

MIGRATIONS – CROSS-BORDER THREAT TO SAFETY OR CHALLENGE FOR THE MEMBERS STATES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION?*

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Abstract:

The article presents the issue of migration movements in the context of chances for and threats to the European Union. Due to the migration crisis of recent years and the resultant uncontrolled wave of migrants coming to the European countries, migrations have become an important element of social and economic reflections both on the domestic and international scale. The goal of the article was to present the threats and potential advantages that might stem from the presence of migrants and the occurrence of migration in the European Union states. The article is of general character and constitutes a synthesis of contents presented so far by the researchers of the migration phenomena along with the conclusions drawn by the author.

Keywords: Migrations, advantages, threats, European Union, cross-border threats

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Introduction

"Migration is a process, not a problem"

William L. Swing

Movement has been a companion of mankind since the dawn of times. At the beginning humans were nomadic, so travelling was a part of their nature. When the human beings decided to abandon such a lifestyle in favour of settlements, it soon turned out that further movement was necessary to settle down within new territories and improve a broadly-understood quality of life. Nowadays, in the era of dynamically changing world where, on the one hand, we constantly have to deal with growing disproportions between specific countries, conflicts in numerous states, the issue of ensuring basic living conditions and, on the second hand, with globalisation, digitalisation of large parts of the world, disappearing borders and considerable ease in crossing large distances, migration movements, both the voluntary and forced ones, are still a common occurrence. Over the last years, at the times of the migration crisis, this occurrence intensified to the extent making states and institutions take it up as one of the most frequent issues to discuss on an international forum.

The goal of this article is to *specify the potential advantages for and threats to the Member States of the European Union posed by migration*. The article is of a general character and constitutes a synthesis of contents available in the source literature, along with the conclusions drawn by the author. The main issue was formulated as the following question: *do potential advantages for and threats to the Member States arise from migration and, if so, what are they?* In the further part of the paper, the author attempts to answer the formulated question analysing the issue from the perspective of potential advantages for and threats to the European Union arising from migration movements.

Migrations in the European Union in theoretical perspective

The term *migration* comes from the Latin word *migratio* meaning wandering (away). According to Władysław Kopaliński this term means *relocation, wandering population*¹. Wielka Encyklopedia Powszechna PWN

¹ Władysław Kopaliński, *Słownik wyrazów obcych i zwrotów obcojęzycznych*, Issue XVI extended, Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Wiedza Powszechna, 1989, p. 332.

defines migration as *a wandering or movement of population being a form of spatial mobility meaning territorial resettlements associated with a relatively permanent change of settlement location*². In the eyes of the International Organization for Migration, migration [...] is *a population movement, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes; it includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants, and persons moving for other purposes, including family reunification*.³

Paweł Lubiewski stresses that migration means the massive-scale wandering, relocation of population within the specific country or between different countries to change the place of stay permanently or for a specific period of time, as a result of political, ethnical, religious or economic factors⁴ – pointing out a variety of factors that may cause migration movements, which are the causes for migration as a matter of fact. For instance, Justyna Frelak, in her study *Dlaczego wyjechali, czy wrócą? Wyniki sondażu internetowego* (Why they have left? Are they coming back? Results of the Internet poll) analyses the reasons behind the Poles migrating to the Western Europe.⁵ According to the results of her studies, the most frequently stated reasons for migration include higher income, acquiring new experience and language, political situation in Poland, lack of job posts suitable for education, no possibility to develop professional career⁶. Therefore, as results from the presented study results the most frequent cause of the Poles' emigration is the economic factor. Nevertheless, the group of respondents mostly included young people, with good educational background and with occupational experience⁷ – so based on the obtained results, it cannot be clearly stated that the economic factor was dominant among the Polish immigrants.

² *Wielka Encyklopedia Powszechna PWN*, Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2003, Volume 4, p. 407.

³ *Migration*, International Organization for Migration, [<http://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>], 2 February 2018.

⁴ Paweł Lubiewski, *Nielegalna imigracja. Zagrożenia bezpieczeństwa, część I*, Szczytno: Wyższa Szkoła Policji w Szczytnie (Police Academy in Szczytno), 2016, p. 13.

