



Migrations in the political reality of contemporary states

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Abstract:

Among the important problems of the modern world remains the issue of national security, both on the domestic and international levels. Determining the essential challenges to contemporary governance and analysing the levels of international movement of people indicates that migration pressures are a characteristic feature of modern civilisation. Migration takes different forms and stems from a number of varied reasons, but always brings with it significant social, political, economic and cultural consequences. In many ways it threatens national security, both from within and from without. It is therefore increasingly becoming the focus of activities undertaken both by governments and by international organisations.

Keywords: migrations, state security, migration policy, civilisational changes, policy

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Introduction

The movement of people is an important aspect of modern civilisation. Its intensification is the result of many economic, technical, cultural and political factors. The second half of the 20th century was marked by significant transformations in migration phenomena. The spatial mobility of the population remains one of the characteristic features tied with the development of societies. The changes in contemporary civilisation, especially the processes jointly referred to as globalisation, have set a new standard. They contributed to the shifts in the shape, intensity, as well as the consequences of population migration.

Migration-related phenomena are considered in political science discourses in the context of various threats to the national security system. The role they play only increases in importance with their intensification. They are thus of interest to international organisations, governments, other political forces and NGOs.

People who leave a given country are referred to as emigrants, while those who move into one – as immigrants. The term “emigration” is understood here to mean both 1) the act of leaving one’s homeland for another country in order to settle there permanently or for a certain period of time, or staying outside one’s homeland after settling there, and 2) the community of emigrants permanently residing in a given country.

Taking as the criterion the reasons for leaving one’s country, emigration was divided into the following categories: economic, political, religious, psychosocial, civilisational, forced and voluntary.

The particular motives for leaving one’s country are often ambiguous and not easy to discern. Political grounds coincide with economic difficulties or family reasons. Voluntary motives in particular are often very complex. Apart from economic or political reasons, emigrants are also affected by psychological and psychosocial factors.

Among its other forms, one can also list permanent, temporary and seasonal, individual and group, as well as organised and spontaneous emigration.

The legal status of emigration is another important criterion, allowing to further differentiate between legal and illegal emigration. The flow and intensity of legal emigration is sometimes controlled by the government; the very fact of control as well as its scope are the result of many factors. It should be emphasised that legal status significantly affects the position of emigrants, determining i.a. their professional, social and family standing. Relevant legal regulations concerning the phenomenon of migration are contained in international law. Bilateral agreements between the country of departure and the country of settlement are important in this respect. The legal status of emigrants is regulated both by domestic and international legislation. Agreements within regional organisations such as the European Union have a special dimension in this context. There are considerable differences in this respect between individual countries and international organisations.

Depending on the legal conditions they fulfil, emigrants fall into one of the following categories:

- 1) those who have citizenship of the country of residence,
- 2) those who have dual citizenship,
- 3) those who have a diplomatic passport,
- 4) those who have a tourist visa,
- 5) those who have a right to stay and citizenship of the country of departure or a third country,
- 6) those who have no citizenship, i.e. are stateless,
- 7) those who are in the country illegally.

Migration processes, as a civilisational phenomenon, are largely determined by changes taking place at various levels of social, political and economic life, both in time and space. Over the centuries, various major movements of population have taken place. Their intensity, directions, shape and form depended on different factors: social, economic, legal, political, technological, scientific, etc.

Emigration is a historical, permanent and widespread phenomenon. Its manifestations appeared as early as antiquity. In Europe, it became particularly intensified under the influence of geographical discoveries and colonial conquests. Demographic changes were also an important factor. A significant increase in the number of people in the 19th and 20th centuries led to mass migrations. This period was characterised by significant civilisational transformations; the so-called industrial revolution led to differences in the degree of development of states and societies. The change in the economic structures of countries, regions and cities caused significant movements of population. In the 19th century, the process of emigration was dynamic enough to produce economic, cultural, social and political consequences. As the differences in the development of countries deepened, those with a higher economic potential and a more absorptive labour market began to attract inhabitants of poorer countries or those experiencing economic crisis.

The significant population growth, largely due to an improvement in the quality of life, initially spread to northern and western Europe, and then to the eastern regions. It triggered a significant wave of economic migration, whose manifestations became especially visible in the 1870s. First it affected such countries as Great Britain, Ireland and Germany; then, Central-Eastern and Southern Europe, especially Italy and Poland. At the turn of the century it again gathered momentum. The 20th century also saw numerous waves of migration, caused mainly by the two world wars, the socio-political changes in the countries of the Eastern bloc after 1944, the political developments in Africa in the 1950s and 1960s, economic and political transformations in the Far East, as well as local conflicts occurring in various regions of the world.

