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European Europe – The Migration Crisis of European Integration[1]

Abstract: *When joining the European integration project, countries declare that they accept the underlying common values and principles, including the principle of solidarity. The migration/refugee crisis has verified the attachment to these principles. As it had happened on many occasions throughout history, in times of crisis national tendencies and interests gain the upper hand and in some countries sensible public debate is replaced by calls for a fight for a European Europe. Poland is one of these countries.*

Keywords: migration, refugees, solidarity, nation state, Visegrad Group, Polish migration policy

Introduction

'If the EU did not exist, we would have to invent it today. Far from being a threat to national sovereignty at the beginning of the 21st century, the EU first makes it possible. In the world risk society, faced with the menacing aggregation of global problems that resist national solutions, nation states left to their own devices are powerless, incapable of exercising sovereignty. The pooled sovereignty of the EU provides the only hope

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for every nation and every citizen to live in freedom and peace'. These are the words of the German sociologist Ulrich Beck,[2] spoken in an interview for 'The Guardian' in 2009. But in the face of the migration/refugee crisis they seem as relevant as back then. The benefits from European integration to all Member States are so tangible and obvious that acting to the detriment of the European project by promoting nationalist sentiments in order to further one's goals in the internal political arena can be dangerous and irreversible.

1. Nation, nation state

Europe is a continent composed of nation states or ethnically diverse states with a single, central authority. They differ considerably because of their location, history and tradition. The mobility of the inhabitants of Europe resulting from the abolishment of border controls between individual EU Member States, lower transportation prices as well as accessibility of information due to the widespread availability of Internet access has weakened local ties but at the same time contributed to the formation of new communities and caused changes to state structures. In this context, can modern European countries still invoke national identity, shared tradition and values?

What we refer to as a nation is an ethnic and cultural community existing in a specific territory, developed on the basis of history and tradition, aware of its own identity, and often also sharing the same language and having one dominant religion.[3] According to this definition, national identity, the need to have a state, history and national culture are the most important nation-forming factors.

A nation is a community of ideas. The purpose of this ideology is to mobilise the largest possible part of the population, considered a nation, to defend its common interests. As the ideology spreads, national awareness starts to form, meaning a sense of belonging to a nation and feeling connected to it. Threats activate a mechanism of joint and involved action to defend it. The existence of such awareness results in the sense of national identity – the feeling of being different from other nations.

Most existing nations have formed independent states, mainly in the period of increasing nationalistic sentiments in the 18th and 19th centuries. A state should be considered a nation state when it is inhabited by the representatives of a single nation. Nowadays, however,

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[2] https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2009/apr/13/european-union-economic-crisis (last visited 20.12.2016).

[3] S. Kowalczyk, *Naród, państwo, Europa* (*Nation, State, Europe*), Radom 2003.

it is hard to find a demographically homogeneous state. Globalisation and migration contributed considerably to diversification of the societies inhabiting individual countries. The model of a state developed in a given territory, subject to historical changes and exercising sovereign authority over the citizens, based on common language and tradition, is becoming a thing of the past. The increasing economic and political interdependencies, the formation of state unions, regional communities, federations and confederations, international organisations and corporations has limited the capability of states to exercise their sovereign powers as they have ceded some of their competences to other actors of international relations. The domestic and international realities are so strongly intertwined, the movement of goods, services and people is so intense that the borders that states used to guard are becoming blurred.

We are therefore starting to speak of the nation as a relic, an anachronistic form in international relations, which is sinking into oblivion by decision of contemporary societies. But perhaps we should pay more attention to historical phenomena, which have shown many times that the significance of the nation state grows considerably in crisis situations and in the face of armed conflicts. In these circumstances, uniform nation states, oriented inwards, have repeatedly proven stronger and have provided a greater feeling of stability.

The experience of World War II, with critical evaluation of nation states' egoistic interests, pushed European countries towards integration in the 1950s. Already back then, politicians represented two different visions of European integration: federal and confederate. The former wanted a community equipped with supranational institutions, they were dreaming of a European government, of joint policies in various spheres, of transferring sovereign state competences to federal bodies (Paul-Henri Spaak, Konrad Adenauer, Alcide de Gasperi). The latter, in turn, spoke of a Europe of homelands, with common institutions limited to administrative and technical role, respecting the identity and sovereignty of the individual states and based on joint unanimous action of governments (Charles de Gaulle).

