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3. SECURITY IMPLICATIONS OF THE MIGRANT CRISIS IN EUROPE IN 2015-16

Abstract: In the contemporary world there is an increasing number of reasons for which citizens of a country leave to another one. It is shown that people on the move are an almost inevitable source of social and political shocks, conflicts and terrorism in Europe, since by means of mass media terrorism as an unconventional threat to the contemporary security is imported to Europe from the region of the Middle East. In this regard, the causes as well as security implications of the migrant crisis in Europe for human security will be discussed. Millions of refugees perceive the European Union as a safe haven and a place where they can live in peace with their families, but, among them there are individuals who driven by political goals and jihad ideas pose a serious threat to international peace and security. The Middle East conflicts, known as a region that is the very heart of world crises, have been lasting for decades and as such, have consequently lead to migrations as a security problem, that mostly affect countries of the European Union. Upon a massive migrant inflow, security implications are undeniable and they should be adequately addressed. In the first instance, that poses a great challenge to the countries that accept migrants and requires the adequate organisation of humanitarian aid systems as well as creation of an environment suitable for integration. This paper draws attention to discordant approaches of European countries when it comes to accepting migrants and refugees, and a response given by certain members of the European Union testifies about that, thus compromising human security, freedom and civil rights, as well as preservation of basic principles of solidarity and tolerance upon which the European Union rests. Creating and realizing a policy based on the mentioned universal human rights, values, and aimed at solving increasingly frequent migration flows, would enable an adequate response of the European Union to one of the contemporary security issues it currently faces. The migrant crisis that has struck Europe actually requires balance between, on one hand, respecting basic human rights and solidarity, and, on the other, prevention and protection from potential threats, such as terrorism, which can directly affect realization of national security.

Keywords: *migration, migrant crisis, terrorism, human security, European Union, Middle East*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Old as the humanity itself, human migration has played an important role in shaping the world as we know it today. Regardless of the reasons for which they emigrate, arrival of a larger number of foreign citizens to a new country can have a negative impact on its national security. Transit countries, whose territory those people have to cross on their way to the final destination can also be at risk. Although migrants in certain countries can have a significant contribution to labor force growth, many people perceive them as a threat to social cohesion and stability, a burden to economic welfare that exhausts local housing resources, health care system and education, consequently leading to resentment and hostility of local population. More than a million migrants came to Europe in 2015, causing a crisis in countries struggling with the influx of immigrants, as well as creating a division over the best way to solve the problem of migration.

2. REFUGEE VS. MIGRANT

Although terms *a refugee* and *a migrant* have their meanings which are clearly specified by international law, in public discourse and media there tends to be a mix-up and an incorrect use of these two terms. By invoking provisions of international conventions and protocols¹ many migrants declare themselves refugees² in the hope of being granted rights to a safe refuge and protection from being returned to dangers they have run away from. Protection of refugees implies taking responsibilities, and only in order to avoid enabling refugees to enjoy their rights, many countries call them migrants.

Migrants are people who do not face any obstacles regarding their return, but they decide to migrate in the hope of improving their current living conditions, find a job or better education. A choice between one of these terms reflect fundamental attitudes towards refugees, among the public and authorities of the country in which they are located. While refugees are treated according to norms of refugee protection defined in national law and international law, countries can treat migrants according to their own immigration laws and processes.

The majority of people who are coming to Europe this year are from the countries where wars are raging or that are considered as “the countries which produce refugees” and that need international protection. However, a small number of them originate from elsewhere, and for many of those people it would be correct to use the term “migrant” (Edwards, 2015).

3. CAUSES OF THE CURRENT MIGRANT CRISIS

The Middle East is a very dynamic conflict region, in spite of entangled interests of all great powers, where the international community still has not found diplomatic solutions for establishing peace and security. Over the past few years conflicts in this region have been intensified, and their consequences also impact countries on other continents. The valleys of

1 The 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol laid the basis for the contemporary refugee protection. Taken from <http://www.unhcr.org/1951-refugee-convention.html> on 02.07.2016.

