

POLICY BRIEF

Migration Crisis: International Cooperation and National Strategies

VLADIMIR MALAKHOV

*Doctor of Political Sciences, Director of the Center for Applied and Theoretical Political Science,
The Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPA), RIAC expert*

RUSSIAN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Sergey Lavrov – Chairman
of the Board of Trustees
Herman Gref
Aleksandr Dzasokhov
Leonid Drachevsky
Aleksandr Dynkin
Mikhail Komissar
Konstantin Kosachev

Mikhail Margelov
Yury Osipov
Sergey Prikhodko
Anatoly Torkunov
Andrey Fursenko
Aleksandr Shokhin
Igor Yurgens

PRESIDIUM

Petr Aven
Igor Ivanov – President
Andrey Kortunov – Director General
Fyodor Lukyanov
Aleksey Meshkov
Dmitry Peskov

Editors:

Ivan Timofeev, Ph.D. in Political Science
Timur Makhmutov, Ph.D. in Political Science
Elena Alekseenkova, Ph.D. in Political Science
Vladimir Morozov

Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC) is a membership-based non-profit Russian organization. RIAC's activities are aimed at strengthening peace, friendship and solidarity between peoples, preventing international conflicts and promoting crisis resolution. The Council was founded in accordance with Russian Presidential Order No. 59-rp "On the Creation of the Russian International Affairs Council non-profit partnership," dated February 2, 2010.

FOUNDERS



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation



Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation



Russian Academy of Sciences



Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs



Interfax News Agency

RIAC MISSION

The mission of RIAC is to promote Russia's prosperity by integrating it into the global world. RIAC operates as a link between the state, scholarly community, business and civil society in an effort to find solutions to foreign policy issues.

The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of RIAC.

Migration Crisis: International Cooperation and National Strategies

Migration has moved to the top of the global political agenda in recent times. The unprecedented influx of refugees to Europe, on the one hand, and the high rate of South–North economic migration on the other, have led to sharp political and public opinion divisions.

Over the last year-and-a-half, the expressions “migration crisis” and “refugee crisis” have become firmly lodged in the political and journalist discourse. However, to what extent does the term “crisis” reflect the real state of affairs? And to what extent does it reflect the way it is perceived? What can be done at the national and international levels to change the situation? What is the current state of international cooperation on migration regulation? What is the outlook for this cooperation in the foreseeable future? And what is Russia’s place in this cooperation?

The abovementioned issues were discussed during the II International conference “Migration crisis: international cooperation and national strategies”, that was held on September 22-23, 2016 in Moscow and organized by Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC) and The Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPA). The paper presents the key results of the discussion of the following questions: (1) an analysis of the international migration system over the past half a century; (2) an examination of the demographic, economic, political and humanitarian aspects of the crisis; (3) a look at the phenomenon of migration in reference to security problems; (4) a review of the state of international cooperation in migration regulation.

International Mobility and the International Migration System

Migration across borders is as old as human history. What makes the current stage different is that the process has acquired a global character in its actual sense. Transport technologies of the late 20th and early 21st centuries have greatly facilitated the movement of people from one part of the world to another. Over the last fifty years, starting in the 1960s (that is, from the beginning of decolonization) and until the present time, an *international migration system has taken shape*. This system has been developing in long-term cycles, which is why extraordinary phenomena are in fact short-term fluctuations.

At the beginning of 2016, there were a total of 244 million international migrants in the world. By contrast, there were 232 million in 2014, 150 million in 2009, 140 million in 1997, 111 million in 1990 and 77 million in 1965. However, the growth looks impressive only in absolute, not relative terms.

In relation to the total world population, the share of migrants has remained at a stable 3 per cent for decades.

International migration is a manifestation of geographical and social *mobility* of people. Movement across state borders is influenced by a variety of factors. This is why there are many types of migration – labour migration, family migration, education migration, business migration, lifestyle migration, etc. There is a consensus among the majority of economists that, on the whole, migration has a positive impact on the socioeconomic sphere of the host country. The influx of people from the Global South to the Global North is an important factor that sustains a positive demographic dynamic in industrialized countries. Migrants and their descendants are a powerful source of economic and cultural innovation and a major factor of the human capital growth.

