Migration of refugees from the third world countries – is it a real security threat?

A menekültek migrációja a harmadik világ országainból – biztonsági fenyegetést jelent-e?

Abstract

This article deals with refugees and their influence on security. The problem of migration has its political, historical and legal aspect described below. Security is endangered in terms of violation of basic state interests; there is also a threat of extremism and criminality, threat of spreading diseases and threat of violation of cultural identity. Moreover, European Union countries want to stop the influx of refugees. They use different ways of dealing with this problem such as giving donations to some countries to look after immigrants and so make them change their mind and let them stay; others build fences etc.

Keywords: quotas, extremism, diseases, refugees, terrorism.

Absztrakt

A cikk a menekültekkel és azok biztonságára gyakorolt hatásával foglalkozik. A migráció problémájának vannak a későbbiekben tárgyalt politikai, történelmi és jogi szempontjai. A biztonság veszélyeztetett, amikor az alapvető állami érdekek sérülnek; a szélsőségesség és a bűnözés is fenyegetést jelent, a betegségek terjedése, a kulturális identitás megsértése szintén fenyegetést jelent. Ráadásul az európai uniós országok szeretnék megállítani a menekültáradatot. Különböző módon kezelik ezt a problémát, adományokat adnak egyes országoknak a bevándorlók ellátására, annak érdekében, hogy meggondolják magukat, és ott maradjanak; mások kerítéseket építenek stb.

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INTRODUCTION

Recently, Europe has been facing uncomfortable reality of thousands of refugees coming, claiming right to rest within its territory, obtaining status of asylum-seeker. These people come mostly from war affected countries such as Syria, Libya, Iraq, Afghanistan etc. They are trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea and go ashore in Italy, Greece or Malta.

All of them are sailing in poor boats not fit to reach the shore safely, starving, suffering from diseases and living in deplorable conditions. That’s the reason why so many end up dead before ever reaching their dream destination. The main cause of that is drowning in the sea as smugglers usually provide them with poor means of transport.

Rescue teams from European countries are doing their best to help them and prevent them from losing their lives. If they are successful, migrants are transported to specialised centres to the countries named above, waiting for the sentence of relevant authorities.

The most unpleasant piece of news for them would be their internment back to the country they had left. Anyway, all of them hope for better future in European countries and believe that risking their lives is absolutely worth it.

However, there are other obstacles that migrants must deal with. They are considered to be a security threat for Europe, especially European Union members, due to EU pro-migrant policy, one says. Others believe that their contribution to multiculturalism is more positive than these pessimistic outlooks.

Nevertheless, the situation today might be described as a humanitarian crisis that Europe faces. That is why so many special summits, not only within Europe but also overseas, have been called to deal with this acute situation. The resolutions have been issued, most of them rather political than legal. However, even these caused a controversy and general disagreement.

More than a million migrants and refugees crossed into Europe in 2015, sparking a crisis as countries struggled to cope with the influx, creating a division in the EU discussing the best ways of dealing with resettled people.

The vast majority of migrants arrived by sea but some have made their way over land, mainly via Turkey and Albania. Winter did not intercept the flow of people - with 82,636 people reaching Europe by the sea since the beginning of year 2016.

1. HISTORICAL ENTRY

Migration of migrants from the third world countries is not just a phenomena of recent years. It occurred several decades ago and it is predominantly linked with decolonisation. After the second world war the idea of keeping colonies was generally left to oblivion, so decolonisation started. This process was sometimes hard and sometimes very cruel but afterall, new states were given sovereignty – at the beginning parcial, later on absolute.
New states and their authorities could then treat the population as their citizens, being though despoiled from their natural resources and left without any sign of economical progress. This kind of historical unfairness still resonates within the population.

Furthermore, several political groups or military formations within these countries attempted to take control over the country. Conflicts started and suffering people found themselves in desperate situation.

These aspects made the process of migration to former European colonial states quicker. Migrants had the advantage of speaking language of the colonial country so it was natural they didn’t hesitate to migrate.

2. POLITICAL ENTRY

Contemporary situation is the issue of the European Union, mainly as some EU members (Italy, Malta and Greece) are struggling with significant financial expenses.

Political conceptions of resolving this situation vary. First of all, EU believes that starting of a so called EUNAVFOR-Med mission organized by the chief commander in Rome might be the turning point, where European ships allowed to handle those of the marketters in the Mediterranean Sea would be the goal. The European Union is attempting to get an approval of the Security Council of the United Nation for this operation.

The operation is supposed to be divided into several parts. The first part shall focus on getting general information about the contraband net in the Mediterranean. In the second and the third part, EU shall find smugglers’ ways and means and take them into custody in accordance with the international law and partnership of Libyan authorities.