In recent centuries, the following directions of migration have been the most pronounced: 1) from Europe to North America, 2) from Europe to South America, 3) from Europe to southern Africa and Oceania, 4) from Africa to the Americas, 5) in the Far East, from China and India to neighbouring countries, 6) from the eastern to western regions of North America (intra-continental migrations in North America), 7) within the territory of the Russian Empire, the USSR and the CIS, and 8) from rural areas to cities, which is commonly referred to as the urbanisation of social life.

In recent decades, migratory movements have intensified. This is due to the liberalisation of the legal procedures for crossing the borders. Border control has been abolished between many countries. Visa-free travel has been introduced. However, these advantages apply only to the inhabitants of countries at a similar level of economic and civilisational development located within specific cultural circles. The right of the citizens of EU member states, introduced by the Schengen Agreement of 14 June 1985, to visa-free travel, is an example of the freedom of migration within the European cultural circle, between countries belonging to the European Union. A significant intensification of migratory movements within the EU was seen after 1 May 2004. The accession of new member states from Central and Eastern Europe to the European structures opened the way for economic migrants to the countries of the so-called old union. The same privileges have also been extended to other countries in the European cultural circle on a similar level of civilisational development, such as Switzerland and Norway.

Inequalities of economic development are believed to be a significant cause of migration. The departure of people from countries outside of the industrialised world is a continuous process of varying intensity and

directions. This problem is particularly visible at the borders of the industrialised world. Mass migrations from Mexico to the US, from North Africa to Western Europe or from poor to rich Asian countries are a case in point.

The reasons for migration are usually not clear-cut. The factors inducing individuals to emigrate intertwine and encompass various aspects of their family, economic, social and political situation. The push–pull model is often used to analyse migratory movements. The most frequently mentioned push-factors include: international conflicts, internal armed conflicts, repressive political systems, discrimination, violation of human rights, hunger and poverty, natural disasters and ecological catastrophes. Pull-factors include: guarantees in social security, absorptive labour market, universal access to education, economic development, family reunification, political stability, democratic principles and judicial protection of the individual.

Changes in the scope of economic cooperation between enterprises from individual countries, liberalisation of capital flows, and the activities of international corporations led to the creation of a global economic system in which the world was divided into regions. The dividing lines run along the map of investment attractiveness, economic and political stability, the shape of the labour market, consumer affluence, level of civilisational development, etc. A common reference is the level of national income per capita. This factor reflects whether a given country is rich or poor, indicating the main directions of migration. Economic migrations are particularly intense at small geographical distances; one example could be the increased emigration from Mexico or Cuba to the US, or from Poland to Germany.

Technical progress is also an important factor of migration. In this respect, the following phenomena are of particular significance:

- 1) changes in the place of residence due to high industrialisation and environmental pollution,
- 2) desire to improve the standard of living and move to a region with better access to modern technologies (infrastructure, availability of consumer goods, better work organisation, better medical care, etc.),
- 3) technological development in the area of means of transport (significant reduction in travel time, especially important when travelling long distances –

e.g. from few weeks to few hours to get from Europe to North America – greatly increases the mobility of the population; reduction of relative travel costs, including the cost of means of transport themselves, made travel more accessible and thus had a positive effect on the development of transport services, e.g. airlines,

4) development of means of communication allow easier access to information about the world,

5) increasingly accessible travel and long-distance communication facilitate more frequent contact between emigrants and their families in the country of departure.

Increased activity of political life also contributes to the intensification of population movements. Individual political events can lead to a decision to emigrate, and often even force migration waves. World War II significantly changed the global population image. Internal political processes, such as the introduction of martial law on 13 December 1981 in Poland, can also result in significant population movements. Emigration factors rooted in the internal situation of a country include: 1) escaping from a repressive political system, 2) being forced to leave the country as a political opponent of the government in power.

Contemporary social, economic and political changes require raising the level of education. As a response, there has been a growing number of service providers in this area, supplying the demand of consumers who actively participate in various segments of this market. The demographic structure of migrant populations is also changing as the proportion of people with higher education among those who change their place of residence increases substantially. This has measurable consequences. It gives immigrants a better start and facilitates their adaptation and integration. More and more frequently they have knowledge of the culture, social and economic relations, and political institutions of their country of settlement, they often speak its language or other languages that allow them to communicate there freely. They also show considerable interest in learning foreign languages. Language courses are organised, both as an integral part of the education system and as separate initiatives. Knowing the language of the country of settlement helps to mitigate the culture shock caused by arriving in a new unknown world. Nowadays highly qualified workers and specialists emigrating to countries on a similar economic level constitute a significant part of emigrants. They are

also becoming increasingly independent and able to function without the help of social welfare institutions. Their status in the labour market is improving. All this means that the process of their integration and acceptance by the environment is less marked by social tension.