2 The term refugee is used for individuals who are suddenly forced to leave their country of origin for fear from persecution or death (Banch, 1985, Doherty & Madarazzo 1988, according to Lukić, 2005:19)

the rivers Tigris and Euphrates are burdened with wars in Libya, Iraq, and primarily Syria in which a brutal civil war has been raging for over 5 years, between the regime in Damascus, lead by President Bashar al-Assad, and Syrian opposition. Damascus has become the center of civil protests, riots and armed conflicts. As a result, desperate people started fleeing in even larger numbers during the past two years (Dragostinova, 2016).

More and more Syrians have left their country and moved towards neighboring countries and Europe. More than half the refugees under UNHCR's mandate are from just three countries: Syria (4.9 million), Afghanistan (2.7 million) and Somalia (1.1 million) (The Guardian, 2016). The total number of Syrian refugees registered outside the EU was estimated in July 2016 at 4,836,396 (UNHCR, 2016).

In public discourse and media, a question has been raised why now, when conflicts have been lasting for years. This escalation can be attributed to a confluence of intersecting push-and-pull factors, some of which have been simmering for years. The combination of push factors includes: (1) the ongoing violence and instability in countries of their origin; (2) the deterioration of conditions in countries of first asylum which has led some, including Jordan and Lebanon, to tighten their borders, limiting access to nearby safe heavens for the displaced; (3) the continued lack of opportunities to work or enroll in school for most refugees; and (4) geopolitical changes that have closed off alternative destinations, such as Libya (Banulescu-Bogdan & Fratzke, 2015).

4. SECURITY IMPLICATIONS OF THE MIGRANT CRISIS IN 2015-16

In the first place, migration flows deepen the crisis in the countries that are starting points of their quest to a better life i.e. their countries of origin, then they impact the countries through which they pass and which are not their final destination, as well as their final destination. Thus, "migrations can pose a threat to people and governments of the countries from which migrants are fleeing and to which they are going, as well as the relations between those two countries" (Williams, 2012: 587).

It is essential to emphasize the specificity of the current migrant crisis that refers to a cultural aspect considering the fact that there are Muslims among migrants. Therefore, there are cultural and religious characteristics that require a special approach. The process of Islamic radicalization gains momentum with young Muslims who can be present among migrants and that is why the security implications of the migrant crisis draw much attention.

Global events such as terrorist attacks, which echo around the world, committed by immigrants complicate additionally the accepting of new migrants into "promised" countries (Traynor, 2015). For countries receiving large numbers of refugees, the risk of terrorist attacks by "refugee warriors" and, on the opposite side, by native xenophobic vigilantes targeting on refugee populations increases (Reinoud, 2009:343). Across Europe, a median of 49 percent believe that the large number of refugees fleeing countries such as Iraq and Syria pose a major threat to their country. An even larger median of 59 percent say that refugees will increase the likelihood of terrorism in their country (Stokes, 2016). Maybe their fear is justified because of the examples and statistics that will be revealed in this text. Terrorist attack in United States is a first example that shows how the immigration problem can be destructive. Center for immigration studies has made report that covers the immigration histories of 94 terrorists who operated in the United States between the early 1990s and

2004, including six of the September 11th hijackers (Kephart, 2005). Some of the findings are these: there were 94 foreign-born terrorists who operated in the United States, and the study found that about two-thirds of them (59) committed immigration fraud prior to or in conjunction with taking part in terrorist activity; the terrorist operatives covered in this report were foreign nationals. They all had to travel to the United States in order to conduct their operations there (Kephart, 2005). In favor of this, recent terrorist attacks in the countries of the European Union show that the aforementioned fear came true in reality. Terrorist attack in July 2016, committed by a Muslim from Tunisia should be a backbone for cautious immigration policy in future. Mohamed Bouhlel was known to the police for assault with a weapon, domestic violence, threats and robbery, but he had no known links with terrorism (Samuel & Morgan, 2016). Despite this, he was indoctrinated which made him responsible for this attack. Also, a terrorist attack, which took place in Germany on July 24th this year, was committed by a Syrian refugee who hacked a pregnant woman to death. Before this attack there was another one, an Afghan refugee hacked passengers with an axe as he shouted "Allahu Akbar" - 'God is Great' - during a rampage on a train in Germany on 18th July. (Foster, 2016). All of these attacks happened in the countries which are members of the European Union. Maybe this fact is a reason more for the EU to step up response to migration crisis and terrorism as a security corollary.

