

## Reception Centres at Europe's borders. Unlearning the lessons learnt of contested migration hotspots – Case Study Canary Islands, Spain

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### Goals and questions

- What lessons can be learned from the Moria refugee camp for newly emerging camps such as the one in the Canary Islands ?
- How is the **interplay of multi-level policy decisions** on EU/Spanish national and Canarian local level implemented into the practice of reception camp conditions? What does this mean for the living realities of migrants inhabiting these spaces?
- What are the **coping mechanisms** done by refugees and migrants in terms of dwelling and what can we learn from them?
- To what extent does the Canary Islands Plan reflect a continuity of the **European migration management** ?
- How does the 2006 “Cayuco Crisis” compare with the current situation ?
- What is the **impact of the COVID-19 pandemic** on the planning and development of camps, as well as on the access to/importance of space?

### Methodology

- Canary Islands case study: **exploratory research** – few current studies, compared to other camps in Europe (Greece); high significance due to the increasing number of migration from North/West Africa.
- Mapping of camp structures/planning and actors with **comparison to Moria**.
- **Mapping spatial activities** in and outside the camp including access to health facilities as well as the connection the surrounding areas
- **Semi-structured interviews** with relevant actors: NGOs, activists, authorities and migrants
- **Participant observation** of daily routine/camp and realities of life



Migrants outside Las Raices camp, Tenerife 2021



Moria Camp, Greece 2020



Outside of Las Raices Camp, Tenerife, 2021

### Background Information

- 2020: 23,000; 2021: 20.700 migrant arrivals in the Canary Islands, → 750 percent more than in 2019 (2,687) – what are the parallels and differences to the Cayuco Crisis in 2006 as well as other migration hotspots as Moria or Lampedusa?
- The Atlantic Route from West Africa to Canary Islands is the deadliest migration route with 4,016 victims in 2021 due to overloaded boats, insufficient food and water and life-saving equipment.

### Multi level migration governance

- **Local/regional:** European municipality cooperation, very limited decision-making power in camp decisions, strong **activism** strongly shaping politics and media, migration perceptions/ views of locals/ neighbours
- **National:** interviews with governmental actors/ national NGOs: noted discrepancies + high decision-making power
- **EU:** Europe's pledge to “No more Moria” not living up to its promise: undermined by the emergence of a new migration hotspot in the Canary Islands with strongly criticized living conditions

### Situation in migrant camps (Tenerife/Gran Canaria)

- **Expulsions from the camps and violation of the migrants' freedom of expression and protest.** In the face of the blockade situations, as well as in protest to the terrible conditions in which the camps are held, migrants have carried out peaceful protests. These have resulted in expulsions from the camps or imprisonment. This is an unregulated system of “negative points” for disciplinary reasons.
- **Externalization of work to NGOs** → becoming state actors → externalization of work to civil society / activists which are becoming the new NGOs
- **Lack of clarity and arbitrary decision making regarding the eligibility criteria** by which the Spanish state selects those who are transferred to the peninsula and those who are not.
- **Refusal of migrants to stay in camps** because of the poor conditions and the rumors that those who stay there would face deportation. Consequently, a significant number of migrants live on the streets or in improvised camps located on the outskirts of the Las Raices camp