The legal status of immigrants in the country of residence has changed significantly due to human rights awareness. An increasing number of international regulations in this area forces countries to introduce solutions in accordance with generally accepted standards. Especially the scope of legal protection of economic and social security guarantees is increasing. This also contributes to changing the demographic structure of immigrant populations. There is a marked increase in the activity of entire families. In some regions, such as the countries of the European Union, immigrants are even granted certain political rights. In recent years there is also a growing tendency to regulate taxation issues. Agreements are being signed with the aim to eliminate double taxation. This significantly intensifies migratory movements and the level of economic activity of migrants. Moreover, fewer and fewer immigrants find employment in the so-called informal sector.

A distinctive aspect of contemporary global changes is the creation of a new quality of the education system, mainly in the area of higher education. New forms of learning introduce opportunities to study at universities in other countries. In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of student exchange programmes and various types of scholarships, especially within European structures. A brief trip to study in another country often results in subsequent emigration. This helps to build mutual economic, social and cultural relations between countries.

Rising level of education has a significant impact on both the decision to emigrate and the destination. Education and easier access to information allow to thoroughly compare living conditions in particular countries. Factors such as economic indicators, legal system, opportunities for economic and social advancement, the size and character of the diaspora from the emigrant's country, as well as cultural and civilisational diversity may prove decisive. Better education makes it possible to limit illegal emigration through the earlier use of all available legal channels. In this context, the following factors are important: knowledge of the legislation of the country of settlement, knowledge of international law, knowledge of the language of the country of settlement, skilful communication with officials, etc.

Immigration has many consequences for the demographic makeup of both the country of departure and the country of settlement. For the former, these can include demographic aging, lower birth rate, depopulation; for the latter, gender imbalance, demographic rejuvenation, overpopulation.

The economic effects are also significant, for both the country of departure and the country of settlement. For the former, these can include outflow of workers causing shortages in labour supply in certain market segments, reduction in unemployment, fund inflow, decrease in consumption, changes in employment structure, lower prices of real estate, changes in production structure, reduced demand for certain products and services, development of small business. For the latter, inflow of cheap and often highly-qualified workforce, introduction of new inventions, development of new branches of economy, filling vacancies, fund outflow, rising costs of social welfare, rising prices of real estate, increase in consumption, land development, creation of a global labour market, increased supply of certain services.

In the sphere of politics, emigrants are often treated as a “safety valve” due to the outflow of radical individuals or groups. Other political consequences for the country of departure include rising wealth of emigrant families, deepening economic inequality, transferring new patterns of political culture, belief that material success can only be achieved abroad (economic passivity), problems with reintegrating re-emigrants, disintegration of families, formation of a multi-generation migration chain. Emigrants often establish opinion-forming centres influencing the political life of their country of departure. They can also create pressure groups shaping international relations in both bilateral and multilateral contacts.

In the sphere of culture, immigration means the penetration of new values, formation of new norms, and personality changes. It enriches the national culture of the country of settlement, introducing new trends and diversity into the sphere of artistic life, which is usually perceived as a positive phenomenon. Migration movements also broaden people’s horizons. However, for the country of departure, the outflow of its creative force is not an advantageous process. On a similar note, the country of settlement may also have to face difficulties. Cultural differences are one of the main causes of conflicts with immigrants. Manifestation of a different, foreign cultural identity as well as ethnic and racial factors may generate tension. The situation becomes exacerbated if immigrants do not work, refuse to integrate and show signs of pathological behaviour, such as drug addiction or alcoholism.

The process of immigration determines the attitudes of many generations. Only the fourth generation of immigrants is usually considered fully integrated into the new culture. Each generation of immigrants faces difficulties of a different nature. The first generation has to overcome the greatest barriers, as it is faced with the greatest change – the greatest number of unfamiliar stimuli necessitating a reaction. The number of these unknown stimuli depends on the cultural and geographical distance, knowledge about the given region, the immigrants' economic and social status, etc.

Modern civilisation is characterised by an increasing amount of stimuli transmitted mainly through the media. Without an appropriate background, e.g. a family, knowledge of local structures, customs, etc., this can cause a loss of sense of security. The behaviour of the immigrants' themselves is also important. They may fight for the recognition of the values of their native culture, which usually leads to a conflict; or they can define their own identity, disregarding national or ethnic criteria.