It is an undeniable fact that 80% of migrants are men aged between 18 and 50, who are fit for military service so that among them there are a number of potential terrorists. It is presumed that at least 3,000 jihadists have reached Europe among groups of migrants, and 50 terrorists have already been discovered, leading to the declaration of some kind of emergency in the European Union (henceforth the EU) (Radišić, 2015:70). Because of that, law enforcement agencies that protect borders, control the movement of people, goods and vehicles have a great responsibility in the situation of the current migrant crisis. Frontex³, a specialized and independent European agency, participates significantly in the current crisis mainly in carrying out rescue operations, and the fact that during an action in May 2016 13,800 migrants were saved, testifies about that (Frontex, 2016). This is when restrictive policies of the EU countries became evident. Many provoked riots and inhumane treatment of migrants, lead to compromising a primary dimension of the human security concept – personal security of migrants.

The policy of migration and migrant crisis management has become an important field of both implementing national policies as well as policies on international level. The lack of joint and adequate response of the EU to a massive inflow of migrants together with the introduction of border obstacles and agencies for prevention of illegal immigration led to numerous border inconveniences. On 9th September, 2015 Denmark closed its rail links and motorways to Germany, while Germany, Czech Republic, Austria and Hungary introduced tougher border controls. Hungary introduced new regulations concerning all individuals who entered its territory illegally, thus risking a 3-5 year prison sentence. Also, due to an increased inflow of migrants, in June 2015 a decision was made to build a 4-meter-high fence along the 175-kilometer border with Serbia, and along part of the border with Croatia. Hungary is just one of the EU countries which have explicitly shown the instruments of their restrictive policy to the greatest extent. Numerous migrants

3 European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union. Frontex. Taken from <http://frontex.europa.eu/about-frontex/origin/> on 05.07.2016.

gave interviews about violent behaviour of Hungarian police forces on its borders. A large number of adults and children suffered significant physical injuries on that occasion (Roberts, H., Hall, J, Charlton, C. & Tonkin, S., 2015). Croatia had numerous phases regarding its response to migrants, but blocking traffic on the border with Serbia had extremely negative consequences on their relations (Korybko, 2015).

The survival of the “Dublin Regulation”⁴ which regulates responsibilities of the EU member states to adequately treat asylum applications has also been called into question. Due to a large number of asylum applications, Hungary stopped accepting asylum seekers, while Germany, Czech Republic, Austria and Denmark independently decided about asylum applications, despite the existing regulations (Gajić, 2016: 91).

Serbia, which has developed its own strategy for dealing with a massive inflow of migrants who have crossed and are still crossing its territory, is the first country that registers all migrants, and lets them travel to the EU countries. Although it is still in the process of accession to the EU, our country has treated migrants in a friendly manner and addressed the issue of the migrant crisis more than responsibly, thus setting an example by respecting basic European values, which cannot be said for many countries with full EU membership. Based on the previous text, we can say that the EU faces some key challenges relating to the current migrant crisis. First, the practical challenge presented by the sheer scale of the crisis should not be underestimated. The volume of people moving, the diversity of their profiles, countries of origin and vulnerabilities and the dynamic nature of their routes of entry and the clandestine means they often use all present an incredibly complex and demanding situation. *For Italy, Greece, Croatia and Hungary – the EU countries on the frontline – the volume and speed of the influx has simply overwhelmed their asylum systems at a time when their economies are particularly weak.* Second challenge - identifying those in need of international protection and those who are not is complex. This is important because of their migrant or refugee status. Third, there is a substantial financial cost to countries receiving large number of refugees and others who are granted international protection. Many EU states don't want to bear with economic concessions and question about how long refugees will remain. Fourth, early and adequate integration support - they may be more likely to invest in building a life in the country where they were formally relocated or resettled. Fifth, public opinion in Europe on international migration is highly divided, affecting both government policies and integration prospects for refugees and other migrants. Finally, obtaining a coherent approach from all 28 EU members is proving extraordinarily difficult.

