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Political contexts of migration crisis in Europe

Though the public attention towards migration crisis seems to drop this year in Europe, the political roots and consequences still remain valid and continuing to shape European politics. The most important political contexts are the following:

a) Syria as the unstable and unsafe region. The most important parties involved in the conflict have not come up with the political solution, meanwhile even no solution to end military actions is taken yet. Conflict in Syria caused big humanitarian catastrophe and affected huge number of people: estimated 13,5 million are in a need of humanitarian help; 6,3 million are displaced internally in Syria, 4,8 million left the country to neighbor states, almost 2 million reached the European countries. Different interests of biggest states in Syria conflict – United States and Russia – do not let to achieve political solution on a sustainable peace. Moreover, Syria is not the single source for global migration, sub-Saharan Africa constitutes another big route of moving people. The former head of U.K.'s mission in Libya has said in Spring, 2017 that 1 million people are on the road to Europe across Africa.

b) European Union's relationship with Turkey – the country which is capable directly to control of illegal migration flows from its territory to Greek islands and further to EU. On March 18, 2016 EU signed agreement with Turkey providing 6 billion Euros by the end of 2018 for the help of migrants on the territory of Turkey. The plan let to diminish the numbers of migrants going to Europe, however mutual distrust between EU and Turkey pulls down a shadow on positive political agenda between the parties. The source of this distrust is associated with longstanding expectations on possible Turkey's membership of the European Union. President Recep Erdogan's decline to authoritarian rule in recent years makes European leaders suspicious towards good mutual relations. Angela Merkel has told in early September, 2017:„I don't see them ever joining and I had never believed that it would happen", by meaning Turkey's membership to the EU.

c) The rise of radical Right within the European countries. Though the majority of political scientists view these activities as the mainly populist movements (which seek to gain political outcomes from cheaply inciting the primitive fear on newcomers), nobody seems to deny the old serious problems of multiculturalists politics in Europe. The social-political integration in the multi-ethnic states as Germany, France and U.K. (and United States in another context) was not so successful that would prevent the internal divisions or even conflicts between different ethnic-cultural-religious origin groups. The issues of social welfare, job market, national culture, religious symbols on public (particularly in France) were at stake long before global migration crisis started in Europe. The rise of far Right just resembles old tensions in troubled times as the result of unsolved internal problems within the nation-states. Adding the security issue – the periodic terror attacks across Western Europe – reasonable concerns of society need to be addressed by the governing political elites. If not, the vacuum provides a good terrain for radicalism.

d) The division between Western and Eastern European states on the refugee crisis. European Commission in June 14, 2017 started the infringement procedure against Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland regarding non-compliance the agreed numbers of relocation of migrant persons as the commitment to Greece and Italy. Eastern European countries are much more negative to "welcome politics" on illegal migration. Euroscepticism and turn to national political agenda is vividly rising within these former communist countries. Whether this shift is a decline from European identity/values or a reassertion of narrow

nationalistic politics towards a closed undemocratic society – it is an open question, I think, especially bearing in mind that the people in these countries are highly pro-European.

e) The uncertain nature and role of the European Union itself. EU suffers from democratic legitimacy and is not certain what formula it should take: "more Europe" or "less Europe"? Based just on market integration or deeper political union? Different speed Europe or the united whole? All agree that the benefits of common market (including free movement of Shengen area) should be maintained, however recent nationalistic move on both sides of Atlantic (U.K. and U.S.) prompt again the EU the question about its nature. Actually the question of "what should the EU be?" rests on the question what is the role of nation state in a globalized world.