Forced migration is a somewhat different case. It is caused by wars, including civil wars, political persecution and natural disasters. Although international legal documents and the media draw a distinction between migrants who leave their country *voluntarily* and refugees who are *forced* to take this step, in practice the difference is often blurred. The fact is that when the economy is non-existent or shattered in a number of states, labour migration is for many people the only way to survival.¹

AUTHOR:

Vladimir Malakhov,

Doctor of Political Sciences, Director of the Center for Applied and Theoretical Political Science, The Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPA), RIAC expert.

¹ Refugees often face the same problems as other groups of migrants. The difference is that the major part of refugees is not ready for moving to other countries and is forced to leave their homes. Thus their needs and vulnerability can be much more critical. These humanitarian aspects of migration were discussed during the special session of the conference, organized in partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

The number of refugees has reached a record high of 21.3 million people. And this figure does not include internally displaced people. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, at the beginning of 2016, the number of people who had been forced to leave their homes amounted to 65.3 million.²

In assessing the prospects for the Global North,³ which includes Russia, one gets the impression that global migration flows in one direction, i.e. from the regions of the Global South. This view, however, obscures the scale and complexity of the phenomenon of global migration. In fact, at least 40 per cent of world migration takes place between the countries of the South.

As for the forced migration (refugees), the North receives just 14 per cent of these flows. Only 5 per cent of the people who became refugees in 2015 headed towards Europe.

There is a tendency in the media and general public of the host countries to view migration, especially forced migration, as a threat to national security. However, looking at the issue of international migration from the police perspective (“securitization”) obscures the complex and multi-dimensional character of this phenomenon. One should keep in mind that this view demonizes and criminalizes millions of people who are forced to seek a better future – or simply to save their lives – in another country.

We should take into account the fact that forced migration is a consequence and not a cause of the unfortunate international security situation.

It may sound trivial, but it is this lack of security, which is primarily caused by wars, that results in the new floods of refugees.

“Migration Crisis”: Reality and Perception

GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The media buzz since the summer of 2015 leaves no doubt that the current forced migration situation in Europe is perceived as a crisis. But it is not unprecedented in terms of scope. Europe has seen far greater levels of the forced movement of people, notably after 1945. The flow of refugees ran into millions after the end of the First World War and the Russian Civil War (1918–1920). The scale of forced migration triggered by the war that brought about the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s was only slightly less (about 800,000 people).⁴

In relative terms, the number of migrants arriving in the European Union is not critical, accounting for 0.2 per cent of the total population (or 2 persons per 500 residents).⁵

The expert community is almost unanimous in asserting the demographic necessity of migration.

The average birth rate of 1.7 children per woman does not even provide simple reproduction of the population (even including the flow of immigrants).⁶ There is a consensus among economists that migration has a favourable impact on the European economy.

Without an influx of new people, it is impossible to maintain an acceptable ratio between workers and pensioners.⁷

Of course, the influx of immigrants that Europe has experienced since the spring of 2015 is special in many ways. The majority of new arrivals are refugees or economic migrants who, realizing that it is impossible to legalize their presence in the European Union under the current circumstances, claim to be refugees.⁸ Their number

² Figures at a Glance / The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). URL: <http://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>

³ The “North” in this meaning of the word refers to all the economically developed countries, including Australia, Japan and South Korea.

⁴ Refugees and Displaced People from the Former Yugoslavia Since 1991 // GRID Arendal. A Center Collaboration with UNED. URL: http://www.grida.no/graphicslib/detail/refugees-and-displaced-people-from-the-former-yugoslavia-since-1991_0c5a

⁵ Asylum Statistics. URL: http://www.ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics

⁶ The 2015 Ageing Report: Underlying Assumptions and Projection Methodologies. Joint Report Prepared by the European Commission (DG ECFIN) and the Economic Policy Committee (AWG) // European Economy, 8/2014, p. 409. URL: http://www.ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2014/pdf/ee8_en.pdf

⁷ By 2060, the able-bodied population in the European Union will have dropped by 38 million. Ibid. p. 71.

