Migration as part of the state's foreign policy: Case study Slovakia

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Abstract

Border protection and the right to decide about entry and residence of foreign nationals on the state's territory are regarded as the most important manifestations of the state's sovereignty and usually fall under the control of the police forces and ministries of interior of individual states. Yet, in some cases, the migration flows heading to or by-passing the state's territory can transform from the issue of domestic policy to the foreign policy realm. The paper will outline conditions which have to be met for such transformation, as well as the consequences of this process on the example of a particular state – the Slovak Republic.

Keywords: domestic policy, foreign policy, migration, security, Slovak Republic

Introduction

Activities aimed at regulation of the international migration flows are an integral part of functioning of the modern national states. States regulate entry of foreigners into their territory from several reasons including security, economics and also political aspects. The current migration crisis of people from the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa hit the European Union (EU) at the end of 2014 and caught public attention in the Slovak Republic since 2015. Before its outbreak, the issue of migration was considered to be part of the state's domestic affairs and wasn't deemed as a keystone of the Slovak foreign policy. The right to decide on entry of foreigners to the state's territory has always been understood as a form of manifestation of the state's sovereignty. Therefore, it seems obvious to regard the Ministry of Interior as the key institution involved in shaping of each country's migration policy. However, the interconnection between international migration and foreign policy is becoming more and more evident over the last few years and migration is changing from the solely movement of people to the phenomenon which is able to determine not only the state's foreign policy, but also its perception by the other partners on the international level.

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Main aim of the submitted paper is to identify major factors that conditioned process of transformation of migration from an issue of domestic policy into one of the crucial realms of the Slovak foreign policy, as well as the specific time periods of this transformation. Furthermore, we aim to point out to specific examples of how migration shapes foreign policy of the state and its formation. Following analysis of the current development, the paper concludes with recommendations for the policy makers regarding topic of approaching the most burning issues stemming from the current migration crisis in the European Union so that the enforced policies would contribute to fulfilment of the Slovak foreign policy goals and domestic priorities.

Regarding the listed objectives, the paper is structured as follows: First, we analyse the nexus migration-foreign policy on the theoretical level. Based on the theory of Michael S. Teitelbaum, demographer dealing with international migration movements, the chapter approaches several levels of the reciprocal relation of the cited factors analysing foreign policy as a potential driver of migration movements on one hand and international migration as a factor determining state's foreign policy on the other hand. In relation to foreign policy, we analyse also the issue of security as a factor that can facilitate internationalization of migration and subsequently, the other chapter identifies particular phases of this process in the Slovak environment. In our context, we perceive "internationalization" as a process in which an issue (migration) transforms from the domestic policy to the foreign policy realm. Generally, we can identify two periods of the internalization process, with the first phase beginning in the 1990s and going on more intensively after 2000, when Slovakia strived for membership in the EU and the Schengen area and the second phase after 2014 reflecting the migration and refugee crisis in Europe. Finally, the last chapter deals with political impacts of migration on the Slovak foreign policy in the most recent months. These can be observed on the regional level reflecting the V4 countries attitudes towards the crisis and the emerging potential for reinforcement of the group's position in the region but also on the European level reflecting the Slovak Presidency in the Council of the EU in the second half of 2016.

The paper is based on the available literature and scientific studies, research papers but also internet sources as published on the websites of the relevant Slovak institutions and organizations, including the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic; Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic and Eurostat – statistical office of the European Union.[1]

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[1] It is important to note, that migration is a dynamically developing topic and the issue we deal with in this research paper reflects the conditions until September 2017.

1. Nexus migration – foreign policy

The state's foreign policy and international migration are intensively interconnected and they influence each other: migration flows condition adoption of measures for regulation of population movements by the nation states and they affect also the internal affairs such as provision of social services (basically health care, housing and education). Migration does affect also the population structure of the country and although significant population change demands long-lasting and continual immigration flow, also shorter but more intensive immigration waves can influence demography and cause security concerns of the original population. On the other hand, state disposes with quite effective tools to affect the migration flows[2], especially from the legal point of view. These tools include both restrictive immigration laws and border controls (Bogdan et al., 2014).