The debate on Europe of Homelands vs. Homeland Europe re-emerged at the turn of the millenniums. In 2000, in his speech backed by Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, German Minister of Foreign Affairs Joschka Fischer declared that the European Commission should become a strong government of Europe, the European Parliament should be dividing the EU budget and the EU Council of Ministers should become a 'Chamber of the States'; Brussels would be making decisions on the military and

foreign policy of the Union.[4] At the same time, French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin favoured a federation of nation states, the competences of the 'European government' being limited to decisions on the economic policy of the euro area, the European Commission having greater prerogatives but still within the traditional triangle: the Commission, the Council and the Parliament. Jospin advocated cooperation between the European Parliament and national parliaments, without excessively restricting their sovereignty. The media were emphasising at that time that Jospin had rejected Schröder's plan to increase the power of European bodies at the expense of the individual states, because in the process of European integration France had always been stressing the role of nations. Additionally, *Die Welt* pointed out that it was not possible to build a federal structure with Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic or Slovenia because these countries had fought hard to regain sovereignty just a decade before and would not part with it now.[5] Tony Blair, in turn, during his visit to Warsaw summed up the British position at the turn of the centuries as follows: 'Europe is a Europe of free, independent sovereign nations who choose to pool that sovereignty in pursuit of their own interests and the common good, achieving more together than we can achieve alone. The EU will remain a unique combination of the intergovernmental and the supranational. Such a Europe can, in its economic and political strength, be a superpower; a superpower, but not a superstate'.[6]

In March 2000, when the EU's Heads of State and Government met in Lisbon to discuss the strategy for the next 10 years, their main aim was to see European economy become the most competitive economy in the world, with constant growth due to the creation of more jobs and better use of the existing ones, increased social cohesion, growth of R&D investment, reduction of red tape and barriers to businesses.[7] In order to fulfil this goal, we need manpower as much as funds, and given the ageing of Europe this means we need migrants as well.

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[4] https://www.wprost.pl/15293/Europa-Ojczyzn-czy-Ojczyzna-Europa (last visited 9.02.2017).

[5] http://wiadomosci.wp.pl/kat,1356,title,Europejska-prasa-o-wystapieniu-Jospina, wid,174204,wiadomosc.html?ticaid=11898c (last visited 9.02.2017).

[6] http://www.jura.uni-bielefeld.de/lehrstuehle/mayer/dokumente/Palmowski_NE1_5_2007.pdf (last visited 9.02.2016); *Prime Minister's Speech to the Polish Stock Exchange*, 6.10.2000, http://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/address_given_by_tony_blair_to_the_polish_stock_exchange_warsaw_6_october_2000-en-f8c765d9-ad33-4ce3-bfbe-7dd6d01141d7.html (last visited 20.12.2016).

[7] W. Stankiewicz, *Rocznik Integracji Europejskiej*, No. 6/2012, Olsztyn, http://rie.amu.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/269-288.pdf (last visited 10.11.2014).

The members of the Communities had invited economic migrants much earlier – if not jointly then with the same intention. With the economic boom of the late 1950s and early 1960s, doors were opened to foreigners. As Max Frisch once very aptly said, 'We asked for workers. We got people instead'. These people were coming from countries culturally and mentally much different from where they arrived. The plan was that they would come, fill the gap in the demand for workforce, and once they perform their tasks they would return to their countries of origin. The migration policy of the 'old' EU Member States is a consequence of the influx of cheap foreign labour force, which in the 1960s and 1970s fuelled their booming economic growth. The immigration was not homogeneous in terms of origin, culture or religion, but it met the economic demands of that time. In the United Kingdom, these were migrants from former British colonies (India, Pakistan), in France, they came from North Africa (mainly Algeria), in Italy – from Morocco, in Germany – from Turkey. The influx of foreigners to these countries was much ahead of any reflection on how to find a place for them in the society. Temporary measures were implemented to provide *ad hoc* solutions to the emerging problems. But tensions and conflicts were growing, accumulating, and from time to time they would flare up uncontrollably; for instance, there were cases of setting fire to the homes of Turkish or Moroccan workers, attacks on migrants in schools and on the streets.

