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Irregular Migration: Challenges and Threats to Security on the European Continent

A.A. MIKHLIN

Abstract. The author examines the state of irregular migration that has developed over recent years on the European continent and its influence in creating new challenges and threats.

Keywords: irregular migration, terrorism, illegal drug trafficking, global challenges and threats of the present, criminal groups, current legislation, illegal entry.

The beginning of the 21st century is characterized by the escalation of the traditional threats and the emergence of new ones. Terrorism, illegal drug trafficking, irregular migration, and piracy at sea – here is an incomplete list of global challenges for mankind in the 21st century. To counter them, the countries' efforts integration not only at the regional level but also at the global one is required. In this connection, international cooperation issues take center stage in the fight against these challenges and threats.

The irregular migration, as a result of rapidly and unevenly developing globalization processes in different corners of the world, holds a specific place among new challenges and threats of the present. The urgency of this issue is significant as it comprises a number of important and interdependent components (economic, political, religious, law enforcement, etc.) as well as the causes the main among them apparently being poverty and numerous local armed conflicts (Syria, Libya, Iraq, Afghanistan, etc.), in particular based on religious strife and ethnic rivalry. These causes make people seek better life for themselves and their families.

The urgency of considering the danger of the present-day migration is in the fact that it becomes a kind of mass destruction weapon bringing the risk of drawing migrants into the illegal activity of smuggling, terrorist, pirate, and other transnational ethnic organized crime groups in the European Union territory.

So, what is migration?

The definition of *migration* as the movement of people (migrants) across borders with the change of their location forever or for a long term is the most appropriate one.

In the process of analyzing the phenomenon of migration, a complex of factors, not only political, but also economic, natural, sociopsychological, legal, etc., should be taken into account. The important distinction of the forced migration from the irregular one is that a person who decided to immigrate does it with all formalities implied by law of the state of the planned residence. The causes of the forced migration may include political views and economic, legal, racial, national or other concepts. At the same time, the forced migration in certain circumstances may be irregular. Such circumstances may include desperate situation or other forcible, in view of a migrant, reasons.

The irregular migration is the movement of people with a breach of legislation of any given state and implies an illegal entry of immigrants using any methods, means, and labor activity in a host country in circumvention of legislation in effect.

In the vast majority of countries, the irregular migration is a criminally punishable act prescribing hefty penalties in the presence of aggravating circumstances (commission of various accompanying crimes).

The migration is caused by economic disparity, burgeoning poverty, environmental deterioration, human rights violations, and lack of peace and security.

The following types of the irregular migration are known:

- organized and unorganized (spontaneous);
- individual and group;
- as a result of crossing the state border through unguarded sections or outside checkpoints with forged documents;
- illegal entry and reluctance to leave upon expiry of entry permits.

The irregular migration may also occur not only as a result of illegal border crossings but on perfectly legal grounds as well with the subsequent unreported employment in a host country.¹

The irregular migration contributes to the emergence and development of certain negative *economic trends*.

- 1. The outflow of significant financial assets from the host country to the immigrants home state by means of tax evasion and further acquisition of currency in order to subsequently funnel money to their homeland using banking and other financial mechanisms.
- 2. The existence and development of alien ethnic communities in the regions of the host country where there is no shortage of manpower. Moreover, local diasporas are rather closely associated with compatriots living in various foreign countries. The host country for whatever reason has no visa regime with many of these countries.

- 3. The rapidly growing imbalance between the indigenous population and expatriates due to low fertility of the former and high fertility of the latter (natives of Islamic and Asia-Pacific countries). Consequently, cases of violent bloody confrontation on ethnoconfessional grounds are not uncommon, including gun and knife crimes.
- 4. The labor market imbalance and ousting of the host country indigenous population from certain employment spheres by expatriates.
- 5. The increasing social impact on infrastructure, particularly on health-care and education, connected with the growth of population (at the expense of immigrants), which further strengthens the negative attitude toward immigrants on the part of the host country indigenous population. The load on the budgets of all levels increases, which is the cause of aggravating the socioeconomic situation as a whole.

