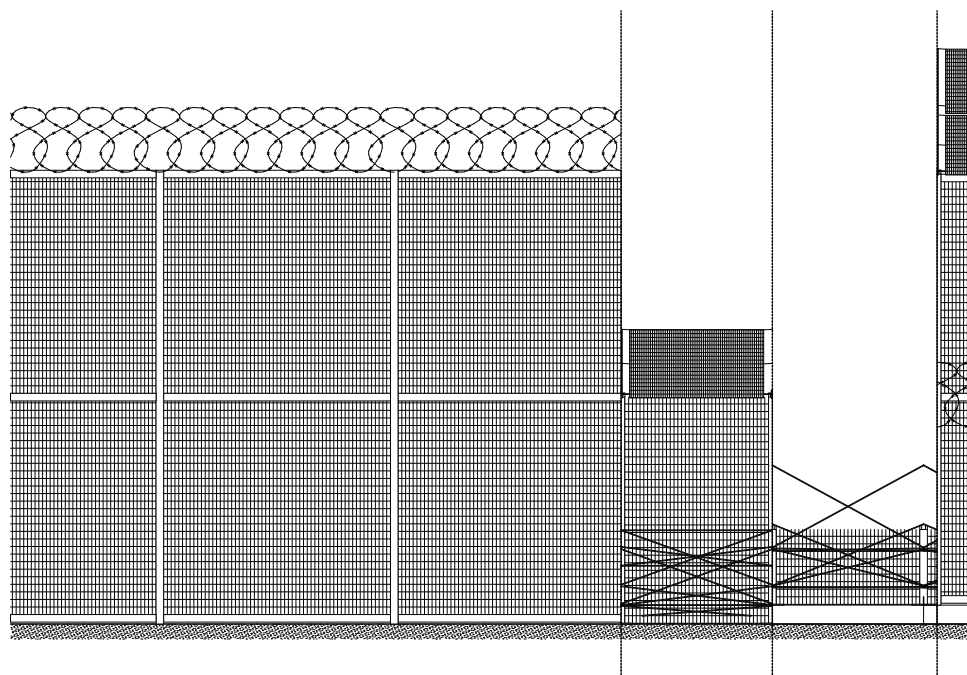
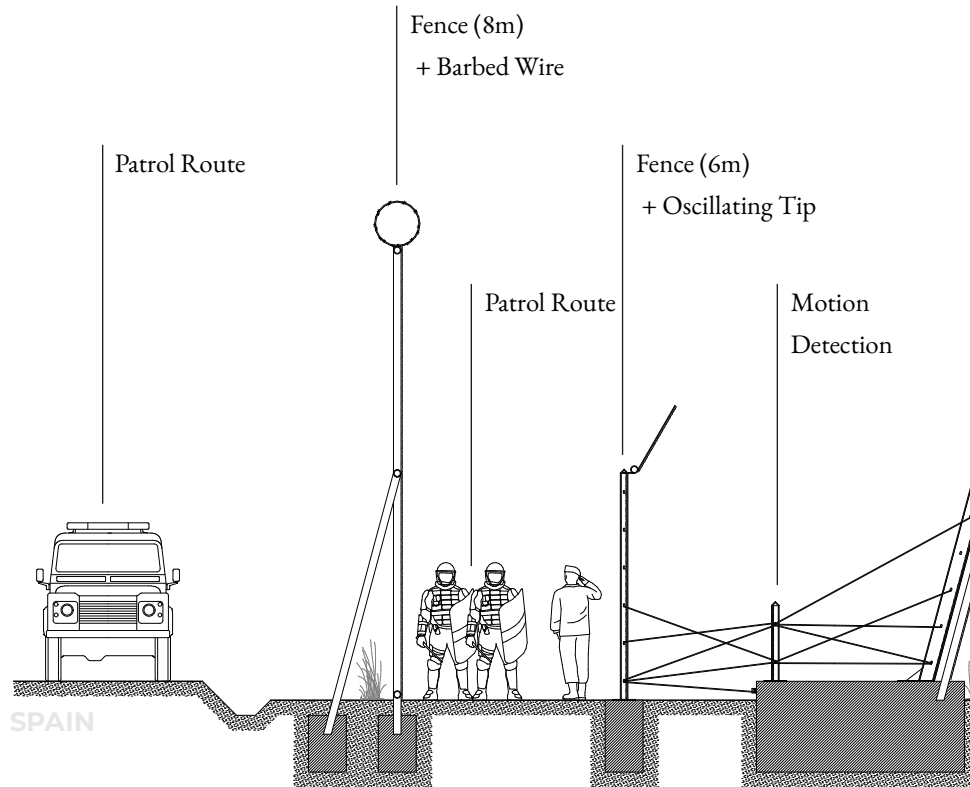
# Border Architecture

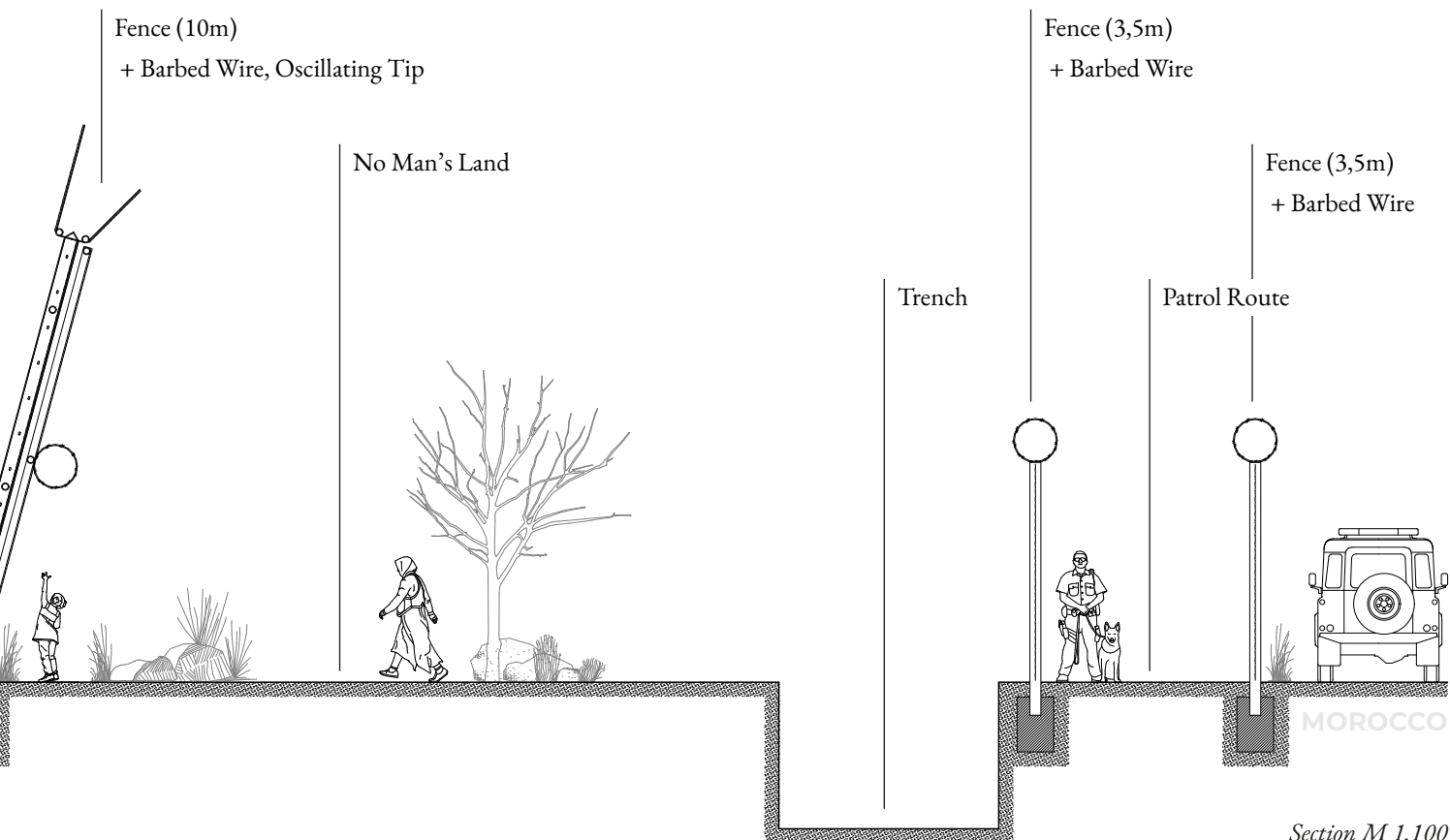
Spain // Morocco

This section and elevation shows the architecture of the border between Melilla (Spain) and Morocco (relating to p.32/33). Ceuta follows a similar structure with the exception of the fences on the Moroccan side of the border. It is based on satellite imagery and photos (Google, n.d.), as well as drawings (Deutinger, 2018, Chapter 2).

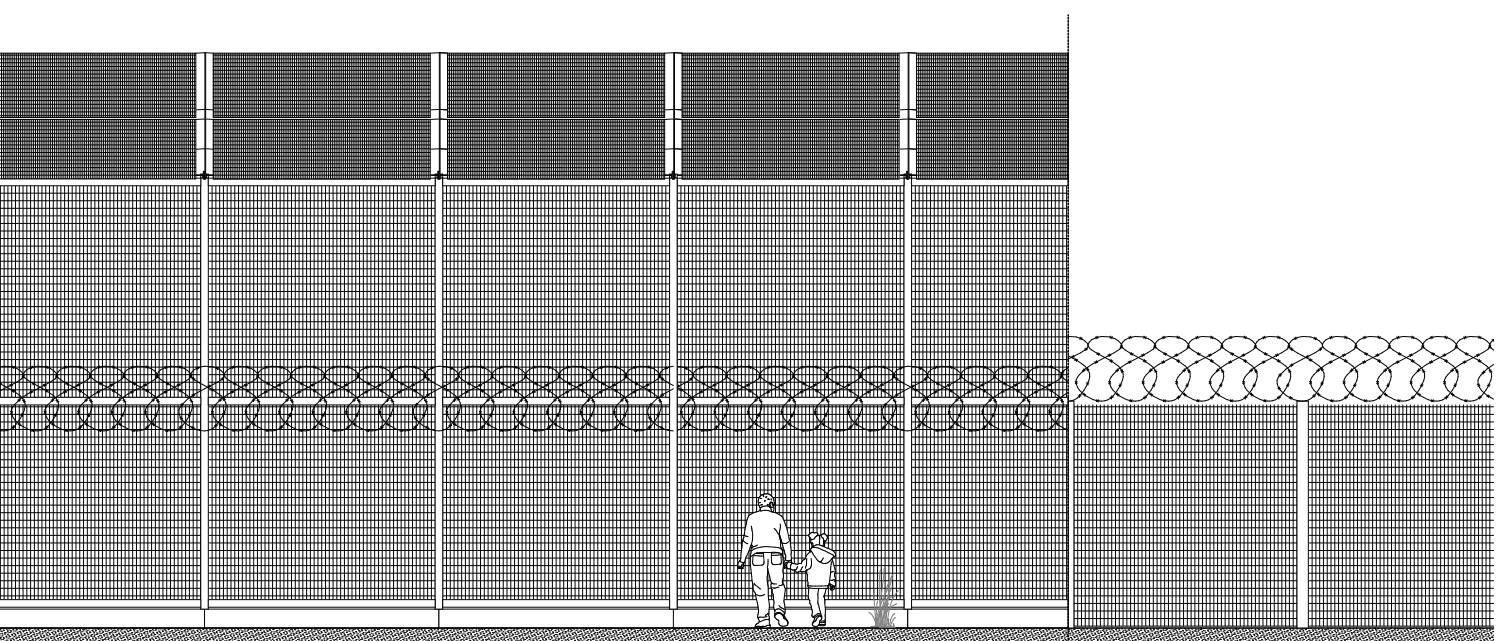
## Reflective Questions:

- ◆ What is worse: a 10 metre fall or a cut from a concertina wire? Or are they equally cruel?
- ◆ Why is the border fortified on the Moroccan side of the border close to Melilla?
- ◆ Who pays for this? Is it the EU?
- ◆ What does such a structure mean for animal movements?
- ◆ What psychological effect does this structure imply?





*Section M 1.100*



*Elevation M 1.100*





Greece // Turkey

*\* out of the **internal** European Perspective* [Figure 3],  
the secrecy around border infrastructure and personnel is characterised by the censorship in the image.



## Shield of Europe

This combined border stretch separates the EU members Greece and Bulgaria from Turkey. Greece being a Schengen country this border is seen as the gate to the EU, from the internal as well as the external perspective. Therefore this border stretch is a major land migration crossing point and the migration related deaths are constantly increasing, lately reaching alarmingly high numbers (IOM 2022). While the FRA (2020) reports recurring human rights violations of Greece border guards, as ‘push backs’ and similar ill treatments, the information upon such at the Bulgarian section are surprisingly scarce.

This border constellation is currently among the deadliest in the EU (IOM, n.d.). Therefore this thesis further analyses its spatial composition. The border architecture in Bulgaria consists of a 235 km long fence covering the whole border line. The entire border area is a heavily controlled restricted zone (FRA, 2020). Vast forest areas and a partial border river complement the life threatening environment hidden under a cloak of silence. The Greece border line fully profits from the respective border river Evros/Meriç. From the year 2000 until 2019 a total number of 398 deceased migrants in relation to the border river Evros/Meriç were reported in a forensic report (Pavlidis & Karakasi, 2019). The very few stretches not following the river bed were recently fortified by Greece authorities. The geographical position paired with the political tension make this border strip highly relevant to this examination.

# Shield of Europe

**275 km Fortification,  
constructed 2012 -**

This Map shows border infrastructure along the Bulgarian, Greek (hereinafter in the maps GR) and Türkisch (hereinafter in the maps TR) land borders, and indicates spatial relations of such. It is based on satellite imagery (Google, n.d.), contains additional border information (FRA, 2020) and mapping of dead/missing migrants (IOM, n.d.). No other sources were used unless referenced in the map.

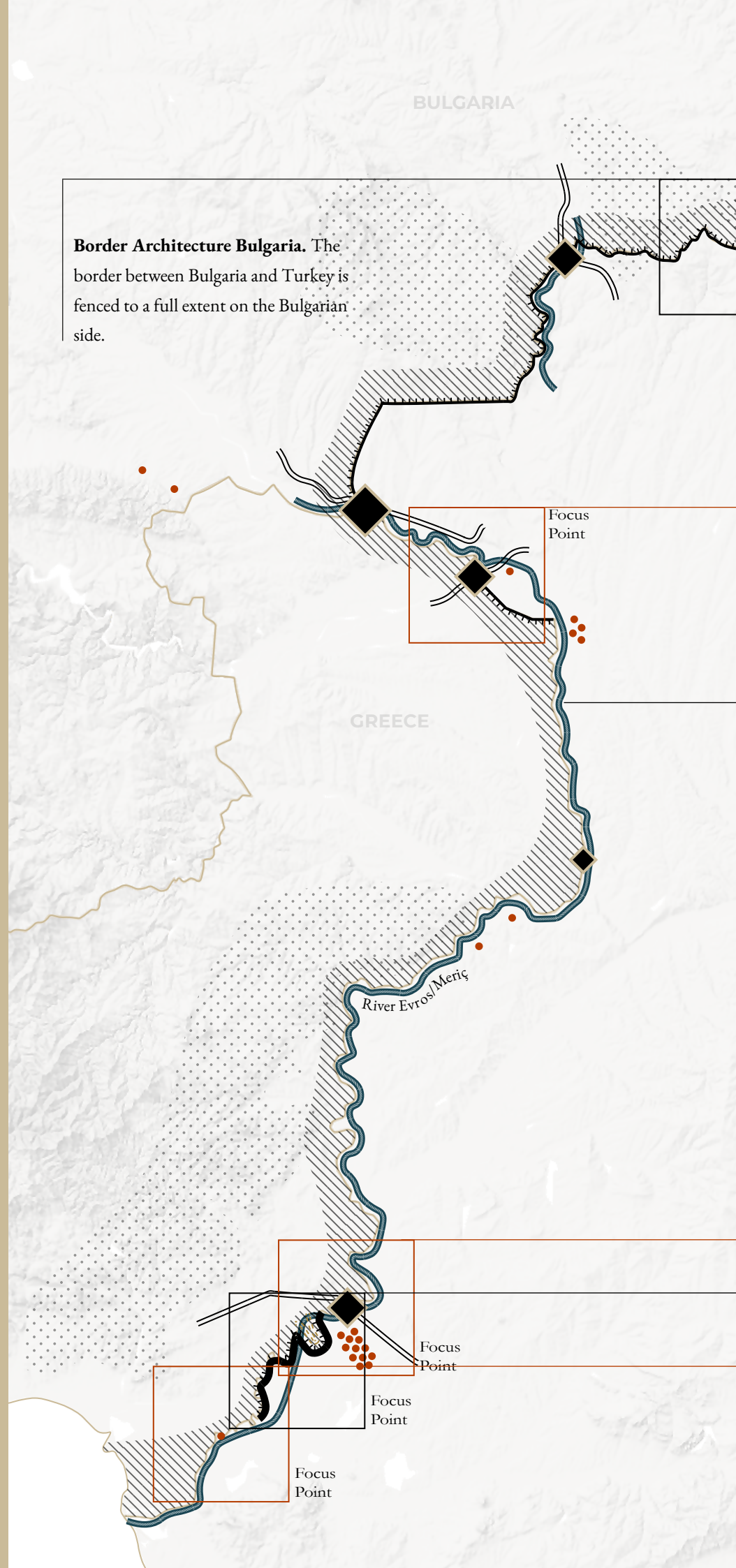
## Reflective Questions:

- ◆ At first glance these borders might look friendly, using natural elements as dividers. But how friendly are they really?
- ◆ Why do migrants have to drown in a European river?