⁸ The share of refugees proper among those who arrived in Europe directly from their country of residence is estimated at 77 per cent, with 23 per cent migrating for economic reasons. See the sociological studies conducted by Franck Duvell et al: Unravelling the Mediterranean Migration Crisis (MEDMIG). Sep 2015–Aug 2016. URL: <https://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/project/unravelling-mediterranean-migration-crisis-medmig/>

is almost three times the number of forced migrants registered in previous years.⁹

Nevertheless, the International Monetary Fund and other analytical centres estimate that in the longer term the cost of receiving refugees will be outweighed by benefits.¹⁰

These include GDP growth due to the influx of new workers, the creation of jobs spurred by the building of housing and infrastructure facilities (schools, day-care centres, hospitals, etc.) and the increase of aggregate demand.¹¹

If European governments handle issue of integrating new arrivals properly, then the costs incurred by will be recouped by 2025–2027.

Many leading economists believe that we will see a slight economic growth as a result of increased labour market recovery due to the influx of refugees over the next few years.¹² This growth is estimated to be 0.3 per cent in Germany, 0.4 per cent in Sweden and 0.5 per cent in Austria in 2017.¹³

At the same time, we should be aware of the social and political risks associated with such a massive influx of arrivals from regions that differ culturally from the host countries.

The concerns and fears of the local population (both real and induced) tend to boost the popularity of extreme right parties. When they get into the parliaments (let alone the governments) of European countries, these parties start imposing an anti-migration agenda on society and ratchet up xenophobia in the media. This leads to the social exclusion of migrants and their

descendants, which in turn may result in negative consequences for society.

DYNAMICS OF THE SYRIAN REFUGEE SITUATION

The mass exodus from Syria began back in 2011, but the European bureaucracy and political class pretended not to notice it. The calls for an international conference on Syria were ignored.¹⁴

One major aggravating factor was the absence of legal channels for leaving the war-affected country (closed borders, lack of access to procedures for obtaining status in any given country).

In particular, the Schengen visa, one avenue for legal immigration, was not employed (only 10 per cent of refugees applied for such visa from Syria, and all of them were turned down).¹⁵ European leaders chose to leave it to Syria's neighbours – Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon – to handle the situation. The spontaneous flow of Syrian refugees to these countries resulted in the accumulation of large numbers of people on their territories. According to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, as of June 2015, there were 2.3 million refugees in Turkey; 1.15 million refugees in Lebanon (a country with a population of 4.5 million); and 700,000 refugees in Jordan (which has a population of 9.5 million).¹⁶ Temporary accommodation camps were set up in these countries with the help of the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and other international organizations.¹⁷

Clearly, it was impossible to keep such a large number of refugees in camps, and some of them,

⁹ More than one million refugees arrived in Europe in 2015. The flow diminished significantly thanks to the EU–Turkey agreement. In the spring of 2016, an estimated 136,000 people arrived by sea. See: Migrant Crisis: Migration to Europe Explained in Seven Charts // BBC. March 4, 2016. URL: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34131911>

¹⁰ Aiyar S. et al. The Refugee Surge in Europe: Economic Challenges // IMF. January 2016. URL: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/sdn/2016/sdn1602.pdf>

¹¹ For Good or Ill: Europe's New Arrivals Will Probably Dent Public Finances but Not Wages // The Economist. January 23, 2016. URL: <http://www.economist.com/news/finance-and-economics/21688938-europes-new-arrivals-will-probably-dent-public-finances-not-wages-good-or>; Zetter R. Are Refugees an Economic Burden or Benefit? // Forced Migration Review Online. URL: <http://www.fmreview.org/preventing/zetter.html>

¹² Eurozone Economists' Survey 2016: Refugees. How Will the Mass Arrival of Refugees Affect the Eurozone Economy? // Financial Times. January 27, 2015. URL: <https://www.ft.com/content/8cab36e4-a4ee-11e5-97e1-a754d5d9538c>

¹³ Aiyar S. et al. Op. cit., p. 14.

¹⁴ Tarasenko P. Lavrov and the UN Push for International Conference on Syria // Russia beyond the Headlines. August 12, 2013. URL: http://rbth.com/international/2013/08/12/lavrov_and_the_un_push_for_international_conference_on_syria_28849.html

¹⁵ See: Franck Duvell. Speech at the International Conference Migration Crisis: International Cooperation and National Strategies. September 22–23, 2016. RIAC, RANEP (conference materials soon to be available in print).

