

Contribution to call on the use of mercenaries in immigration and border management and the impact on the protection of the human rights of migrants.

In **porCausa Foundation** we have been working exclusively on migration policies and public debate for the last 5 years. Research, analysis, journalism and communications in projects developed in four regions (Europe, Africa & Middle East, Latin America, North America) with an ever-expanding network of collaborators, sources and implementation-alliances. We have produced research papers and investigative journalism pieces on the design, funding and externalization of migration policies that we hope useful for your Group. Here bellow some thoughts and publications from our recent work:

About the security narrative:

Despite the sharp and clear decline in migrants arrivals since 2015 the narrative of fear and the fortification of borders has become mainstream in the public discourse at European and national levels. The previous original inclusion of Migration area under the new vice-presidency "Protecting our European Way of Life" (later sweetened as "Fostering") speaks for itself. The arms and security industries are very active and effective in lobbying towards a Fortress Europe. In this trend, they have been benefiting from the arrival of ultra-nationalist and anti-immigration to parliaments and governments, but their influence is much earlier. Many of the proposals of the security lobbies (reinforcement of Frontex and Eurosur or the creation of 10,000 permanent border guards to the creation of the European Defense Agency, the migration-crime-terrorism link in the public discourse, etc) have been converted and materialized successfully, capturing billions of euros of public policies for their own benefit. Once fear is inoculated, customized solutions are suggested and purchased. The security industry is reinforced in all future scenarios both at European and national level, either indirectly by the incessant flow of financing towards the migration and borders' control policies, either directly thanks to the open EU commitment with the security industrial sector, which advances in the capture of discourse and in its strengthening as a driver and representative of interests increasingly confused and mixed with that of the EU's own policies.

The EU research publication "[Understanding our political nature](#)" underlines the **importance of metaphors, framing and narratives**. The rise of **xenophobia and populism globally is deeply connected with the change of narratives, propaganda and nationalism** in a increasingly **polarized and desinformed societies**. Nowadays, the traditional cleavage right/left seems to be insufficient and tends to be replaced by open/closed or [hopefull/fearful](#) options. The first evidence of this securitization trend is the hostile-defensive language and the established link between security and migration.

From Council to Council and in every European summit a **strong connection between migration and security is being consolidated**, to which are added, the fight against terrorism, organized crime, or new emerging and hybridized threats. On all these fronts, technology research, security and even development cooperation policies are weaving a dense network of interests from which they always benefit. Think-tanks, NGOs and the media have been warning for years of this alignment and penetration of private interests in the decision-making and financing mechanisms of the European Union and in national governments regarding migration control.

This is the case of the **Fundación porCausa** in our report [“The industry of migration control : The Spanish winners of European Union border policies”](#) (Nov. 2017), or those of Statewatch, Center Delàs, or Stop Wapenhandel among others.

Industry lobbies

The presence of this powerful European security industry reaches all the political, legal and financial path traced by European, national and local decision makers. From Brussels, where their lobbies (especially the European Organization for Security-EOS) meet with legislators, profit from revolving doors, offer their goods and services in an increasingly smaller market and apply for all aid and tenders put forward by those who have previously frequented and advised. The support and funding for research on security issues benefits both security companies and research actors, which are supported, advised and gathered under the same lobbying umbrella (EOS). These are sometimes industry-led consortia. The daily contacts between representatives of the institutions and executives of these large corporations in events, congresses, conferences and hearings, give direct access to the offices where migration control policies are decided, the cake is distributed among the largest - with a doubtful true competition in the sector. Complicity between industry, research and public officials, could threaten not only free competition of small and medium-sized companies against large corporations that take over the sector, but with data protection legislation and, more importantly, with migrants' human rights of migrants. The industry itself is not the problem, but to what extent it is it that captures the security discourse to put it at the service of its interests. In the case of immigration control, the victim is clear: the criminalization and unprotection of human beings who try to cross borders to access a better life and flee from despair.

→ **In-house research and publications:**

The industry of migration control: The Spanish winners of EU border policies ([Nov. 2017](#))

Melilla and border exceptionalism ([Feb 2019](#))

Melilla Vice ([May 2019](#))

Fact-checking: desmontando las vallas de Ceuta y Melilla en siete pasos ([Dec 2018](#))

El negocio en la sombra del discurso del miedo ([Jan 2020](#)) also in English at Statewatch: [The shadowy business of fear-mongers](#)

Collaborations:

Oxfam Intermón: [Origen, Tránsito y Devolución](#). Las personas refugiadas y la crisis política de la UE. 2018 (Origin, transit and return. Refugees and the EU political crisis)

UNICEF Spain: [Niños y niñas migrantes no acompañados en Frontera Sur 2019](#). (Unaccompanied migrant children in the European Southern border)

Andalucía Acoge: Informe [1988-2018. Recorrido migratorio: 30 años de muertes en el Estrecho](#) (1988-2018. Migratory route: 30 years of deaths in the Strait of Gibraltar) Nov 2018

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