At present, irregular migration seriously threatens both national security of an individual state or a group of countries, and even the entire world. It is especially topical today when migration processes markedly affect not only the policy-making in a number of European states but also the forming of new challenges and threats in the European continent as a whole. Human migration is one of the acutest and most dangerous global present-day problems which is essentially a global civilizational challenge.

Analyzing irregular migration as a challenge for the states of one or another region and its interaction with other challenges and threats, it is necessary, in my opinion, to apply a comprehensive and balanced approach envisaging an extensive use of the advanced scientific and methodological, logical and mathematical, and international legal tools in their totality. Their efficient and successful application may essentially help the respective ministries and federal agencies of the Russian Federation to fight against new challenges and threats of today as regards the development of a certain performance strategy at all levels of the top-down governance in the context of the present-day realities.

The irregular migration is closely associated with terrorism, illegal drug trafficking, piracy at sea, abduction and sale of people as well as other types of criminal activity. The transnational organized crime groups are receptive to occurring changes and rapidly adapt to new methods of trafficking in goods, cash, or people and to new transportation routes.

The main routes of the irregular migration of a large number of people lie through the territory of the Western Balkans. It is not only a transit region, but also the main source of weapons sold in the global arms markets, illegal drugs as well as money laundering by means of property investment and business companies. In source nations or transit countries the organized crime groups use ethnic or national links with the diasporas in the EU territory. Ethnic diasporas frequently in one form or another provide access of organized crime groups (OCG) to countries' markets, including in legal business structures, companies, and

goods traffic. OCG are also involved in organized crime in the sphere of real estate using the existing diasporas for logistical support.²

The international criminal is a fairly serious, experienced, and cunning adversary, well-trained, among other things, in the financial field, quickly adapting to the realities of modern life, and capable of fitting into the legal economy, rapidly coopting new members, and creating flexible partnerships with diverse criminal syndicates. The present-day criminality professionally masters advanced technologies, including the cyber domain. Mutual fighting of states against crime must produce results and be aligned with the times. It is important to act incrementally, if possible, proactively, and not to surrender the initiative. It is necessary to strengthen the law enforcement component by real deeds directed at eliminating the socioeconomic basis of present-day criminal business.³

Certain economically and militarily developed countries, first of all the U.S. and NATO members, in order to pursue their far-reaching geopolitical goals by waging resource and power wars that affect the formation of the servile policy in one or another region of the world, give a boost to the irregular migration process and migrants transformation from a rubble into a controlled monolith. The vivid examples are wars launched by the U.S. and NATO in the Middle East and North Africa, and the Arab Spring bloodshed, closely linked with and having acted as a catalyst of unprecedented migration flows from the countries of the Middle East and North Africa to Western Europe and particularly to Germany.

According to numerous scholars, what is meant here is the resettlement of peoples, the greatest in over a half-century since the end of World War II. It turned out that in Germany, the current political and administrative system of international relations management in the sphere of migration has been unprepared for this course of events much as German immigration laws have stopped to conform to the fast-changing geopolitical situation. Incidentally, from 1954 to the present day, around 31 million migrants moved to Germany for permanent residence.⁴

It should be noted that the attitude toward migration and immigrants in the territory of Old Europe is not marked by uniformity. The assessment of any given human deed undoubtedly bears the signature of public opinion forming in the society influenced by media. And public opinion is an area highly subject to manipulation.⁵ Encountering the harmful effect of colossal migration flows literally ravaging Europe in 2013-2016, European public opinion abruptly transformed from complacent and joyous to vicious and aggressive.