Migration flows can influence the foreign policy of the state and vice-versa – the foreign policy acts in many cases as determinant influencing establishment and heading of new migration flows. The relation among migration and foreign policy is of a multi-level character. An integral part of the foreign policy is therefore also creation of an effective border regime, introduction of stricter asylum procedures, control of irregular migration, or repatriation. Teitelbaum (1984) analyses four levels of relations between migration and the foreign policy. First, foreign policy as a factor stimulating international migration, although not always intentionally. An example can be military or political interventions that endangered stability of the target country and caused emigration flows from the particular regions. Second, international migration as a tool of foreign policy. Both the sending and the receiving countries can use migration flows as a tool for destabilization of their foreign enemies by means of granting asylum to migrants from the antagonistic regimes, or by encouraging civilian or military movement to the claimed territories in order to establish effective control of those regions – the so called unarmed conquest. Third, migration as a factor influencing foreign policy of the state. The foreign policy of the receiving country is in many cases influenced by the presence of a large numbers of refugees, immigrants or diasporas within the state borders; not only regarding the relations towards the home country of migrants, but also because of the fact, that the home country can strive for mobilization of its emigrants in the receiving state to reach the local government's support for its goals, such as support for membership in an international organization. Fourth, the foreign policy priorities, for example the security, can influence the form of the immigration/asylum policy. Thus, different forms of migration policy in different states result into unequal treatment of the same groups

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[2] Yet, international migration is interconnected with the process of globalization. Therefore, states efforts to control migration flows collide with the main globalisation tools – communication technologies and new means of transport.

of migrants in particular countries (Gokalp-Aras and Sahin-Mencutek, 2015). There is no universal definition of the term foreign policy[3], and also delimitation of its implementing tools is subject of many concerns. Liďák (2000) classifies wide variety of means that are used in the process of accomplishment of the foreign policy goals, such as diplomatic, economic, geographic, demographic, national, historical and cultural tools but also the military power of the state. As there is no uniform specification of the foreign policy tools, one can include to the list basically any activity of the state that has potential to influence its relations with the other actors of the international system. Based on this assumption, attempts to influence migration flows undertaken by the national states can be deemed as the foreign policy tools, as well.

As already mentioned, foreign policy can be understood as the means for realization of the state's national interests[4] and its heading depends on the power-political group ruling the country at the particular moment (Liďák, 2000). In the Slovak settings, each government draws up its foreign-policy goals in the document called *Manifesto of the Government of the Slovak Republic*. Since establishment of the independent Slovak Republic in 1993, there were nine governments ruling the country, including the current one, which was created after the general election held on 5 March 2016. Next part of the paper analyses six recent Manifestos, beginning with the one from 1998. The temporary limitation is based on the fact, that in 1998 Slovakia labelled its pro-European and pro-Atlantic orientation as a primary national interest of the state for the first time and the European Union and NATO have remained elementary partners for the Slovak foreign policy ever since. Particular attention of the following analysis is paid to the migration-foreign policy nexus as expressed in the analysed documents. Table no. 1 analyses the six documents from the qualitative and quantitative point by comparing frequency of the migration-related comments; classification of the migration issue to the paragraphs dealing with domestic or foreign policy and the general attitude of the government towards the issue.

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[3] Tayfur (1994, p. 117) defines foreign policy as "*...the official activity formulated and implemented by the authorized bodies of the sovereign states by means of orientations, plans, commitments and actions, that are directed towards the external environment of those states.*" Another quite complex definition comprehends the foreign policy as *"...a complex set of priorities and directives for the activities in certain conditions; it represents the basics of the country's behaviour towards other states and includes elementary goals which the national government wants to enforce on the international scene, as well as the tools used for achievement of these goals*" (Pearson and Rochester, 1992, p. 73).

[4] The national interest is for this purpose explained as "*...the complex of most general requirements of the state stemming from its geographic position, historical experience and actual relations towards the other centres of power.*" (Krejčí, 2001, p. 260); according to the criteria of relevance, time and generality, it is possible to divide national interests into primary and secondary interests; permanent and flexible interests; universal and specific interests.