What are policy priorities for the next phase of the European response to the migration? EU policy responses need to move from a security-centric focus towards a ‘multi-sector’ policy approach guaranteeing a balanced setting of priorities across all relevant policy sectors. All these responses should fully guarantee fundamental human rights compliant focus. The EU Dublin System needs to be fundamentally revised and substituted by a new regime of redistribution of responsibility. The issue is not only about moving asylum-seekers around, but also about making sure that proper reception conditions are in place everywhere across the Union (Carrera, Guild and Gros, 2015). The future of the EU common external borders policy is also a central issue. If the Schengen Area is to endure,

4 The purpose of this Regulation, adopted in 2003, is to determine which State is responsible for examining an asylum application – normally the State where the asylum seeker first entered the EU – and also to make sure that each claim gets a fair examination in one Member State. The Dublin Regulation, UNHCR. Taken from <http://www.unhcr.org/4a9d13d59.pdf> on 05.07.2016.

it needs to establish a common institution responsible for securing external borders. A starting point should be a true 'European coast guard', with its own budget, ships, and personnel, as a flexible tool with which to allocate resources as effectively as possible at any given moment (Gros, 2015).

There are a number of concrete actions that European governments could take to institute a more effective and appropriate response to the current crisis. The EU governments must ensure the protection of all migrants, but particularly women, children and other vulnerable groups, irrespective of their migration status. It means identifying those who are in need of international protection and affording them such protection accordingly, and, for those whose asylum claims are rejected, ensuring their humane and appropriate treatment, including safe return to their country of origin. The EU states must adopt a coherent, long-term and comprehensive strategy that tackles both the causes and the consequences of the current influx. This must provide for adequate political, diplomatic and economic investments in countries of origin, transit or first destination outside the EU, as well as improving asylum systems and resettlement in destination countries within the EU (Metcalf-Hough, 2015).

Security implications of the migrant crisis do not stop on state borders of countries that are part of the migrant route. According to some authors, the fear of local population is justified since it is a fact that migrations inevitably expose local population to an increased risk of contagious diseases, crime and terrorism (Simeunović, 2015:6). Such an example of insufficient solidarity with migrants can be observed in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Sweden, Denmark and Norway in which, regardless of the official immigration policy, a great resistance of citizens towards accepting migrants is present. In certain cities where a small number of migrants were supposed to be accommodated, public petitions were signed and it was demanded that state and local authorities should give up accepting migrants i.e. individuals that were supposed to be resettled and accommodated in their communities (Radović, 2015). The resistance of citizens, and even that of the wider public, can be explained by the fear and security concerns, especially from the point of view of national and personal security (Koser, 2011).

It is important to point out that the migrant crisis is followed by other implications for health, economic and political security as three significant dimensions of already mentioned concept of human security. Health security is compromised by the lack of hygienic conditions during taking care of migrants, which could result in spreading diseases. Also, due to the lack of financial resources and uncertain future regarding employment and basic sources of income, migrants flee to developed countries of the EU in order to find economic security.

As one of the problems that has emerged during the current crisis, and to which the EU has not had, and, it seems, it still does not have a response, is openness of borders between member countries within the Schengen area, which makes it difficult to control the flow of migrants. In these newly arisen circumstances, certain internal borders are established again due to a massive inflow of migrants (Radović, 2015). Once they enter the EU-Schengen area, migrants and refugees can travel freely without any restrictions and controls. Conflicts triggered by closing the borders compromise political security and lead to cooling the relations between countries. It is obvious that security implications of the migrant crisis are complex and that they permeate all dimensions of the human security concept.

5. CONCLUSION

Therefore, as we have shown, the EU countries have reacted differently to the migrant crisis. In this respect, certain countries have accepted a large number of migrants, some transit countries have provided uninterrupted transit on the way to their final destination, while some countries, however, have built fences and put barbed wire on their borders in order to forbid and prevent migrants from entering. Due to the fact that there are so many mutually conflicting strategies for overcoming the current migrant crisis, even confrontations among some member states of the EU were bound to happen.

The current migrant crisis has brought about numerous security implications to which even the most significant international community actors have not had a harmonized response. At the level of the political elite of states, regional and international organizations, creating adequate policy for solving the migrant crisis is necessary, as well as its implementation at operational levels.

Political decisions made with the aim of solving the migrant crisis definitely represent the most significant factor which affects stabilization of the existing circumstances, but without their successful implementation in the context of developing an environment ready for a comprehensive admission of migrants, we face the risk that all threats we could have prevented or at least reduced, might be materialized.

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