

POLITICKÉ VEDY / POLITICAL SCIENCES

Časopis pre politológiu, najnovšie dejiny, medzinárodné vzťahy, bezpečnostné štúdiá / Journal for Political Sciences, Modern History, International Relations, security studies

URL of the journal / URL časopisu: <https://www.politickevedy.fpmv.umb.sk>

Author(s) / Autor(i): Danylo Stonis
Article / Článok: Book Review: International Migration from a Political Science Perspective: History, Theory, and Current Issues
Publisher / Vydavateľ: Fakulta politických vied a medzinárodných vzťahov – UMB Banská Bystrica / Faculty of Political Sciences and International Relations – UMB Banská Bystrica
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24040/politickevedy.2023.26.2.203-210>

Recommended form for quotation of the article / Odporúčaná forma citácie článku:

STONIS, D. 2023. Book Review: International Migration from a Political Science Perspective: History, Theory, and Current Issues. In *Politické Vedy*. Vol. 26, no. 2, pp. 203-210. ISSN 1335 – 2741. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.24040/politickevedy.2023.26.2.203-210>

By submitting their contribution the author(s) agreed with the publication of the article on the online page of the journal. The publisher was given the author's / authors' permission to publish and distribute the contribution both in printed and online form. Regarding the interest to publish the article or its part in online or printed form, please contact the editorial board of the journal: politicke.vedy@umb.sk.

Poskytnutím svojho príspevku autor(i) súhlasil(i) so zverejnením článku na internetovej stránke časopisu *Politické vedy*. Vydavateľ získal súhlas autora / autorov s publikovaním a distribúciou príspevku v tlačenej i online verzii. V prípade záujmu publikovať článok alebo jeho časť v online i tlačenej podobe, kontaktujte redakčnú radu časopisu: politicke.vedy@umb.sk.

Journal *Politické vedy* is provided under the conditions of Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International CC BY 4.0. / Časopis *Politické vedy* je publikovaný na základe podmienok Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International CC BY 4.0.



BOOK REVIEW: INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION FROM A POLITICAL SCIENCE PERSPECTIVE: HISTORY, THEORY AND CURRENT ISSUES

Danylo Stonis*

RIEGL, M., DOBOŠ, B. (eds.): *Mezinárodní migrace pohledem politických věd: Historie, teorie a současné otázky [International migration from a political science perspective: History, theory and current issues]*. Praha: Ústav mezinárodních vztahů, v. v. i., 2021. 188 p. ISBN 978-80-87558-35-5

The book, published by *Institute of International relations* in Prague, tackles a migration issue in Europe. The book was written as the result of applied research, titled "Migration from the Middle East region, Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia: geopolitical and security context, consequences and recommendations for Czech Republic" and conducted by Faculty of Social Sciences at Charles University in Prague. Migration has become an important issue which is present on the political agenda of the EU member states.

The topic of migration has recently returned to the daily agenda of the EU member states in response to the rapid influx of refugees from the Middle East, which was caused primarily by the conflicts in Syria and Iraq, resulting in political and economic destabilization of both states. Despite constant presence of migration issue in both foreign and security policy of states, the EU members usually did not pay significant attention to it. This changed significantly after 2015 European migrant crisis, when a significantly increased movement of asylum seekers from Sub-Saharan Africa and Middle East to Europe triggered profound changes in social, economic, political and demographic spheres of the EU states. Moreover, the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine caused one of the largest refugee crises within Europe, raising the question of migrants' adaptation and

* Mgr. Danylo Stonis is a PhD Student, Department of International Relations and Diplomacy, Faculty of Political Sciences and International Relations, Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, Kuzmányho 1, 974 01 Banská Bystrica, Slovak Republic, e-mail: danylo.stonis@student.umb.sk.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24040/politickevedy.2023.26.2.203-210>

integration in EU, as well as development of legal framework for regulation of rapid migration wave from country located within European neighbourhood.

In this regard, the book provides an overview of theoretical and conceptual topics related to the study of migration as well as covers the European approach to migration issue. In addition, the book identifies general historical trends in migration and provides an analysis of migration-related concepts, in particular, "Fortress Europe" and "Teichopolitics".

The publication is structured into eight chapters, which overview historical background of migration and tackle specific aspects of migration issue in the European context. Thus, the book can act as an introduction to the migration issue in Europe for the general audience, as well as a tool for political scholars and migration analysts, providing a comprehensive analysis of migration policy concepts and factors influencing migration patterns.