The European Union expanded to include 28 Member States, but it has not become more cohesive and homogeneous. This was shown, for example, by the votes on the constitution for Europe (with referendums against in France and the Netherlands[8]). After all, constitution is characteristic of a state, not of a European superstate. This and similar events have clearly shown the changing attitudes on the European political stage. The enlargement, as a result of which the countries of Central and Eastern Europe joined the Union, has also contributed to this situation by giving rise to intra-EU migrations. These, in turn, often met with a negative reaction of the societies in the 'old' Member States, which became much more sensitive to 'others', and the economic crisis further intensified this sentiment, as 'others' are perceived as a threat to local labour markets.

The deteriorating sentiments were also not much improved by Europe 2020, a strategy announced by President of the European Commission Jose Barroso in March 2010 with the aim of getting Europe out of

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[8] E. Kużelewska, *Proces ratyfikacji Traktatu ustanawiającego Konstytucję dla Europy i jego następstwa* (*The Ratification Process of the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe and its Consequences*), Warszawa 2011.

economic collapse. The strategy called for mobilisation and joint action to overcome the crisis. The economic development plan focused on innovation in research and promotion of environmentally friendly 'green' knowledge-based economy as well as on the development of human capital. This agenda should be implemented, again, jointly and for the common European good. Bureaucrats and officials in Brussels lost touch with the European reality and seem to have miJssed the signs that 'Europe was no longer on the road to superpower status, but that it faced an existential crisis'.[9]

And where have we arrived at a couple years later? We have a European Union that is suffering from the effects of the financial and euro crisis and the migration/refugee crisis, a Union startled by the British decision on Brexit. And national 'nightmares' are resurfacing.

2. Migration in the EU before the crisis

According to Eurostat, on 1 January 2015, 34.3 million people born outside the EU-28 were living in the EU Member States. The highest numbers of foreigners were living in Germany (7.5 million), the United Kingdom (5.4 million), Italy (5.0 million), Spain (4.5 million) and France (4.4 million).[10] Detailed information can be found in the table below.

It was therefore no longer a European Europe. What is more, the 'nation-based' societies of the Member States also form a very diverse melting pot, which has often been described as the source of the Community's strength. Many citizens of the Member States move within the Union in search for better living conditions, contributing added value to the host societies, this added value being very positively evaluated by local and central authorities. The 'national' hysteria about the migration/refugee crisis seems therefore to have a second side to it – gathering votes, the electorate being fed fear of migrants, to win elections.

For many years Europe had been perceived as a place friendly and open to migrants. Each year some four million new immigrants arrived, including some two million from outside the EU territory.[11] The Member States made numerous – albeit not very successful – attempts to develop a joint migration and asylum policy. In 1990, faced with a rising

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[9] W. Laqueur, *The Last Days of Europe: Epitaph for an Old Continent*, New York 2007, p. 15.

[10] http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Migration_and_migrant_population_statistics/pl (last visited 20.11.2016).

[11] *Kryzys i co dalej (The Crisis – And What Now?)*, "Biuletyn Migracyjny", No. 53, December 2015.

