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IMMIGRATION POLICY AND DEMOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVES OF BULGARIA

(Summary)

The contemporary migratory process in Bulgaria is a new and complex phenomenon, which has been observed since the 90s of the twentieth century till nowadays. There is a change of the external migratory pattern that becomes of mixed type, i.e. besides emigration, immigration flow to the country is observed.

Due to the variety of factors that cause migratory process, no modern theory can fully comprise and clarify all aspects of migration. The chosen in the thesis model for tracking the immigration process through all its stages in the sending and receiving areas of micro, meso and macro level allows the most complete study of international migrations.

Some basic demographic characteristics of immigrants in Bulgaria have been analyzed. On the basis of the national features, several specific categories are included such as: settler on the basis of origin (in this case Bulgarian), type of desired immigrant, immigrant with satisfied preferences, etc. Thus, the analysis is enriched; especially when it comes to different cohorts of immigrants, as already the age differences are reported that undoubtedly reflect the attitudes. This typologization is also important in cross-sectional analysis, which is used together with other conventional approaches, e.g. Old-age dependency ratio, rates of aging, etc. It is beneficial also in the development of specific programs and policies for intake of immigrants and the necessary assistance by the competent authorities for their settlement and integration in the long run.

The identification of immigrants by their demographic characteristics and categories allows the integrated approach for a control and management of the immigration to be consistent with the determination of its effects on the age structure of the population and the potential of the labor force.

Bulgaria is situated on a geographic crossroad and through its territory pass some basic migration roads, along which come migration flows from North Africa, the Near and Middle East, China and Indo-China, Russia and the Western Balkans. Over the last decade to 2011 the immigrants in Bulgaria are 131.5 thousand. They represent 1.79% of the population of Bulgaria. From the total number of immigrants 36.7 thousand are persons with foreign citizenship. Persons who declared to have dual citizenship - Bulgarian and other, are 22.2 thousand people. A big part of them are of Bulgarian origin who received Bulgarian citizenship. The others are Bulgarian citizens by birth who have acquired foreign citizenship.

The remaining 72.7 thousand people are mainly Bulgarian citizens that lived constantly abroad and returned to the country.

When comparing the age structures of the immigrants and the population of Bulgaria as a whole, it turns out that immigration has led to the increase of population in the young age groups. For example, in the age group 20-29 years the population of Bulgaria without

immigrants is 13.13%. Thanks to immigrants in this age group its share increased to 13.31%. The situation is similar in the age group 30-39 years, in which the population of Bulgaria without immigrants is 14.43%. Thanks to immigrants in this age group, the share increased to 14.65%.

The presented results of the three versions of the official forecast of National Statistic Institute for the development of the population till 2060, integrated with the projections for immigration flows by size and age structure, show that it is possible only to delay the process of reduction of the country's population and some rejuvenation. Due to the younger average age of immigrants compared to the average age of the whole population, it was found that this rejuvenating effect occurs only in the short and medium term.

In the long term (the second half of the XXI century) the immigration in its former age characteristics will further contribute to the deterioration of the age indices of the population mainly due to the small number of individuals in the age range 0-15 among immigrants and the rapid passing of immigrants from the group of middle age to the group of older ages.

The lack of well-developed and operative strategy for integrated management of immigration, limits the possibility for the immigration flow to be the main factor that will determine the extent of this aging of the population.

Monitoring of immigration must be consistent with the expected demographic effects. The identified migratory pressure upon the southeastern border of the country defines the already formed another type of immigration flow, with different features. This trend is currently irreversible and it requires defining clearly the type of "preferred" immigration.

Currently, there is no authority to monitor the degree of integration of not only this type of immigrants, but even of persons of Bulgarian origin.

Therefore the immigration policy requires long-term program and measures. The decision, which would contribute most heavily to focusing on migratory policy, is the establishment of an authority with competencies in all areas - from legal to illegal immigration. The consolidation of all policies in the field of migration and their integration by a single authority outside other ministries would help greatly to improve coordination, information transfer and process management itself.