¹⁶ Global Trends 2015 / UNHCR. URL: <http://www.unhcr.org/global-trends-2015.html>

¹⁷ Not all the Syrian refugees stayed in camps, of course. Some of them managed to become integrated in the local economy. They were for the most part well-to-do people who owned businesses (for example restaurants) in their home country and managed to open a similar enterprise in their new place of residence.

using routes laid by smugglers, headed towards Europe.¹⁸

Many refugees who ended up in Europe had not initially planned such a long journey.

Scholars draw a distinction between primary, secondary and tertiary refugee flows. The primary flow consists of those who from the outset wanted to move to Europe. Usually, they are educated and skilled people who had a chance to settle in a developed European nation. The secondary refugees were those who had experienced violence or humiliation, or who had found themselves in unbearable conditions in the countries where they had found refuge.¹⁹ The tertiary flow is those whose journey to Europe began after they had been to two or more countries.

The European Union leadership stayed calm until May 2015. No measures were taken even after June 2015, when the number of refugees from the Eastern Mediterranean exceeded the number of refugees coming from Africa. The result of this inaction was a humanitarian crisis, when a critical mass of people in need of help accumulated in the southern Balkans and refugee camps in Greece were overoccupied. A humanitarian catastrophe was only averted by civil initiatives, the dedicated work of dozens of small NGOs and thousands of volunteers.

What was the political response to the crisis? Macedonia opened its border under the pressure from Greece, and Germany suspended the Dublin Regulation.²⁰ This relieved the burden on Turkey and the Balkan states and greatly improved the social and psychological situation that had fractured the public mood. Public opinion, while still polarized, shifted to some extent from concern and fears about the refugee influx towards compassion and solidarity.

In late summer and early autumn 2015, the European Commission adopted a number of decisions that contained both humanitarian and repressive measures. These included:

- addressing the causes of the mass exodus of people from certain regions;

- improving the conditions for refugees in Turkey;
- moving and resettling refugees;
- tightening border control;
- easing the regime for accepting refugees and simplifying the procedures of filing for refugee status;
- deporting persons suspected of violating the law.

However, things never moved beyond discussions because of the deep differences between the member states. It was not until October 2015 that Brussels and Ankara began to act together, although the agreement between them was signed back in April.²¹

During the summer of 2015, the European public opinion became more positive concerning the prospects of receiving refugees. This happened, first, because the public had been informed about the unfavourable demographic prospects in most European countries; second, because the media took a sympathetic tone; and third, because of the efforts of civil society.

Later, public sentiment reversed in Germany and other major EU states (not to mention Hungary, Poland, Lithuania and other East European countries, which had been hostile towards refugees from the start). Beginning from 2016, the sociologists recorded a fall in the support for Chancellor Merkel's course and prevailing anti-immigrant sentiments.²²

The main causes of the shift were the following.

Firstly, *gross inequalities between the EU member states*. The socioeconomic situation in Eastern and Southern European countries is dramatically worse than in the countries of Western and Northern Europe. As a result, the calls of the more prosperous member countries for European solidarity on the forced migrant issue fell on deaf ears.

¹⁸ This is how the Balkan route leading from Turkey to Greece appeared. In 2015, it became more important than the routes from North Africa towards Italy and Spain.

¹⁹ For Syrian refugees, this country is Turkey. For Africans, it is Libya. Under Qaddafi, Libya was a migration magnet for people from Sub-Saharan Africa. But after 2011, Libya ceased to be a safe place.

²⁰ Under the Dublin Regulation, a person seeking asylum in the European Union can file a petition only on the territory of the country of first arrival.

²¹ Under the agreement, the Turkish authorities undertook to return the refugees who had tried to get to Greece by sea back to the camps in Turkey.

²² Stokes B. Euroskepticism beyond Brexit. Significant Opposition in Key European Countries to an Ever Closer EU // Pew Research Center. June 7, 2016. URL: <http://www.pewglobal.org/2016/06/07/euroskepticism-beyond-brexite/#eurefugees>

Secondly, *certain social stratas did not feel the benefits of economic growth*. They do not feel that they are a part of the development process, which can result only in a sense of resentment.

Thirdly, *alienation and frustration* experienced by much of the European population (and not only in poor, but also in wealthy EU countries) *spawns xenophobia*.