Table 1. Foreigner population by nationality

	Total		Citizens of another EU Member State		Citizens of a non-member country		Stateless	
	(thousands)	(% of the population)	(thousands)	(% of the population)	(thousands)	(% of the population)	(thousands)	(% of the population)
Belgium	1 300.5	11.6	857.1	7.6	442.8	3.9	0.7	0.0
Bulgaria	65.6	0.9	12.5	0.2	51.2	0.7	1.9	0.0
Czech Republic	457.3	4.3	184.3	1.7	273.0	2.6	0.0	0.0
Denmark	422.5	7.5	173.2	3.1	244.4	4.3	4.9	0.1
Germany	7 539.8	9.3	3 475.5	4.3	4 055.3	5.0	9.0	0.0
Estonia	191.3	14.6	7.9	0.6	183.4	14.0	0.0	0.0
Ireland	550.6	11.9	368.6	8.0	180.2	3.9	1.8	0.0
Greece	822.0	7.6	198.7	1.8	623.2	5.7	0.0	0.0
Spain	4 454.4	9.6	1 948.4	4.2	2 505.2	5.4	0.7	0.0
France	4 355.7	6.6	1 485.8	2.2	2 869.9	4.3	0.0	0.0
Croatia	36.7	0.9	11.7	0.3	24.2	0.6	0.8	0.0
Italy	5 014.4	8.2	1 491.9	2.5	3 521.8	5.8	0.7	0.0
Cyprus	144.6	17.1	106.4	12.6	38.2	4.5	0.0	0.0
Latvia	298.4	15.0	6.8	0.3	291.4	14.7	0.2	0.0
Lithuania	22.5	0.8	4.3	0.1	16.6	0.6	1.6	0.1
Luxembourg	258.7	45.9	222.2	39.5	36.4	6.5	0.0	0.0
Hungary	145.1	1.5	80.8	0.8	64.8	0.7	0.1	0.0
Malta	27.5	6.4	14.9	3.5	12.6	2.9	0.0	0.0
Netherlands	773.3	4.6	430.9	2.5	338.8	2.0	3.6	0.0
Austria	1 131.2	13.2	565.4	6.6	562.9	6.6	2.9	0.0
Poland	108.3	0.3	30.0	0.1	76.6	0.2	1.7	0.0
Portugal	395.2	3.8	100.4	1.0	294.8	2.8	0.0	0.0
Romania	88.8	0.4	33.8	0.2	54.7	0.3	0.3	0.0
Slovenia	101.5	4.9	17.2	0.8	84.4	4.1	0.0	0.0
Slovakia	61.8	1.1	47.2	0.9	13.1	0.2	1.5	0.0
Finland	218.8	4.0	90.2	1.6	127.8	2.3	0.8	0.0
Sweden	731.2	7.5	296.0	3.0	416.2	4.3	19.0	0.2
United Kingdom	5 422.1	8.4	2 988.1	4.6	2 434.0	3.8	0.0	0.0
Iceland	24.3	7.4	19.8	6.0	4.4	1.3	0.1	0.0
Liechtenstein	12.6	33.7	6.5	17.5	6.0	16.1	0.0	0.0
Norway	512.3	9.9	328.1	6.4	182.3	3.5	1.9	0.0
Switzerland	1 997.2	24.2	1 322.8	16.1	674.1	8.2	0.3	0.0

(¹) The values for the different categories of citizenship may not sum to the totals due to rounding.

Source: Eurostat (migr_pop1ctz).

tide of migration, the 'old' Member States signed the Dublin Convention (it entered into force in 1997), concerning the processing of asylum applications by the EU Member States, replaced in 2003 by the Dublin II Regulation and in 2013 by Dublin III. The Treaty of Amsterdam, which entered into force in 1999, moved issues related to migration, asylum and visas from the third to the first pillar of integration, which meant that it was 'Communitised', that EU institutions would take responsibility for managing this sphere. It also incorporated the provisions of the Schengen Agreement into the EU acquis. These provisions were also confirmed by the Treaty of Lisbon. The sensitive nature of this issue, however, caused an unexpected regression of integration. In 2013, the ministers of foreign affairs of EU Member States approved a reform of the Schengen system, admitting temporary controls on the Union's internal borders, as well as reforms of the European asylum policy. Border controls can be restored periodically in extraordinary circumstances (such as a threat to national security) for a period of no longer than 10 days and only upon consent of the European Commission. A considerable surge of migration was not deemed a threat to internal security.[12] The amendment to the Schengen Agreement in the face of the mass influx of refugees opened the floodgates and now the Member States may restore border control for a period of up to three months without Commission's approval.

The Arab Spring, which has swept through Arab countries starting from 2011, caused an exodus of millions of people inhabiting that region. The migrants moved first to neighbouring countries and later to Europe. It is not the purpose of this article to conduct an analysis of the reasons behind these events; it is necessary, however, to highlight the fights that were at their core: for human rights (Tunisia, Egypt, Syria), against corruption (Tunisia, Egypt), for improvement of living conditions (Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria), for liberalisation of the political system (Libya, Yemen, Syria), or motivated by ethnic (Libya, Yemen) and religious (Bahrain, Syria) differences. The simultaneous rising of these movements was possible due to broad use of the Internet and social media for communication, which also made it possible to learn about life in other parts of the world and awakened the desire to move there.[13]

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[12] https://www.stratfor.com/analysis/europe-rethinks-schengen-agreement (last visited 20.12.2016).

