

Abstract

Illegal immigration has been a major topic of concern in the last few years in both the United States and the European Union; the policies and practices of border control and the use of detention have often been the center for political debate. Assessing the policies in the United States and the European Union in regards to how 'liberal' each are carried out through practice provides insight to the disparity between policy and practice. The thesis analyzes and compares the discourse used written into the policies, official government guidelines, and reports which focus on the approval and criticism of how the policies are put into practice through the United States and European Union government agencies; whilst providing data on recent illegal immigrant trends along the U.S.-Mexican border, as well as the Greek-Turkish border. The results discovered conclude that the European Union writes more 'liberal' discourse into their policy and government guidelines than the United States; the European Union illustrates more concern for fundamental individual rights while carrying out practice along the borders; but is falling short in ensuring that Member States (such as Greece) carry out other policy areas up to European Union standards, in this case the use of detention. The implications of the thesis offer an assessment of the practices used in United States and European Union in relation to the policy itself, helping to address where improvements are needed by analyzing the 'liberal' components of the policies and practices.