Fourthly, *part of the political class in modern Europe is taking advantage of these sentiments, building up their symbolic capital and electoral base*. They include not only the right-wing populists from, for example the French National Front or the Alternative for Germany, but also members of the European political mainstream (Prime Minister of Hungary Viktor Orban and Nicolas Sarkozy, who had just dropped out of the fight for the presidency in France, to name but a few).

This puts the leaders of those EU countries who have committed themselves to preserving a liberal immigration regime under serious political pressure. For example, German Chancellor Angela Merkel is facing not only a visible fall of social support for her political course, but also opposition inside her own Christian Democratic Union.

The manoeuvre undertaken by Angela Merkel and her supporters can be described in the following way:

on the one hand, amendments to the legislation that make it easier for refugees to access the labour market are adopted.

In particular, the asylum seekers who have been in Germany for more than three months and have a good chance of being accepted have been granted the right to work on condition that no German citizens have applied for the vacancy.

*On the other hand, the procedure for deporting asylum seekers whose application has been turned down has been simplified.*²³

At the same time, the rhetoric that demonstrates society the authorities resolve to combat crime and terrorism is being ratcheted up.

The Bundestag is discussing the possibility of granting broader powers to the special services to collect data similar to those that the National Security Agency in the United States was granted under the Patriot Act passed by Congress on October 26, 2001.²⁴

The Migration Phenomenon and the Security Issues

Papers and reports on security issues stress that *analyzing security in a narrow sense is useless*.²⁵ That is, it is wrong to reduce the security problem to its military-political dimension. However, that dimension is not confined to *national*, much less *social* security, which includes environmental conditions, healthcare service, crime rate, etc. Extrapolating the problem of social security on migration, it said it necessary to note that the main threat to security comes from the fact that migrants do not have access to the healthcare system. This is fraught with the mass spread of infectious diseases. As for crime, studies have failed to discover any correlation between the crime rate and the share of migrants in the population.²⁶

Among the main threats to international security are dictatorial political regimes and the so-called "failed states." The lack of justice, illegal imprisonment, torture and the socioeconomic plight of people in a number of African, Asian and Latin American countries are a powerful stimulus for people to leave their countries. This does not mean that the hundreds of thousands of people who have to leave their country, thus joining the global migration flows, should be seen as potential criminals. But it does mean that authoritarian regime, as well as the statehood collapse, inevitably lead to human trafficking, thousands-kilometres-long drug routes, international terrorism, etc. This leads to traditionally

²³ In 2015, Germany deported about 18,000 people.

²⁴ The Patriotic Act / United States Government Publishing Office. URL: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-107hr3162enr/pdf/BILLS-107hr3162enr.pdf>

²⁵ Waever O. European Security Identities // Journal of Common Market Studies. 1996. Vol. 34. No. 1. URL: http://www.gla.ac.uk/0t4/crcees/files/summerschool/readings/summerschool09/readings/Waever_for_Galbreath.pdf; Kiltz L., Ramsay J.D. Perceptual Framing of Homeland Security // Homeland Security Affairs. 2012. Vol. 8 (15).

²⁶ See the findings of the German Federal Criminal Investigation Agency (Bundeskriminalamt, BKA), published in November 2015: Report: Refugees Have Not Increased Crime Rate in Germany // Deutsche Welle. 13.11.2015. URL: <http://www.dw.com/en/report-refugees-have-not-increased-crime-rate-in-germany/a-18848890>. The report stresses the need to "dispel rumors about an increase in criminal acts in Germany [due to immigration]".

trivial recommendation to the leaders of the international community on the need to target the causes and not the consequences of these phenomena.

International terrorist groups have long viewed Western countries as the target of their attacks. Attempts are being made to draw young migrants into the terrorist networks both through internet propaganda and through personal contacts with the advocates of radical Islam.

Destabilization in the Middle East, primarily in Libya and Syria in 2011, represented a qualitatively new stage in generating and spreading the ideas of a global jihad. This of course was preceded by the destruction of statehood in Iraq in 2003.²⁷ The emergence of Islamic State in Syria and Iraq is a direct consequence of the short-sighted and irresponsible policy of the United States and its allies. The war in Syria has, on the one hand, become a magnet for radical Muslims all over the world (including Russia). On the other hand, it has served as a powerful propaganda tool in the hands of Islamists. Besides, the terrorist fighters returning from Syria to their own states pose a major security threat²⁸.