Table 1. Migration-foreign policy nexus in the Slovak government's manifestos

GOVERNMENT	FREQUENCY OF THE MIGRATION RELATED COMMENTS	MIGRATION DEEMED AS FOREIGN POLICY(FP)/DOMESTIC POLICY (DP) ISSUE
Mikuláš Dzurinda 30.10.1998 15.10.2002	2	DP
	- Migration is mentioned in terms of state borders protection. The government declares to *"...create mechanisms to prevent infiltration of criminal organizations and their activities to the Slovak territory... It will review legal basis of the visa-free programs to prevent state borders violation and threat of migratory waves crossing our territory*." - Slovakia commits itself to implement its migration policy in accord with the standards of the EU.	
Mikuláš Dzurinda 16.10.2002 4.7.2006	1	DP
	Migration is addressed only in a limited scope in relation to the future EU membership of Slovakia. The government pledges to draw up new concept of the Slovak migration policy and adjust its visa policy to the EU legislation.	
Robert Fico 4.7.2006 8.7.2010	1	DP
	Document includes only two sentences on migration in the chapter dealing with internal security. First of them deals with further adaptation of the Slovak law to the European acquis; the other one with creation of the Immigration and Naturalization Office of the Slovak Republic (which has never come into being).	
Iveta Radičová 9.7.2010 3.4.2012	4	DP + FP
	- Migration is analysed in the context of the Slovak membership in the Schengen area. - The government declared that Slovakia will engage in the process of migrants' resettlement and relocation from the most burdened EU Member States respecting the principle of solidarity. - Slovakia commits itself to participate on creation of the Common European Asylum System and conclusion of readmission agreements with Russia and Ukraine. - Migration has been labelled as a new global challenge Slovakia needs to face.	
Robert Fico 4.4.2012 23.3.2016	0	n/a
	Manifesto of this government does not include any single mention of migration.	
Robert Fico 24.3.2016 nowadays	6	FP
	- The Slovak Republic considers a belt of persisting instability along the EU border, which gives rise to mass migration and international terrorism, as one of the most acute external challenges. - The government is prepared to support constructive solutions to the unprecedented migration crisis, respecting the specificities and capabilities of individual Member States. - The government will actively support implementation of the European Agenda on Security for the years 2015 – 2020, focusing in particular on illegal and uncontrollable migration. - The government will further intensify its fight against trafficking in human beings. - The government will strengthen its cooperation with the European Union in securing the external borders of the Schengen area. - One of the priorities of the Slovak Republic's presidency of the Council of the European Union is to support a swift build-up of the necessary personnel and technical capacities for the new European Boarder and Coast Guard Agency.	

Source: Úrad vlády SR [Government office of the SR], 2017

Present research in the field of international migration and foreign policy indicates significant impact of the security aspects of migration on the internationalization of the issue – especially with regard to perception and presentation of migration as the potential or immediate security threat. Nexus

migration–security can be analysed on two levels – connecting migration with the national security[5] and relating migration to the human security. We do not aim to prove or deny the claim that migration is a security threat. On the contrary – we take for granted, that securitization of migration has become the social reality over the last few decades in the public, on the political level and also on the scholarly level.

A detailed study of the migration-security nexus would require analysis of a wide range of factors reflecting the complexity of both terms. Considering the aim of this paper, we will narrow down the research of this topic to the aspect of securitization, which is understood as the theoretical reflection of the Copenhagen school[6] and the theory of constructivism in international relations. Securitization is defined as the process of transforming actions, processes or actors present in an international environment into security threats based upon language, interpretation or perception.

However, it is not right to uncritically accept perception of migration as a security threat, whether on the level of theory or the practical level. First of all, migration is a process that can have uncountable number of forms. Therefore, it is important to distinguish which particular form of migration might cause potential security concerns. Most scholars agree on the fact, that it is mainly irregular migration which can be treated as the matter of concern. Interestingly, the public also deems especially the increase of irregular[7] migration flows as the security threat. Nevertheless, even more important than rising numbers of irregular migrants is (for the issue of securitization) lack of information on who and for what particular reason comes to the state. Therefore, the term "irregular" connotes casting off the state control and thus, it is perceived as dangerous for the state. The core of the problem is the supposed connection of migration and terrorism, organized crime and endangerment of human life and health. Although most experts agree that it is not possible to prove direct connection in these areas, assumptions and expectation often prevail over reality which results into establishment of new policies targeted against this "threat". The policies include diverse restrictive measures, which can finally negatively influence the human security of migrants themselves (for more see Koser, 2011).

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[5] Scholars emphasize the fact, that discussions on relation between migration and (national) security are much more concerned with the security of the developed states (mainly receiving states of migrants) than the one of the developing countries (mostly sending or transit countries of migrants). Paradoxically, the migration management is a security challenge more for the poor states than for the rich, developed ones (Wohlfeld, 2014).

[6] Traditional definition of security referring to the direct armed clashes of two beliggerents is unsufficient in the modern world. For the topic of migration, it is important to horizontally discern especially the narrow – mostly military comprehension of security and the wider concept perceiving security as the phenomenon involving not only military, but also economic, societal, political, environmental and other factors (Lasicová, 2006; Ušiak and Nečas, 2011).