[13] For more see: *Dwa lata Arabskiej Wiosny – próba bilansu* (*Two Years of the Arab Spring – Towards an Assessment*), Report of Amicus Europae Foundation, Warszawa 2013; *Arabska wiosna w Afryce Północnej* (*The Arab Spring in Northern Africa*), E. Szczepankiewicz-Rudzka (ed.), Kraków 2014.

It is generally agreed that the migration crisis began in 2015, when more than 1.2 million applications for asylum were filed in the EU Member States.[14] According to UNHCR data, the migrants who came to Europe in 2015 were mainly Syrian nationals (49%), followed by Afghans (21%) and Iraqis (8%). The most numerous applications for asylum were filed in Germany (476,000), followed by Sweden, Austria and Hungary.[15]

In May 2015, the European Commission announced the European Agenda on Migration.[16] High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini said back then: 'With this bold agenda, the European Union has proven itself ready to address the plight of those escaping from wars, persecution and poverty. Migration is a shared responsibility of all Member States and all member States are called now to contribute to tackling this historical challenge', and First Vice-President of the European Commission Frans Timmermans said: 'The European Council clearly stated that we need to find European solutions, based on internal solidarity and the realisation that we have a common responsibility to create an effective migration policy'.[17] The rescue package included, among others: intensifying Frontex activities, collecting data on smugglers, employing additional officials in Italy and Greece, implementing fingerprints checks and a preliminary draft on the relocation of refugees throughout Europe. The reaction to this project has shown that the much publicised migration or refugee crisis is in fact a crisis of the fundamental principle of European integration: the principle of solidarity, and therefore a crisis of the integration project. When Brussels called on all Member States to support each other, to show solidarity, the Visegrad Group (Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia), composed of EU Member States that had been benefiting from various forms of solidarity since their accession, refused to accept refugees and called them 'unwanted foreigners'.

Because of the refugee crisis, from September 2015 Austria, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Slovenia, Hungary, Malta and Norway restored border controls on their internal borders based on unilateral decisions under the Schengen Borders Code (Articles 23–25). The Code allows for the introduction of control on the EU's internal borders '[i]n exceptional

[14] http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/571356/IPOL_STU(2016)571356_EN.pdf (last visited 20.12.2016).

[15] http://uchodzcy.info/infos/obecny-kryzys-migracyjny/ (last visited 20.12.2016).

[16] https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/communication_on_the_european_agenda_on_migration_en.pdf (last visited 20.12.2016).

[17] http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-4956_en.htm (last visited 20.12.2016).

circumstances where the overall functioning of the area without internal border control is put at risk as a result of persistent serious deficiencies relating to external border control [...]'.[18] In these circumstances, controls may be introduced for a period of six months and may be extended three times, meaning that the maximum time they can be in force is two years.

Given that the measures taken were not yielding expected results, on 4 March 2016 the Commission presented a roadmap for restoring the Schengen system to full functionality, and Vice-President of the Commission Frans Timmermans assured in it that its aim was to abolish all border controls as soon as possible, by December 2016. The document also included the estimated cost of abolishing the Schengen Area, a proposal for establishing a European Border and Coast Guard, as well as providing assistance to Greece.[19]

In April 2016, the European Commission prepared another proposal for reforming the Dublin system, where it identified five priority areas in which the common European asylum system should be improved. According to the plan, it was necessary to: achieve greater convergence and restrict asylum tourism, prevent secondary flows within the EU, propose a change of the competences of the European Asylum Support Office and strengthen the Eurodac system.[20] This was yet another desperate step that confirmed the ineffectiveness of EU institutions in the face of the refugee crisis.