That danger should neither be underestimated nor exaggerated. The following circumstances need to be kept in mind.

First of all, the majority of terrorist attacks that took place in Europe between 2004 and now were not committed by labour migrants or refugees, but by second generation immigrants, i.e., by people who are citizens of European countries.²⁹

Therefore, the problem of integrating new arrivals is of paramount importance in the context of ensuring the security of these countries.

Secondly, the share of migrants in Europe who are potentially capable of committing a terrorist act is estimated at 0.3 per cent.³⁰ Early identification of such people is the task of the *special services*.

Thirdly, suspecting refugees from the Middle East of supporting *Islamism as an ideology* only on the grounds of their religious affiliation is incorrect, not to mention the fact that 10 per cent of Syria's population before the war were Christians.³¹ They were the first victims of religious fanatics and thus had no option but to emigrate. The exodus of people first from Afghanistan and then from the parts of Iraq and Syria occupied by IS militants was prompted by an immediate threat to their lives resulting from religious and ideological incompatibility.

Fourthly, it is important to be aware of the *danger of the narrative that creates an atmosphere of hostility around migrants in general and refugees in particular*.

The issues of migration and refugees are covered in an alarmist tone, meaning that new arrivals are ostracized and subsequently marginalized. Because social marginalization is a breeding ground for the spread of extremist ideas, social inclusion measures – integrating migrants and their descendants – should be seen as government priorities.

Fifth, there is no direct link between the number of refugees in a country and the level of terrorist threat due to the penetration into the country of terrorists disguised as refugees and the possible recruitment of refugees by representatives of terrorist groups. Thus, in Lebanon and Jordan refugees currently account for almost a quarter of the population. However, the situation there in terms of terrorism threat is much more favourable than in Turkey.³²

²⁷ It is worth remembering that the ideological grounds for the terrorist attacks in Madrid (2004) and London (2005) was the participation of Spanish and British forces in the attack on Iraq.

²⁸ Andrey Kazantsev, "Recruiting Foreign Terrorist Fighters and Dealing with Returnees: European Experience and the Prospects for Russia," Russian International Affairs Council, April 29, 2016, http://russiancouncil.ru/en/inner/?id_4=7385

²⁹ See Data from Modern Security Consulting Group MOSECON GmbH, and the speech by its Director General Yan St-Pierre at the international conference "Migration Crisis: International Cooperation and National Strategies." September 22–23, 2016. RIAC, RANEP (Conference materials are being prepared for publication).

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ International Religious Freedom Report. Syria // U.S. Department of State. <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2006/71432.htm>

³² Turkey today hosts about 3 million Syrian refugees, with its own population being about 80 million.

International Cooperation in Regulating Migration

Despite the profound differences between the European Union and Russia on a whole range of foreign policy issues, they are *destined to cooperate* in the field of migration.

The so-called global governance of migration processes is unthinkable without Russia's participation. Politicians and experts in the European Union countries are aware of this. Indeed, such cooperation has been under way for a long time.

Russia, for example, is involved in the Prague Process, a dialogue on a wide range of issues of migration regulation involving the European Union, the Schengen Area states, participants in the Eastern Neighbourhood Policy, Turkey and countries in the Western Balkans and Central Asia. Documents produced in the course of the Prague Process are published in two languages, English and Russian.

Russia is an active participant in international treaties on migration regulation at the international (the UN, the International Organization for Migration, the European Union, etc.) and interstate (bilateral and multilateral) levels. Russia for example, has signed 204 bilateral and 19 multilateral agreements with about 90 countries. The agreements cover the following issues: reciprocal travel, labour migration, crime and illegal migration control, citizenship, readmission policies, border crossing points, visas, etc. Since the interests of businesses (entrepreneurial activities abroad) and those of individuals (tourism, study, work) involve the movement of people, any steps made in terms of the legal regulation of migration affect hundreds of thousands of people.³³

At the same time, we should acknowledge that the labour agreements signed so far are mostly of a declarative character.³⁴

As for the consequences of agreements in other spheres of migration regulation, experts

believe that agreements on reciprocal travel are undoubtedly positive, but agreements on easy access to citizenship are controversial.

