

**Konferencija rektora europskih sveučilišta i sveučilišta mediteranskih zemalja
„Bridging the Distances and the International Challenges“
Rim, 25. lipnja 2015. godine**

**Izlaganje rektora Hrvatskog katoličkog sveučilišta
prof. dr. sc. Željka Tanjića**

THE EUROPEAN UNION AND MIGRATION

The population of the European Union is ageing, and this trend is expected to continue into the future. As a result, when talking about the migration policies of the European Union, it is necessary to take the poor demographic structure of its members into account. Analysts of the Migration Policy Centre at the European University Institute, Florence, offer the following responses in reply to a question about what would happen if, in the next 20 years, immigration into the EU were to end: The EU would lose 33 million working age people (-11%); the age dependency ratio in the EU (the number of people older than 65 years of age in relation to the number of working age people) would increase from 28% to 44%; the proportion of young workers (the age group between 20 and 30 years) in the work force of the EU would be reduced by 25%, and the proportion of workers in the age group between 60 and 70 years would increase by 29%. (*Philippe Fargues (ed.) 2014. Is what we hear about migration really true? Questioning eight stereotypes. Migration Policy Centre at the European University Institute: Florence.*) On the basis of these estimates, as expected, the migration policy of the EU is founded on immigration policies. There are two challenges in terms of immigration policy: the first challenge is relatively predictable and lies in the quality planning of labour migration, to attract a specific profile of migrants; but the second, unpredictable challenge is illegal migration. These challenges and the direction of immigration policy are in opposition to each other. On the one hand, a balance must be found between rational planning and clear, expected aims, which must meet the needs of the economies of the EU countries, and on the other hand there is the unplanned and uncontrolled inflow of immigrants, who see better opportunities for life in EU countries. When considering planned labour migration, it is necessary to align the labour force supply and demand on a regional, national and global level. The legislative frameworks of legal labour migration are very selective and aimed at highly educated workers, who possess skills that are in demand. There is also a need for workers with a lower level of education, but due to the lack of appropriate legal migration pathways, a significant proportion of this is met through illegal migration. Planning migration policies demands a multidisciplinary approach as a basic requirement for successful policies. National policies pose an additional problem, with their specific developmental needs and aims. It is vital to respect the principle of human rights and the rights of migrants from international conventions. However, when the principles of European migration policies and current practice are analysed we see major deviations from the promotion of human rights. These conflicts are most noticeable in the realm of illegal migration. The main direction in resolving the problem of illegal migration is aimed at resolving the consequences of this form of migration. A major part of practice (the Triton and Poseidon operations, run by Frontex), as well as measures planned for the future, relate to strengthening control of the external borders of the EU, which also includes rescuing migrants. For example, the European Commission, in the middle of April 2015, proposed a 10-point plan to the European Council, for combating smuggling of immigrants and to prevent potential immigrants from setting out across the Mediterranean Sea. Of these ten points, seven are directly aimed at preventing immigration. So the emphasis is on measures relating to the consequences of illegal migration, and not on preventive measures,

which would work to resolve the "push factors" in the migrants' countries of origin. The other three measures are aimed more at the more even distribution of migrants, who have attained refugee status, amongst the EU countries. In this way they act more to reduce the non-alignment of migration policies between EU members than to resolve the causes of illegal migration. Therefore, it is worth listening to the words of Pope Francis, who, in his message marking the 101st World Day of Migrants and Refugees, emphasized that the foundations of action relating to this problem on a global level should be the values of mercy and cooperation. His appeal relates not only to relieving the consequences, but also to action regarding the causes, such as wars and hunger. "Solidarity with migrants and refugees must be accompanied by the courage and creativity necessary to develop, on a world-wide level, a more just and equitable financial and economic order, as well as an increasing commitment to peace, the indispensable condition for all authentic progress." (*Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 101st Day of Migrants and Refugees (2015)*).

Regarding Croatia, the youngest EU member, it may be said that, apart from the fact that it is traditionally a country of emigration, Croatia is also a country of immigration, especially for migrants from neighbouring countries in the region. Croatia is a country on the Mediterranean and in the central-European Danube River basin, which is one of its advantages in the region. From 2000-2009 Croatia had a positive migration balance, that is the number of people moving into Croatia was higher than those moving out. Since 2009 that trend has changed and the migration balance has become negative. The fall in immigration into Croatia is primarily the result of the negative trends in the economy, especially due to the reduced need for labour in sectors such as construction, hospitality and tourism, which traditionally employ foreign workers, and in ship-building. From the moment when it became a full member of the EU, Croatia entered the area of internal European migration. With the weakening of legislative barriers in Croatia and other, less developed members of the EU, with weaker economies, there has been growth in the negative migration balance with more developed and wealthier EU members. The result of this process is seen in the double negative, in terms of quantity (the size of the population is falling) and quality (the fall in the number of highly educated and qualified people). This is one aspect of migration policies which has been insufficiently developed in the EU. Therefore, in order to plan balanced development policies and compensate for the negative internal migration in the EU, it is necessary to act preventively and develop compensatory measures, aimed at reducing the differences between more developed and undeveloped members, and, on a global level, to seek solutions led by the ideas of solidarity, mercy, justice and peace.