[7] The causes for rising numbers of irregular migrants include the general increase of mobility in the world as the consequence of globalisation and modernisation of transportation and communication technologies; but also growing restrictions of legal migration possibilities; discrepancy between labour market demand and supply and also the fact that mass migration is often caused by a severe abuse of human rights and conflicts in the world (Wohlfeld, 2014, p. 67).

2. Phases of "internationalization" of the Slovak migration policy

International migration always affects at least two countries – home countries of migrants and the receiving states. Therefore, its sole core has an international character. However, when comparing the structure of ministries and distribution of their responsibilities in the Slovak Republic, but also in most of the EU Member States (Bolečeková and Olejárová, 2016), we can conclude that most migration issues fall within the competencies of ministries for interior and they are thus deemed as the issues of domestic policies and security. We suppose this can be subscribed to the perception of the state sovereignty, but also to the fact that the process of crossing the state borders by international migrants is intertwined with the state's responsibility to protect its internal borders and its citizens by monitoring the coming and stay of foreigner on the state's territory.

Control and protection of the state borders, as well as the particular phases of entry and stay of foreign nationals on the Slovak territory, beginning with granting residence permit to the granting of citizenship in the Slovak Republic fall within the responsibilities of the police forces under control of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic. Yet, migration is a cross-sectional field and therefore, there are many other governmental agencies and state administrative bodies taking part in process of formation of the Slovak migration policy and performance of tasks emerging from the key documents. These include – Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak republic; Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic; Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic and the Slovak Statistical Office. In the future, it is expected that the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic would become more involved in the process, as well as the other local authorities and municipalities (Migration Policy of the Slovak Republic – Perspective until the Year 2020).

2.1. First phase: establishment of the state and entry to the EU and Schengen

Due to the socio-political development of the country, Slovakia was almost half a century isolated from the natural international migration flows and also from this reason still belongs to the EU Member States with one of the lowest immigrants per capita. Shortly after establishment of the new state in 1993, the Slovak Republic was forced to react to the growing immigration flows but also rising numbers of emigrants leaving the country. The need and general demand to formulate positions and define attitudes to particular types of international migration has become even more intensive following the Slovak efforts to integrate into the EU. This striving was also shaping course of the

Slovak government in particular areas of the migration management[8]. There are two breaking points for the Slovak migration policy – year 2004, when Slovakia became a member of the EU and year 2007 when the country joined the Schengen area. The legal migration in the state started to rise – on one hand because of the movement of Slovak nationals to the other EU countries, on the other hand due to the rising numbers of the EU Member States' citizens in the Slovak Republic (Divinský, 2009).

After the EU accession, Slovakia continues with systematization of the legal acts dealing with migration and coordinates the Slovak migration policy with the existing legislation on the European level. This period can be labelled as the first phase of "internationalization" of the migration policy in the Slovak milieu. In the same period, the Slovak authorities detected decrease in irregular migration referring to attempts at illegal border crossings, as well as illegal stay of the foreigners on the Slovak territory. This development can be subscribed to the Slovak membership in the Schengen area and associated increased protection of the EU external borders from irregular third-countries migrants. Therefore, the first phase of internationalization of the Slovak migration policy is generally regarded as bringing mostly positive impacts for the country.

2.2. Second phase: Slovak migration policy after the 2014 migration crisis

The migration crisis that hit the EU in 2014 and more intensively in 2015 did not impact the Slovak Republic in a significant way from the quantitative point of view. Although Slovakia was not the main destination state of migrants and asylum seekers from the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa, the country has caught the attention of the entire EU following highly negative attitude of the Slovak political leaders towards migration. The most politicians based their argumentation mostly on the "security concerns"[9].

In regard to the migration crisis, we can conclude conformity of all relevant political parties in Slovakia concerning their attitude towards the issue of granting asylum and other forms of protection of non-citizens from the third-countries on the Slovak territory; as well as towards the proposals for

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[8] Before Slovakia joined the EU, the state passed new laws on residence of the foreign nationals and on asylum and accomplished fundamental institutional reforms, especially establishment of the Migration office of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic.
Integration efforts became the main driver affecting formulation of the Slovak migration policy. First *Conception of Migration Policy of the Slovak Republic* (Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 11/2005) was adopted for the period 2005-2010. The other document of the migration policy was called *Conceptual Plans of the Migration Policy of the SR for the Period 2011-2015* (Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 67/2011). The key document of the present migration policy of the state is the *Migration Policy of the Slovak Republic – Perspective until the Year 2020* (Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic no. 574/2011).
[9]Androvičová (2015) points out, that the security aspect dominated the migration discussions in the Slovak Republic already before the outbreak of the migration crisis.