The present-day immigration policy in Germany undergoes significant changes in the context of the difficult demographic situation developing in the country. This situation also depends on a number of contradictions in the sphere of Germany's immigration policy:

- discrepancies between immigration laws in Germany, where the overwhelming majority of irregular migrants strive to get to, and the rapidly

- changing geopolitical situation in the world; growing imbalance between the indigenous population and arriving migrants;
- immigrants' ignorance of the German language as well as lack of necessary skills to find a job; demonstrative reluctance of the majority of immigrants to comply with the laws of Germany and integrate into the German society;
 - striving of immigrants to forcefully lay down the rule in certain regions of Germany and create territories free from legitimate power of the country;
 - rise in crime to that end and, above all, grave and heinous crimes (murder, sexual assault, and robbery), growth of illegal drug trafficking, arms traffic, human trafficking, etc.

The existence and activities of ethnic diasporas in Germany is perceived as the forming of closed enclaves unwilling to assimilate with the German society and observe its laws and cultural traditions. All this cannot but leave a mark on the current immigration policy of Germany. The policy of multiculturalism declared by Chancellor Angela Merkel has collapsed.

There is a real threat that irregular migrants, disgruntled and deprived of protection, will be recruited by diverse smuggling, terrorist, pirate, and other transnational organized crime syndicates. It should be noted that at present the most numerous immigrant community in Germany is torn apart – the split is between the immigrants earlier assimilated with the German society and those who have recently arrived in the country and are reluctant to accept German lifestyle.

It's natural that all these facts are alarming for the respective German services. In recent years, the German law enforcement agencies have registered a negative trend in the territory of the Western Balkans connected with the formation of radical Islamist terrorist networks for delivery of jihadists to conflict zones. Salafi-oriented preachers recruit militants in Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, and Macedonia for participation in combat actions in Syria and North Iraq. For the past three years, the number of immigrants in Germany has grown by one million and by the end of 2015 reached 9.11 million people.⁶ This factor has become a bane for law enforcement bodies of not only Germany but also of other countries, particularly Switzerland. According to the data of these countries' special services, since 2013, more than 880 Islamists have left Germany and about 60 persons – Switzerland to take part in combat actions in Syria and Iraq. At present, approximately one third of jihadists have already returned to Germany and 14 persons – to Switzerland. From the point of view of the German and Swiss special services, the Islamists coming back from hotspots of tension are a kind of "ticking time bomb."⁷

The German law enforcement agencies have found out that ISIS militants are being trained to sail through interviews in the police or reception centers for

immigrants to have the opportunity to hand in a refugee application. The nine triggermen of the Paris terrorist attack of November 13, 2015, as a result of which 130 people were killed, 90 persons in the Bataclan theater included, and 400 suffered wounds of varying severity, arrived in Europe as refugees. Up to this day, the supposed manufacturer of the bomb who arrived in Germany through the Balkans and Austria has not been found.⁸

According to the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, about two million immigrants arrived in Germany in 2015. The same year, around 860,000 people who didn't get a chance to obtain German passports voluntarily left Germany. At present, the number of immigrants is about 1.14 million.⁹

In 2015, 1031 assaults on refugee hostels were made in Germany and in 2016, 970 similar actions were registered. Moreover, 2,396 offenses against refugees outside hostels were committed in Germany.¹⁰

As a consequence of measures carried out by the German government and the European Union as a whole connected with the voluntary return of immigrants who failed to get the refugee status and preventive measures against irregular migration in the countries of its origin and transit, the number of immigrants coming to Germany has drastically decreased compared to 2015.

For example, according to German Minister of the Interior Thomas de Maizière, approximately 280,000 immigrants arrived in Germany in 2016 (in 2015 – over 800,000). Among persons having applied for political asylum, the number of descendants from Syria amounted to 36%, from Afghanistan – 17%, and from Iraq – 13%. In accordance with the Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees of July 28, 1951, adopted following UN General Assembly Resolution # 429 (V) of December 14, 1950, 36.8% of refugee status candidates received protection. Additionally, 22.1% of the designated persons received protection for staying in the territory of Germany.

