

CRISIS FACE OF MIGRATION: NEW CHALLENGES FOR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

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Abstract. *The purpose* of the article is to study the causes of migration flows in Europe in recent years and the ways to solve the current migration problem in the EU. The analysis allows us to find possible ways to prevent and minimise the risks of spontaneous influx of illegal migrants from developing countries, as it creates numerous social, economic, demographic, cultural, and religious problems for the EU countries. The authors analyse the trends of integration of refugees into the European community considering the crisis situation in the world associated with the emergence and spread of the coronavirus pandemic. *Methodology.* During the writing of the article, the authors used such methods as analysis, synthesis, abduction, concretisation, logical, and tabular methods. Information from various sources was analysed, the most important aspects were emphasised, a detailed analysis of the migration process was conducted, and its negative and positive aspects were singled out. *The results* of the analysis of the European migration crisis of 2015 in political and religious, economic and demographic aspects have shown that there has been a threat of increase of illegal migration to the European countries, which may lead to a crisis in the European countries. The situation has been exacerbated by the appearance of the coronavirus pandemic, which has threatened the lives of many Europeans. The actions and positions of the leaders of the member states of the European Union on migration policy and solving the problem of mass influx of migrants are considered. The results of the study have shown that the negative effects of the migration crisis in Europe are far outweigh the positive ones and this applies to every aspect of the study. Although the issue of migrants was partially resolved in 2017, during the period of coronavirus infection, which has now spread to all European countries, the issue of migrants has arisen again, which has exacerbated this problem. The focus is on the desire of the leading EU member states to limit the influx of emigrants into the territory of the EU member states without the desire of migrants to find work and gain the appropriate level of knowledge. *Practical implications.* The results of the study can be used by teachers during lectures on this topic, students to prepare for seminars, as well as by all interested citizens who have access to this information. *Value/originality.* These arguments allow us to state that in order to resolve the migration crisis in the EU countries, it is necessary to apply an integrated approach, considering all important socio-political, cultural, and ethnic values. After analysing the data in detail, the authors have singled out the positive and negative aspects of the migration crisis in Europe, analysed labour migration in Europe, considered the current state of migration processes and the consequences of migration, and suggested ways to solve the migration crisis in Europe.

Key words: migration policy, migrants, refugees, migration crisis, European Union.

JEL Classification: F22, F53

1. Introduction

The European region has always been attractive to migrants from other countries. The result was threats and challenges for the countries of the “Old World”, which led to crises. This is due to the large number of illegal migrants who want to live in Europe at any cost. The crisis is not a new phenomenon in the world. From history we can mention the First World Economic

Crisis in 1857–1858, the Great Depression in 1929–1939, the oil crisis in 1937–1975, and the Russian default in 1998–1999. The crisis situation in migration policy is related to hostilities, the First and Second World Wars. The migration crisis has become a major obstacle to the further development of the European Union member states, which has led to rising mass unemployment, violence and a decline in the economic

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potential of European countries. After analysing the causes, positive and negative aspects of each crisis and similar previous situations in the world, it is possible to propose measures to prevent possible subsequent negative crisis challenges.

2. Labor migration in Europe

The European migration crisis is a humanitarian catastrophe caused by the massive influx of migrants to Europe from the war-torn countries of Africa and the Middle East (UN News Service Section, 2015). The EU Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Johannes Hahn says that as of mid-September 2015, the number of migrants is the highest in human history. According to BBC, the armed conflict in Syria has been and remains the main reason for forcing people to leave their country. Prolonged violence in Iran and Afghanistan, widespread armed commitments in Eritrea, and poverty in Kosovo are the causes of migration. The problems in Central and South-East Africa are also forcing the people of these countries to seek a better fate away from home. Between 2014 and mid-2017, 600,000 migrants made a “breakthrough” to Europe (actually, to Italy) through the Libyan uncontrolled Mediterranean crossing, of which 12,000 died (BBC News, 2016). The second stage of the growth of the migration challenge began in 2015, when Syrian refugees began to migrate to Europe, who, before fleeing from the terror of ISIS, were concentrated mainly in camps in the territory of the Republic of Turkey. However, for many years, the European countries have been interested in illegal labour migration. It was and remains beneficial for employers, but has become a great burden for the state. Migrants, naked and barefoot, with children and lonely, ready to do anything to get to the country of their dreams, where there is the peaceful sky overhead.