solution of the migration crisis and its origins, which should proceed in cooperation with the countries of origin of migrants. Based on the previous analysis, it is possible to identify several proposals for the crisis solution common for most of the Slovak political parties:

1. protection of the EU external borders;
2. refusing of the EU obligatory quotas on migrants;
3. creation of detention facilities outside of the EU territory which should concentrate migrants heading to the EU in order to review their asylum request, assort them into groups and redistribute successful asylum seekers to the EU receiving countries;
4. stabilization of situation in the home countries of migrants, especially in Syria, Libya and Iraq;
5. precise selection of asylum seekers and economic migrants, who are not eligible for the refugee status, subsidiary protection, temporary protection or any other form of protection in the EU.

It is undeniable, that the current situation and development of the migration flows significantly impacts the issue of perceiving migration as the security threat by the public. Yet, it is questionable, to what measure is the public opinion influenced by the international reality and what impact have the official political statements of the parliamentary representatives, that were highly negative since the outbreak of the crisis until nowadays. Twice a year, always in May and November, the EU conducts a general survey of the public attitudes towards different social, political or economic issues in all EU Member States. The survey aims to discover and compare statistical data regarding EU citizens' position towards Union's institutions; perception of the general heading of the EU as a whole and prioritization of problems that the EU and its Member States have to face. By comparing results of Eurobarometer 83 (May 2015) and Eurobarometer 85 (May 2016), it is possible to observe gradual "internationalization" of the topic of migration of the third-countries citizens in the Slovak setting. The topic of migration has been indirectly included in two Eurobarometer questions: 1.What do you think are the two most important issues facing our country at the moment? 2. What do you think are the two most important issues facing the EU at the moment? Whereas in the spring 2015, only 4% of the Slovak citizens responded "migration" to the first question and 35% of them to the second question – in May 2016 the percentage raised to 17% in the first case and 59% in the second case (European Commission, 2016). Increase of negative attitudes of the Slovak citizens certainly reflects escalation of irregular migrants coming to the European Union in the second half of 2015, when the migration crisis reached its peak – the Frontex agency detected 978,338 irregular border crossings in the EU over the last quarter of 2015, which is ten times more than over the last quarter of 2014 with 79,819 irregular border crossing (Frontex, 2016).

Based on the stated facts, we can conclude that "internationalization" of migration in the Slovak Republic has been conditioned by the recent development of migration flows over the present

migration crisis along with its increased negative presentation by the influential political elites. The period 2015-2016 is considered to be the most important phase since establishment of independent Slovak Republic regarding migration. In this period, migration has become important and crucial part of the Slovak foreign policy. This statement would be verified in the following part.

3. Impacts of migration on the Slovak foreign policy

Taking into concern the one-party government ruling the country in 2012-2016, the political decision making including foreign policy priorities depended mostly on decisions of the government party. Position of the Slovak Republic towards the crisis can be defined by two attitudes: first, support of voluntary relocations and second, rejection of the quota system as adopted in the Council Decision (EU) 2015/1601 establishing provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of Italy and Greece on 22 September 2015. Pursuant to the proposed scheme, 120,000 migrants are to be relocated to the EU's Member States following the size of economy and population of the particular Member State. According to the Annex I and II of the cited Decision, Slovakia would be required to take 802 refugees – 190 from Italy and 612 from Greece. Out of the 28 Union's Member States only the Czech Republic, Hungary and Romania were also against the quota system and Finland abstained in the ballot. Slovakia – under the then one-party government of SMER - reacted by filling an action for annulment to the Court of Justice (case C-643/15), challenging the legality of the Asylum-Seekers Relocation Decision from 22 September 2015 establishing provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of Italy and Greece[10]. Hungary, which was asked to take 1,294 asylum seekers, joined the Slovak action three months later. Process at the CJEU started on 10 May 2017. On 6 September that year, the Court has rejected a challenge by Hungary and Slovakia. This step significantly contributed to change of perception of the Slovak Republic abroad to the country that does not want to accept refugees, neither to express solidarity with the other EU Member States.[11] Yet, unlike in case of Hungary and Poland, which refuse to take any migrants under the relocation mechanism; Slovakia was aware of its legal obligations under the EU law and relocated

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[10] Through the action for annulment brought before the Court of Justice of the European Union, the claimant requests the annulment of an act adopted by a European Union institution, body, office or organisation. Consequently, the Court reviews legality of an act and may annul the act based on one of the four grounds: lack of competence; infringement of an essential procedural requirement; infringement of the Treaties or of any rule of law relating to their application; misuse of powers (EUR-Lex, 2010).