At present, the German authorities have launched measures on repatriation of refugees to their origin countries. It is planned that in 2017, around 55,000 immigrants would voluntarily leave Germany, which is 20,000 more than in 2016. In order to facilitate their returning home, immigrants will be paid money (compensation) as well as aided at the settlement initial stage.¹¹ But if an immigrant resolves to arrive in Germany again, he/she will have to pay back the money given to him/her in full.¹²

However, it seems highly unlikely that these measures would resolve the irregular migrants issue. Immigrants would try to avoid deportation by any means using in this case any available methods and assets including armed resistance to the police. And this means that due to the provocative behavior of immigrants, the protests of indigenous population of Germany would grow and expand at an exponential rate. Today, the police in federated state (Land) North Rhine Westfalia anticipate the emergence of the so-called neighborhoods outside of law where the immigrants not obeying the law would rule. At present, problems connected with big Arab clans arise practically in all cities of the Ruhr

Industrial Region as well as in Cologne. The tensest situation is being unfolded in Marxloh, in the so-called problem quarter of Duisburg. In recent months, the police efforts on normalizing the situation have permanently resulted in police officers being attacked by members of Arab clans.¹³ Moreover, the situation is aggravating because unemployment prevails among immigrants, an opportunity to find a job in the German labor market without professional skills is absent, and ethnic tension is observed.¹⁴

Against the background of the growing discontent in the German society with the policy of the government headed by A. Merkel in the area of migration, the policy of dictate pursued by the U.S. toward their country (brazen and insolent behavior of the U.S. special services, including the National Security Agency, in the territory of Germany, etc.) arouses strong resentment and contempt among a greater number of Germans. The policy of sanctions imposed on Russia under Washington's pressure has already cost Germany 200,000 workplaces and 30 billion euro.¹⁵ As a result of Russia's tough response to the Western sanctions, European farmers lost 5.5 billion euro.¹⁶ Despite the allied relations of Germany and the U.S. within NATO, the United States strives at any cost to prevent the convergence of Germany and Russia and formation of a powerful economic alliance of two states as it can result in the loss of Washington's geopolitical and economic influence in the territory of the EU.

In its striving to prevent convergence of two strong continental states having much in common in their history and economies, the U.S. will take any measures not to lose its dominance in the European continent. With due regard to the unfolding catastrophic situation with immigrants in Europe and if the German Federal Government nevertheless make up their mind to follow an independent policy in respect of Russia, the U.S. could use immigrants organizing yet another full-scale color revolution. The technologies and scenario could be applied that have been repeatedly tested in other states with the mobilization of their shadow terrorist resources. This revolution could unprecedentedly destabilize the whole of Europe, which in its turn could threaten to escalate into a full-fledged interconfessional war in its center. It is fraught with fearful geopolitical, military, economic, and other complications with a colossal incalculable damage capable of triggering a chain reaction not only in Europe but the world over.

In February 2015, *The Washington Post* cited former CIA Director Michael Hayden who stated that in 2020 at the latest, Germany would be no longer controllable. The degradation of values, Islamization, mass unemployment, and reluctance of a certain part of immigrants to integrate coupled with other problems in Germany would become civil war prerequisites. In the CIA research *Circa 2020* presented as far as April 2008 by KOPP EXCLUSIV, "the uncontrollability of many European industrial centers" is forecasted. As far as Germany is concerned, according to this report, the Rhine-Main area, some parts of the Ruhr region (Dortmund and Duisburg are named in particular), Berlin, Ulm, Stuttgart as well as Hamburg environs could allegedly drop away from it. A sim-

ilar scenario in the given period is forecasted by the CIA for the Netherlands, Belgium, France, the UK, Denmark, Sweden, and Italy. According to the research mentioned above, powerful migration flows and unwillingness to integrate on the part of many immigrants is the basis of all developments. They will start taking up arms in the fight for “ethnically homogeneous vast neighborhoods outside of law” and defend them from all integrating efforts. In view of this, the CIA claims that parts of Europe will “explode” and the European Union in its present-day form will totally disintegrate.¹⁷

If the situation develops in accordance with the forecasts of CIA analysts, the European continent can plunge into a deep chaos for long as disturbances will move beyond the territory of Germany. They will be on the rise, and, quite possibly, affect the European Union as a whole. The EU leaders cannot but understand the problem, otherwise the question of survival of Western civilization and Christianity and Christian culture at large will be asked point-blank. This pace of developments will be a direct challenge to national security of the Russian Federation that compels the Russian authorities to respond using the whole of the available potential.