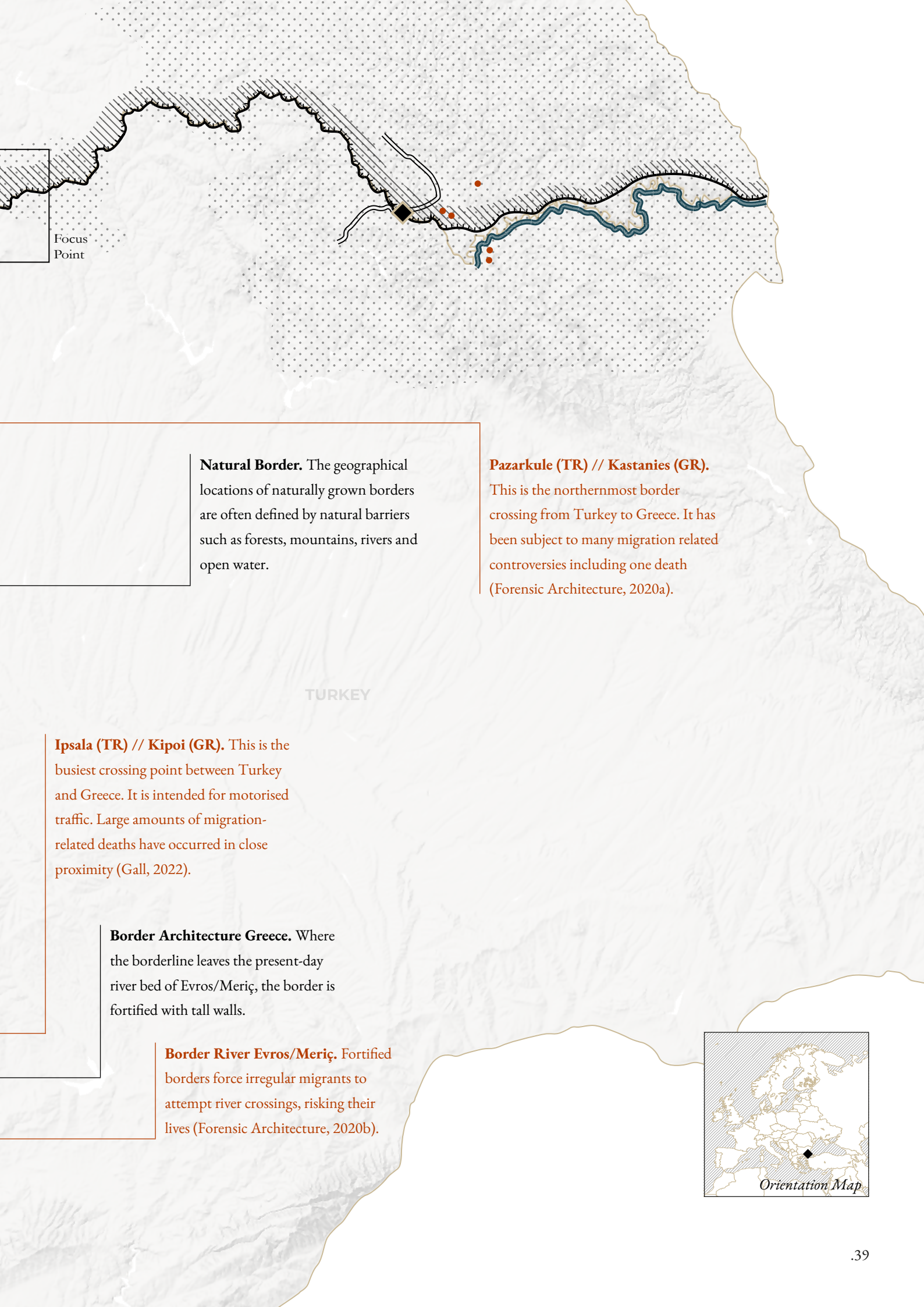
-  Restricted Zone
-  Forest
-  Wall
-  Fence
-  Road
-  River
-  Border Stations
-  Missing/Dead Migrant



10 km







Focus  
Point

**Natural Border.** The geographical locations of naturally grown borders are often defined by natural barriers such as forests, mountains, rivers and open water.

**Pazarkule (TR) // Kastanies (GR).**

This is the northernmost border crossing from Turkey to Greece. It has been subject to many migration related controversies including one death (Forensic Architecture, 2020a).

TURKEY

**Ipsala (TR) // Kipoi (GR).** This is the busiest crossing point between Turkey and Greece. It is intended for motorised traffic. Large amounts of migration-related deaths have occurred in close proximity (Gall, 2022).

**Border Architecture Greece.** Where the borderline leaves the present-day river bed of Evros/Meriç, the border is fortified with tall walls.

**Border River Evros/Meriç.** Fortified borders force irregular migrants to attempt river crossings, risking their lives (Forensic Architecture, 2020b).



# Border Architecture

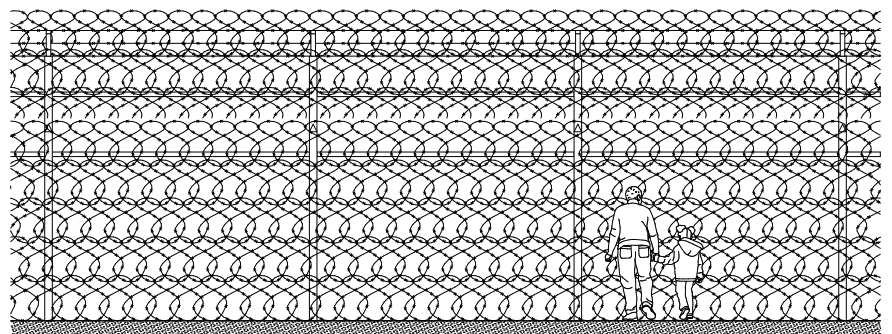
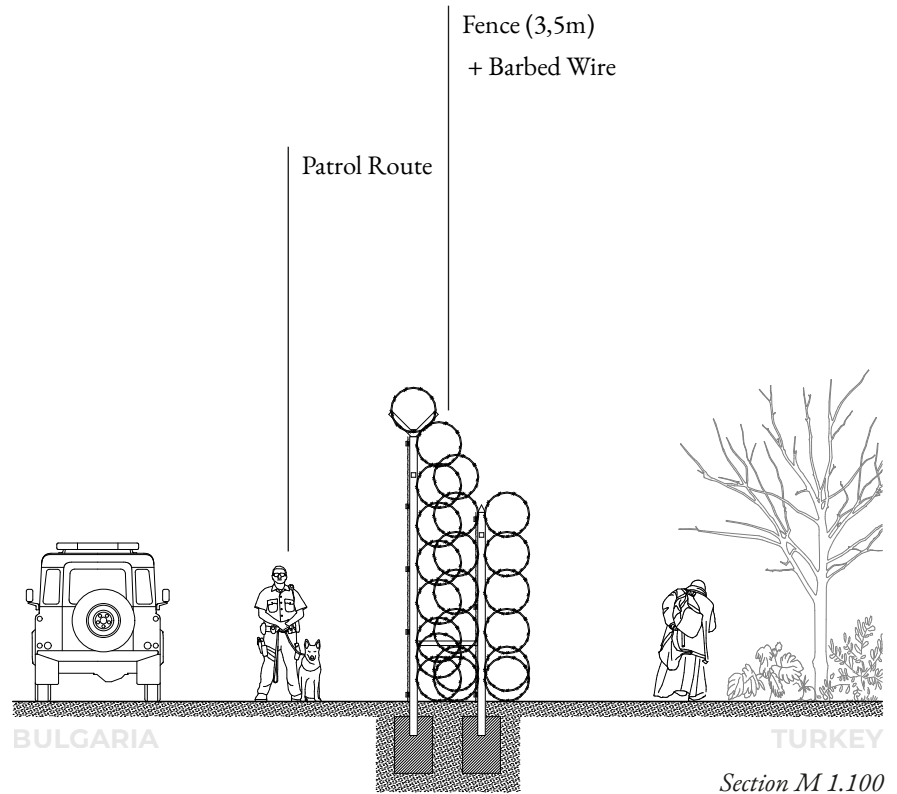
Bulgaria // Turkey

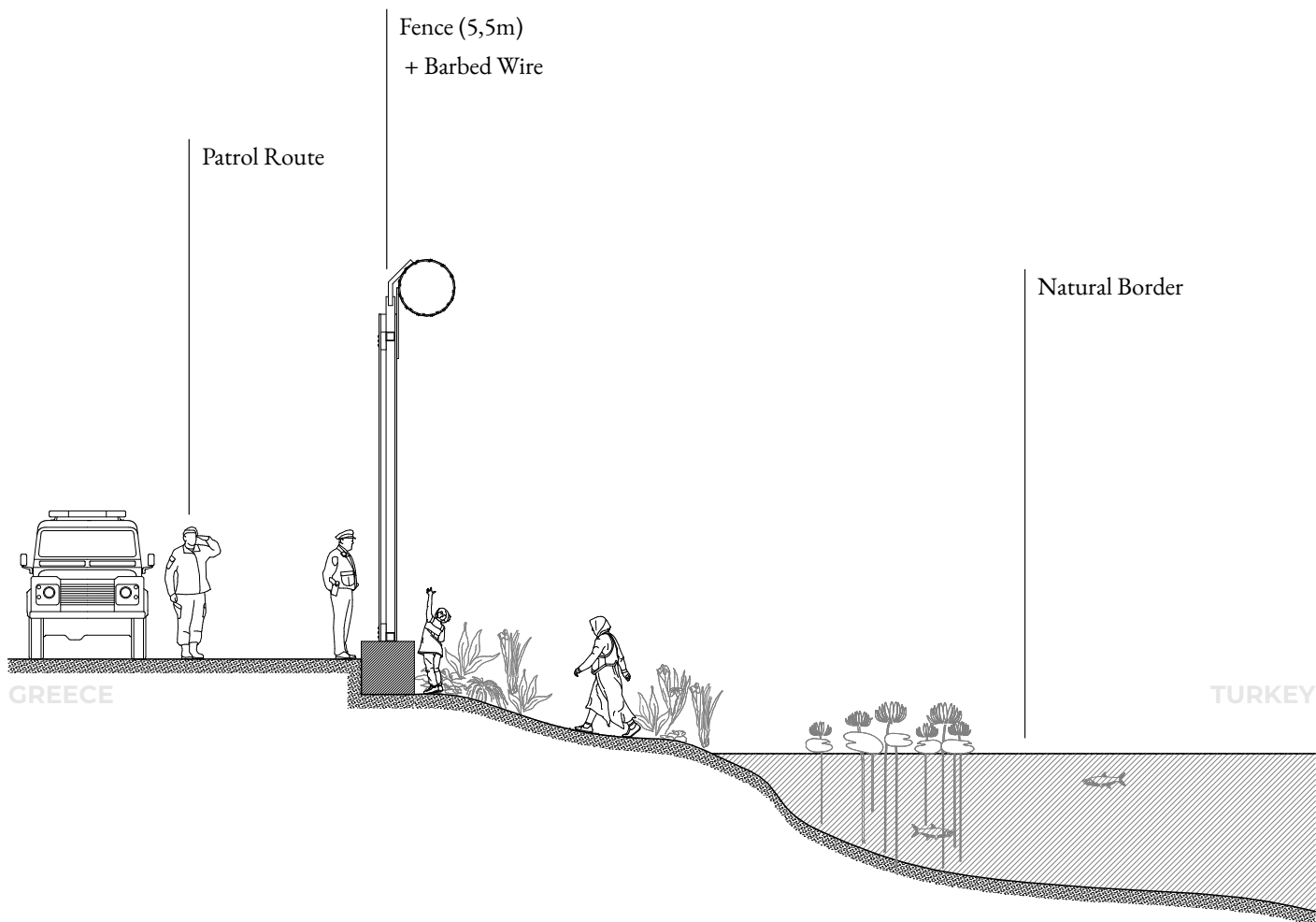
Greece // Turkey

These sections and elevations show the architecture of the borders between Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey (relating to p.38/39). The type and amount of fortification vary between the countries, likely depending on geographical conditions. They are based on satellite imagery and photos (Google, n.d.), as well as drawings (Deutinger, 2018, Chapter 2).

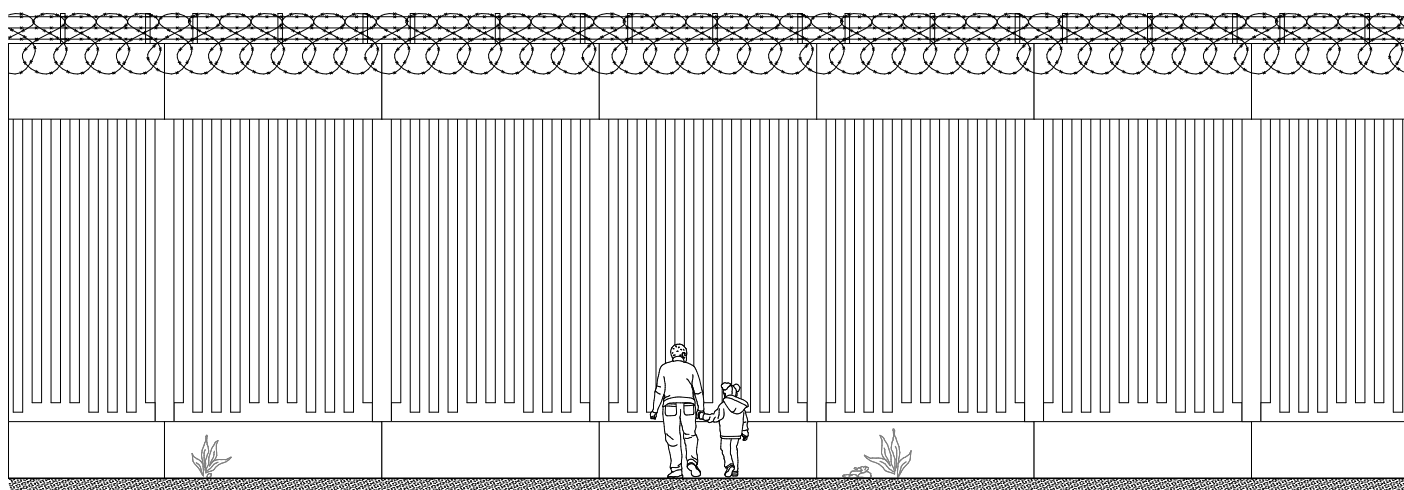
## Reflective Questions:

- ◆ What is Bulgaria concealing?
- ◆ What are the reasons for the two countries' different strategies regarding the border fortification?
- ◆ Is there a physiological reasoning behind the elevated patrol routes, possibly related to dominance?
- ◆ What would happen if the EU instead of funding walls and fences, used this money to support the assistance of migration in the external EU border countries?



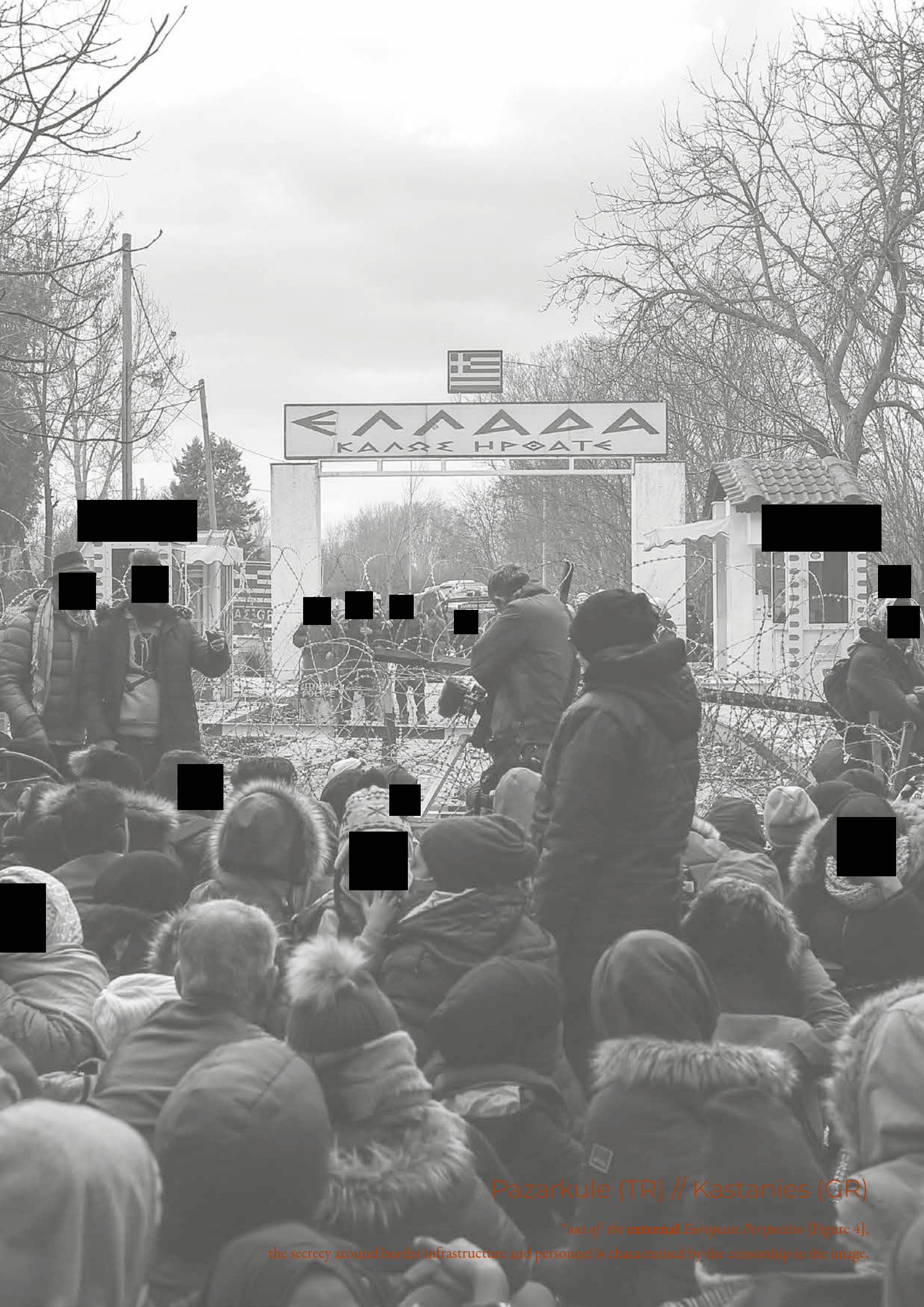


*Section M 1.100*



*Elevation M 1.100*





Pazarkule (TR) // Kastanies (GR)

*\* out of the external European Perspective [Figure 4],  
the secrecy around border infrastructure and personnel is characterised by the censorship in the image.*

## Border Crossings

In order to reach the EU territory migrants have scarce options. Due to the available amount of data this work focuses on the main options to cross the land border between Turkey and Greece. The corresponding sea route is the attempt to reach Greek islands in the Aegean Sea. On the Greek mainland, two accessible border stations for regular migration are installed. The main crossing passes over the river Evros/Meriç between the border cities Ipsala (TR) and Kipoi (GR). It is exclusively equipped for motorised traffic, both private and commercial. Even though being the southernmost and therefore closest border station to main migration routes, the complex lacks facilities to handle such migration attempts and is completely fenced off, denying pedestrian access. The secondary crossing lies within fields between the border cities Pazarkule (TR) and Kastanies (GR). It is one of the few sections that does not follow the riverbed. The border line is instead demarcated by a barbed wire fence. Even though being significantly smaller and not intentionally preventing pedestrian crossing, the station is also fenced off and does not assist migrants.