[11] Except of accusations against Slovakia from unsolidarity (towards migrants seeking international protection on one hand and towards the other EU Member States which admit asylum seekers on its territories), there is another negative connotation regarding Slovakia and migration – linking the country with discriminatory rhetoric. The reason was mainly a decision of the Slovak government to accept only Syrian asylum seekers of Christian religion.

16 migrants from Greece until July 2017 despite political refusal of the Decision (EU) 2015/1601 (European Commission, 2017). Thus, consequences of the Court decision on the action have more political than legal impact for the country. This can be reflected on the EU level in case of future talks on different political agenda issues including the EU budget. There are concerns over the potential attempts of some EU Member States to retaliate to Slovakia for its attitude towards the quota system despite the official proclamations, that the stance on migration will not affect other realms of cooperation among the states on the EU level. If the country continues to stand up to its legal duties, it does not have to fear any legal measures from the EU unlike Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic. These countries face an infringement procedures initiated on 14 June 2017 for their non-compliance with their obligations under the 2015 Council Decisions on relocation.[12]

Despite the fact that Slovak politicians refused mandatory quotas they emphasized readiness to help "according to our own possibilities" Slovak help over the course of the migration crisis took form of sending police units, which were helping (and they still do) on the borders in countries facing most intensive migration pressure (including the EU Members States, as well as the third countries). Furthermore, the government of Slovakia concluded bilateral agreement with Austria about temporary relocation of asylum seekers from Austria to the recently re-opened asylum centre in Gabčíkovo in the Slovak Republic over the course of the entire asylum procedure in Austria until the final decision is made. In cooperation with the civil society *Pokoj a Dobro* (Peace and the Good), Slovakia granted asylum to 149 Assyrian Christians from Iraq. However, part of them decided to return back to their home country after several months. In October 2015, government allocated 500,000 € from the sources of the national lottery company TIPOS for humanitarian projects of non-governmental organizations rendering assistance in the refugee crisis (Úrad vlády SR [Government office of the SR], 2015). During the UN Summit for refugees and migrants[13], that took place on 19 September 2016 in New York, the Slovak Republic assumed commitment to grant 550 governmental scholarships for refugees until 2021[14]. After the end of the summit, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic Miroslav Lajčák stated: "*I take the result of this summit and our participation in it to be a success. It has been confirmed, that we do not stand aside when global problems are solved and we are ready to become involved in a constructive way*" (SITA, 2016).

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[12] Neither Hungary, not Poland relocated anyone since the scheme started. The Czech Republic has not relocated anyone since August 2016 (with 12 migrants relocated until that date) and not made any new pledges for over a year (European Commission, 2017).

[13] Information on course of the summit and its conclusions can be found online at http://refugeesmigrants.un.org/.

[14] Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic stated, that this is an unprecedented number within the scope of our country and at the same time very useful investment, because the refugees, who get education in Slovakia, will be able to make use of it later by helping with restoration of their home countries.

Another particular impact of the migration crisis on the Slovak foreign policy is visible on development of relations in the V4 group. Central European countries manifested relatively high degree of unity regarding solution of the current crisis. A common sign is refusal of mandatory quotas on relocation of asylum seekers in the EU; solution of the current situation on voluntary basis; increase of protection of the Schengen external borders and cooperation with the sending and transit countries in the Middle Eastern region and sub-Saharan Africa. Another common sign is a high degree of anti-immigration and above all anti-Muslim sentiment typical for all V4 states both on the highest political level just like as in the general public of the particular states, as shown from the opinion polls. Most striking parallels are to be found when comparing stand of the Slovak and Hungarian government regarding mandatory quotas – as noted earlier, only three months after the Slovak reaction, Hungary also filled an action for annulment against Decision from 22 September 2015 (Case C-647/15). [15] On the other hand, Poland voted in favour of the Council Decision (EU) 2015/1601 and thus, set off another path compared to the other V4 countries, although the current Polish government reflects the general V4 attitude[16]. Certain differences can be found by comparing stands of the political leaders of the particular V4 countries. The president of the Slovak Republic is considered to be the most liberal over issues of migration among the leaders of the other Central and Eastern European countries, whose approaches are more clear-cut. Yet, generally, Central Europe is deemed as the most radical opponent of the common EU measures aimed at the third-countries migration and the V4 states are often criticized for unwillingness to manifest solidarity with countries in the south-eastern Mediterranean and Western Balkans, who face the biggest migration pressure in respect of their geographical location at the EU external borders.