Illegal migration was not a spontaneous phenomenon but in 2015 it became a threat to the host countries. The number of refugees living near the borders of the European Union in July 2015 reached a record 107 thousand people, according to representatives of the European Union (Tandelaty, 2017). This is the highest figure since 2008, when the calculations began. In Germany alone, the number of migrants applying for political asylum in 2015 was 750,000. The President of the European Parliament Martin Schultz stated that the main problem caused by migrants is not their influx, but the lack of solidarity for the adoption of common rules for resolving their resettlement, which leads to a significantly uneven burden on migration services in Europe (BBC News, 2016).

3. Consequences of migration

The consequences of migration are, first of all, the causes of socio-economic nature, poverty, unemployment, hostilities, inability to realize themselves in the homeland. The ethnic composition of migrants is very diverse, most of whom are Muslims who bring a culture of Islam to Europe. Sunnis and Shiites, compactly settling, mainly in the European cities, are building cultural and civilizational enclaves (ghettos), where there are their own schools, grocery stores with halal food, mosques, educational institutions (madrassas) and more. After analysing the situation in the host countries of refugees, the positive and negative consequences of migration processes were singled out (Table 1).

Table 1 shows that the number of negative consequences in any aspect of migration exceeds the number of positive ones. Its detailed analysis to prevent a recurrence of this phenomenon is especially important after any crisis. Countries must work

Table 1

The consequences of migration processes

Factors	Positive	Negative
1. Political and religious		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – risks of international, interethnic conflicts; – deterioration of the criminogenic situation; – Islamic “occupation” of the European countries; – loss of the European identity; – outbreak of religious wars in Europe
2. Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – reduction of production costs due to the use of cheaper foreign labor; – savings on education and training costs; – the opportunity to fill vacancies in non-prestigious areas of activity and industries with heavy physical labor; – increase in tax revenues to the state budget at the expense of immigrants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – reduction of the nominal wage level; – low level of social protection of migrants; – unemployment of citizens, dissatisfaction due to lower wages; – presence of illegal migrants; – irrational use of money earned by migrants; – increase in expenditures on social protection of migrants – payment of significant social benefits to migrants from the state budget
3. Demographic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – improving the demographic situation in countries with aging populations, rejuvenation of labor resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – increase in mortality due to difficult physical working conditions; – lack of multiculturalism and assimilation of the young population; – social dependence.

Source: authors' research

together to solve large-scale problems together. Any country can find itself in a difficult situation. Many years have passed since that crisis in Europe, and it is now possible to draw conclusions about the correctness of the decisions taken at that time regarding refugees. Merkel's actions are assessed differently by politicians, but most of them are negative. Thomas de Maiziere, who headed the German Interior Minister, said in an interview with ARD that there were times when the situation got out of hand. In turn, the representative of the parliamentary faction "Alliance 90" / "The Greens" in the Bundestag Irena Mikhalych believes that the decision not to close the borders of Germany was the right one. "Otherwise, chaos with unpredictable conflict potential would arise in the heart of Europe," the politician said (Vezel, Rigert, Bushuev, 2018).

4. Crime among the migrants

If we consider the crime rate among migrants in the EU, it is higher in Germany than among other Community countries. However, in the overall structure of crime, factors such as citizenship and nationality are of secondary importance. According to R. Behr, a sociologist at the Hamburg Police Academy, many crimes cannot be explained by ethnicity alone. Factors such as unemployment, social environment, low level of education also play a role. R. Behr also emphasizes that the responsibility for crimes in most cases is not the refugees who have recently arrived in the country, but those who live in Germany for a longer period of time. "The vast majority of crimes involving so-called migrants take place at least six months after their arrival in Germany," R. Behr says. Most criminals with migrant roots have lived in Germany for a long time and are well acquainted with the generally accepted standards of conduct in this country. "Therefore, usually migratory roots or ethnic origin – just a small stone in the overall mosaic," the sociologist explains (Vishnevskii, 2018).