Despite the unwelcome nature of the border stations, migrants still try to access them often ending in tragic confrontations with armed border forces. In order to avoid these clashes, migrants are forced on detours and irregular border crossing attempts. These detours contain the deadly challenge of natural border elements such as the Aegean Sea or the border river Evros/Meriç.



## Ipsala (TR) // Kipoi (GR)

### Primary Border Crossing

This Map shows border infrastructure at the primary border crossing between Greece and Turkey and indicates spatial relations of such. It is based on satellite imagery (Google, n.d.). No other sources were used unless referenced in the map.

**Incident:** [REDACTED]

**Casualties:** 19 Migrants

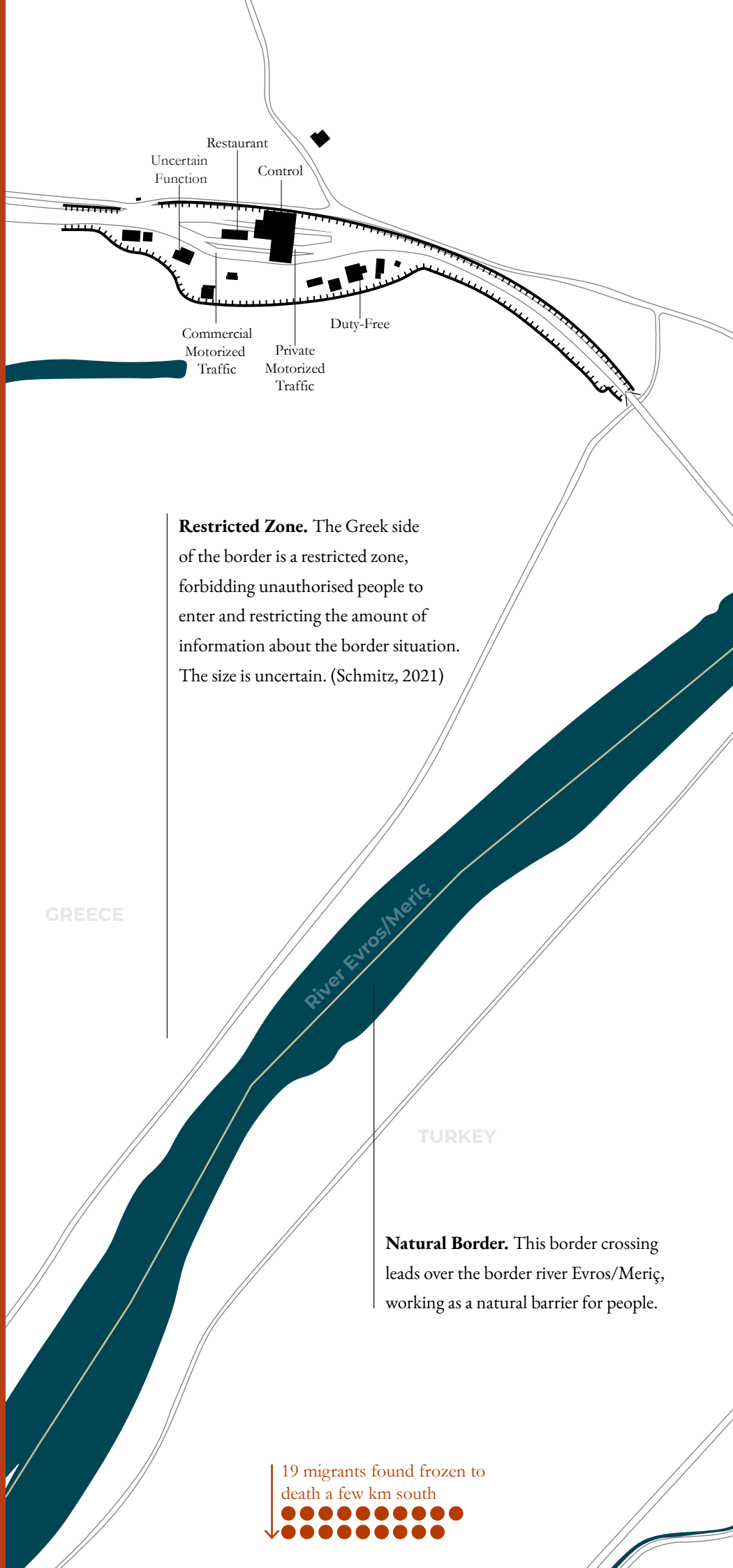
**Date:** February, 2022

19 frozen bodies were found in February 2022. Survivors state that the group was apprehended by Greek border authorities days earlier on the Greek side of the river Evros/Meriç after an irregular border crossing. They were brought to a detention centre in which they were stripped of their belongings. Afterwards they were pushed back to the Turkish side in a boat. Without shoes and proper clothing they tried to orient themselves and were forced to walk in the dark. In this desperate search for help 19 persons froze to death (Gall, 2022).

- Building
- River/Lake
- Fence
- Road



100m



**Restricted Zone.** The Greek side of the border is a restricted zone, forbidding unauthorised people to enter and restricting the amount of information about the border situation. The size is uncertain. (Schmitz, 2021)

**Natural Border.** This border crossing leads over the border river Evros/Meriç, working as a natural barrier for people.

19 migrants found frozen to death a few km south

**Patrol Route.** The border is further controlled through patrol routes on both sides of the river Evros/Meriç. Regular patrols of border authorities search for irregular persons.



**Fence.** Both the Greek and the Turkish border stations are fully fenced off in order to prevent people from irregular access.

Guarding Posts

Uncertain Function

Guarding Posts

**Non-Pedestrian.** This border crossing is allegedly only for motorised traffic, thereby preventing pedestrian migration.

Uncertain Function

Control

Commercial Motorized Traffic

Uncertain Function

Control

Duty-Free

Private Motorized Traffic

Vehicle Control

Control



# Pazarkule (TR) // Kastanies (GR)

## Secondary Border Crossing






This Map shows border infrastructure at the secondary border crossing between Greece and Turkey, and indicates spatial relations of such. It is based on satellite imagery (Google, n.d.). No other sources were used unless referenced in the map.

**Incident:** [REDACTED]

**Casualty:** Muhammad Gulzar

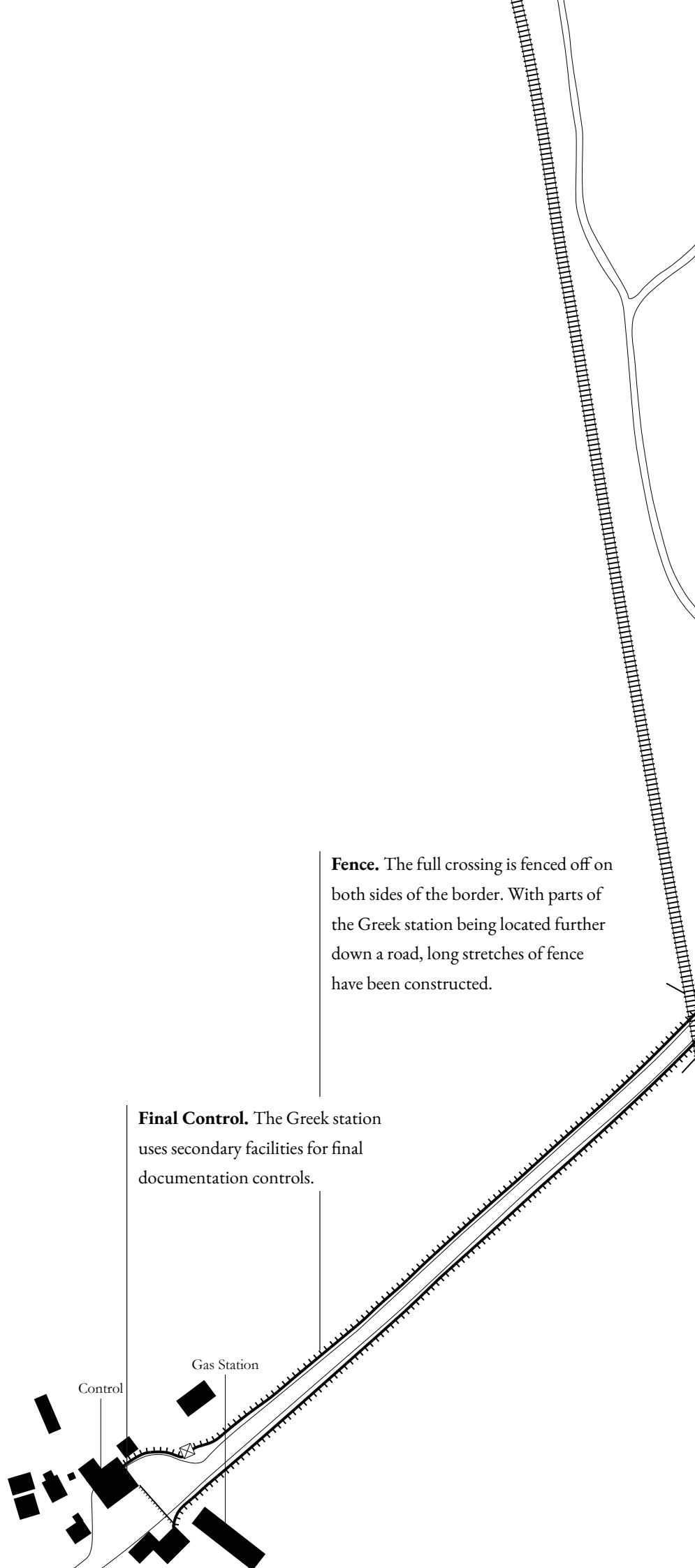
**Date:** March 4th, 2020

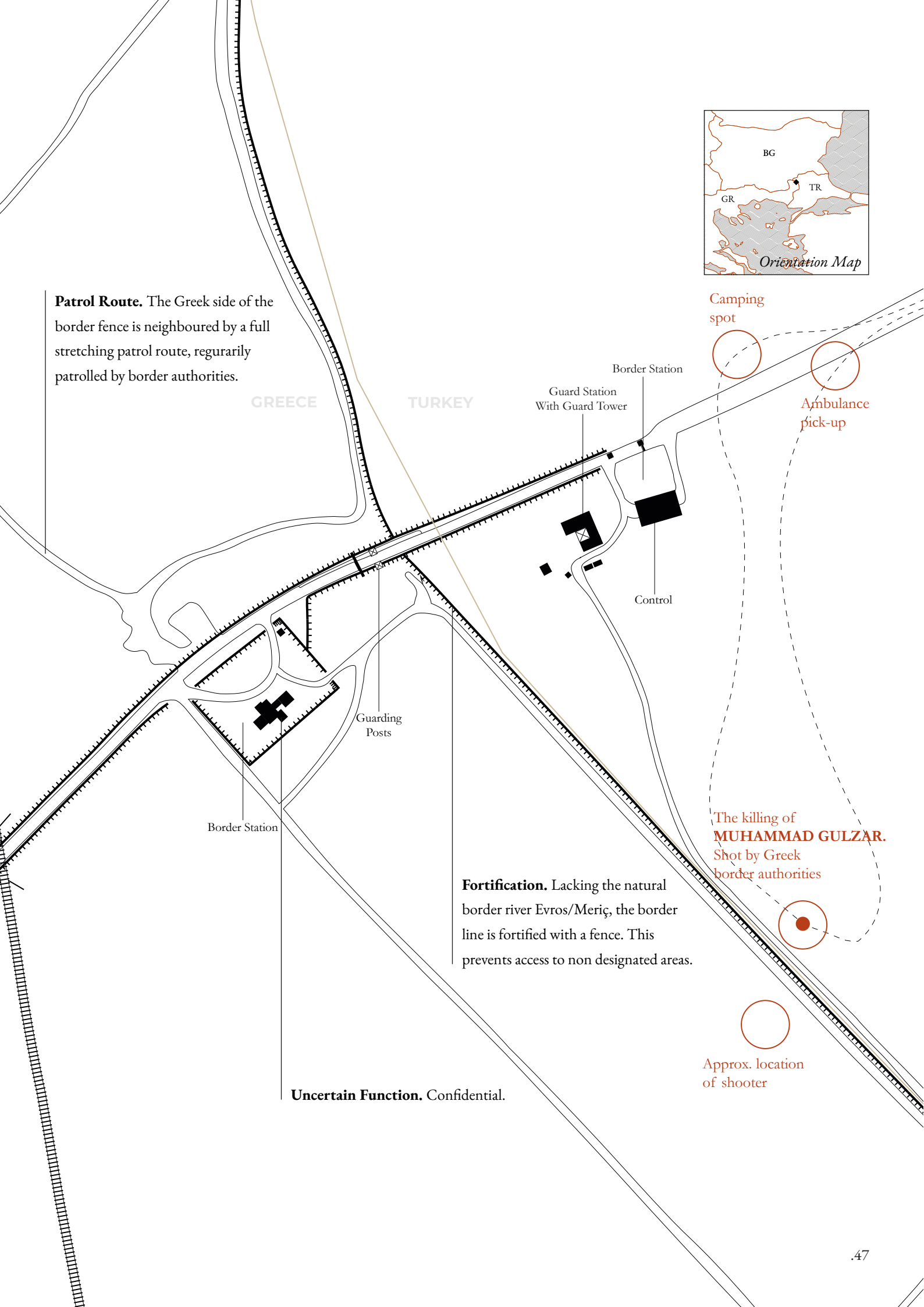
Muhammad Gulzar was shot dead March 4th 2020. The violent escalation between migrants and Greece border authorities occurred at this border crossing. Attempts of unarmed migrants crossing were prevented by Greece. Forensic Architecture (2020a) analyzed a high probability of Greek militaries being responsible for the fatal shot that killed Muhammad Gulzar right behind the border line. Apart from the death of Muhammad Gulzar, other migrants were injured the same day. Greece authorities refuse to investigate these incidents until today.

-  Building
-  Guard Tower/Guard Post
-  Fence
-  Road
-  Railway



100m





**Patrol Route.** The Greek side of the border fence is neighboured by a full stretching patrol route, regularly patrolled by border authorities.

GREECE

TURKEY



Camping spot

Ambulance pick-up

Border Station

Guard Station With Guard Tower

Control

Guarding Posts

Border Station

The killing of MUHAMMAD GULZAR. Shot by Greek border authorities

**Fortification.** Lacking the natural border river Evros/Meriç, the border line is fortified with a fence. This prevents access to non designated areas.

**Uncertain Function.** Confidential.

Approx. location of shooter

# Border River Evros/Meriç

## Migration Border Crossing

This Map shows an informal border crossing between Greece and Turkey and indicates spatial relations of such. It is based on satellite imagery (Google, n.d.). No other sources were used unless referenced in the map.

**Incident:** [REDACTED]

**Casualty:** Muhammad al-Arab

**Date:** March 2nd, 2020

Muhammad al-Arab was shot dead March 2nd 2020. During that period the government of Turkey encouraged migration over the river Evros/Meriç to put political pressure on the EU. The Greece government reacted by deploying military forces in the region to prevent irregular access. Together with other migrants Muhammad al-Arab crossed the river Evros/Meriç at this point. They then attempted to access Greek territory, which according to Forensic Architecture (2020b) was forcefully prevented by military units and lead to his assassination.