3. The Visegrad Group's position on the crisis

The Visegrad Group (V4), created in the period of systemic transformations in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, is a regional form of cooperation of four Central European countries: Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, established in 1991 on the basis of neighbour relations as well as historical and cultural similarity.[21] Initially, its core concept was the development of democratic state structures and free-market economy, but later it was the common goal of participating in the

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[18] Regulation (EU) No 1051/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2013 amending Regulation (EC) No 562/2006 in order to provide for common rules on the temporary reintroduction of border control at internal borders in exceptional circumstances, Official Journal L 295 of 6.11.2013, p. 1.

[19] *Back to Schengen: Commission proposes Roadmap for restoring fully functioning Schengen system*, Brussels, 4 March 2016, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-585_en.htm (last visited 20.12.2016).

[20] Z. Czachór, A. Jaskulski, *Polska wobec kryzysu migracyjnego w Europie (Poland Vis-à-vis the Migration Crisis in Europe)*, Instytut Obywatelski, Analysis 2015/7, p. 9.

[21] For more see: *Informacja na temat Grupy Wyszehradzkiej (Information of the Visegrad Group)*, Kancelaria Senatu, Czerwiec 2012.

process of European integration (albeit the countries quickly moved from cooperation to rivalry in the process). As has already been mentioned, the V4 adopted a common stance in May 2015, when the European Commission announced the European Agenda on Migration – they refused to accept migrants. In February 2016, at a meeting in Prague, the prime ministers of the four V4 countries and Bulgaria as well the president of Macedonia adopted a joint declaration concerning the migration crisis, where they stressed that unless appropriate steps are taken to improve control over the most exposed sections of the European Union's external border and the influx of migrants is stopped, the situation could get out of control.[22] Furthermore, the declaration stressed that the measures implemented to deal with the crisis should be developed on the EU level, and Polish Prime Minister Beata Szydło even said that the crisis was the greatest one among those Europe was going through and therefore a matter of concern to all of us. At the same time, the V4 countries were taking actions going directly against what they were advocating, such as Hungary's independent decision to erect a fence on its border with Serbia and Croatia or the criticism of the relocation and resettlement system. In the context of the declaration, Prime Minister of the Czech Republic Bohuslav Sobotka mentioned a contingency plan – which Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán called 'plan B' – that could help solve the migration crisis (the plan included the improvement of the protection of the borders between Bulgaria and Turkey and between Macedonia and Greece), while Prime Minister of Slovakia Robert Fico refuted accusations made against the V4 countries that they had failed to show solidarity with the other EU countries, stressing that the V4 countries had offered financial and technical assistance to support border protection.

The next meeting of the V4 focused on the refugee crisis was held in Warsaw in November 2016, this time between ministers of internal affairs. On behalf of their governments, the ministers once again expressed opposition to the EU system of refugee relocation, advocated support to refugees outside the Union, further sealing the external borders and placing greater emphasis on returning migrants to their countries of origin.[23]

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[22] *Premierzy Grupy Wyszehradzkiej wzywają do umocnienia Europy* (*The Prime Ministers of the Visegrad Group Call for Strengthening Europe*), http://wiadomosci. wp.pl/kat,1356,title,Premierzy-Grupy-Wyszehradzkiej-wzywaja-do-umocnienia-Europy,wid,18163119,wiadomosc.html?ticaid=118b99 (last visited 16.12.2016).

[23] *Państwa Grupy Wyszehradzkiej powołają centrum zarządzania kryzysem migracyjnym* (*Countries of the Visegrad Group Will Establish a Refugee Crisis Management Centre*), http://www.polsatnews.pl/wiadomosc/2016-11-21/panstwa-grupy-wyszehradzkiej-powolaja-centrum-zarzadzania-kryzysem-migracyjnym/ (last visited 20.12.2016).