Despite listed negative connotations on the European level, migration crisis had certain positive impacts – it has confirmed conformity of opinions of the V4 states and the general importance of the existence of the V4 as a platform facilitating enforcement of the common interests of the Central European countries in the EU. Migration crisis created an opportunity for the V4 and thus, Slovakia,

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[15] At the beginning of October 2016, there was a referendum in Hungary dealing with migration. The question was formulated as follows: „Do you want the European Union to be able to mandate the obligatory resettlement of non-Hungarian citizens into Hungary even without the approval of the National Assembly?" The referendum was invalid due to low turnout (41.32 % of valid votes and 6.17% invalid votes), however, overwhelming majority (98.36% i.e. 3,643,055 out of 8,272,625 qualified voters) who voted in the referendum was in favour of the government's anti-quota position (Aktuality.sk, 2016).

[16] Compared to the other V4 countries, Poland was always specific in the issue of migration. The reason is on one hand incomparably larger territory and population in comparison with the Czech Republic, Slovakia or Hungary; on the other hand it is the different historical experience with migration (especially presence of the Ukrainians and Byelorussians on the territory of the state). These differences appeared already in 2005 in an opinion poll dealing with the issue of migrants and foreigners that took place in all V4 countries. The Polish people were much more opened to the foreigners compared to the rest of the V4 states. Statistically, 62% of Polish citizens perceived settlement of the foreigners on their territory positively. Positive reaction to the same question expressed only 34% of people in Slovakia, 26% of people in the Czech Republic and 23% of people in Hungary (Visegrad Group, 2016).

to prove its influence in the process of making decisions and solving problems on the European level. Refusal of the common EU measures and differentiation of opinions on how to solve the crisis contributed to change of perception of Slovakia (and the V4), which started to be treated as a relevant actor and fully-fledged member of the EU that has to be taken into account in the process of formation of the European policies. As noted by Terem and Lenč (2015, p. 681), migration crisis has become „...*certain indicator of whether the Central Europe is ready to reinforce its position in the system of international relations, or whether it will remain only an object of great powers interests*.“

Last but not least, change of the intensity of migration flows was reflected in formulation of priorities of the Slovak Presidency in the Council of the EU, beginning on 1 July 2016. Slovak Presidency had four priorities: economically strong Europe; modern single market; sustainable migration and asylum policies; and globally engaged Europe. In the field of migration Slovak Presidency strived to "...*encourage the Union to develop more sustainable migration and asylum policies...*" because "...*the current migration crisis is putting enormous pressure on the EU's external borders and on the asylum systems of the Member States*" (Priority slovenského predsedníctva [Priorities of the Slovak Presidency], 2016). Paradoxically, in 2014, when the Slovak authorities started with the preparatory phase for this important task; nobody expected that migration would become one of the most important topics of the Slovak Presidency[17]. One of the first documents outlining program priorities of Slovakia for the Council Presidency was a report called *Preparing Presidency of the Slovak Republic in the Council of the EU 2016 – basic platform and current priorities*, drafted in 2012. The report proposed that national priorities should reflect Slovak long-term strategic goals and interests – cooperation with the non-members of the EU in the Eastern Europe and in the Balkans; enlargement of the EU; Strategy EU 2020; or the issue of treatment of water resources in the EU as the topic stressing particularities of Slovakia as the presiding country (Úrad vlády SR [Government office of the SR], 2016). The topic of migration, refugees or border protection – despite location of Slovakia at the EU external borders – was completely absent in 2014 and turned into most fundamental issues of the Slovak Presidency only in 2016 despite the fact that the impact of migration crisis in Slovakia was (at least regarding amount of asylum seekers and irregular migrants) compared to the other Member States relatively moderate.[18]

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[17] Little known fact is, that 85% of each state's Presidency agenda results from the common program document of the Presidency Trio; 10% are the priorities reflecting current development in the European Union and only 5% is set up by the presiding state itself.

[18] Regarding number of asylum applications submitted by the third-countries migrants in the EU Member States in 2015, Slovakia was on the 25. place out of 28 EU countries. Asylum application was submitted only by 330 persons from the third-countries (including 149 asylum seekers from Iraq as mentioned above in the text). On the other side of the chart were the states most burdened by asylum applications in 2015 - Germany (441,800), Hungary (174,400), Sweden (156,100), Austria (85,500), Italy (83,200) and France (70,600) respectively (Eurostat, 2016).