- Building
- Forest
- River/Lake
- Fence
- Road
- Migration Path

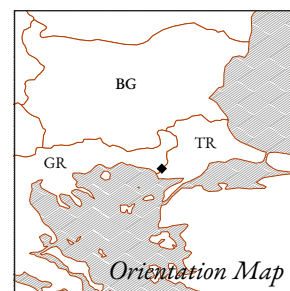


100m



**Turkey.** This area is one of the few sections where the border line does not follow the river Evros/Meriç. This opens the possibility of crossing the river while remaining in Turkish territories.

**Surveillance.** Aerial surveillance is used to identify irregular migration attempts early on in order to initiate preventive measurements. Drones with infrared cameras support stationary watchtowers.



Approx. location of shooter

The killing of  
**MUHAMMAD AL-ARAB**  
Shot by Greek  
border authorities

Camping  
spot

Crossing  
point

Antennas

**Patrol Route.** The border is further controlled through patrol routes on both sides of the river Evros/Meriç. Regular patrols of border authorities search for irregular persons.





EXTINCTION



DEATH

TYRANNY

INSANITY



# Borders of Tyranny

The overall picture that the EU external land borders depict is horrific. While some of them should not even exist after a complete territorial decolonisation, others seem to exceed each other in their efforts of fortification. The dehumanisation of borders in the EU is evident, but it is necessary to stress worldwide leading fatality rates for irregular migrants (IOM, n.d.b).

**Death.** The more obvious effects of fortifications is the prevention of movement and division of communities. A study focusing on the border wall between EU borders (De Genova, 2017), indicates that the physical barrier has little impact on the choice of whether to migrate or not to migrate. The effect seen is rather the need for detours and the resulting divergent crossing locations. The actual consequence is the higher risk on such irregular journeys and therefore a higher fatality rate. This correlation between increased fortification and the death of migrants can be observed on the Balkan route. Numerous fortification efforts in the region after 2015, was based on the complications of the land route to increased migration attempts over the Mediterranean sea and dangerous detours on land. While 3,771 migration related deaths were reported in 2015 the number jumped to 3,000 in the first half of 2016, while the actual number of migration attempts decreased drastically (Jones, 2016, p. 2-3). The direct danger of fortifications is prevalent in reported injuries and even fatalities caused by barbed wire or the height of fences when tried to overcome (BBC, 2018).

**Insanity.** Next to the direct physical effects studies indicate various more indirect psychological effects of fortified borders. Evidence of unnatural behaviour among people living close to the Berlin wall was observed in the 1970s (Wapner, 2019), such as people claiming that they were being spied on and stalked. The German physician Dietfried Müller-Hegemann coined the term *Mauerkrankheit*, or 'wall disease'. Another study on the physiological effects of living close to the peace lines in Belfast showed that the affiliated negative effect on mental health increased the number of antidepressants description and anti-anxiety medication (Maguire et al., 2016). Furthermore, research has shown that the construction of border walls and fences has a negative effect on a country's attractiveness in

international relations and signals hostility to the inhabitants of other countries (Mutz & Simmons, 2022, p.1). It is also claimed that the erection of border walls changes people's views on immigrants, and in some cases people have changed from being polite and acting normal, to completely avoiding immigrants (Wapner, 2020, p. 67). In summary fortifications negatively affect psychological wellbeing of close living individuals, as well as societal perception of related topics.

**Extinction.** The humanitarian issues of fortifications can to some extent be transferred to wildlife and animal migration. Studies on the border wall between the U.S. and Mexico (Defenders of Wildlife, 2022; Jordan, 2018) show how animals and wildlife are negatively affected when the lands that they live and thrive on get divided by uncrossable barriers. Evidence shows that if certain species are cut off from important mating or feeding regions the risk of extinction rises. Due to the similarities in border infrastructure, the main consequences for animal migration can be seen in analogy to EUs walls and fences.

**Tyranny.** Complementing the hostility, there are various human rights violations at the border itself. The intentioned spatial deterrence is maintained through 'push-backs' and even use of deadly violence. The analyzed cases of Muhammad al-Arab, Muhammad Gulzar and countless others in Greece show the cruelty and inhumanity in which border protection is lived and hidden from authorities. We see the way border architecture is used to implement spatial dominance by elevating the patrolling areas artificially over the opposite site at the new Greece border walls. We recognize the inhumane dimension the fortifications in the Spanish exclaves have taken over the years, by adding layer over layer and continuously elevating the system. We see the way commerce and traffic efficiency is prioritised over human well being, safety and dignity.

The question remains: why do we keep doing this? With all the negative effects and indirect side effects for everyone related to the border region? With all the costs, environmental damage and spatial limitations? With all the unforgivable suffering that these inhumane fortifications cause?

**Is that the REALITY we want?**

CLOSE & FLIP











24.278



Architecture is the spatial incarnation of political power.

Following the Spider-an mantra

- **With great power comes great responsibility** -  
we as architects must explicitly position ourselves politically.

WE STAND FOR THE  
FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION.

Inevitably, we must change the perspective on migration and  
borders within the European Union. From disgrace to dignity.

Replacing the deterrent **REALITY** ...

EU Heartbeat

A horizontal line in a dark red color. On the left side, the text "EU Heartbeat" is written in a small, dark red font. On the right side, the line transitions into a heartbeat graphic, consisting of several sharp, vertical peaks of varying heights, resembling an ECG trace.

...with a humane **ALTERNITY**.

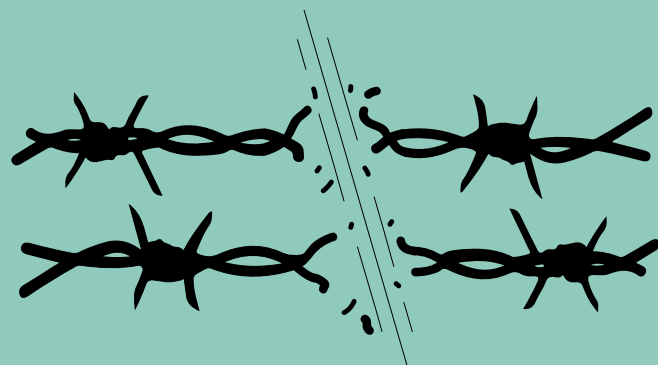
For a restoration of the mere groundwork of our beloved  
European community of values.

CHARTER OF FUNDAMENTAL  
RIGHTS OF THE EUROPEAN  
UNION

TITLE I / Dignity

Article 1 / Human dignity

*Human dignity is inviolable. It must be respected and protected.*



Whose personas perspectives are relevant to be portrayed?

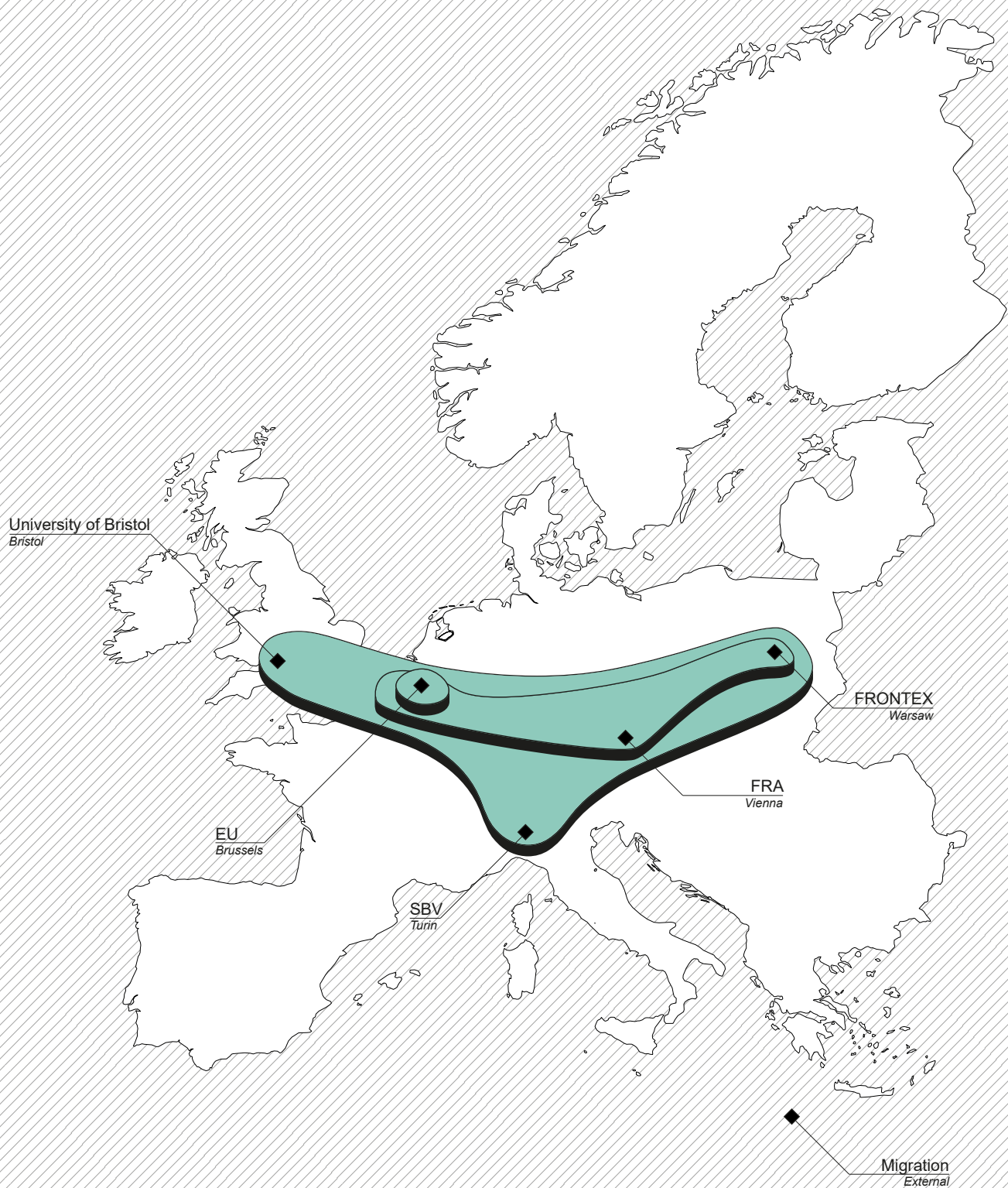
What are existing positions in the spectrum of socio political discourse?

What do speculative visions of external European land borders consist of?

How would the | **relevant** | ALTERNITIES in the | **socio political discourse** | **speculatively conceptualise** | around external European land borders?

**What can we achieve?** This thesis is an exploration of alternatives. We want to portray existing alternatives to the current border reality. The discourse around borders is ongoing and unbelievably complex. We can not be representative but we can visualise relevant perspectives. Filtered through our own bias we deliver images for a socio political discussion. Ultimately, we want to participate in a paradigm shift through the discursivity of this thesis itself.

The third chapter opposes alternative border scenarios and visions. It investigates the participants of the discourse and positions different perspectives on border realities. This work gains insights into the respective visions in a participatory process through interviews of persons who represent these positions. Based on these statements, this internal EU spectrum can then be visualised through graphical transcription. The internal visions are opposed to the alternative ideas of a person with a migration experience, whose vision undergoes the same participatory visualisation process. The inconclusive representation of contradicting visions opens the discussions and leads back to the heart of this thesis.





## Political Discourse

A multitude of perspectives shape the political discourse around migration and borders. All of which represent dramatically different visions when it comes to alternative border realities. As much as the current spatial manifestations in border regions are the result of the inherent migration politics, so are alternatives shaped by political positions. Even though not being manifested, these alternatives can be graphically translated into spatial compositions based on statements and beliefs. We individually interviewed representative personas following the same structure and asking the exact same questions each time. These comparable spatial intentions can be graphically transcribed into visions within the same non contextual setting. Which then can indicate what the spatial results of the intended political paradigm shift might look like.

In order to define which perspectives are relevant to portray we must understand their different positions in the spectrum of the discourse and define representative personas. The first basic distinction is geopolitical. Is the perspective coming from within the EU and is therefore internal, or does the view reflect a non-EU position and is therefore external. The internal discourse upon migration seems to disregard external parties mainly discussed upon. To change these circumstances and to align ourselves with Ward's (2019) call to speculate on behalf of others we have the basic opposition of an external vision to the internal visions. The spectrum of internal perspectives is further defined through their political power and voice. From almost fortification to complete abolishment. The Tower of Power indicates their political influence on the actual situation. The higher the position, the more inherent political potency. The geolocation of these positions indicates that the majority of political participants are gathered in the western epicentres of power. When considering the distance of the political power to the areas of migration related death at the south eastern land borders, the political remoteness becomes obvious.

**EU.** The first perspective represented is the EU itself with several legislative and executive organs involved. As legislative representative the European Commission is the core of political decision making on the EU level. The European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex is an important support entity for national border control efforts. As stakeholders in the actual

execution of border related migration policies, their visions are highly relevant. While their budget as well as their area of competencies has been growing significantly over the last years, they were not able to avoid controversies about Frontex officers being involved in 'push-backs'. The Fundamental Rights Agency (hereinafter FRA) is a controlling element with a consultancy mandate for the commission. They analysed noncompliance in regard to European fundamental rights and formulated guidelines towards border personnel (FRA, 2020). Their idealistic approach adds to the European vision of an alternative border reality. Attempts to contact representatives from both the EU and Frontex were not successful. Therefore this perspective is fully constructed based on information available to the general public.

**Abolition.** The second perspective represented is the combination of an academic and activist border abolition point of view. Abolition in the sense of going as far as even questioning geographical demarcation between states altogether (The Funambulist, 2014). The academia argues out of a progressive thoughtful position, being conceptual and often inaccessible for a broader public. The activist on the other hand is based on strong moral persuasion, but lacking the wider theoretical context. Both have a similar political influence, but differing approaches. In contrast to the EU representatives, both perspectives are willing to be interviewed on their alternative border vision. The academic represented by a migration mobilities professor and the activist by a Stop Border Violence (hereinafter SBV) volunteer supporting migrants at the Italian border. SBV is an initiative publicly protesting against violations of article 4 of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights (SBV, n.d.). This perspective is constructed on their personal beliefs and ideas of transformation.

**Migration.** The last perspective portrayed is an individual with actual external migration experience over EU land borders. This perspective is based on an interview with a Syrian refugee who experienced her particular migration journey in 2015. Even though nowadays being internal, her experiences allow to draw from the external perspective.

## Interview Series

The interview series addresses relevant persons of the discourse around EU border alternatives. The semi structured sessions are following the same structure and asking the same guiding questions, aiming to create comparable results for a graphical transcription. The following guiding questionnaire forms the basis of the perspectives the alternities are built on.

### Current Border Reality

#### What is your connection to the EU external land borders?

In particular: Greece|Turkey; Bulgaria|Turkey; Ceuta/Melilla|Morocco?

**What is your opinion on the current reality of “Fortress Europe”?** How do you see the development of it since the migration peak in 2015?

**Are fundamental human rights violations against migrants and even their death evitable?** What is your opinion on the relation between national sovereignty and fundamental human rights?

### Speculative Border Alternity

**The Setting.** Now we would like you to imagine a scenario in which the EU external borders are constructed and planned in compliance with the Fundamental Rights of the European Union. A humane system treating everyone equally with

dignity and respect, adapted to the specific needs of the ones arriving. Within this system no ‘push backs’ take place and death at borders is prevented. Legislative change enables sufficient safe and legal migration routes to the EU. Nevertheless, varying flows need to cross geographical borders.

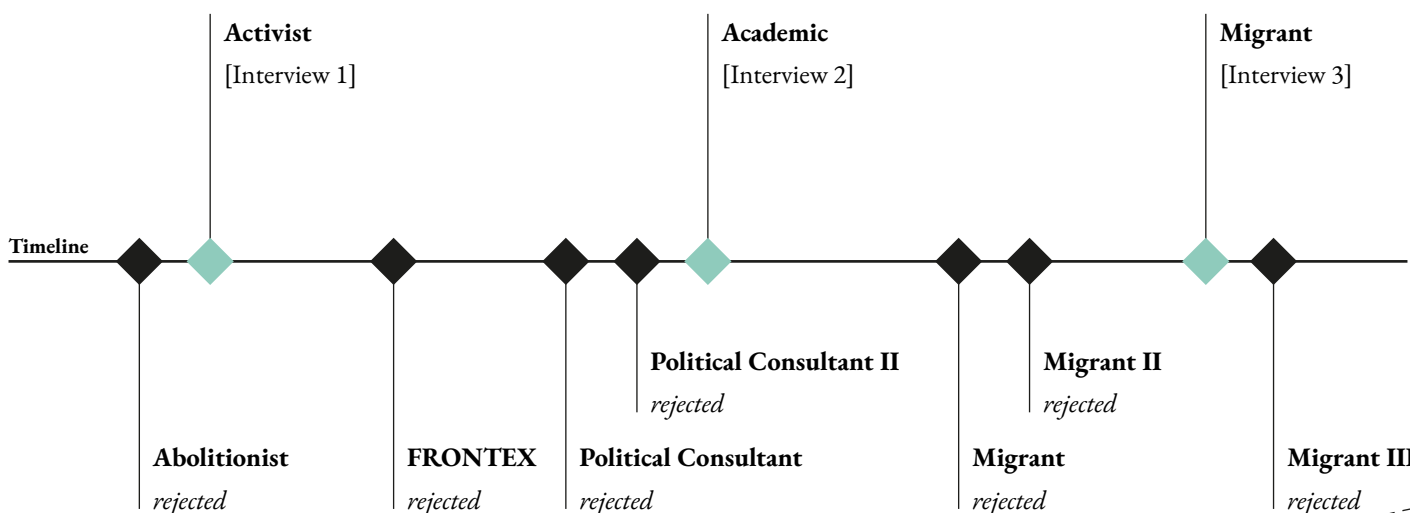
We would like to understand how you would imagine this **new border crossing situation**, focusing on the main flows of commercial traffic, regular migration (Resident, Visa, Visa free, predetermined Refugee), animal migration and most importantly **persons without pre-assessed right of entry** (Asylum seeking, etc.)?