⁵ Justyna Frelak, "Dlaczego wyjechali, czy wrócą? Wyniki sondażu internetowego", in Lena Kolarska-Bobińska (ed.), *Emigrować i wracać. Migracje zarobkowe Polaków a polityka Państwa*, Warsaw: Instytut Spraw Publicznych, 2007, pp. 83–94.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 86.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 85.

Currently, in the era of globalisation and relatively easy access to worldwide information, we hear of migration resulting from world curiosity, willingness to learn about other cultures more and more often, we may even speak of “migration being in fashion” – thus we may state that the cultural and social factor is prevalent. Whereas the migration crisis, understood as uncontrolled influx of immigrants mostly from east and south, outside the European Union, is rooted not only in willingness to improve the quality of life, but survival in general. Only after ensuring the basic need of safety, the migrants pursue economic improvement of living conditions in their country of migration. Therefore, the reasons for migration movement are complex and multi-faceted, making it difficult to single out one specific factor causing the immigrants to visit other countries.

Multitude and ambiguity of *migration* definition result from the fact that this occurrence is investigated into by researchers from many areas and spheres of science, such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, cultural studies, social studies and other. Each of the researchers sees the migration from the perspective of her/his own study discipline. All the ways of perceiving the migration are brought together by the nature of the phenomenon –the movement, translocation of people. On the global scale, this movement leads to change of residence countries, resulting in mixing of nationalities, cultures, societies. Europe has felt the results of such movements particularly strong over the last couple of years.

Professor Nikolaos Zahariadis, in his article *Migrexite and its Consequences for the European Union*⁸ pointed out a specific paradox of the migration crisis: the migration crisis has brought to the surface fissures tearing the EU apart and at the same time bringing Member States closer together.⁹

Professor Nikolaos Zahariadis based his studies on the situation of two European countries where the migration crisis is felt mostly – Greece and Italy. In the part titled “Quo Vadis Europe?” the author posed three noteworthy questions:

⁸ Nikolaos Zahariadis, “Migrexite and its Consequences for the European Union in European Policy Analysis” in *Contemporary Issues of Policy-Making across Europe*, Volume 3, Issue 1, Spring 2017, pp. 11-19.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 11.

- 1) Are the Member States able to deal with the consequences of growing xenophobia and racism?
- 2) Are the Member States able to solve the safety problems caused by illegal migration properly?
- 3) Do the Member States safeguard and integrate the visitors properly?¹⁰

According to Nikolaos Zahariadis, the Member States of the European Union still devote too little attention to those issues.

Additionally, the author expresses his concern about solidarity of the EU states in the sphere of nationalistic parties gaining power¹¹. He also points out that the asylum system of the EU, according to the Dublin II Regulation, turned out insufficient to deal with the crisis (due to a vast number of people seeking asylum), which resulted in temporary return of periodically recurring border checks in Poland, Hungary and Slovenia starting from 2015 and the governments of France, Malta, Germany, Austria, Denmark, Sweden and Norway still conducting such checks.¹² At the same time, the author stresses that the migration crisis is possible to be transformed into a positive scenario – however, for this to happen, society's perception of immigrants needs to change – a short-term perspective needs to give way to the long-term one, and focus should shift from immediate losses to possible future gains. This conviction was used by the author of this paper as a basis for further considerations of perceiving migration in the context of threats, but also possible benefits.

Migration crisis in Europe – an overview of current state of studies

Undoubtedly, intensified migration movements present a challenge for the European Union and are a subject of many discussions on an international scene. Because of the cultural and social differences brought in along with the immigrants, migrations may cause unrest among native citizens and in their massive, uncontrolled form they can be a source of real threats for countries. Following the migration crisis dating back to the mid second decade of the 21st century, the social opinion in many European

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 17.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 18.

¹² *Ibidem*, pp. 18-19.

countries has grown significantly radicalised, marking the migration with negative undertones and the migrants themselves have become unwelcomed for many Europeans. In the Member States of the European Union and around the globe radical, right-winged parties with their anti-immigrant programmes started to gain momentum. These parties began to accumulate more and more support from their electorate, especially among the older persons and among the ones with lesser educational background.