The introductory *first chapter*, written by **Martin Riegl** and **Bohumil Doboš**, defines the main research subject of the author team, which is contemporary migration and its impact on international security relations. The book aims not only to introduce a basic overview of the concepts associated with migration, but also to transfer them to the European level. **Riegl** and **Doboš** clearly define the main goal of the book: to formulate the basic knowledge associated with migration to Europe and bring it in a comprehensive form to the audience, interested in the issue. Each of the following chapters brings relevant facts into the discussion about migration, helping readers to navigate the issue and inspiring them to deepen their knowledge on the topic.

The main topic of the *second chapter* is the historical development of migration flows. In this chapter, **Irah Kučerová** prepared a qualitative analysis of this phenomenon in the period of the last few centuries. The author evaluates migration as a phenomenon that has accompanied the history of mankind since time immemorial and explains this concept as the migration of people to other regions, which are often very far away. In conclusion, migration is presented as a natural manifestation of human individuality, which must be perceived as an act of free will or forced expulsion.

Kučerová provides an explanation of the most frequently used terms regarding migration. The term "migrant" refers to people who voluntarily leave their homeland in search of better living conditions. Another term is "refugee" - a person who has a legitimate fear and therefore involuntarily leaves their country to escape hostilities of a religious, racial, national, or political nature. The third

concept is “fugitive” - a person urged to migrate by the fear of being arrested or persecuted in their native country, which makes it difficult for them to return. Such migrants tend to have severe psychological trauma. And finally, the fourth term is “exile” as a specific form of refugee. Exile is a person who leaves their homeland involuntarily, but, unlike a refugee, strives to return. Exiles leave their homeland not for economic or social reasons, but for political and religious ones. Both the exile and the refugee have one common denominator, which is the intention to return home when the situation in homeland calms down.

The *third chapter*, written by **Bořivoj Hnízdo**, clearly evaluates and explains the historical significance of migration. It focuses on the evolution from international emigration to intercontinental immigration over the centuries. It describes the formation of Europe as a cultural and political entity. Furthermore, it recalls the period of medieval Europe and its migratory contacts with the non-Christian world. Due attention is also paid to intercontinental migration in the period from the end of the Napoleonic Wars to the outbreak of the First World War. In the section devoted to intercontinental migration in the 20th century, the importance and role of Jewish migration is taken into account, especially in 1930s, when Jews and Central European democrats fled overseas.

On the basis of in-depth analysis, **Hnízdo** points out that the migration crisis of the second decade of the 21st Century was not actually a milestone in the development of immigration to Europe. It just confirmed the previous development and therefore has become a significant political topic in almost all European countries. The main cause of persistently strong intercontinental immigration to Europe is and will continue to be political instability, high corruption of political regimes, economic backwardness, and the danger of conflicts, which, in addition to huge population growth and environmental degradation, are the main factors of this development. As a result of these phenomena, Europe, as long as it remains politically stable and economically capable of maintaining its social system, will continue to attract non-European immigration, mainly from sub-Saharan Africa and Middle East.

At the end of the chapter, **Hnízdo** concludes that if this scenario were to come true, Europe would face major demographic changes in the 21st century, which could significantly affect its entire cultural, political and economic environment. Such a development could lead to fundamental transformations of the continent, which would have no analogies in Europe since the era of the migration of peoples and the formation of medieval Europe. There has been a situation in which two opposing processes are taking place in Europe. On the one hand, the

low birth rate, stagnation or even reduction in the size of traditional European ethnic communities sharply contrasts with the dramatic demographic developments on other continents. On the other hand, massive immigration to Europe from overseas may increase the percentage of these new communities.

The *fourth chapter*, written by **Veronika Jelínková**, clearly explains the importance of migration for the European continent, especially its institutional and legal framework, which includes documents such as the Treaty of Lisbon, the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility, the European Program for Integration and Migration, the Common European Asylum System, including the Dublin III and Dublin IV regulations.