**Can you describe in one sentence what you would like to see and feel from these different perspectives while approaching the border to enter Europe?**

**How do you spatially imagine the borderline?** What is your opinion on security measures (cameras, barbed-wire, fences, walls, facial recognition, etc.)?

**How do you spatially imagine border crossings?** Should it be the same border crossing for persons without pre-assessed right of entry as for the remaining flows? What is the predominant flow (pedestrian, motorised, etc.)?

**What specific functions would you like to see at and around the crossing for the differing flows and why?** Could you arrange these functions according to importance?



\* graphic: **Interview Timeline**

## Sama's Journey

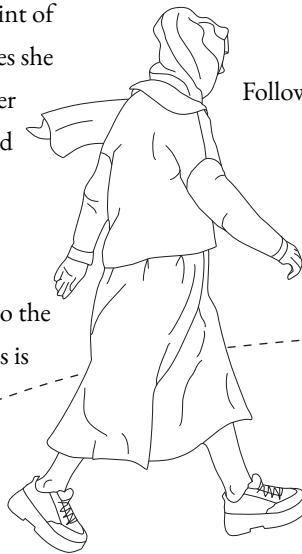
For an immersive reading experience we created the fictional character Sama. She is a young woman at an unspecified point of her migration journey. In the following differing perspectives she will be confronted with the corresponding alternative border reality. Her described experiences help to further understand the spatial layouts and what they impose on a person trying to migrate over these European external land borders. She therefore becomes our medium of reflection on the created alternities. A short summary of the journey is located next to the axonometrics. An even deeper investment of her experiences is available through the journey cards.

Using the hidden object games methodology, six cards per axonometry lead through Sama's journey. The indicator in the right upper corner matches each card set with one of the axonometrics. Gone through in a chronological order, each card unveils a specific stop. The zoom-in graphic allows us to locate Sama in the spatial composition and discover more visual details. The described situation allows insights into spatial functions and the experiences of a migrating person.

Sama is always located in the middle of the zoom-in graphic. Additional graphic components in the frame give enough hints to locate her in the axonometric. Furthermore she is wearing the same characteristic shoes throughout the alternities and by coincidence we captured her in the same three postures over and over. Now please meet Sama...



Hi!  
I'm Sama.



Follow me!



Nice to meet you.

Sama's Journey



Alternity

I



Take these cards and scan to listen to the EU perspective.



Alternity

II



Take these cards and scan to listen to the Abolition perspective.

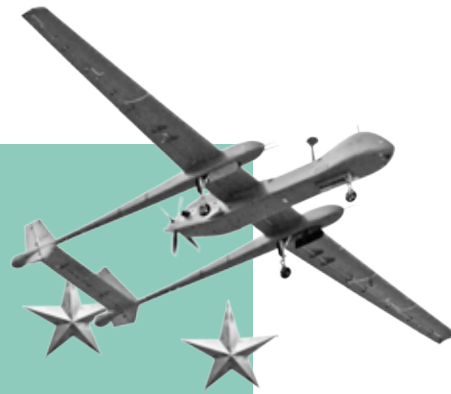


Alternity

III



Take these cards and scan to listen to the Migration perspective.

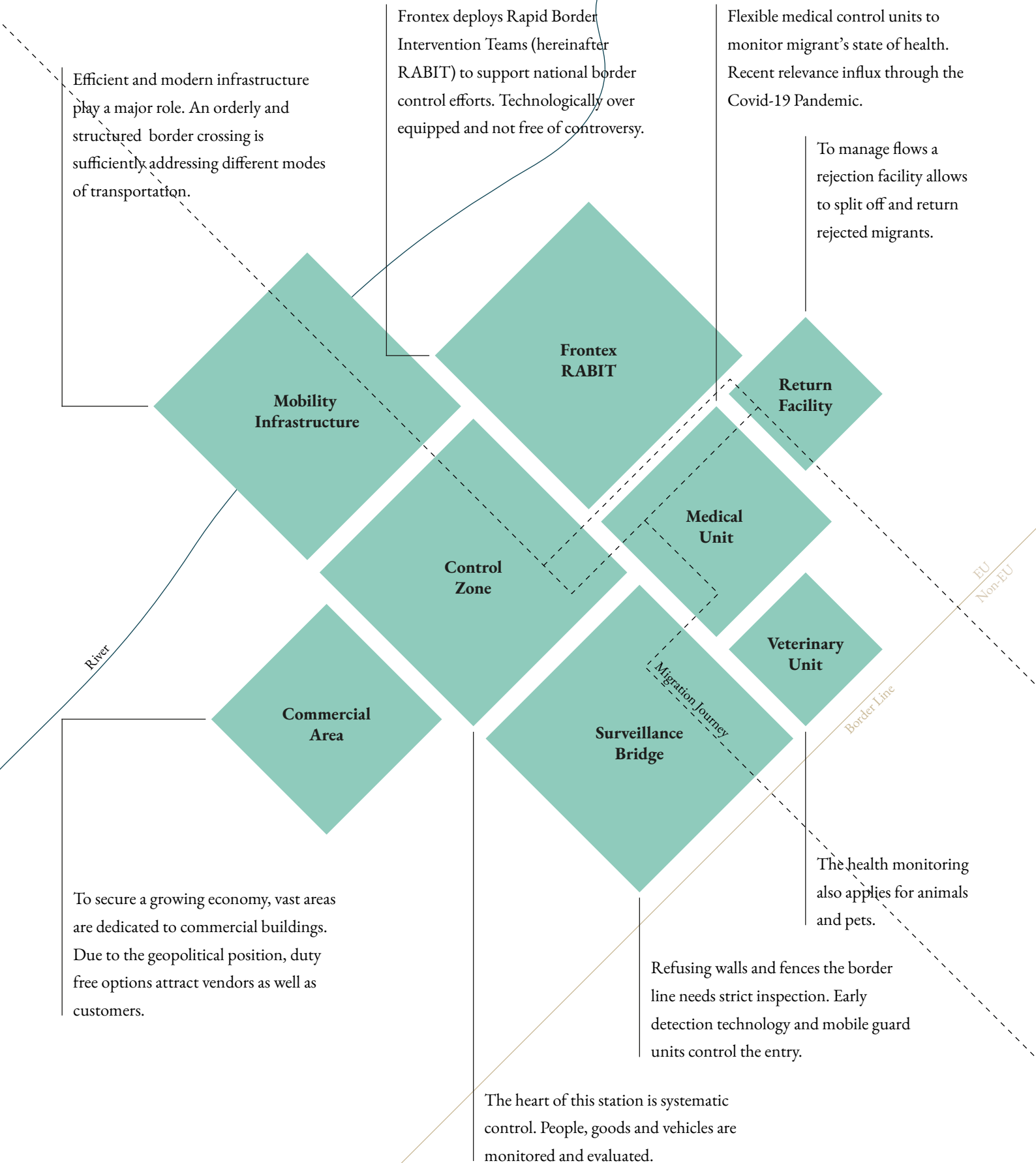


**"Compliance with fundamental rights is an essential component of effective border management. EU law instruments relevant for border control contain clear fundamental rights safeguards."**

- FRA (2020, p.35)



## EU Perspective





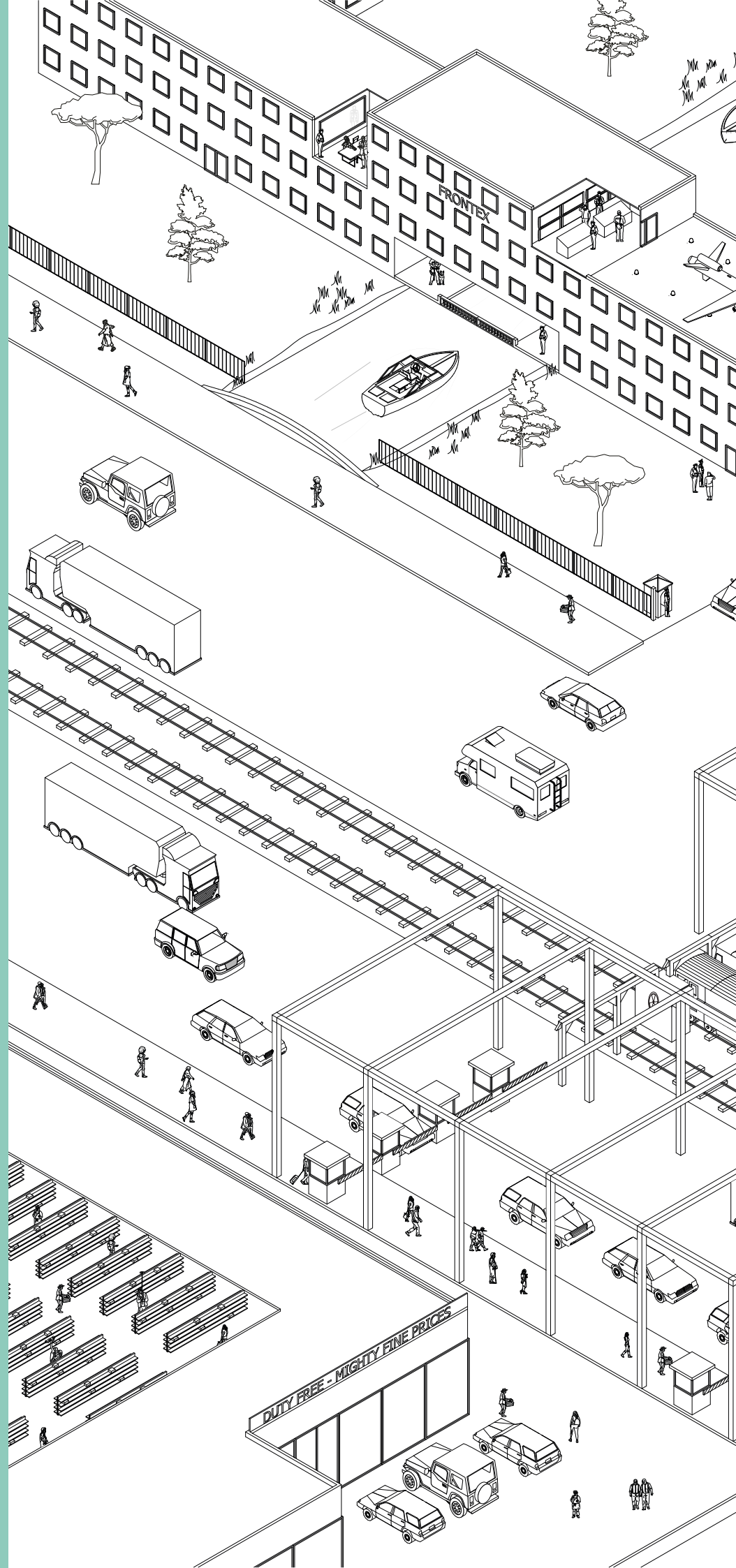
# Alternity I

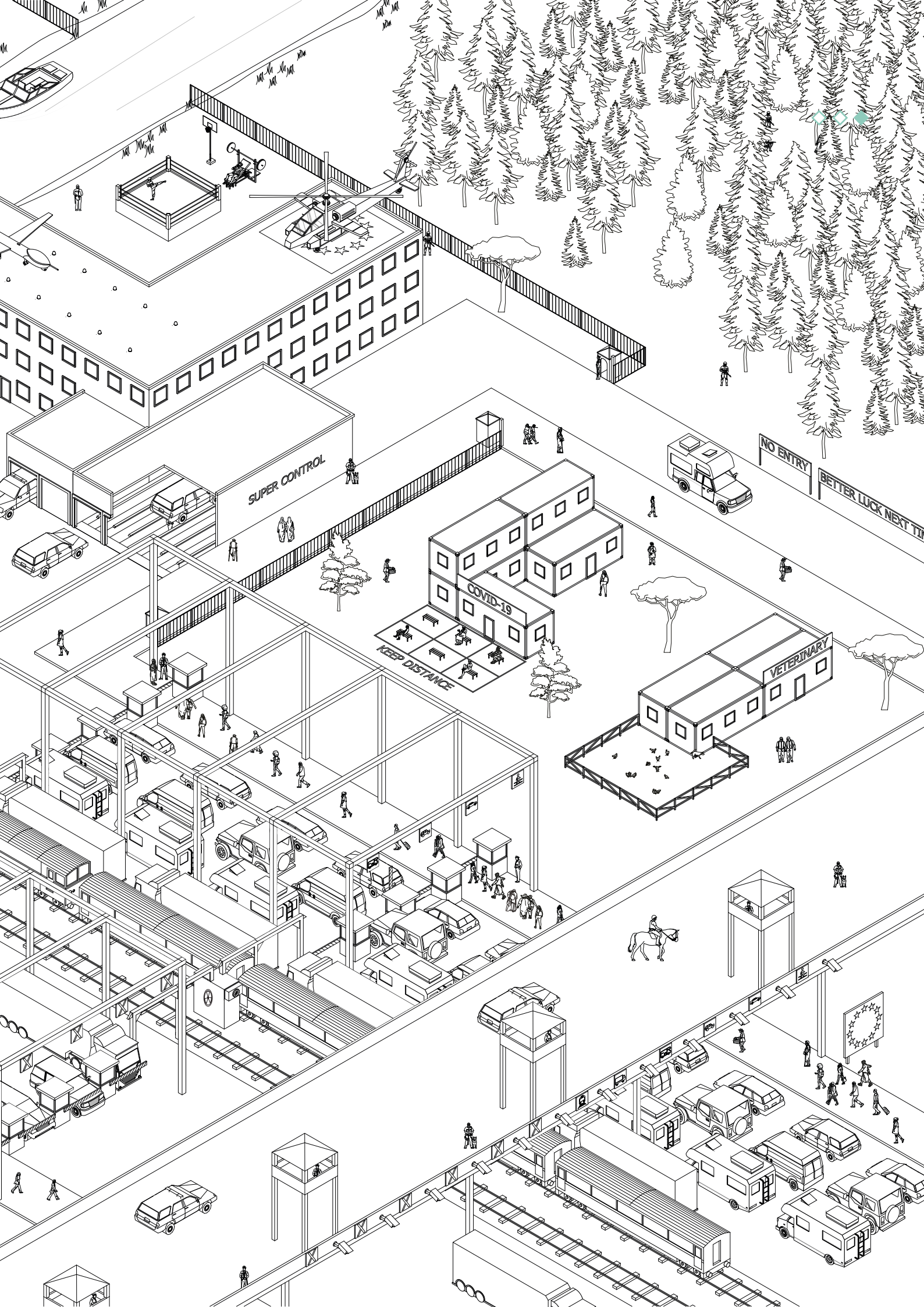
## EU Perspective

This Axonometry shows a non contextual alternative border reality, based on the EU Perspective. All visualisations are without guarantee of correctness and completeness.

## Sama's Journey [Alternity I]

**Day 79.** After a long walk, today I arrived at the border station. The first thing I could see was the big bridge with towers and many guards. I felt nervous. The first check up went quite quick. Everything was very coordinated. I was directly sent to the covid centre for testing. Luckily I tested negative! In the second control they asked a lot of questions and I felt overwhelmed. They decided that I had to go to the Frontex Rabbit centre. Funny name. My friend got rejected and we got separated. I hope she is gonna be alright. I was brought into an interrogation room where I had to wait very long just to answer more questions. They were polite but I was super frightened. After hours I suddenly got the information that I can pass the border. I was brought out and allowed to continue my journey. I heard that some are not as lucky as me. Now I'll have to continue walking to find a place to rest and get something to eat. I'm starving and this was super exhausting. I just can't afford the fancy duty free malls.