In November 2016 a report was published titled *Attitudes towards Immigration and their Antecedents: Topline Results from Round 7 of the European Social Survey*¹³ by the European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ESS ERIC). The 7th edition of the report includes the studies carried out in 2014 and is a certain comparison with the report of 2002, but taking account of the new social circumstances and changes occurring between subsequent editions of the studies. Therefore, the 7th edition study was expanded with the most recent issues associated with social perception of migration movements.¹⁴ As stated by the Director of ESS ERIC Rory Fitzgerald, 7th edition of the *European Social Survey Topline Results* report emphasises one of the most frequent subjects of researchers' analyses – the attitude of European communities to the issue of migration¹⁵.

As results from the report, the bodies of the European Union decide that the Member States are to accept the immigrants according to political decisions, while the Member States' communities are not clearly in favour of such decisions. The report might be seen as an attempt to find an answer to the question: why the European Union decides to accept massive amounts of immigrants within its borders, while the Member States reached no consensus as to the conditions of accepting the immigrants. It is therefore worth to consider whether the European Union's policy and the sense that the Member States' communities have little effect on the decision to adopt such a migration policy could have affected the public image of migration and, resultantly, resound negatively among the society when it comes to attitudes towards the immigrants?

¹³ *Attitudes towards Immigration and their Antecedents: Topline Results from Round 7 of the European Social Survey*, London: European Social Survey ERIC, Issue 7, 2016, [https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/docs/findings/ESS7_toplines_issue_7_immigration.pdf], 2 February 2018.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 3.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 2.

As a consequence of the conference in the European Parliament on 19.06.2017, based on the 7th edition of the European Social Survey and in agreement with the Migration Policy Group a post-conference paper was drawn up titled *Attitudes towards immigration in Europe: myths and realities*¹⁶, summing up the current trends among the European states in perceiving the issue of immigration. The authors of the publication search for the dependencies between the migration policy of the countries and the public opinion on immigration. They ask the question whether the immigration policy determines public opinion or it is rather the consequence of public opinion and, straight away, they stress that there are no conclusive scientific proofs that one of the factors is more dominant than the other – therefore, they propose defining the dependencies between public opinion and immigration policy as a circle¹⁷. The policy-opinion circle also shows a two-direction feedback, so the public opinion affects the immigrant policy in the European states, thus, the immigrant policy applied by a country shapes the opinion of its citizens. According to this assumption more integration-oriented policy applied by a state evokes more positive social opinion. However, the authors point out that there is still no uniform empirical method that would allow to research into this phenomenon in various countries. Different scientific studies use variable indicators of the migrants level of integration¹⁸, which makes it difficult to draw up conclusions reflective of the phenomenon in its entirety.

The authors of the publication *Attitudes towards immigration in Europe: myths and realities* also underline a strong polarisation of opinions among the Member States' societies¹⁹. Rob Ford claims that the citizens of the European Union Member States have the tendency of turning to extremities in their opinions on migrations. This division is based on such variables as age, education, social class and certain migration heritage background. He thinks that an extremely positive attitude to migrants is displayed by young people, with good education, coming from middle class, with migrants, for instance,

¹⁶ *Attitudes towards immigration in Europe: myths and realities, conference proceedings, European Parliament, 2017,*
[https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/docs/findings/IE_Handout_FINAL.pdf], 12 February 2018.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 4.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 6.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 10.

among their ancestors. Contrastively, the most negative opinions are expressed by the elderly, with worse education, coming from lower social strata²⁰.