They also announced plans to establish a refugee crisis management centre, to be administered by Poland. The purpose of the centre would be to support refugees staying in camps outside the EU – in, for example, Lebanon, Jordan. Slovak Minister of Internal Affairs Robert Kaliniak stressed the need to convince the EU Member States to adopt the concept of 'effective solidarity', pointing out that the migrant relocation system was not yielding the expected results. The numerous speeches delivered in the context of this meeting failed, however, to provide an answer to the question of how to solve the problem of those refugees who are already in the EU. Somewhere in the background is the unvoiced opinion that the responsibility lies with those who said: 'we can do it' (*Wir schaffen das* – German Chancellor Angela Merkel); and those call from the abyss of an ever deeper crisis for the observance of one of the fundamental principles of the European Union – solidarity. On 7 October 2015, Angela Merkel and François Hollande delivered a joint speech in the European Parliament concerning the refugee crisis. Important words were said on the need for the EU Member States to maintain solidarity and stick together. President Hollande pointed out: 'There is a temptation to retreat into our own national shells in time of crisis. However, experience and history tell us that doing it alone is not the way'. Angela Merkel, in turn, stressed that only with the Member States acting together could the refugees be distributed fairly among the countries; she reiterated the values on which the EU is founded, including solidarity, stressed that refugees are no anonymous mass but real people and that the EU is obliged to protect them under the conventions it had signed.[24] Some Member States chose to ignore these appeals. Poland has been one of them.

4. Poland's position on the refugee crisis

Poland's position on the refugee/migration crisis has been already partially discussed above as the country is one of the members of the Visegrad Group and speaks in the European arena together with the other V4 countries. However, since this is not 'merely' a refugee/migration crisis but one entailing a much greater threat – a conflict among the EU Member States as well as between the Member States and the European Commission – we should analyse Poland's position on the matter in more detail and in a broader context, including the national context.

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[24] Merkel and Hollande's speech in the European Parliament, see for example: https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/fran%C3%A7ois-hollande-and-angela-merkel-historic-joint-plenary-appearance (last visited 18.03.2017).

Poland's position on the plan of distributing refugees among the EU Member States was expressed in the resolution of the Polish Sejm of 1 April 2016.[25] The Sejm voiced a negative opinion on the decision of the Council of the European Union on relocation and transfer of refugees issued in September 2015. It also criticised the previous Polish government's support for this decision, even though the position agreed upon by the Visegrad Group was different. According to the resolution, the point of reference for the Polish government should be the national refugee policy criteria, which stress the need to provide special protection to single women, children, families with two or more children, and religious minorities. At the same time, the Sejm categorically opposed any attempts to establish permanent EU mechanisms of allocation of refugees or migrants, stating that instruments of refugee and migration policy should be in the hands of the Polish state, especially given what it referred to as growing social tensions caused by the excessive wave of migration from the Middle East to Europe. The Sejm added, however, that it fully supported the provision and financing of humanitarian aid in areas ravaged by armed conflicts and countries neighbouring on these areas.[26]

The refugee issue has been the source of a broad discussion in the Polish society. This is, however, unfortunately not a public debate but much rather politicians and the media playing on the people's emotions. The catchphrase 'Poland for Poles' (*Polska dla Polaków*) seems rather peculiar given that 2.5 million Polish labour migrants work in the countries of the 'old' EU and that there is growing deficiency of workforce in the Polish market. The refusal to accept refugees, even though some 7,000 were to be relocated to Poland, has marked Poland as one of those countries where the common value of solidarity has been sacrificed on the altar of national interest, and to call a spade a spade – of the struggle to gain the support of a specific electorate. Anti-migration sentiments are an easy source of political capital, as proven by the rise of various nationalist movements in many European countries. It would not bid well for the future of Polish economy if the functioning of the Shengen Area was restricted (checkpoints, tariffs, tourism, etc.); moreover, faced with the lack of declarations of support from their partners, the countries that are most severely affected by the influx of refugees (Germany, Austria, Italy, Sweden, France) might just choose to opt for such solutions as closing their borders.

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[25] Resolution of the Polish Parliament of 1 April 2016 on the Polish immigration policy, Journal of Laws 2016, Item 370.

[26] Ibidem.

It is in the interest of Poland to look for solutions to the crisis situation on the European level instead of shutting itself away within its national borders. At this stage, however, it would be necessary to have many social forces involved, not only politicians but also the media (especially the public ones), social media, the Church (which has considerable opinion-forming influence in Poland), and finally the education system. The problem needs to be shown it its proper proportion. Only a small number of the refugees who would be relocated to Poland would in fact remain there. This is because first, they would have to be found eligible for international protection. Some would be verified as labour migrants, others would be sent back to their countries of origin, provided that these are deemed safe countries, or to safe third countries. And those who would potentially remain in Poland would most likely soon start looking for a way to leave for Western Europe, the Eldorado they learned about on the Internet.