**“Instead of these barracks and fucking barbed wires I would like to see some more buildings, a park, a little school, an accommodation centre and see it as a little village.”**

- Activist [Interview 1]



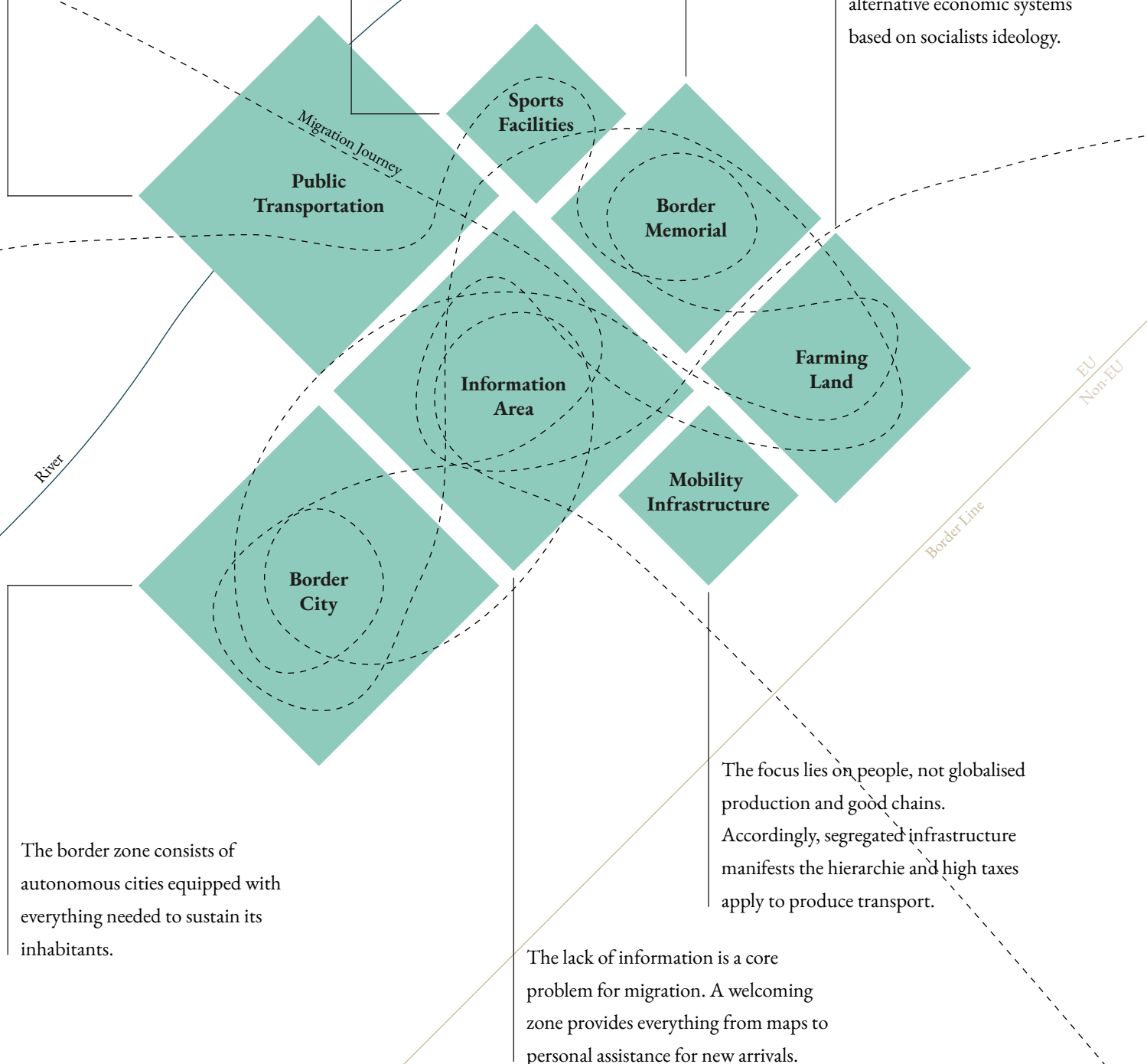
## Abolition Perspective

Accessibility, reachability and connectivity are values a proper public transport system should assure.

Activities and sports are active integration tools. Considering the long term stay of migrants these offers connection and creates bonds between participants.

A memorial in tribute to the historic relevance of the place in this post borders abolition scenario, informs and reminds of the overcome past.

To create independence, vast farmland secures nutrition for border land inhabitants. Imaginably integrated in alternative economic systems based on socialists ideology.



# Alternity II

## Abolition Perspective

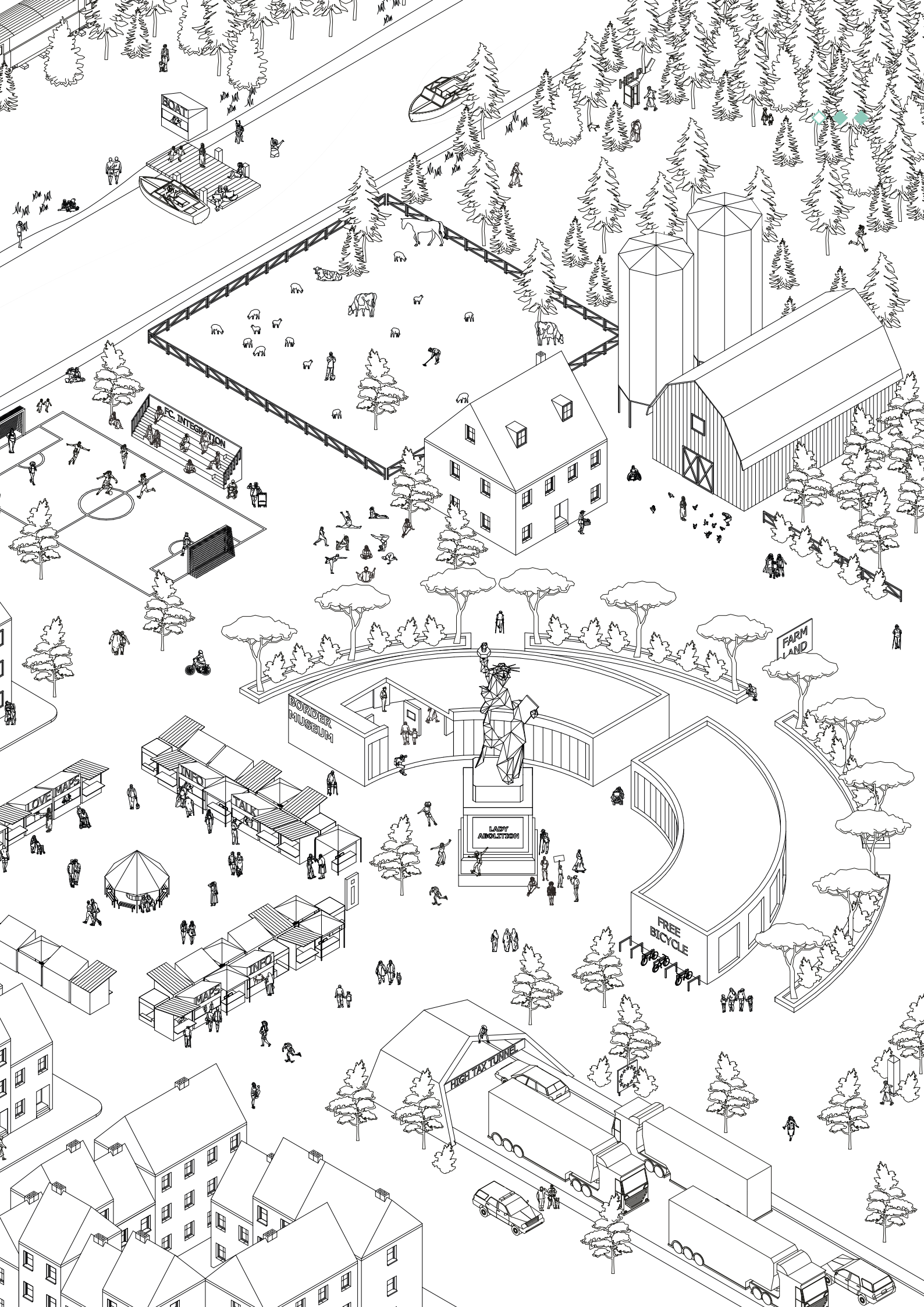
This Axonometry shows a non contextual alternative border reality, based on the Abolition Perspective. All visualisations are without guarantee of correctness and completeness.

## Sama's Journey [Alternity II]

**Day 136.** A few days ago I arrived in the border region. I got a bit lost in the woods but luckily found one of the help phone booths. The directions helped me find Lady Abolition and I oriented towards her. I arrived at the support market which is directly next to the border museum. After being hugged and welcomed, I received a lot of information about this place and a free map for the migration pilgrimage route. Then I even got invited to stay with a private host. So generous! So I spent the last days here in town to get a little break. I met a lot of kind people and was invited to play for the F.C. Integration after they saw my football skills. It's more my thing than Yoga. It's super nice and beautiful here. No heavy traffic, a lot of nature, lovely people and basically everything you need to live. I could also get a job at the farm. But I have to move on. Tomorrow I'm gonna get supplies and meet with friends at the cooking station. We are planning to take one of the boats to finally continue our journey.

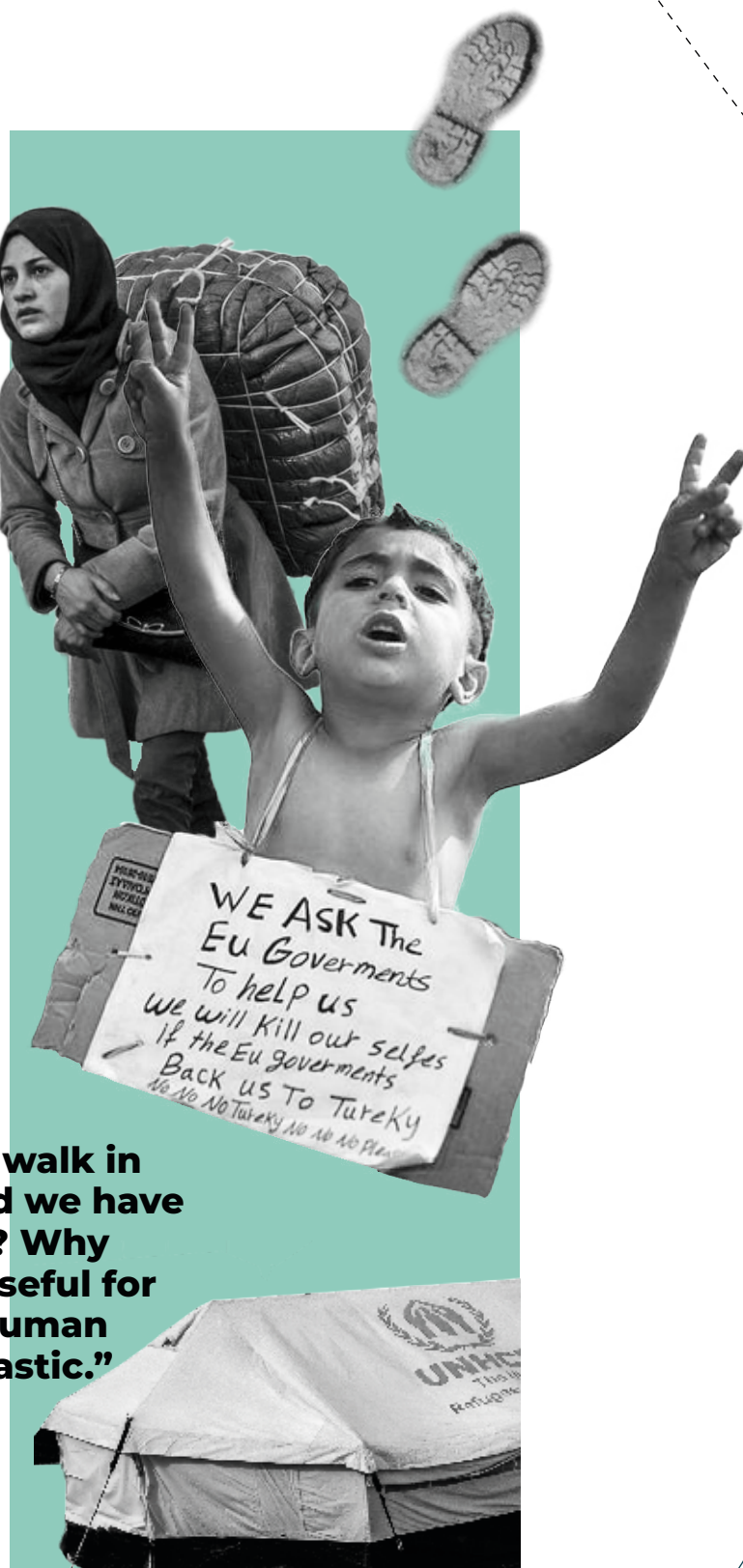






**"Why did we have to walk in the evening? Why did we have to wait at the border? Why were there nothing useful for the people? We are human beings, we are not plastic."**

- Migrant [Interview 3]



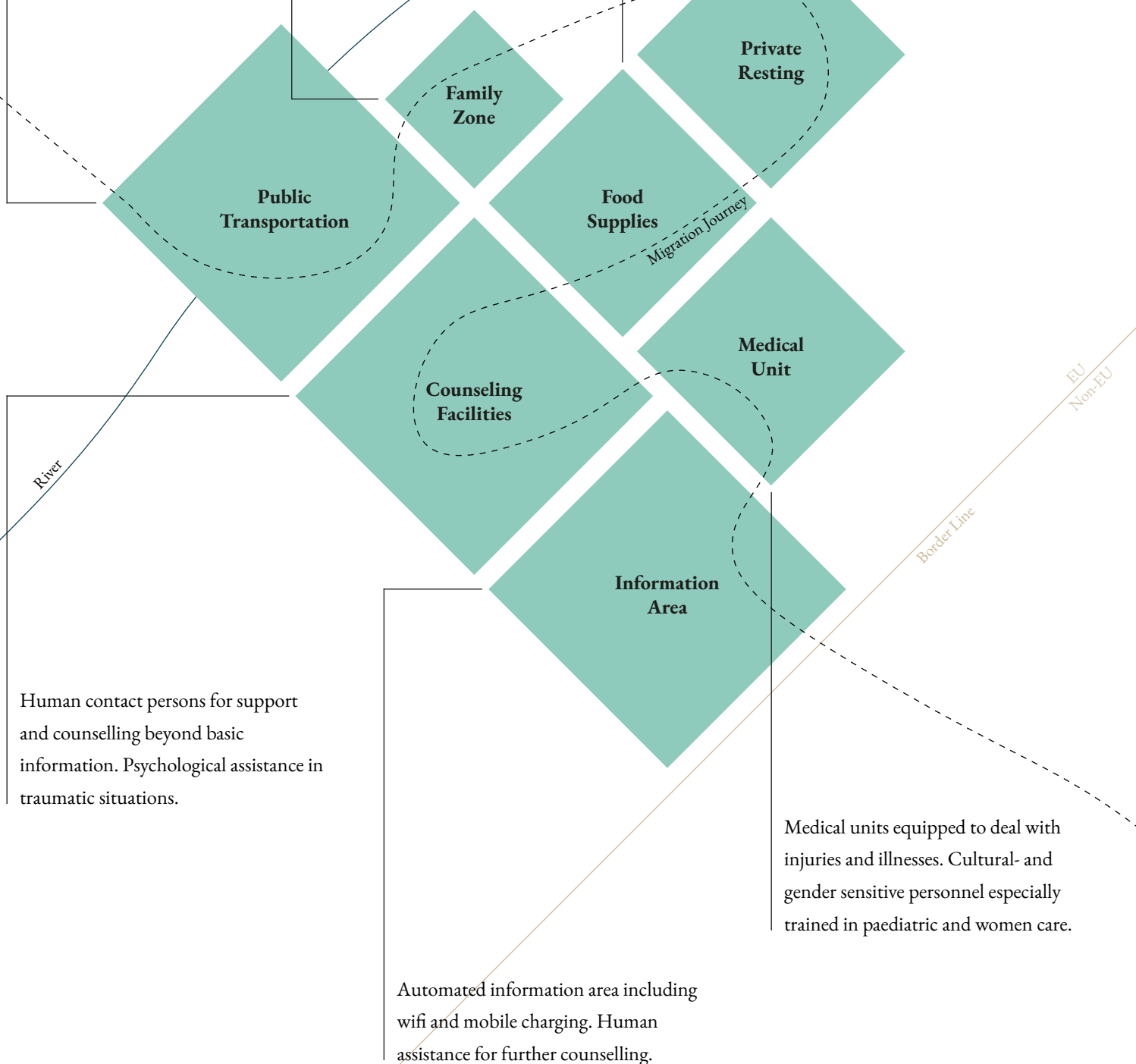
## Migration Perspective

Modern and efficient public transportation offers. Interconnectivity over borders to assure safe and gapless journeys.

Affordable, fully automated food resupply possibilities and restaurants, accepting multiple currencies.

Private short term resting opportunities, especially equipped for families and segregated from groups.

A place for children to be children, and families to meet, talk and exchange experiences about their journeys.