The report by Uuriintuya Batsaikhan, Zsolt Darvas and Inês Goncalves Raposo, *People on the move: migration and mobility in the European Union*²¹, created as a part of Bruegel think tank, is also noteworthy. The report includes an analysis aimed at investigating into popular beliefs and opinions of the European Union regarding migration and comparing them with the facts. The report presents the demographical data, statistics regarding migration as well as beliefs and opinions concerning this occurrence. It shows that among the most significant issues the European Union immigration, just next to terrorism, is currently the most crucial problem²². Interestingly, unemployment, economic situation or financial policy of the Member states in 2017 were far less frequently pointed out by the respondents. The situation has changed dramatically over the last couple of years – even in 2011 the greatest problem of the European Union indicated by the respondents was the economic situation²³. The authors of the report also emphasise global tendencies regarding the social perception of the migration. In comparison with other continents – Africa, North America, Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as Oceania, the respondents of the European Union claimed that it is necessary to lower the number of immigrants most often – such an answer was provided by 49% of the respondents from the European Union, whereas only 8% of the surveyed stated that a number of migrants in the European Union should grow²⁴. Interestingly, it is yet another report where the authors point to the fact that negative opinions on the migrant's presence are expressed mostly by the elderly, less educated persons and individuals from the countries with high unemployment rate. The persons with higher education and the younger ones (up to the age of 54) show more positive attitude towards migrants. The authors of the reports also investigated into public opinion on the matter of immigration depending on

²⁰ *Ibidem*.

²¹ Uuriintuya Batsaikhan, Zsolt Darvas, Inês Concalves Raposo, *People on the move: migration and mobility in the European Union*, Brussels: Bruegel, 2014 [http://bruegel.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/People_on_the_move_ONLINE.pdf], 1 March 2018.

²² *Ibidem*, p. 23.

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 24.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 25.

the country of immigrants' origin – it turned out that the respondents are more often positive about the immigrants being the citizens of other European Union countries. The immigrants outside the European Union are perceived decisively more negatively among the EU societies²⁵.

The report *People on the move: migration and mobility in the European Union* also attempted to answer how the citizens of specific, selected states of the European Union assess the manner the Union deals with the migration crisis. As a part of the studies conducted for the needs of the report the respondents were asked the following question “Do you approve/disapprove of the way the European Union is dealing with the refugee crisis?”²⁶ According to the obtained results the states which are critical of activities of the European Union with reference to the migration crisis to the largest extent include Greece (90%) and Italy (80%). These are the countries suffering the most from the economic crisis of the last couple of years. The obtained results allowed to hypothesise that the states disapprove of the European Union supporting migrants due to the sense of injustice done to them, which is allocation of insufficient EU funds for aid in the economic crisis. The high percentage of answers indicating no support for the activities of the European Union was also recorded among the respondents from such countries as Hungary (66%) or Poland (65%) – the countries mostly known from promoting anti-immigration attitudes.

Over the last couple of years these states struggled with the issue of sanctions placed by the European Union as a result of refusal to accept the immigrants.

Starting from 2000, the International Organisation for Migration publishes the report with comprehensive outlook upon the current migration situation around the globe along with the most recent migration problems every 2-3 years on average. The goal of reports created by IOM is to provide a better understanding of the migration issue by the politicians, scientists and broadly-understood public opinion. The latest publication by IOM *World Migration report 2018* deals with an interesting issue of shaping the public opinion on migration by the media.²⁷ The authors provide an example of the

²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 28.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 35.

²⁷ International Organization for Migration, *World migration report 2018*, Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2018,

opinion poll conducted in Europe and the United States showing that the persons with knowledge about the exact number of migrants (some of the surveyed persons were provided with such information by the researchers) think that their country is overpopulated with immigrants less frequent. The citizens who were not given the information on the exact number of citizens in their country spoke in favour of decreasing this number.²⁸ It is yet another study showing how volatile is the public opinion on migration and how easily it may be influenced by external factors.

The quoted examples of studies, reports and scientific publications indicate that in the migration crisis, in addition to the presented issue in the form of uncontrolled influx of migrants, the greatest problem is posed by the social opinion in the European Union states. The European community is becoming more and more radical, and media contents deprived of thorough verification and misguided, additionally cause the citizens to assume increasingly negative attitudes towards the migrants. Therefore, the basis for creating a new migration policy by the governments of the Member States and the EU bodies should be formed by an educated society, aware both of threats and potential benefits resulting from migration movements.

Threats resulting from migration movements

The European Union was formed as an institution aimed at associating and bringing together the countries of the modern Europe.