According to **Jelínková**, the entire migration crisis goes through three stages. The first stage includes the period from January 2015 to April 2015, which is called the period of the Mediterranean route. In the second phase, from April 2015 to March 2016, several European states opened migration routes, allowing incoming migrants to pass through their territories, but others, such as Hungary, built a “wall” on their borders. And the third stage, the period until 2018, was characterized by “hotspots”, a system, aimed to support and simplify the efficiency of the asylum procedure. The hotspot system has not yet been properly effective, mainly due to long waiting times that have led to the creation of migrant camps in hotspot locations, especially in Greece. From a geographical point of view, this applies to all three routes, which are represented by the Western Mediterranean route (Spain), the Central Mediterranean route (Italy) and the Eastern Mediterranean route (Greece and the Balkan states).

In spite of the aforementioned, it appears that the migration process is under control today. But the influx of refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants to Europe does not end. Conflicts around the world continue to emerge, therefore the number of migrants is expected to increase. In addition, the migration crisis has highlighted how easily fear of the unknown can be used to one's advantage. In recent years, there has been an increase in right-wing extremist parties in Europe, which benefit from the fear of the migration crisis and concerns among the European population. **Jelínková** concludes that only the following years will show us how European society was able to deal with the onslaught of so many new residents from countries with a completely different social and cultural basis. But this will no longer be a question of migration and asylum policy, but of integration policy.

The *fifth chapter*, written by **Jan Putensen**, very thoroughly analyses the often-inflected term “Fortress Europe”. First, it recalls the historical development

and political connotations of this term. However, overall, the chapter is designed as a case study of far-right views in Austria, Germany and Italy on migration issues, as they have been publicly formulated and promoted during the last ten years, especially after 2014.

When analysing the situation in Austria, **Putensen** mainly recalls the former Minister of the Interior Johanna Mikl-Leitner from the conservative Austrian People's Party (ÖVP), who, after visiting the Austrian border with Slovenia, declared that "Fortress Europe" must be built to stop chaotic mass migration, and The Identitarian Movement of Austria (IBÖ), a far-right activist movement founded in 2012. It demanded to build an external land border of Europe along the lines of the Hungarian border fence, allowing full control of border crossings. In addition, the IBÖ pushed for border closure along the lines of Australia's Operation Sovereign Borders.

As part of the analysis of the immigration situation in Germany, **Putensen** mainly focuses on the Dresden protest movement PEGIDA, which is directed primarily against Muslim immigration. Many of its views and positions were soon adopted by the Alternative for Germany (AfD), an originally liberal but Eurosceptic party founded in 2013 that transformed into a populist anti-immigrant party right after the migration crisis broke out. **Putensen** points out, that the "Fortress Europe" concept has never become an official position of the AfD. However, this concept is openly supported by the National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD), which envisions Europe as the home of the original European population and proposes a two-level border protection strategy for its protection. According to it, states should strictly control their own borders and at the same time jointly organize a coordinated "defence line" at Europe's external borders as a bulwark against mass foreign immigration.

The third country evaluated in detail is Italy, where the term "Fortress Europe" is used more often than in most other EU countries. Since 2017, there has been a movement called "Fortezza Europa", which is a far-right movement from around Verona, a city infamous for the development of Italian neo-fascism. This movement shares a conspiracy theory that there is a gradual replacement of original European societies by foreign immigrants who pose the threat of "extermination" of national identities in Europe. The goal of the "Fortezza Europa" movement is to preserve Europe as a continent where people can maintain their ethnic and cultural identity, based on the thorough protection of their own borders, which should also have military security if necessary.

Putensen concludes the chapter by summarizing that there are two main

views on the fulfilment of the “Fortress Europe” concept. The first says that if we were to limit our view only to strictly guarded and well-monitored borders allowing full control of cross-border movement, then we could conclude that the EU is beginning to turn into “Fortress Europe”. This is evidenced by the fact that, since 2015, ten EU states have already built border barriers that cover 950 km of the EU's external borders, or the Schengen area. The aim of these measures was to prevent irregular immigration. The second is based on the fact that in Europe there is no general rejection of immigrants and deportation to their home countries.

Another important and thoroughly analysed topic in the migration debate is teichopolitics, which is the content of the *sixth chapter*, written by **Branislav Mičko** and **Martin Riegl**. Teichopolitics is a term of Greek origin, derived from the word “teichos”, which means city wall. It refers to any more or less rational policy of dividing or delimiting space in order to protect it or strengthen territorial control, driven by economic or financial reasons.