# Alternity III

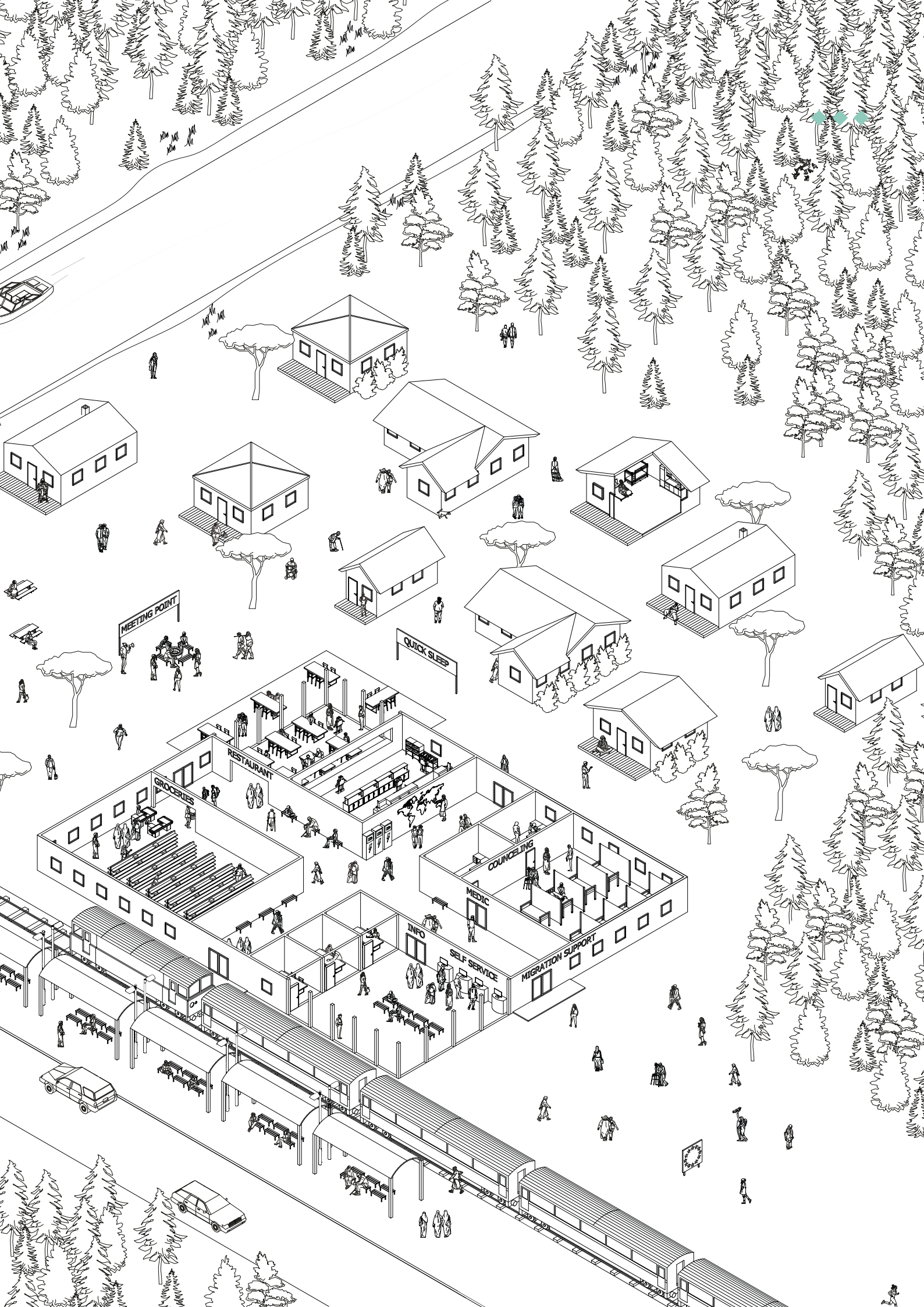
## Migration Perspective

This Axonometry shows a non contextual alternative border reality, based on the Migration Perspective. All visualisations are without guarantee of correctness and completeness.

### Sama's Journey [Alternity III]

**Day 06.** This morning I arrived at the border station by bus. I was directly forwarded to the information area of the migration centre. There I got all infos I needed from the selfservice screens. I could already buy my ticket for the train later today and book one of the private quick sleep huts for a few hours. So I didn't even need the personal consultation. But I guess not everyone is a digital native like me, so it's helpful that they exist. Afterwards I had a quick appointment with the doctor. I injured myself yesterday so it was good to get that checked up. Luckily nothing serious! Then I enjoyed a few hours of rest in one of the huts. That was very relaxing and I'm glad that I got some privacy. After that I got a delicious meal in the restaurant. The robots there are super cute and in general I think it's very impressive that everything is automated. Besides the guards of course. Otherwise I wouldn't feel safe here. Just imagine that! Robocops! I'm gonna get some supplies now, before leaving for my train.







OPEN UP!

# A REFLECTIVE DISCOURSE or WHY DO WE KILL.

**KABA.** Karl Sandman. Barne Haferkamp.

This is a conversation between the authors Barne and Karl. The dialogue includes experiences, questions and reflections upon the presented work and processes behind it.

**BH.** Where to start?

**KS.** In the end! I would like to talk about the interviews that we got and especially the ones we didn't. We wanted to build our visions based on the respective perspectives and therefore asked representatives of every single position to talk with us. But unlike the others, not one representative from the EU perspective agreed on being interviewed. It was quite frustrating to read that Frontex is very much open towards academic work and school projects in general, just to then be turned down and denied an interview as soon as we specified our topic and intentions.

**BH.** It seems everyone in charge is aware of the situation, but too afraid to talk about it. A secrecy that followed us throughout the reality chapter! Such turn downs were hard to take, especially in the beginning of the process. I remember the border abolitionist who rejected the interview because his border visions can't include geographical border lines, which he doesn't believe in. Unfortunately exactly these lines were our bench mark and base of speculation for the scenarios.

**KS.** Not to mention the difficulties we had in finding an interviewee with a migration background that wanted to talk to us. This migrant perspective was crucial for us and can definitely not be replaced through readings and interpretations as the EU perspective for instance. This uncertainty in participatory processes can be really nerve-wracking and you have to be adaptable to be able to react and compensate for these challenges.

**BH.** That's why I'm so grateful that R\*\*\* [Interview 3] agreed to this interview. It was very moving to hear her story and I'm very impressed with how open she was with us. We only established this contact due to a mutual friend, which in the end made this interview possible. And I must say that I still stand behind the decision of not revealing her identity and personal story. It is very personal and it must be her decision whom she wants to share this with, even though she allowed us to use the whole interview.

**KS.** Definitely. Her personal story would have helped to understand her vision of a border station better. But it is safe to say that she has the experience of crossing several EU borders during her migration journey and was able to reflect on this during our session. And in the end this was our delimitation for the migrant perspective interviewee to have their experience to draw from.

**BH.** Another thing I would like to mention is our decision to merge the academic interview with the activist interview into the abolition perspective. Originally we had planned to set up four different visions, but based on the very similar stand the respective interviewees took, it felt natural to merge these into the abolition perspective.

**KS.** Going a bit into detail, I think this already leads to one of our key observations. Both these interviewees had completely different backgrounds. One being a professor engaged in migration studies, focusing on human movement. The other one being an activist with strong morals and actually working at the border helping migrants on a daily basis. What they have in common is their incomprehensibility and even anger, in the case of the activist, towards the current reality. Both of them had similar ideas for a humane approach. Welcoming, supportive, green and desirable, an almost perfect dream version of a border. The misconception that we found, compared to the migrants perspective, is the duration of the stay a migrant would have in these alternative border realities.

**BH.** Absolutely. The migrants perspective, on the one hand, is based on the idea of a place that supports migrants to leave it as fast and efficiently as possible. The abolition perspective, on the other hand, cultivates the underlying idea of a longer or even unlimited stay, considering the wholesomeness of life supporting facilities. A city at the border ready to be inhabited

**KS.** And the way these axonometrics need to be seen. They are based on a participatory process with personal opinions and infused with our political beliefs. Pictures which are synthesising ideas for alternative border realities and invite political

**KS.** This clearly goes in the direction of shame, which explains the collective secrecy around this death. The information we depended on is scarce and inconsistent. Critical texts on border situations themselves are written out of subjective perspectives and it is hard to navigate the immense amount of opinions, without knowing which sources are trustworthy and which are not. Due to the high political relevance you always have to



consider the option of manipulation and narrative adjustments in favour of the leading power system. Our research upon the reality left a lot of open questions and we see the need for further investigation in this area.

**BH.** One of these questions is the actual number of dead and missing migrants. The heart of our statement. IOM carefully tries to portray solely confirmed cases and therefore an indefinite dark figure needs to be taken into account. Which in the end makes the situation even more horrific. The case of the 19 frozen migrants for example was not yet documented in the missing migrants project.

**KS.** And we have no proof of a direct relation between border architecture and death of migrants. These incidents often happen spatially unrelated and only the assumption of a working deterrence allows us to connect a death on a therefore forced detour to the spatial elements. Every migration journey is unique and influenced by so many factors. Although, the evidence is quite clear and some incidents even directly relate to the border fortifications.

**BH.** Therefore, the question remains why we keep building these unbelievably expensive walls. They seem quite ineffective in their original purpose of keeping irregular migrants out and have a very well researched amount of negative side effects. So why are we so commonly drawn towards the idea of safety and protection through a wall? Maybe this misconception of impregnability is the relict of a societal inherited belief dating back to ancient times when borders actually granted protection? And that this strategy became irrelevant with societal and technological advancements just hasn't reached our shared understanding of the world?

**KS.** You philosophise again. A point we haven't touched upon yet is decolonisation. We merely scratch this topic and even put a price tag on the exclaves. I remember our discussion to start

a fundraising page on behalf of the Moroccan government to raise this ridiculously small amount of money we calculated. An activist idea we should definitely come back to.

**BH.** By doing so we would at least take the clear political stand that we Europeans have to finally take responsibility for the grievances of colonial and post-colonial times. A crime that similarly to today's migration politics has been ignored and hidden for too long. Our thought behind this is that Spain should return these territories and therefore very directly lose the need for further fortification efforts around Ceuta and Melilla. Decolonisation is a topic that needs to be addressed and pushed, just as the topic of migration politics needs to be changed.

**KS.** Coming back to EU migration politics. The deeper we investigated this topic in relation to its spatial manifestations, the more it feels like we as society are misled by this misconception of controllability. An approach that is addressing the symptoms of a socio political challenge instead of searching for a cure. And it is not migration that is the illness in this scenario. We early on realised that migration is an effective life preserving mechanism of geographical adjustment. We believe that we shouldn't try to end migration, but rather adjust how we perceive it as a society and therefore deal with it. In a humane way.

**BH.** Two very recent examples might lead to the underlying problem. At the end of the year 2021 thousands of migrants gathered at the Polish-Belarusian border trying to reach the EU. Trapped in this political triangle of strength between the respective countries, entry was denied and people had to endure the cold winter in provisional camps. Poland immediately began construction of a migration prevention fence along the whole border to Belarus. In the beginning of the year 2022 millions of ukrainians started fleeing the latest brutal attack Russia launched on their country. Even though this time there are significantly more migrants, the European states united and initiated support measures, effectively opening their gates. What is the difference?

**KS.** Reports from the Polish Ukrainian border indicate that migrants not matching the white western appeal which Ukrainians are associated with, were not allowed to cross the border. This brutally unveils the structural racism that drives EU's migration politics. This is the disease. It seems to



be important what you look like and where you come from to prove worthy of European hospitality. Just to remind you we're writing the year 2022. Article 21 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights forbids discrimination. Signed by all member states it should lay our societal foundation, but apparently there is still room left in the interpretation of what discrimination is.

**BH.** As we pointed out, compliance with these fundamental rights is the main issue that we observe. And these reliability issues can be observed even further. The European parliament publicly announces that there will be no funding for barbed wires, while through infrastructural support payments exactly these are partially financed when supported members fortify their borders. The question remains why such actions stay unprosecuted? We managed to gather this information, so the relevant European institutions must know, but decide not to act. So why do we **kill**?

**KS.** We won't be able to answer that. But we understood that in order to change the current reality we must engage in the predominant political discourse to address the issues at their origin, because the reality seems to be a physical manifestation of political intention, heavily influenced by social drivers as racism and misconception. Therefore we need to reach as much publicity as possible.

**BH.** Which is the reason for our push throughout the process for publication beyond the given academic frame. If we want to make our activist intentions count we must reach further than a thesis usually reaches. A step that we took is participation in the interdisciplinary 2022 IMISCOE Spring Conference upon rationality shifts in migration politics. In discourse with merely sociologists we presented our design approach, which was met with positive resonance. We even managed to establish further contacts and plan to deepen the dialog with migration studies.

**KH.** Let's pick up the question if we managed to change perspective. We defined the relevance for this in our theoretical framework, which we called KABA design. In many ways this design and research framework is our answer to the common critique towards the speculative design fields. A thing that stood out here is the white male overrepresentation when looking through the reference list in the theoretical framework. This privileged position is questioned from the exact same privileged

position, when Ward formulates his critique. We translated this idea of speculation on behalf of others, into our interview series upon alternative border realities. The participants of our process are a majority female and from diverse backgrounds.

**BH.** And we can claim socio-political relevance. To reflect on the criticality is probably for others to evaluate. We for our part had definitely a hard time while intertwining our political position, architectural theory and analytical representation and struggled throughout the process when to be neutral researchers or biased activists. Which leads to the question what even is political architecture and what did we do?

**KS.** Yeah what did we do? We found our personal approach to this topic and our personal way of taking this challenge. Whether we can count that as political architecture is questionable. Too much is left for interpretation in Till's eminent critique towards the state of architectural practice. But we see his argument that architecture is political. Therefore the architects play a crucial role and must be aware of their influence through their work. But...

**BH.** Why do we still feel so insanely helpless and unbelievably powerful at the same time? What if we create our desired reach? What is the actual difference that we make? We have built nothing! No life saved! No policy changed! And still. We have reached you dear reader. Taking the high probability that you are a European citizen as well, we ask you to spread this, discuss it and create a discourse that collaboratively might create the societal paradigm shift needed to rebuild the way we live our fundamental rights. Or to put in the sense of our graphical manifesto, to reaccelerate the cardiac arrest our society suffers in its core value of being humane. It is an incredibly complex and long journey that lies before us, but we have to try on behalf of the ones that we leave suffering while enjoying our wrongfully acquired privilege in Europe. It lies in our hands and depends on our hearts.

**KS.** Well, now you might ask yourself, this is all fair enough but when do we finally reach the conclusion? Well too bad, there is none. This stays non conclusive. It is our statement, our exploration and our attempt. Not complete, not representative, not correct. There is no conclusive solution, but a simple question. Why do we **kill**?





### Surveillance Bridge

Walking forever, that probably describes my day so far. There is no public transport crossing the border! I just arrived at the station. Earlier I was followed by a drone for a while. Before I could even see the massive surveillance bridge. I must say that I have weird feelings and I'm afraid of doing anything wrong.

1/6

Card Text [1/6]

### 1st Control

This queue took forever. I have to answer a lot of weird questions. Even though everyone is polite I don't feel safe. At least I can understand what they tell me and I get the information in a printed version as well. But I don't really know what is happening. Apparently I'm forwarded to some sort of medical screening now.

2/6

Card Text [2/6]

### Medical Unit

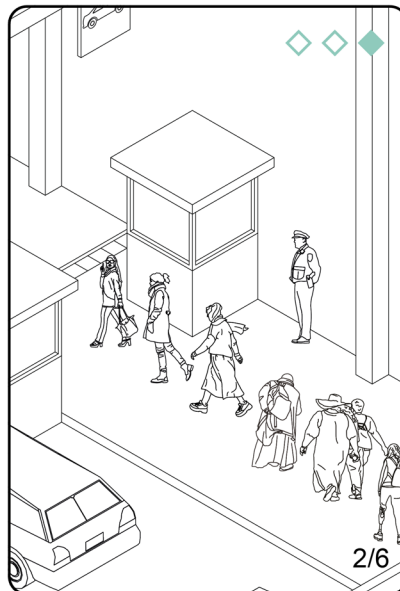
More questions. And very intimidating ones as well. But I guess if I wanna come through this I should cooperate. The things I say are documented with the same tablets they had at the control. Now I'm waiting for my turn at the Covid-19 test. If that's negative I was told that there will be more health related tests. Stressful!

3/6

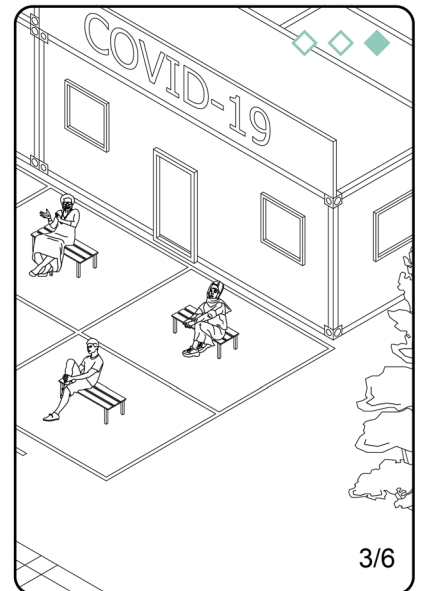
Card Text [3/6]



Card Image [1/6]



Card Image [2/6]



Card Image [3/6]

### 2nd Control



I didn't expect it but apparently there are more questions to be asked. I start feeling like I repeat myself, but something seems to be off. I got pulled over by a Frontex officer. He is talking to someone on his radio. I don't know what is going on but I was told to wait here. They seem to talk about me, but I don't understand it.

4/6

Card Text [4/6]

### Frontex



I have been sitting in this strange interrogation room for hours now. The officer brought me here and told me to wait - again. Another man just came in and is repeating the same questions. I feel like they are cross checking my answers. This whole situation freaks me out. I'm exhausted, hungry and tired. I just wanna leave.

5/6

Card Text [5/6]

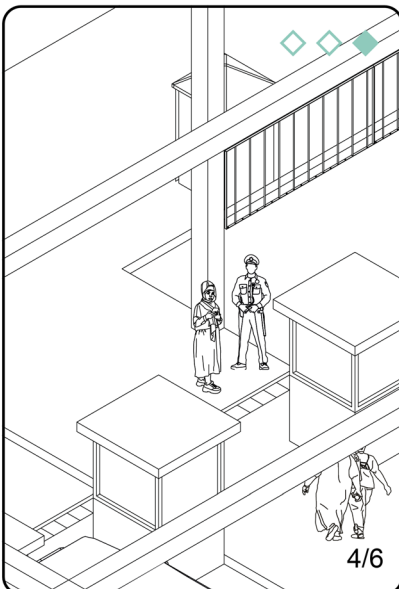
### Street



Finally I'm allowed to move on. The man told me that I'm lucky to get out at the right side of the building. No clue what he meant with that. But I don't care, I just want to go. I was held there for a long time without any food or water. I'm super hungry now, but the next stop is far away. I guess that means more walking!