Russia has still not developed a mechanism to facilitate the fast-track issue of temporary residence permits and permanent residence cards. Meanwhile, it is precisely these forms of legalizing foreigners that have been tested in global practice and have proved very effective from an economic point of view.³⁵

How Can International Experience in Migration Policy be Useful for Russia?

The question of which migration policy is the best, taking the specific features of this or that country, is the subject of fierce debate. Without going deep into these discussions, let us touch upon just one topic: the procedures for legalizing foreign citizens, and residency and citizenship as an element of these procedures.

Russia clearly needs an influx of foreign labour. This means that it also needs clear and unequivocal rules for legalizing foreign nationals coming to the country to work.

However, there are no national programmes that meet this criterion. The only exception is the state programme for resettling compatriots, but it is unlikely to yield tangible results. The potential of the Russian population in the near abroad has practically been exhausted. It would be no exaggeration to say that everyone who wanted to move to Russia has already done so.³⁶

At the same time, the underdeveloped state of institutions that provide temporary residence permits and permanent residence cards forces people to resort to corrupt schemes to obtain the desired status. This leads to the development of a shadow business involving migrants.

³³ Chudinovskikh O. S. Report at the International Conference "Migration Crisis: International Cooperation and National Strategies." September 22–23, 2016. RIAC, RANEP (conference materials are being prepared for publication).

³⁴ Zayonchkovskaya Z. A. International Partnership of Russia and Central Asian Countries in the Field of Labour Migration: Legal Framework // Migration in Modern Russia. Current State, Problems, Trends. Collection of papers by Federal Migration Service of Russia. Moscow, 2012. pp. 98–115.

³⁵ Chudinovskikh O. S. State Regulation Governing the Acquisition of Citizenship of the Russian Federation: Policy and Trends. Moscow, 2015.

³⁶ Vykhovanets O., Gradirovsky S., Zhitin D., Lopukhina T., Mkrtychan N. The Policy of Immigration and Naturalization in Russia: Current State and Trends / Ed. S. Gradirovsky. Eurasian Heritage Fund, Volga Federal District Strategic Studies Centre. Moscow, 2005. pp. 33–36.

There are several examples which illustrate that the state of affairs in Russia is unacceptable. In 2015, nearly 627,000 people were living in Russia on temporary residence permits, with another 425,000 in the country on permanent residence cards. The statistics for 2016 are very similar: 613,000 and 455,000, respectively.³⁷ Thus, with a population of 143.5 million, Russia has slightly more than 1 million foreign nationals who have legalized their status in the framework of these institutions. To compare: Sweden (which has a population of 9.6 million) was home to 695,000 foreign nationals with permanent residence cards as of the beginning of 2016; in Norway (whose population is 5.1 million), the figure was 483,000.³⁸

The Russian authorities consider temporary residence permits and permanent residence cards to be a step on the way to citizenship.³⁹ But this is not necessarily the goal of the holders of these documents. The experience of industrialized countries shows that the permanent residence card is a flexible instrument which, among other things, helps to attract foreign investments. It offers legal guarantees, including inviolability of property, while not making it obligatory for the person to take up permanent residence in the country. One cannot expect foreign businesspeople to invest actively when they are deprived of such guarantees. As for the requirements under the Federal Law on Citizenship of the Russian Federation, whereby a foreigner applying Russian citizenship must renounce his or her former passport, this is definitely a harmful thing. It is hard to imagine a businessperson from a developed country who would want to obtain a Russian passport on such terms.⁴⁰

In other words, Russian legislation in its present shape impedes investments into the Russian economy.

Prospects for International Cooperation in Migration Regulation

The Summit for Refugees and Migrants was held in New York in September 2016 as part of the 71st Session of the UN General Assembly. The summit adopted a declaration reiterating the good intentions of the member countries and containing some specific decisions. Thus, the UN member states have agreed to accept 360,000 refugees in 2017.⁴¹ It was decided to co-opt the International Organization for Migration (IOM) into the structure of the United Nations. The IOM will become a United Nations Committee, although it will be financed from other sources.