5. Migrants' problems and the way to solve them

Problems among migrants have many negative consequences, which are manifested in a number of events that need to be addressed immediately. Thus, at the end of December 2016, hundreds of women were raped in Cologne. Police later found out that most of the suspects were from North Africa. This story was silenced for some time, but after the facts were revealed, the migrants were confirmed by attacks by locals. Merkel has never publicly regretted her decision to open borders (Dzhgarkava, 2021). However, during the CDU congress in December 2016, she stated that the events of 2015, when about a million refugees arrived in Europe, should not be repeated. Since 2016, the number of applications for refugee status in

Germany has been steadily declining – primarily due to the closure of the so-called "Balkan route". In recent years, the German authorities have also significantly tightened the rules for granting asylum to refugees (Smith, 2020). According to statistics, there are still more unemployed migrants here than among the indigenous population. According to the Institute for Employment Research (IAB), only one in two foreigners who have arrived in Germany since 2013 is currently employed. In addition, many refugees have lost their jobs in recent months due to a coronavirus pandemic. After the Commonwealth failed to cope with the flow of migrants, and not all the EU members were ready to defend these values to the detriment of themselves, Brussels had to negotiate with Turkey, which agreed to host refugees and thus serve as a barrier to migration crisis for the EU. Instead, Brussels has proposed allocating funds to support migrants and launching talks on Ankara's membership in the commonwealth (Vezel, Rigert, Bushuev, 2018).

6. The current state of migration processes

With regard to migration processes, the situation began to have negative consequences in early 2020 due to the sharp aggravation of the situation in Syria. In Idlib province, Erdogan said on February 29 that his country had opened its borders with the European Union to Syrian refugees and was no longer closing its doors. Turkish authorities began to guide and encourage the movement of illegal migrants. Ankara has allowed more than 100,000 refugees into the European Union across its borders. On the border between Greece and Turkey (particularly on the island of Lesbos) there were border breaches by illegal migrants and clashes with border guards and police (Dudina, Tarasenko, 2020).

The foreign ministers of the EU member states met for an emergency meeting. They said the situation on the Greek-Turkish border was provoked by Ankara for political purposes, which faced a migratory burden and was forced to accept 3.7 million migrants and refugees. One week later, Turkey's Coast Guard banned refugees from crossing into the European Union via the Aegean Sea. At the same time, the closure of the sea route was presented as a concern of the Turkish government for the safety of refugees (Dudina, Tarasenko, 2020). The EU leaders said the problem was solved but during the pandemic it became clear that the issue was simply postponed. The economic crisis following the outbreak of the coronavirus has hit even harder on countries that are already feeling the effects of the wars, with the flow of refugees intensifying. This time concerned about the pandemic, the European Union has given a much tougher response to migrants' attempts to enter the EU countries. When crossing the sea borders, many migrants died,

the lack of the necessary level of rescue operations was affected. Those who managed to get there were quarantined. Refugee camps were overcrowded, and many were simply left on ships without acceptable accommodation for two weeks. Greece and Italy, the coastal countries to which migrants arrived, took the blow again. The Commonwealth closed its eyes until a fire broke out in Lesbos, Greece, in the 12,000-strong "Moria" migrant camp. Following the tragedy, Brussels raised the issue of refugees again, but unresolved controversies emerged (Dzhgarkava, 2021). The European Commission tried to find a compromise and in October 2020 an action plan was proposed. This time, it did not offer mandatory reception of refugees by each member of the community. According to the European Commission's plan, countries can either receive migrants, sponsor their return to their countries of origin, or offer material assistance on the ground in their countries of arrival. In general, the plan looks like a compromise, but such a compromise did not suit either side completely. Greece and Italy insisted on a fair redistribution of refugees. Eastern European countries and Austria continue to argue that resettlement measures are possible only on a voluntary basis. As a result, the issue was never resolved.

7. Conclusions

The analysis of the causes and consequences of migration processes in Europe allowed us to draw

conclusions and suggest the following ways to solve the problems of eliminating the migration crisis:

1. Implementation of brutal round-the-clock control of maritime borders. Duty of border or military units in the adjacent area.

2. Providing asylum to official migrants only on condition of their employment. For example, within 14 days of crossing the border, the migrant must find employment and provide information from the place of work to the migration service. Only then can migrants receive free housing.

3. Opening free but mandatory assimilation courses. To do this, it is necessary to create a program "Assimilation of migrants", which could include the following: a course in language, culture, etiquette, etc.

4. Increasing penalties for organizing the transportation of illegal migrants.

5. Even distribution of migrants across the country. An equal number of migrants must be sent to each region of the country.

Thus, we can conclude that a large number of migrants threaten the security and sustainable development of many countries, creating a crisis in the European environment. The process of overcoming the "migration crisis" is long-term and requires a coordinated common policy between the host countries in the short, medium and long term. The main means of overcoming the migration crisis should be the collective harmonization of regulations and actions aimed at solving problems that have arisen in European countries.

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