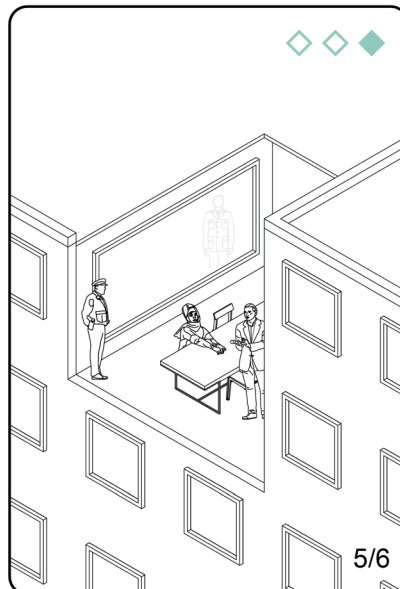
6/6

Card Text [6/6]



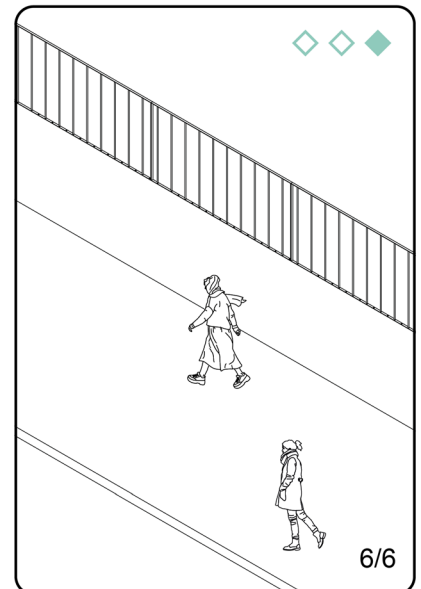
4/6

Card Image [4/6]



5/6

Card Image [5/6]



6/6

Card Image [6/6]

### Help Booth



What a day. I wandered through beautiful fields on my migration pilgrimage but suddenly got a bit lost in this forest. To be honest it was quite scary. But luckily I found a Help Booth. I called and got directions towards Lady Abolition. What a monument she is and fortunately quite tall so I found my way out.

1/6

Card Text [1/6]

### Info Market



My first stop at the market is the love stand. After my experience in the forest I need some emotional support. And a good hug will probably do. Afterwards I'm gonna get one of the maps for my pilgrimage journey. It contains all important stops, like cooking stations, markets, doctors and so on. Where am I gonna stay?

2/6

Card Text [2/6]

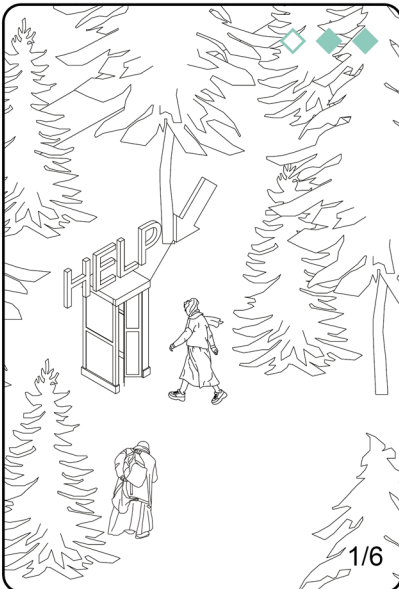
### Private Host



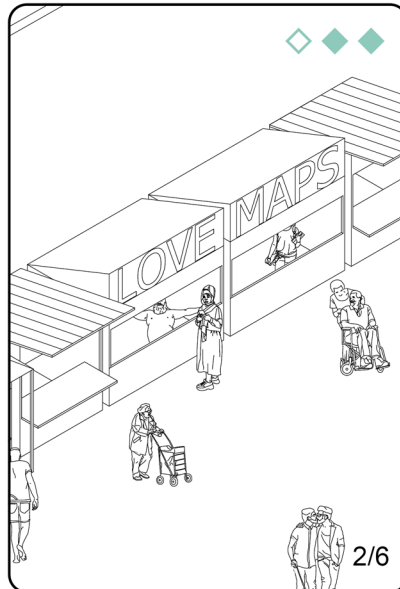
I got this amazing offer to stay at a private host's place. It's very close to the market in Border City. My host is super cool and we have already become friends. He does live here permanently and showed me around a lot. I could actually imagine living here for a while. It's beautiful here and we have everything we need. A few days won't matter...

3/6

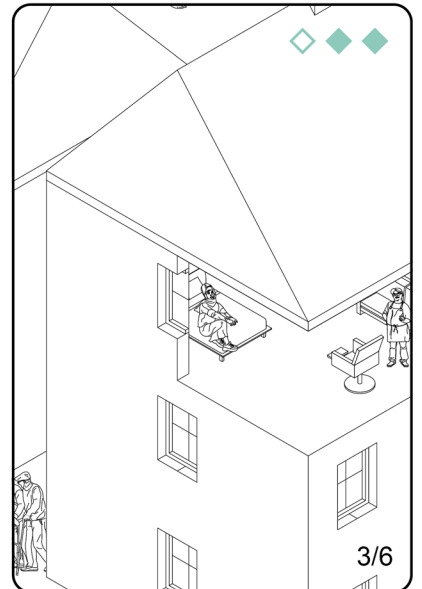
Card Text [3/6]



Card Image [1/6]



Card Image [2/6]



Card Image [3/6]

## Sama's Journey

### Farm



I've been here for quite a while already. After my training with F.C. I decided to get some food from the nearby farm to cook later. The amazing thing here is that the farm works on a collaborative basis. You put in some work, you get some food. I really enjoy the carefree life here, but somehow I wanna continue my journey.

4/6

Card Text [4/6]

### Cooking Station



This free outdoor cooking station has become the meeting point of me and my new friends. I love hanging out here and spending time with this community of close strangers. We usually cook and then just talk forever. Today I'm gonna introduce the idea of leaving the border region and I hope that someone wants to join.

5/6

Card Text [5/6]

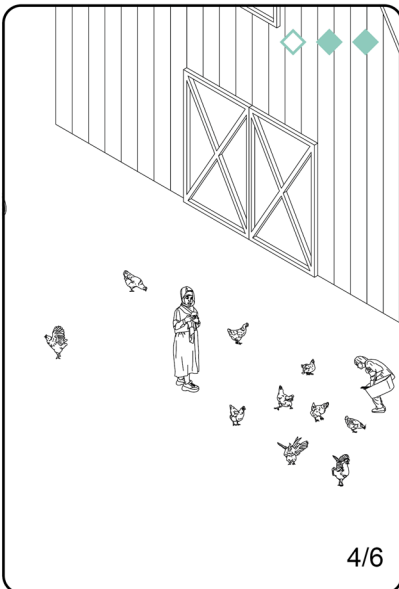
### Boat Dock



It's decided. I'm about to take a boat to continue my journey. It has been a wonderful time and I met so many amazing people, who I became friends with. Unfortunately no one wanted to join -definitely understandable. But I have to continue my journey, otherwise I feel that I will remain restless at the bottom of my heart.

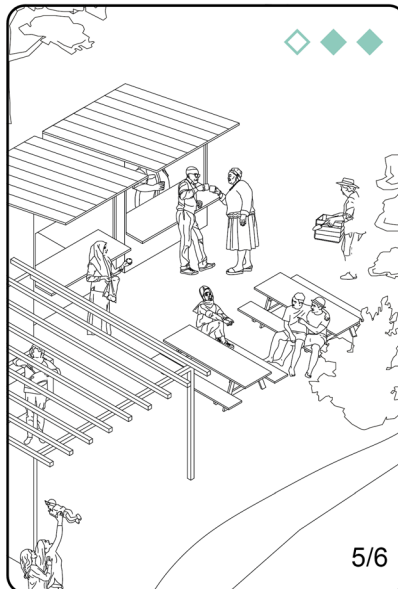
6/6

Card Text [6/6]



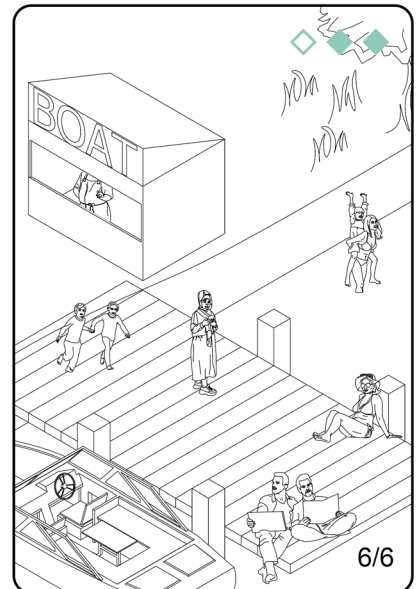
4/6

Card Image [4/6]



5/6

Card Image [5/6]



6/6

Card Image [6/6]



## Sama's Journey

### Bus Station



I just arrived. The bus ride wasn't too long and luckily there is this direct connection. This place feels busy but well organised. I want to continue my journey as soon as possible, so I won't stay too long at the bus station. I don't have much luggage anyways. But where will I get all the information I need now?

1/6

Card Text [1/6]

### Info Center



Wow, impressive! The info centre is very easy to find and it has everything I need! I bought a train ticket and could even afford one of the sleep huts for the meantime. It really helps to have all information concentrated and digitally accessible in different languages. And if you need, there still would be a person to talk to.

2/6

Card Text [2/6]

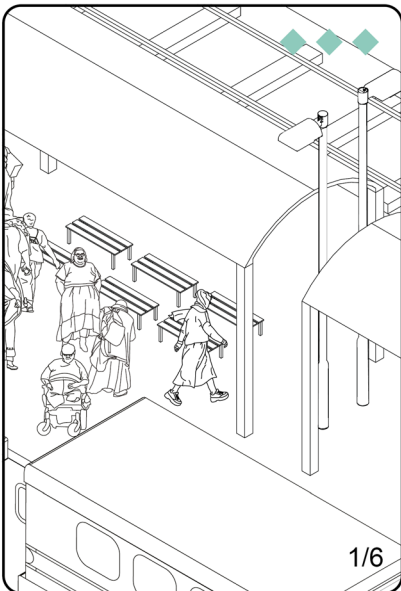
### Medical Office



Before I can rest I need to see the doctor. I have had this pain for a few days now and I really want to have that checked up. I'm relieved that this station has drop in slots for travellers. And I don't even have to pay, because it's part of the border service! And they even have free female hygiene products, so I can restock for my journey.

3/6

Card Text [3/6]



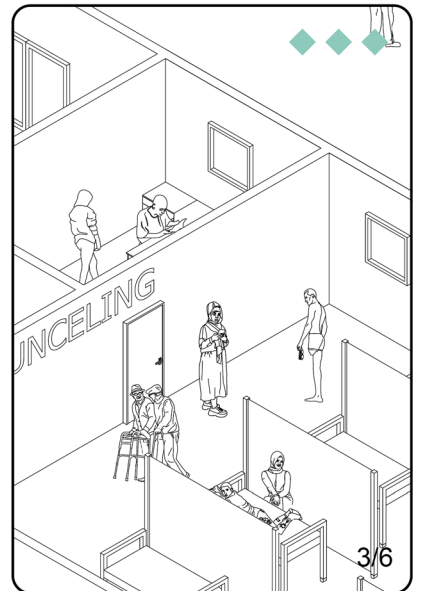
1/6

Card Image [1/6]



2/6

Card Image [2/6]



3/6

Card Image [3/6]

## Sama's Journey

### Sleep Hut



These huts are amazing. The little quick sleep village is just behind the station close to nature. You can rent them per hour and they are fully equipped. It's amazing to get a little break from all of this. Sometimes there are too many people and I need some privacy. I will sleep now and go get lunch afterwards.

4/6

### Restaurant



After my nap I got really hungry and went directly to the restaurant. I just ordered my lunch from a robot! These cute helpers are everywhere, they run the station. The friendly guard recommended sitting outside on the terrasse. I'm gonna go there and watch the hustle and bustle at the playground and enjoy my remaining time.

5/6

### Train Station



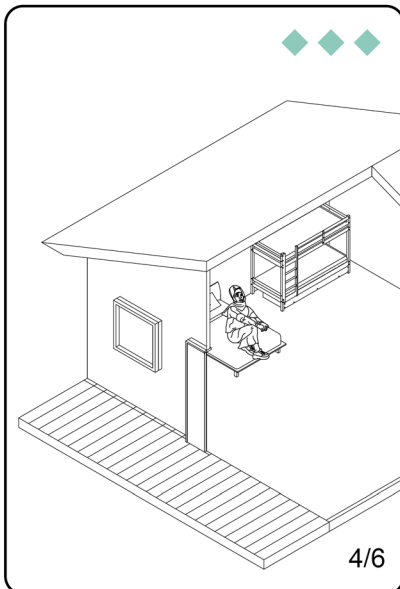
This break was great. All my needs were met and I'm ready to continue my journey. I got some snacks in the market and nearly missed my train. Luckily the station announces departures and I had enough time left to make it. I'm very happy for these fully automatic border stations. It was a great support on my journey!

6/6

Card Text [4/6]

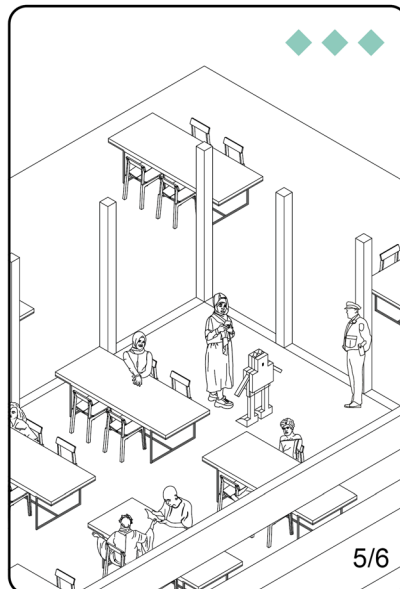
Card Text [5/6]

Card Text [6/6]



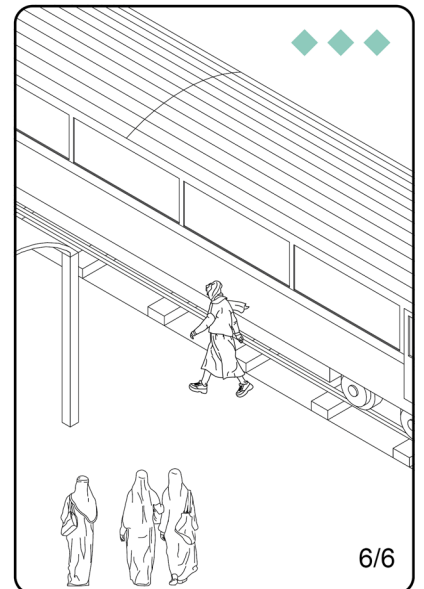
4/6

Card Image [4/6]



5/6

Card Image [5/6]



6/6

Card Image [6/6]

# Easter Eggs

## Sama's Journey

WTF

OOOH... What is happening here? Is Frontex not doing what they claim to be doing?

X

Card Text [1/6]

Just Strollin'

There seems to be a crazy person running over people with her stroller. What might her intentions be?

X

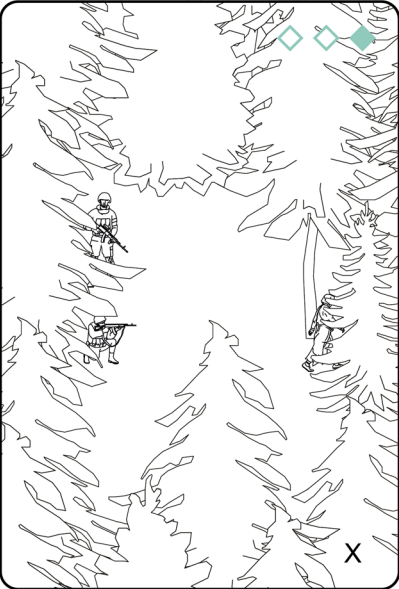
Card Image [2/6]

Svettekörka

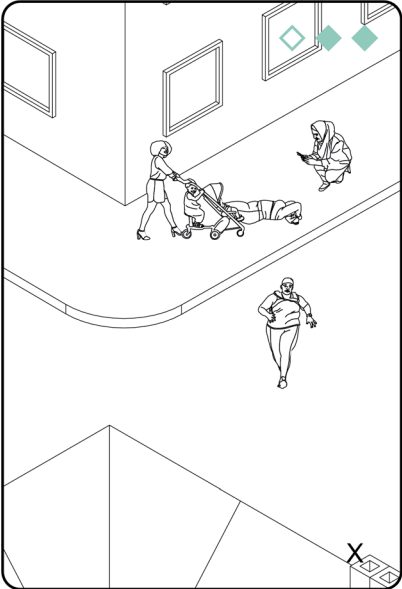
Isn't that Gothenburg's most beloved sauna? Wouldn't it be lovely to sit there for a while and just relax, instead of writing these cards?

X

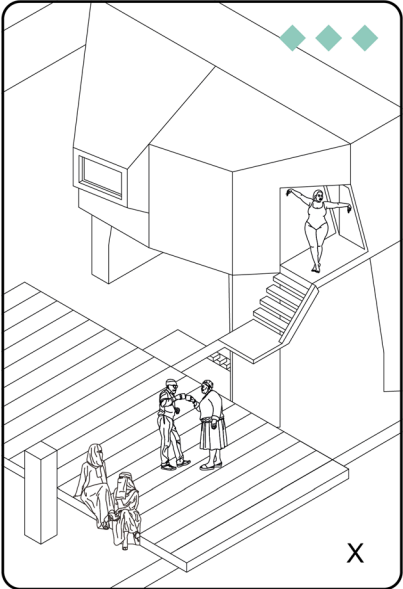
Card Image [3/6]



Card Image [1/6]



Card Image [2/6]



Card Image [3/6]