

Border policies in the light of the Ukraine-Russian war

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Picture provided by: MarketWatch

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Theses:

1. The war has shown the fragility and contingent character of borders, which have proven to be inherently susceptible to transformations in periods of political turbulence. The border *Status quo* in Europe is not a guarantee any more. Border changes have become attractive to some European (non-democratic) politicians (Hungary).
2. Not later than the missile attack as an “unfortunate accident” on the Polish side of the Ukrainian-Polish border region mid November 2022 made clear that a war does not only directly affect two involved parties but neighbouring countries, too.

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Theses:

1. The concept of “comprehensive security” (Finnish model) will become more and more dominating at European borders.
2. The war has led to transformation and adaptation of border narratives under the influence of conflict and the very realistic danger of border transformations.
3. Border narratives in different European border regions became weaponized. Narratives about friendly neighbours changed into “enemy” pictures and vice versa: neighbours that had been presented in a critical way before the war, changed into “best allies” to become stronger in relation to Russia. Example: Poland – Ukraine.

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Theses:

1. Russian influence on the sphere of EU politics has been for a long time too dominating (gas).
2. Western Europe wanted to be naive. Otherwise many western European governments would have to admit that they depended on Russian gas.
3. The time has shown that Russia is just a military, not a political power.
4. Putin`s Russia is more dangerous than the Soviet Union. While the politics of the Soviet Union were predictable and rational, Putin`s policy mirrors irrational and dangerous myths. There is no pragmatism at all. Putin has transformed Russia from an authoritarian to a totalitarian state. All these factors have facilitated Putin to begin the war against Ukraine.

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Theses:

5. Putin is neither a diplomat nor a politician but a demagogue only. His policy is revanchist and completely irrational. He is obsessed by his dream of a restoration of the Russian Empire. In order to achieve this goal, he is ready to accept economic losses in all spheres and political isolation.

6. All analysts in Eastern Europe / Russia (including me) were wrong in their analysis until the last days before Putin started the war against Ukraine. We underestimated Putin`s obsession and irrational way of acting.

7. The Russian aggression against Ukraine has revealed the Western European naivety and benevolence abruptly and brought it to an end.

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Theses:

8. Influenced by the brutal aggression, the Ukrainian nation has become more united. The different perspectives between Eastern and Western Ukrainians have been overcome.
9. The European Union – as well as the NATO – has become more united, too. The past crises have been forgotten.
10. Instead of divisions a new solidarity has developed – for instance the Polish support of Ukraine.
11. Europe will be getting free from its dependence from Russia's fossil energy.

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Theses:

12. Not only in the field of politics but also in the scholarly one, we will need incorruptible paradigms and rules – above all when we are going to analyse the Russian self-conception of its narrative and mission.

13. From the side of Western European countries the worst option would be to return to dialogue with Russia – without the need for a groundbreaking change of Russian behaviour. „Business as usual“ – this has happened after the annexation of Crimea in 2014 – an unforgivable mistake.

14. Sanctions against Putin and Russia were initiated too late. These measurements did not prevent the war against Ukraine. However, they might be suitable to prevent wars potentially planned by Putin.

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Theses:

13. The role of Russian culture and the number of people who want to study Russian will decline. Very many inhabitants of Eastern Ukraine that preferred to speak Russian than Ukrainian before the war, do not want to communicate in Russian any more. All this means that Putin has not achieved his goal: Russification of the Ukraine. On the contrary: he has made Russia less attractive, not only in Ukraine, but in Europe and the USA, too.

Poland after World War II



Central Europe after WWII



Poland-Ukraine: struggles in the history: Volhynia (1943-1945) and Operation Vistula (1947)



Europe – Ukraine – Russia