Problems of integration are becoming more and more acute due to the increasing number of immigrants from non-Western countries settling in Europe. Immigrants from Muslim countries are of particular concern. It is estimated that around 13 million of them currently live in Western Europe. Among immigrants to the United States, newcomers from regions of the world other than Europe also dominate. In the 1950s, two-thirds of immigrants to the US came from Europe and Canada; in the 1980s, about 35 percent were from Asia, 45 percent from Latin America, and less than 15 percent from Europe and Canada. Immigration from Asia and Latin America to the US and Canada continues to increase; the share of immigrants to European countries from Africa is growing significantly. The main directions of migration reflect former colonial ties.

The rate of natural increase in the US and in Europe continues to decline. Any future population growth in Western countries will probably come from the fertility rate among immigrants. As a result, Europeans are becoming more and more afraid of their jobs being stolen by immigrants, of increasing costs of welfare, and changes in their lifestyle. This fear leads to the formation of radical groups for which the immigrant communities are the source of all their country's failures. In recent years, there has been an increase in the electorate of right-wing and nationalist parties hostile to immigrants. On the other hand, contemporary social relations are characterised by an increasing activity of minority groups, which feel undervalued and lack means

of expressing themselves in the existing socio-political situation, and therefore strive for greater self-determination. There is even talk of minority rebellions. The growing activity of both minority groups and radical nationalist groups may lead to many conflicts.

What distinguishes modern civilisation is the phenomenon of internal migrations consisting in the movement of people from city centres to the outskirts. Changes in work organisation mean that more and more tasks can be performed from home instead of large centralised plants or offices. The expanding city centres cause many problems in the area of transport, energy, and water supply; high population density provides a fertile ground for various types of social conflicts, becoming increasingly criminogenic; costs of living and real estate prices are rising at a dizzying pace.

Migration movements can bring about economic progress, political recovery, and help to realise people's goals and aspirations. They affect the sphere of values and social relations, cause economic changes, etc. In turn, their character and intensity also result from, among others, the activities of political agents, such as governments and nations, the quality of political institutions and political scene, the behaviour of voters, relevant legislation, etc.

As a political phenomenon, migration movements occupy an important place in the system of contemporary international relations, especially bilateral relations between individual countries, constituting both their determinants and their expressions. This is reflected in the very act of crossing the border, which can be made either more difficult or easier, depending on the migration policy of both the country of departure and the country of settlement.

Understood as a sphere of social activity related to the pursuit of power within national structures and in international relations, politics is inextricably linked to migration. The phenomena of immigration and emigration are related both to conducting political activity within a given country and to broader political relations defining the modern world.

There are different models of government policy towards migrants. On the one hand, there is the British model of a society based on a liberal approach of the authorities implementing a multicultural policy. This model gives each ethnic group the right to freely cultivate its own culture, traditions, customs and lifestyle. The government's role is limited to ensuring that no minority is

discriminated against by other members of society. At the opposite extreme, there is the model based on a residual/assimilation policy which specifies detailed requirements that must be met by immigrants in terms of the needs of the labour market, objectives of the economic policy, and the requirement to adapt to social and cultural norms of the country. The model of complementary migration policy is determined by the needs of the labour market – structural labour market shortages are filled by migrants selected for their professional qualifications, but the influx of people is under strict control and can never take the form of mass immigration. Two distinct approaches to the migration policy were revealed after the migration crisis of 2015. One was dictated by considerations of humanity and solidarity and expressed by an attitude of acceptance and assistance; the other called for tightening of border controls and opposed the admission of immigrants into the country. There is therefore an indisputable need to develop a coherent migration policy both in individual countries and in Europe.

Immigration, being both the subject and the object of politics, can be considered from various viewpoints: social, economic, cultural, educational, international, etc., and then analysed in more detail: in its various spheres and branches. It can also be viewed as a phenomenon contributing to the shaping of current political reality, as well as affecting the decisions made about the future. As an aspect of civilisation, migration movements favour economic progress, political revival, and the realisation of individual aspirations and goals. However, they can also cause many problems and conflicts.

In its other sense, understood as a community, emigration is a complex social group exhibiting certain distinctive features. At the same time, it is a group diversified in terms of its economic, educational and political structure. The network created by it in the country of settlement and the place occupied in it by the individual correspond to the realities of this country, as well as to the individual characteristics of the emigrant.

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