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Migration Research Group Seminar

# Hungary's long summer of migration - irresponsible governance fails people seeking international protection: A report by MigSzol



BY JOHANNES MAHR & FELIX BENDER  
MigSzol

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**ABSTRACT** / In the summer of 2015, tens of thousands of people from violence- and poverty-torn countries crossed the border between Serbia and Hungary seeking international protection. In this talk, the Migrant Solidarity Group of Hungary (MigSzol), argues that the so-called “refugee crisis” that ensued was the direct result of the inability and unwillingness of the Hungarian government under the nationalist-conservative Fidesz-party and Prime Minister Viktor Orbán to provide effective support to those affected. To this end, we present the results of field-work, documenting the experiences of people seeking international protection and relate those experiences to the increasingly restrictive political and legal context in Hungary. The unique set of testimonies we collected through almost 50 in-depth interviews is of great political importance: While a lot has been written about the events of last summer, the majority of these accounts either provide a sterile chronological description, focus on the participation of Hungarian and international volunteers, or merely depict a snapshot of the experiences of people seeking protection. Yet, embedded analysis of the actual experiences of people who were transiting through Hungary is mostly missing. This is problematic and dangerous because these people are both the most vulnerable and the most aware of the effect of failing government policies. Thus, their voices should be heeded more carefully in determining our shared responsibility to pursue basic human rights for a dignified life.