

The Belarus border, Cop26 offers hope and Colman's star shines

As temperatures plummet on the European Union's eastern frontier, thousands of Middle Eastern migrants remain stranded in the no man's land between Poland and Belarus. It's now clear they were assisted in their arrival by Alexander Lukashenko, Belarus's despotic leader, for use as human pawns in a cruel political game. Yet, instead of forcing the EU to drop sanctions against his regime as he had evidently hoped, Lukashenko has merely triggered a further round of tougher measures to come.

Andrew Roth, Lorenzo Tondo and Martin Chulov survey the backdrop to this complex situation and the dire conditions at the border, while Kenan Malik outlines the hypocrisy at the heart of Fortress Europe's migration strategy that has served to encourage Lukashenko.

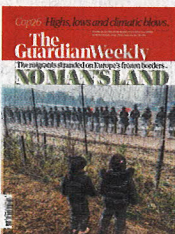
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Cop26 ended with views divided over whether the global climate conference was a success or a failure. The unsatisfactory answer appeared to be both, with many experts leaning to the latter view. Fiona Harvey tells the story of a fraught fortnight in Glasgow and outlines the key points of the agreed text, while on our Opinion pages, George Monbiot argues that regardless of disappointment over Cop, a societal tipping point on climate action is near.

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Our Culture pages feature Olivia Colman, the down-to-earth English actor who went from cult TV sitcoms to global stardom. We also go behind the scenes with foley artists, the people who recreate sound effects for our favourite shows, while our Books pages include a review of a Nobel laureate's visionary epic.

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On the cover

Polish forces face down two curious migrant children among the thousands of people stranded at the border. As Kenan Malik writes: "Polish forces, too, have trapped the migrants. Warsaw has imposed a state of emergency, denying migrants food, water or medical aid and refusing journalists access."

Photograph: Xinhua/Rex/Shutterstock



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