However, in the course of years it turned out that in addition to many opportunities and advantages that it offers its Member States, the European Union also has to face numerous problems and threats, both the internal and external ones. In the era of dynamically transforming world, the social, political and economic crises are also reflected in the functioning of the European Union. In 2017 the uncontrolled influx of migrants to Europe became an issue so serious that working over its solution, and improving external borders safety at the same time, became one of the legislative priorities of the European Union for that year.²⁹

[https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2018_en.pdf], 1 March 2018.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 199-200.

²⁹ Marta Przeor, "Poprawa bezpieczeństwa granic w świetle priorytetów legislacyjnych Unii Europejskiej na 2017 rok" in *Zeszyty Naukowe Obronność*, Warsaw: War Studies Academy, 2017, 1(21)/2017, pp. 125-141.

Threats associated with migration movements may be of variable character and can be considered multi-facetiously; they can also concern different entities, which may include threats for accepting states, threats for emigration states. Threats for the society and the migrants themselves. In this article the author focuses on migrations as the cross-border threat for the Member States of the European Union, therefore, it will be justifiable to further on investigate into the threats resulting from the migration movements through the lenses of two entities: the union states as the states of migration and the societies forming these states. It is also worth to consider the international consequences of the migration movements, posing a threat to the European Union as a whole. Due to the character of threats, the author of this article suggests a division into social, demographic, economic and cultural threats. The author finds such a breakdown as the most exhaustive one as far as the issue of the most current threats associated with migration movements is concerned.

The social threats are those directly affecting the standard and quality of social life and, in more detailed terms, causing such social problems as poverty, diseases and such psycho-social problems as marginalisation of certain groups and social exclusion. In broader context, the social threats may concern not only the citizens of specific countries but the European Union in its entirety. As results from the most recent analyses and reports concerning migration, the social threats are the most problematic area, mostly due to their character, which is not fully structured yet, and due to their dynamic changeability – the manner of perceiving migration issues by the society is changing rapidly and, as mentioned in the publication *Attitudes towards immigration in Europe: myths and realities*,³⁰ it affects the policy of the Member States of the European Union. The most frequently occurring social threats include:

- Social divisions stemming from attitudes of the citizens towards immigrants (division among people showing a positive attitude to immigrants and those who oppose their presence) that may lead to social tensions and, as a consequence, to protests or riots.

³⁰ *Attitudes towards immigration in Europe: myths and realities, conference proceedings*, European Parliament, 2017, p. 4, [https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/docs/findings/IE_Handout_FINAL.pdf], 12 February 2018.

- Increase in crime, both committed by the migrants and the crimes committed by the citizens of accepting states in relation with migration movements.
- Crimes with ethnic background.
- Pluralistic society may lead to decreased sense of national unity.
- Forming of immigrant ghettos and diasporas.
- Large ethnical and racial differentiation.
- Negative patterns of behaviour adopted from less developed countries.
- Social inequalities, marginalisation of migrants, natives viewing them as people of worse sort, e.g. because of lack of language knowledge.
- Occurrence of social pathologies.

The demographic threats are all the factors exerting a negative impact on social structure. In the case of the migration crisis, the most frequently mentioned demographic problem is the overpopulation of Europe, both due to excessive number of influx population and increase in birth rates in European countries as a result the European citizens engaging in relationships with the immigrants.

The economic threats have a negative effect on the functioning of national economy. They are as follows:

- Assigning funds from the European Union to aid the immigrants, which bring in negative effects, not only the economic ones, in the form of cash loss (immigrants try to provide financial aid to the families staying at their homelands), but also the social ones, in the form of increasingly negative perception of migration policy among the citizens of the European Union.
- Labour market segmentation.

The social threats are the factors leading to vanishing of cultural identity, merging of cultures, adopting negative cultural patterns from the foreigners. The most often cultural threats include:

- Religious conflicts and excessive influx of foreign religion, which is especially evident in the case of Muslim population influx to the European countries with Christian background.
- Conflicts between the ethnical groups.
- Excessive development of mass culture.
- Diffusion of cultures and the resultant diminishing of cultural identity.

- Problems with acculturation of immigrants.
- Lack of respect to cultural values of other nationalities and the resultant conflicts between the natives and the immigrants.