The global character of the migration problem and the need for a global approach to tackle it was discussed at length at the summit. The speakers mentioned the need for urgent measures to bridge the gap between developed and developing regions of the modern world. Addressing this problem, the EU High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, said, "Let me say that there are forces in Europe, also here in the United States, around the world, who believe that migration is a fight between the North and the South, the richer countries and the developing ones. We do not believe in this. We, in the European Union, believe in partnerships. We believe we are together in this and that only together we can give real answers. There is no clash between the North and the South. In fact there is massive room for win-win solutions."⁴²

Among the proposals put up for discussion at the summit by the EU representatives were the adoption of joint specialized programmes for developing and protecting the most vulnerable countries. Under the European External Investment Plan, \$50 billion in private investments will be raised and made available to the needy states,

³⁷ Chudinovskikh O. S. Report at the International Conference "Migration Crisis: International Cooperation and National Strategies." September 22–23, 2016. RIAC, RANEPА (Conference materials are being prepared for publication)

³⁸ Chudinovskikh O. S. Report at the International Conference "Migration Crisis: International Cooperation and National Strategies." September 22–23, 2016. RIAC, RANEPА (Conference materials are being prepared for publication).

³⁹ Chudinovskikh O. S. Passport Non-Grata // Migration XXI Century: Independent Information and Analytical Journal. 2014 (November–December). No. 6–7 (26–27), pp. 11–17.

⁴⁰ This provision of Russian legislation is criticized by experts, but the bureaucrats ignore their arguments. In addition to the above-mentioned works by O. Chudinovskikh, see: Florinskaya Y. F., Mkrtychan N. V., Maleva T. M., Kirillova M. K. Migration and the Labour Market. Institute of Social Analysis and Forecasting. Moscow. Delo Publishing House, 2015.

⁴¹ Summit Documents / Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants. UN. URL: <https://www.refugeesmigrants.un.org/summit-documents>

⁴² Federica Mogherini at the UN Summit on Refugees and Migrants at the 71st session of the UN General Assembly // European External Affairs Service, 20.09.2016. URL: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/node/10094_ru

above all those in North Africa that border the Mediterranean.⁴³ The aim of these programmes is not so much to give money to the governments of countries from which the largest flows of refugees come, as it is to finance the social and economic development of those countries. Obviously, this is a formidable challenge. Would the authorities in the recipient states consider financial aid as the wish of successful Europeans to bribe the Africans? Would the money intended for development be used for development purposes? And would something that was conceived as an aid to transformation not end up financing corrupt regimes?

Lots of contradictions surround the issue of universal human values versus national interests. Industrially developed states in Europe and America declare (with different degrees of ardour) their commitment to the idea of global responsibility for what is happening in the world in general, and for the suffering of millions of refugees in particular. As a follow-up to that idea, the summit heard a proposal to develop and sign a Global Treaty on Refugees.⁴⁴ However, the biggest stumbling block is the question of how to distribute responsibility, an issue that still remains open.⁴⁵

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Falk P. How the United Nation's New Agreement on the Global Migrant and Refugees Crisis Might Work // Newsweek, September 26, 2016.
URL: <http://www.europe.newsweek.com/global-refugee-migrant-crisis-502912?rm=eu>

⁴⁵ Ironically, the biggest load of accepting refugees from Syria and other Middle East states fell on the countries that are least to blame for the crisis in that region – Germany, Sweden and Austria. In 2015, they hosted about 900,000, 150,000 and 90,000 refugees, respectively. For comparison, the United States admitted 70,000 refugees in 2015 and 75,000 in 2016 after President Obama promised to increase the quota slightly.



[facebook.com/
russiancouncil](https://facebook.com/russiancouncil)



[twitter.com/
Russian_Council](https://twitter.com/Russian_Council)



[vk.com/
russian_council](https://vk.com/russian_council)



[russiancouncil.
livejournal.com](https://russiancouncil.livejournal.com)



[flickr.com/photos/
russiancouncil](https://flickr.com/photos/russiancouncil)



[youtube.com/
russiancouncilvideo](https://youtube.com/russiancouncilvideo)



[slideshare.net/
RussianCouncil](https://slideshare.net/RussianCouncil)



linkedin.com/company/russian-international-affairs-council/
linkedin.com/groups/Russian-International-Affairs-Council-4473529

Tel.: +7 (495) 225 6283
Fax: +7 (495) 225 6284
E-mail: welcome@russiancouncil.ru
119180, Moscow, Bol. Yakimanka St., 1.

www.russiancouncil.ru