The expenses were counted up to 11.8 million Euros for two preparation months and one year mandate. The Slovak Republic might take part by providing the operation with officers; the Czech Republic has offered a surveillance aircraft. As mentioned countries are not able to accept all of the immigrants getting to their shores, European Comission has introduced the plan to redistribute them among another countries.

This solution (redistributing asylum-seekers) has also been proposed in 2015. Around 40 000 people from Syria and Erytrea ended up in the EU countries. The highest amount of immigrants were hosted in Germany (8763), France (6752), Spain (4288) and Poland (2663). The least number of them ended up in Cypre. Slovakia took in 765 people (1,96%) and the Czech Republic welcomed 1328 new residents.

Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom were the exception as they held a special position and right to opt out from the redistribution solution.


EU also proposed its members to take in around 20,000 refugees at the same time. The list of host countries included also Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom. Slovakia was supposed to accept 319 individuals.4

Turkey, as the largest host of refugees, has received about €3bn from the EU to stem the flow of migrants.5

Macedonia, as the other route to EU, controls strictly the documents of all refugees at the frontiers with the help of officers from Slovenia, Hungary, Croatia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Serbia and allows only Syrians, Iraqi and Afghan to pass the border (Fig. 1).6

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates that more than 1,011,700 migrants arrived by sea in 2015, and almost 34,900 by land. For comparison, in the year 2014 the whole number of arrivals by land and sea was 280,000. The figures do not include those who got in undetected.

The EU's external border force, Frontex, monitored different routes migrants used and numbers arriving at Europe’s borders and put the figure crossing into Europe in 2015 at more than 1,800,000. Most of those heading for Greece take a relatively short voyage from Turkey to the islands of Kos, Chios, Lesvos and Samos - often in flimsy rubber dinghies or small wooden boats.

Fig. 1 Main migrant route to Germany


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3. LEGAL ENTRY

The application of quotas for redistribution mechanism is in accordance with the European Union primary law which includes establishing treaties. It is an emergency reaction to the acute and serious situation in the southern EU states carrying this burden. This is historically the first activation of this mechanism (Article 78, paragraph 3, Treaty on European Union, amended by Lisbon Treaty). The matter of quotas was supposed to be a subject of Summit on 22\textsuperscript{nd} September 2015 head by top EU politicians. The Slovak Republic absolutely disagreed with the principle of mandatory quotas and preferred voluntariness. The government also opposes that Slovakia was not migrants’ top destination to claim asylum.

The quotas proposal was criticised by Czech minister of foreign affairs as well as by Slovak prime minister. Their legal opinion is that the decision to issue an asylum would be suddenly taken from a sovereign state and passed to another subject. It would be in discord with elementar principles that are supposed to be respected. As we are taking responsibility for accepting someone to our territory we should know who the acceptant really is – his background etc.

The conflict in Syria continues to be by far the biggest driver of migration. But the ongoing violence in Afghanistan and Iraq, abuses in Eritrea, as well as poverty in Kosovo, are also leading people to look for new live elsewhere.

![Fig. 2 Top 10 origins of people applying for asylum in the EU](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34131911)
Although not all of those arriving in Europe choose to claim asylum, many do. Germany received the highest number of new asylum applications in 2015, which was more than 476,000.

But far more people have arrived in the country - German officials said that more than a million had been counted in Germany's "EASY" system for counting and distributing people before they claim asylum.

Hungary was the second country with the most asylum applications, as more migrants have tried to make the journey overland through Greece and the Western Balkans. It has had 177,130 applications by the end of December.
Apart from European Union law, there is also a National one. The constitution (constitutional law) of the Slovak Republic includes article dealing with security. It is defined as the state of peace and security, time when democratic order is followed as well as sovereignty, territorial unity, elementary human rights and liberties and people’s lives, health and property and environment is protected.

Over the last several decades, 142 states have signed onto both the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 protocol. “Since, by definition, refugees are not protected by their own governments, the international community steps in to ensure they are safe and protected,” said the UNHCR, the United Nations’ refugee agency.

The treaty was amended in 1967, in part to include refugees from around the world.

And according to the provisions, “refugees deserve, as a minimum, the same standards of treatment enjoyed by other foreign nationals in a given country and, in many cases, the same treatment as nationals,” the UNHCR said.7

4. THREAT OF VIOLATION OF BASIC STATE INTERESTS

One of the most important state interests is to be preserved. This is not in accordance with phenomena such as terrorism. Even NATO general secretary Jens Stoltenberg underlines the importance of checking up immigrants’ backgrounds as the attempts of terrorists to infiltrate between asylum-seekers or refugees is very probable.