The problem of illegal migration poses a particular threat to the European Union. It has gained momentum over the last couple of years due to the migration crisis and the issue is especially noticeable in the countries with the external European Union borders, such as Poland.

The European Border and Coast Guard FRONTEX publishes the quarterly reports concerning illegal migrations within the European Union on regular basis. Additionally, every year FRONTEX presents a detailed analysis of risk. The latest publication Risk Analysis for 2018³¹ includes the summary of illegal migrations in 2017, especially considering the external borders of the European Union and the forecast for 2018. The tendencies are optimistic – in 2017 a total number of revealed cases of illegal migrations at the external European Union borders dropped down significantly – in comparison to 2016 a 60% decrease was reported, and when compared to the peak of 2015, the decrease was 89%³². As a result, the number of illegal migrations in 2017 was the lowest one since 2014, i.e. since the moment the crisis erupted. However, the analytics of FRONTEX stress that these numbers are still significantly larger than the periods before the migration crisis. Despite the fact that the illegal migrations intensity decreased, it still poses a real threat to the European Union.

The threats presented by the author of this publication are merely an introduction to considering the migration movements in the context of the European Union member States' safety. As it has been already mentioned above, migrations are a dynamically volatile occurrence, which makes it impossible to precisely define a set of their accompanying threats.

It needs to be remembered that only a thorough tracking of the current threats resulting from the migration movement can be kept at the level acceptable for the European societies.

³¹ European Border And Coast Agency (FRONTEX), *Risk Analysis for 2018*, Warsaw: FRONTEX, 2018, [http://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/Risk_Analysis_for_2018.pdf], 1 March 2018.

³² *Ibidem*, p. 8.

Migrations as a challenge to the European Union – potential advantages stemming from the migration movements

In the political debates, both at the national and international level, migration has begun to be referred to as a problem and a threat, not a challenge that should be a stimulus for development of the European societies. Yet, the migration movements, both the influx and the outflow ones, may also bring potential benefits for the European Union societies, at the national level and at the level of the whole European Union as a community.

Potential benefits resulting from the migration movements need to be considered assuming many perspectives. Firstly a division criterion needs to be applied – for example Jarosław Oczki, in his article *Migracyjne efekty integracji Polski z Unią Europejską (Migration Effects of Integration of Poland with the European Union)*, made a division into potential advantages obtained in an emigration country by immigrants, companies and society, and into potential advantages for an immigration country obtained by particular citizens of the immigration country, companies, society³³. The potential advantages for the emigration country mentioned by the author are as follows:

- For immigrants: employment, higher income, training and education, getting to know a new culture, meeting new people.
- For companies: skills of returning emigrants, additional revenue of communication and transport companies.
- For society: lower unemployment rate, knowledge and skills of the returning population, establishing international communities, money transfers from abroad, reducing the pressure exerted by a number of population³⁴.

As far as potential advantages obtained by the immigration country are concerned the author mentions:

- For specific citizens of an immigration country: services allowing women to engage in professional activity, cheaper goods and services, possibility to get promoted for managerial posts, enrichment of cultural life, acquiring knowledge on other countries.

³³ Jarosław Oczki, „Migracyjne efekty integracji Polski z Unią Europejską” in *Rynek Pracy*, no. 4, 2002, pp. 124-125.

³⁴ *Ibidem*.

- For companies: supplementation of manpower insufficiencies, availability of cheaper and more flexible employees, bigger ready market and using economies of scale.
- For society: lower inflation, educated individuals, more varied and energetic society, capital invested by the immigrants, additional tax income from young employees, society getting younger.³⁵

However, it is necessary to point out that Jarosław Oczki came up with this division in 2002, in times of different social and political conditions, and most of all, before Poland joined the European Union, and in times before the migration crisis, when international-scale travelling of migrants was significantly less intensified and better controlled. Due to its dynamic volatility, migration is not only evolutionary in nature, but even downright revolutionary, and the factors considered as potential benefits in the past may today be viewed as threats. At the same time, the migration threats may bring both objective and subjective perception of effects, and assessment of specific migration effects may be affected by personal beliefs of a given researcher of the occurrence, as well as the traits characteristic to a specific field of science represented by a researcher.