When analysing the current form of teichopolitics, **Mičko** and **Riegl** convincingly demonstrate that the first decade after the end of the Cold War was characterized by deterritorialization and the breaking down of barriers, but the so-called migration crisis started the process of reterritorialization and the large-scale construction of new barriers, even where there were none before. Their purpose is the protection of the territory and its effective control. It is further recalled that this trend reflects the increase in political uncertainty in the understanding of political difference between “us” and “them”. So-called “New walls” are being built at the initiative of post-modern countries, thus separating themselves from the unfortunate events in pre-modern countries. And in most cases, the military function of the “new walls” and their military security is highlighted.

Chapter seven, also written by **Mičko** and **Riegl**, assesses in detail Western approaches to immigration, which are far from unified. It is recalled that the starting point in all countries is the definition of the terms “migration” and “migrant”. And another important point is the clarification of the term “access to migration”. In the chapter, this concept is explained as a summary of national policies that regulate the access of foreigners to goods located in the collective ownership of a given territorial actor, and whose starting point is the possibility of entering the territory. It is therefore mainly about regulating the number of foreigners who enter the territory of the given territorial actor or already live there.

In practice, this definition manifests itself in four policy areas. The first of them

is the protection of external borders, the main point of which is the regulation of entry into a specific country. The second is the asylum policy, the basis of which is the Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and the Protocol of 1967. The third is the political definition of migrants' access to the labour market, and the fourth is the possibilities and methods of obtaining citizenship.

Mičko and **Riegl** use these four policy areas to compare the asylum policy of Europe and Australia. Based on this approach, it can be stated that Australia insists very persistently on the legal entry into the country and, as a receiving country, it maintains its own ability to filter those who apply for admission. This selective approach also spills over into the asylum issue. Australian policy is therefore based on limiting the number of annual asylum seekers and prioritizing refugees who are registered with the UNHCR. In conclusion, Mičko and Riegl state, that Australia has a very specific approach in which it prioritizes asylum seekers registered on the UNHCR list over asylum seekers who come to the country illegally. In this regard, the approach of the EU is more liberal, since it accepts asylum seekers who have already found themselves on its territory.

The *eighth chapter*, written by **Bohumil Doboš**, is focused on an important trigger of migration waves, which is climate change. This significant fact is documented in the case of Burkina Faso, a former French colony in the western Sahel region (the border of the Sahara and the tropical regions further south) between Mali, Niger, Benin, Togo, Ghana and Ivory Coast. Burkina Faso is actually in the position of the so-called "linchpin state", as it was defined in the context of the Cold War. It plays the role of a pillar that separates the zone of instability from the densely populated and demographically complicated areas in the weak states of the Gulf of Guinea without the presence of external troops.

According to **Doboš**, the EU's intervention should be more urgent because Burkina Faso is located in the geographical transit zone through which important migration routes lead. In addition, this state is located near populated regions of the Gulf of Guinea. In this context, Burkina Faso is the only country in which zones of instability are not separated from the borders of West African states by the presence of troops of external actors. In addition, jihadists have stepped up their activities throughout this area, whose goal is to create new large-scale safe havens here, which they could then use to spread violent activity to Europe. Any EU intervention, however, cannot be conducted only on the military level, but must also include measures to strengthen economic, social and political stability.

The team of authors has succeeded in explaining the main terms related to

migration and defining their correct usage. The book assesses migration in a historical context and shows that it is as old as humanity itself. Additionally, it analyses the evolution of migration issue from the Middle Ages to the present day and proves that the main cause of persistently strong intercontinental immigration to Europe is and will continue to be political and economic instability, high corruption of political regimes, and the threat of conflicts. The book pays great attention to explaining the significance of migration for the EU and analyzes its institutional-legal framework, specifically the most important documents. Using the example of Germany, Austria and Italy, the book evaluates circumstances and limits of the often-discussed concept of “Fortress Europe” as well as the concept of teichopolitics, characterized by the delimitation of space for the purpose of its protection or strengthening of territorial control. Climate change is not left out as an important case of immigration, which is shown by the example of Burkina Faso, located in an important region of the African continent. The main weakness of the book, however, is the absence of research data on migration and adaptation of people with identity and culture close to European one, which could act as a helpful guide in managing a rapid influx of asylum seekers from Ukraine to EU states, caused by 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine. Overall, the book serves as a great introduction to the migration issue in Europe, allowing general audience to better orient themselves in this vast and complex area and providing academic circles with an insight into history and causes of migration as well as different approaches to development of migration policy and legislation for EU member states, especially against the backdrop of refugee influx from Ukraine to EU, caused by Russian invasion of Ukraine.