Ministry of the Interior together with intelligence agencies should reexamine these people. A kind of security scan shall be carried out. They should get utterance from incoming people, comparing them with the information from the countries of origin, non-governmental organisations (such as Amnesty International) or sources of their own. The interrogation is very detailed and time consuming and the question is whether it is evincible to follow this difficult procedure inspecting so many people.

Recently a piece of news on infiltration of IS members between refugees in Germany have been announced. One refugee living in asylum centre was under interrogation of German authorities in Brandenburg. Authorities have analysed several of suspect’s photos which turned out to be false or photomontaged. However, intelligence agencies usually do not launch every piece of information they have so we may only assume.

Slovak Republic secret service gives opinion during asylum procedure if necessary and if asked, however this opinion is not binding and relevant authorities do not have to take it into consideration. The Intelligence service has confirmed that the threat of IS members occurrence has recently increased. We are neither a transit country yet.8 Our neighbour Hungary has erected a fence at the Serbian border to help control the flow of migrants

(Fig.4). Moreover, nowadays crossing this fence became violation of Hungarian criminal law and the authorities will act against them.

![Fig. 4 The fence at the Hungarian-Serbian border](http://www.lefigaro.fr/international/2015/08/26/01003-20150826ARTFIG00276-migrants-la-hongrie-prepare-des-mesures-d-exception.php)

4.1 THREAT OF EXTREMISM AND CRIMINALITY

It is true that one can never predict someone’s behaviour in the future. If they are still kept excluded from the society, the signs of discontentment, hatred to the majority and extreme opinions might occur. Even on the contrary, extremists in host countries might become threat for the immigrants as well.

The biggest challenge for security system is a contradiction between the public feeling of safety and the complexity and unpredictability of risks. These risks are there for a long time and they just reflect the evolution of society. They are more diverse, sometimes less visible and often unpredictable.  

There were cases in Paris in 2005 and in London in 2011 when the street riots grew into serious security problem and criminality reached its top level.

Moreover, German neo-Nazi protesters clashed with police at new migrant shelter near Dresden. No such thing has happened in Slovakia yet, even though a sense of disapproval with taking refugees is present.

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9 Majchút, I. Slovak point of view at the aspects of security p. 38.

4.2 Threat of Spreading Diseases

Many people oppose that refugees unconditionally suffer from exotic diseases, many of them incurable and contagious. The curability is low and expenses high because they are not familiar with vaccination. In fact, during their transit via Hungary many of them were suffering from diarrhoea, cold and exhaustion.

4.3 Treat of Violation of Cultural Identity

Most people coming from northern Africa and Middle East are muslims and that is the reason why nations with christian tradition refuse them. In addition, it is claimed that their language is very different from European languages. As I have mentioned, many of them come from former colonies so it is probable to adapt easier if they really wanted to.

Polish government decided to resolve the problem quite easily. Poland is ready to take christian Syrian refugees.

Moreover, part of the European culture claims a free movement within EU states, but nowadays several EU member states reestablished controls on the frontiers, which is not a threat rather a discomfort, but Europeans got used to this Schengen benefit.

CONCLUSION

The solutions proposed are not absolutely binding for now, as many other circumstances shall become real and this is not actual yet.

Quota mechanism was objected and even refused by many member states, moreover the quota numbers were just proposals. The problem should be solved in Syria and other third world countries to ensure their citizens better outlooks for the future in their home countries.

Threat of criminality is quite high as so many people, lots of them illiterated, will not be able to employ themselves and provide their families with life standard they were looking for within the European economy as its social benefits have limits. People who are hungry are told to do everything possible to satisfy their needs including criminal acts. However, it’s claimed that high number of refugees come from middle class so prejudice might be unreasonable but the question is whether people of different cultural background will accept the rules of host countries. Many of them are economic migrants, not refugees. Moreover, threat of terrorists coming to the EU has increased.

So as I have proved that it is necessary to diversify people who are migrating due to political persecutions, those who want to integrate into the society of a host country and those trying to misuse social system or hospitality in general.

A piece of good news is that European Union declares to give contribution of 6,000 Euros per every asylum-seeker to make their socialisation even more easier.

Time will prove what solution is the best but the idea of multiculturalism has been claimed to be a failure by German chancellor Angela Merkel and British prime minister...
David Cameron. As Germany received the highest number of new asylum applications in 2015, with more than 476,000, we can only guess what Germans will do later on.

Although many restrictions to prevent illegal migration have been introduced, new lines and routes to Europe are about to be used.

BIBLIOGRAPHY