In the present reality, convincing the Polish society that it needs to live in a nation state has no *raison d'être*. The ongoing processes of globalisation cannot be stopped, the existing economic, financial, social and cultural ties cannot be undone. Many problems of the contemporary world cannot be solved within nation states. The demographic situation in Poland – and in Europe in general, for that matter – is detrimental to the economy and to the pension systems. The predominant family model is an important factor in this respect, with children coming only third, after professional career and material stability. Pro-family policy requires huge financial outlays, but it yields results only in the long-term perspective. The lack of workforce resulting from demographic trends and migration of young people in search of better living conditions will have to be filled. Refusing to accept 'others'/foreigners for national, cultural or religious reasons deprives the country of opportunities for development and forces it into stagnation. And this would be against the Polish national interest.

It is a very apt observation that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe fought too long for independence to now surrender it to any community institutions. But it is them who wanted to join the European Union, and it was what their societies wanted. Before they contribute to the annihilation of the European project, they should therefore take a break from populism and embrace higher values, the ones they have once adopted.

Conclusions

For the proponents of the federalist vision of European integration, the ultimate goal of the project is turning Europe into a single state; and this means state authority, exercised over a nation aware of its national

identity, inhabiting a specific territory enclosed by state borders. And such an entity was in fact being formed: the Schengen Agreement created external EU borders; EU citizenship was enshrined in Article 9 of the Treaty on European Union, according to which every person with citizenship of a Member State is an EU citizen as well; EU institutions received a number of new competences with each Treaty, to make decisions for the common good. The potential decisions included those concerning the common migration, asylum and visa policy as well as those concerning non-EU citizens crossing the external borders. But in the face of the refugee and migrant wave, control of the external borders became impossible, and the carefully developed foundations of the common migration policy fell apart, revealing the weakness of the system. EU institutions were unable to develop effective anti-crisis mechanisms and assure the European society that it could feel safe at home. And, as has been mentioned before, many Member States saw the rise of radical, nationalist groups, making politicians much more reluctant to search for common solutions to the situation on the EU level.

Europe was not European even before the crisis. As previously mentioned, on 1 January 2015 34.3 million people born outside the EU-28 lived in the EU Member States. This is more than 6 per cent of the European population. For some political parties they constitute an important electorate; for state authorities and security structures they is a very real threat in the event of discontent and riot; but for those who respect ethical values, these people are Europeans just as we are. Civilisational progress has led to the drafting and conclusion of the 1951 Refugee Convention, in which the signatories committed to protecting refugees, a refugee being 'any person who […] owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it'.[27] Among the masses migrating to Europe after conflicts and wars, there are many who are eligible for refugee status, but there are also many labour migrants who, after becoming familiar with the situation in Europe, intend to move to specific countries, where they are hoping to make a better life. The decision on granting refugee status requires examining each application

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[27] The 1951 Refugee Convention, Chapter 1, Article 1(2), http://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10 (last visited 22.03.2016).

individually. It is subject to a procedure of appeal and can take months or even years. The individuals subject to the procedure remain in refugee centres or receive the necessary support while residing outside refugee centres or camps. Those foreigners who already live in the Member States have so far not upset their legal and social order. What is needed is a well-thought-out, responsible and common policy towards them, integrating them in the European social systems while respecting their cultural specificity, but also enforcing respect for the European cultural heritage and fundamental values. The bond with the host societies should be developed as a result of common rights and obligations. Living in separate parallel realities, constantly talking about egalitarianism and misunderstood political correctness is a temporary and short-sighted solution. It should not be implemented even as a provisional measure to address the need of the hour, and it should certainly not be the strategy pursued by an integration grouping, if it wants to survive and keep developing. Europe can be European through its values, rooted and nurtured in the awareness of its societies and shaped in the process of educating future generations. In the age of globalisation and the Internet, the alternative in the form of nation states fencing themselves off from others seems unfeasible and obscures any constructive discussion on how to address the problem of foreigners in the European Union.

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