Conclusions

International migration was for the long time perceived as the matter of domestic policy of the Slovak Republic. In the second half of the 20th century, the migration flows on the territory of the contemporary Slovak Republic consisted almost solely from Slovak emigrants leaving abroad in order to find work or run away from the regime and political leadership in their home state. After establishment of the sovereign Slovak Republic, there was only negligible number of foreigners living on the state's territory – most of them were citizens of the neighbouring countries, whose stay in Slovakia was conditioned by economic purposes – they were working in the state; or by family ties. Slovakia was never a traditional final destination for third-countries migrants coming to Europe, what is apparent on the number of granted asylums in Slovakia. However, migration is currently important factor influencing foreign policy of the Slovak Republic and its relations with the other subject of international law – especially the European Union and its Member States.

Following the first aim of the study as outlined in the introduction of the paper, the three main factors which significantly contributed to internationalization of the migration topic in the Slovak Republic are the Slovak membership in the EU; Slovak membership in the Schengen area and the outbreak of the migration crisis in 2014. Besides, we managed to provide sufficient evidence for the claim that securitization of migration in the Slovak setting has also helped to transformation of migration from the domestic to an international agenda. Public fears from influx of irregular migrants, threat of physical and cultural security or imperilment of the economic stability of the state were an important impulse that forced political representatives to adopt an official stance towards the issue on an international level, which would reflect public opinion and the attitude of Slovak citizens. Paradoxically, negative public position towards migration was pretty much brought about by the political discourse taking place as part of the 2016 pre-election campaign; as well as insufficient objectivity when informing general public about the on-going migration and refugee crisis.

Internationalisation of migration can be observed also when comparing Manifestos of the last six Slovak governments. Whereas the first three documents (1998-2002, 2002-2006, and 2006-2010) treated migration solely as a matter of domestic policy and did not pay any particular attention to this phenomenon; the Manifestos after 2010 started to perceive migration as an integral part of the state's foreign policy with an exemption of the 2012-2016 government's Manifesto, which does not mention migration at all. The Radičová government (2010-2012) labelled migration as a new global challenge and the current government of Robert Fico (2016 – nowadays) deems migration as one of the most current external challenges Slovakia needs to face. Yet, despite general conformity that was reached across the political spectrum in Slovakia regarding transformation of migration from the domestic to

the foreign policy realm; there are still severe differences on how to approach this topic, depending on the current ruling elite in the state. Whereas Radičová government supported solidarity, conclusion of resettlement agreements and relocation of migrants from the most burdened states on the EU borders; the recent government of Robert Fico proclaims in the Manifesto that the government is prepared to support constructive solutions to the migration crisis, yet respecting the specificities and capabilities of individual Member States.

In an attempt to identify particular areas of Slovak foreign policy which were most intensively influenced by migration, we have to point out to the impact of crisis on the V4 countries resulting into closer cooperation among its members. Besides, Slovakia started to be deemed differently – not anymore as a newly integrated member of the EU, but as an equal actor, that respects the foreign policy lines as created by the older Member States but that must be taken into account in the process of creation of the new EU policies. On the other hand, negative consequences on the European level include widely spread perception of Slovakia as the state that refused to share common responsibility and solidarity with the countries located at the borders with the Middle East region as the source region of migrants coming to the EU. Another negative aspect is presentation of the Slovak Republic in context of discrimination of asylum seekers related to the governmental decision to accept only Syrian Christian families. Migration crisis affected also Slovak Presidency in the Council of the EU – whereas the first conceptual documents drafted in 2012 did not make any provision for migration as the topic of the Presidency Trio; it has finally become one of the four program priorities of the Slovak Presidency.

Regarding impact of migration on the foreign policy of the Slovak Republic, it is possible to formulate recommendations on the general level and recommendations related to the solution of the current migration crisis. On the general level – in case there will not be any radical changes in legal migration flows affecting demographic development of the EU Member States including Slovakia, the priority of the country remains support of labour immigration of qualified workers and thus, effective implementation of the Council Directive 2009/50/EC on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment (Blue Card Directive). Slovakia, but also the other so called new Member States need to pay attention to the "brain drain", seek instruments and take steps to prevent people from leaving abroad (although this might seem contradictory to the free movement of people, especially workforce, in the EU). The other goal should be maximization of drawing of the EU funds allocated for the field of migration and management of external borders. Finally, despite rise of irregular migration from the Eastern and Southern Mediterranean, Slovakia cannot focus all of its sources on the new challenges but has to live up to its obligations of protecting the Slovak-Ukrainian border (external Schengen border),

among others because of the on-going instability in Ukraine and unsure development of the situation in the future.

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