In light of the above, the author of this paper suggest a more universal division of potential advantages, converging with the division of threats resulting from migration movements and associated with spheres of social life impacted by specific consequences. Considering the contents of previously quoted reports and analyses, the potential advantages from the migration movements may be divided into the advantages of social, demographic, economic and cultural character.

The social advantages allow better integration and broadly-defined development of a society, they also lead to decreasing a number of social pathologies. The potential social benefits include:

- Blurring of level-based structure of society due to the immigrants' presence.
- Educational function, especially for the youngest generations. Presence of the migrants who do not show negative behaviour allows the natives to gain a better understanding of other nationalities and to accept them.

³⁵ *Ibidem.*

The demographic advantages are those which exert a positive effect on the demographic structure of a state. Due to unfavourable demographic tendencies in most of the European countries over the last couple of years, the potential demographic advantages are especially significant for development of the European Union states. These are as follows:

- Possibility of rejuvenating the ageing European societies by influx of citizens at productive age.
- Equalising gender proportions.
- State urbanisation.
- Increase in population – conditioned by a regulated influx of immigrants, to avoid Europe overpopulation.
- Influx of qualified persons, also leading to economic benefits.

The economic benefits are all the factors exerting a positive impact on the functioning of national economy. These include:

- Immigrants filling up a gap on the labour market resulting from ageing societies.
- Influx of manpower.
- Increase of employees supply at the European Union labour market.
- The Brain Drain phenomenon – it is believed that some areas are lacking in specialists and the Brain Drain allows to obtain a fresh perspective and skills of employees outside the European Union.³⁶
- Influx of highly skilled specialists from various areas.
- Scientific, technical and technological progress due to broader perspectives is an example of a positive impact.
- Development of global labour market, especially in the case of free flux of manpower.
- Increase of demand for products and services, fuelling the national economy.

The cultural benefits lead to development and positive changes in a given country's culture, assuming that a cultural identity is preserved.

³⁶ *Brain drain*, European Commission [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/content/brain-drain_en], 8 March 2018.

These are the factors that culturally enrich a country, and at the same time, they do not negate its previous achievements and tradition. The main cultural advantages include:

- Expanding the thought horizons as a result of meeting new cultures.
- Shaping of new standards and values.
- Acquiring knowledge on other countries.
- Enrichment of cultural life.

The potential benefits quoted by the author brought in by the migration movements are only a collection of examples, not a closed set – they may change over time and depend from the current situation in the European countries. It is also noteworthy that migration from the countries outside the EU to the European Union territory should not be associated solely with the migration crisis. The migration movements, with their positive and negative effects, had been occurring a long time before the onset of migration crisis – what has changed over the last couple of years is their intensity. This change may lead to change in perceiving some of the consequences of the migration movements as threats or potential advantages; however, irrespective of a number of immigrants coming to the European states, it needs to be remembered that only the shaping of proper migration policy by the Member States and the EU institutions will help to arrive at the consensus at the crossroads between the unrest resulting from threats caused by the migration movements and the potential benefits that might be obtained by the European states due to the immigrants presence.

Conclusion

Attempting to answer the formulated issue question – *do potential advantages and threats to the Member States arise from migration and, if so, what are they?* – the author of this publication presented both the threats and the potential advantages that the migration movements may bring. Nowadays, considering dynamic social and economic changes in the European Union states, it is impossible to classify the migration movements as an occurrence that is clearly negative or positive. Despite numerous threats and still growing aversion towards visitors outside the European Union, we need to remember about the potential advantages that might result from migration.

We also need to consider significant volatility in perceiving possible results of the migration movements - what might initially seem to be a threat can turn out a potential advantage depending on the current social or political atmosphere.

The European Union immigration policy should thus be based on perception of migrants in a long-term perspective, accounting for possible threats and advantages that might be caused by the migration movements, especially the influx of population to the European Union. Skilfully shaped immigration policy should pursue an improvement of the manner the migrants are perceived by the European society and, most of all, it should treat the migration movements as a challenge which, given the right direction, will not be a threat but a stimulus for the European Union development.

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