Despite rather tense situation with immigrants in the EU, it seems that this apocalyptic scenario is as yet unlikely, however, it should not be totally ruled out. The irregular migration in the European Union countries and primarily in Germany is becoming a serious geopolitical factor and global civilizational challenge closely tied with other types of transnational organized crime as well as with international terrorism. It should also be noted that continuing the open door policy pursued by the acting leadership of Germany headed by Chancellor Merkel can result in at least a serious socioreligious collapse in Germany itself, and in the longer term, give the upper hand to right-wing parties at the next parliamentary election with all that it entails.

The possible consequences of the irregular migration for Germany and the European Union as a whole for the foreseeable future can be the following:

- spreading practice of creating zones “free from the power of law” by immigrants not only in Germany, but also in Europe as a whole;
- forming numerous “sleeping cells” consisting of adherents of various terrorist groups, such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State, the most part of which are irregular migrants – descendants from the countries of North Africa and the Middle East;
- active involvement of migrants into illegal activities of various transnational organized crime groups (smuggling, terrorist, pirate) and their employment with the aim of committing grave and heinous crimes with religious implication;
- enhancement of turbulence processes in international relations while instability zones in the EU as a whole and in Germany in particular increase.

Irregular migration consequences for Germany and the EU in the long- and mid-term can be the following:

- forming in the territories of Greece, Albania, Italy, and other Mediterranean countries of closed Islamic enclaves involved in trafficking drugs, firearms, and ammunition, committing acts of terrorism, human trafficking, irregular migration, piracy at sea, on the Danube, and in the Mediterranean, and creating of stable alliances with mafia clans of Albania and other unstable countries of the region;
- interfering with freedom of navigation and possible repeating of the scenario, according to which the pirates act in a wide range of piracy affected areas of the globe, as well as a number of other dire consequences.

In sum, the following conclusions can be drawn.

- 1. In the conditions of rapidly growing globalization and given recent development trends in transnational organized crime in the world, the intensification of contacts between Russia and Germany in their fight against the irregular migration and other challenges and threats of modern times would be possible not only in a bilateral format within the framework of interagency and intergovernmental treaties in force but also multilateral format within the framework of such specialized international organizations as UNODC, Europol, Interpol, and others on the basis of European and international conventions on countering terrorism, transnational organized crime, corruption, etc. Such cooperation must proceed in strict compliance with the applicable laws of the Russian Federation and its international legal obligations.
- 2. The intensification of cooperation between Russia and Germany in their fight against new challenges and threats based on mutual respect and accommodation of both parties' interests and working out of a joint stance on countering the abovementioned challenges and threats would make it possible to create a highly efficient and influential center of power in the European continent that in the long run could become a serious counterbalance to the U.S. in order to neutralize its influence in Europe, prevent from pursuing a policy of double standards in the abovementioned sphere, and make it possible for Russia and Germany to come out in a united front at all international venues on issues of countering international terrorism, irregular migration, and organized crime as a whole.
- 3. Creating an efficient international security system meeting the standards based on respect for human rights, rule of law, strict compliance with the rules of international law embodied in the UN Charter, Universal Declaration of Human Rights (adopted by the third session of the UN General Assembly, Resolution 217 A (III) of December 10, 1948), and a number of other fundamental documents would make it possible to elab-

orate a concerted stance of Russia and EU countries, Germany in particular, on the issue of countering new challenges and threats of today and provide closer and more effective cooperation of Russia and Germany in the abovementioned sphere.

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