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## ON SOCIETAL SECURITY OF THE STATE: APPLYING A PERSPECTIVE OF SUSTAINABILITY TO IMMIGRATION\*

Tomáš Beňuška<sup>1</sup>, Pavel Nečas<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> Faculty of Political Science and International Relations, Matej Bel University, Kuzmányho 1, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia

E-mails: <sup>1</sup> [tomas.benuska@umb.sk](mailto:tomas.benuska@umb.sk); <sup>2</sup> [pavel.necas@umb.sk](mailto:pavel.necas@umb.sk)

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**Abstract.** The article focuses on how immigration can pose a threat for the receiving countries in a societal context. To theoretically cover this, the lenses of the Copenhagen School's theoretical frameworks such as securitization and security sector division are used to put statistical data to practice with the help of analytical and quantitative-comparative method. In the second part of the article, the specific examples of potential threats to the native society are presented, such as demographic crisis of the European Union (which is not a threat related to immigration in itself, but rather a catalyst for the potential threats) and the lower performance of immigrants on the labour market. In the last part, the article deals with the potential of making the migration sustainable through analysis of different understandings of such concept. As seen, international migration in today's intensity is unsustainable and brings practical and political consequences which can be avoided only through effective immigration and asylum policies, which tend to be overlooked in nowadays climate. Society is polarised in this subject and divides people into those who want almost no border controls as opposed to those who want the borders closed. None of these alternatives are valid and concept of sustainable migration could prove to be the viable middle ground so very much needed in this debate.

**Keywords:** security; society; international migration; immigration; sustainability; security threat

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## 1. Introduction

Mankind had been migrating since their beginning as a race, but a concept of international migration started only with nations and as they emerged, a differentiation between native and foreign people began. To a certain extent, people were always divided even before the concept of state, but it was never as legitimate as in such institutionally complex unit as state. Special state departments were built and policies designed in order to regulate conditions applied to people from “outside“. The reason was quite simple: states knew that letting foreign people into their borders had a lot of various connotations in relation to economy, security and even society and left uncontrolled – it could potentially pose a threat. Nowadays, international migration is a frequently discussed topic, as migration from developing countries to developed countries is so significant it started to polarise society into those, who welcome immigrants with open arms with no regards to potential negative impacts and vice versa, those who are strongly opposed to foreigners and see only threats and costs (Chlebny 2018). As we see it, neither of these alternatives are healthy for the state’s and its citizens’ wellbeing. Thus, the goal of this article is to take a nonpartisan perspective through the lenses of various theoretical concepts and with emphasis on the society as an essential building unit of a state.

As immigration is surely a by-product of globalization, its deepening is contributory to the cumulation of various economic and political problems (Ivančík 2019). Our main subject of interest is a society threatened by immigration and as such, we are going to apply securitization theory and security sector division theory of the Copenhagen School to understand how society can actually be threatened and in what manner, since “a threat” does not need to be necessarily of a military nature (Marini, Chokani, Abhari 2019). In the first part, we will also define how we understand terms such as security threat, security risk or vulnerability, since these are the necessary basics for a security analysis. In the second part, we will illustrate a few examples of how can an excessive immigration have a negative impact on the social cohesion within the receiving state and what challenges face societies of today in regard to immigration. In the third part we are going to elaborate on the concept of sustainable migration as an alternative and a sort of middle ground between open door and closed door policy which are debated on the grounds of either public or political discourse.

## 2. Theoretical framework

As the Copenhagen School stems from the theoretical basis of social constructivism and social constructivism is an inherently relativist concept, we consider defining of pivotal terms in this area essential for our article to be comprehensible. If we’re discussing *societal sector*, we are using a term coined by the aforementioned Copenhagen School (or at least in the security context) which stems from their concept of securitization, or rather an overally new approach towards understanding of security. What Buzan and his colleagues basically did was that they viewed the security relations between the threat and the threatened from both perspectives and relativized them. They went even deeper and didn’t acknowledge only state actors as threatened but even individuals, or non-human entities such as environment, economy, or social structures in society. When suddenly the number of “threatened“ significantly rose, a need for compartmentalization emerged: hence the 5 security sectors being military, environmental, economic, political and societal one. With all these sectors, they managed to cover essentially every threat and threatened entity that one could think of by subsuming it to one of the

security areas and by applying the so-called securitization theory and a kind of a “speech-act“, as they call it.

According to Buzan et al., the “speech-act“ should fulfill three rhetoric criteria and it is a discursive process by means of which the actor a) states, that the *referent object* is existentially threatened, b) demands a right to take extraordinary measures to deal with the threat and c) persuades the public, that the behaviour which breaks rules in order to face the threat is justified and legitimate (Buzan, Wæver, de Wilde 1998). To mark something as a “security issue“ we are putting an added gravity upon the issue and a main priority. Therefore, securitization could be perceived as a process through means of which the unpoliticized (those which aren’t discussed) or politicized (those which are discussed) issues promoted to security issues, which are needed to be dealt with urgently and this fact legitimizes circumvention of public discussion and democratic procedures (Van Munster 2012). Essentially, we could built up a spectrum, or rather an axis of prioritized issues: the least urgent are unpoliticized issues. A state doesn’t act and takes no interest. When it comes to the politicized issues, a state starts to take interest and acts. Finally, securitized issues are top priority and a state will do everything in its competence to resolve them. The main point of the whole theory is that any public issue could be securitized into the security issue, even though it has no military character whatsoever. And there comes the relativity: a certain security issue is not objective, but subjective in its nature and has a different impact on a different actor in the whole process meaning that, for instance should the oil prices go significantly up, it would pose an existential threat towards the (most obviously the economic one, although we definitely could find intersections even to other security sectors) sector of less developed recipients, not the oil powers. A brain drain is also a brain gain for the goal state: an outflow of educated people could pose a threat to several sectors of the home state, yet for the receiving ones it is a positive phenomenon. This is incidental to the aforementioned *referent object*, which is one of the components of the securitization discursive process. As we mentioned, a *referent object* is an entity, which happens to be under an existential threat. The other two key components are *securitising actors* and *functional actors*. The *securitising actors* are the ones declaring the *referent object* as existentially threatened and by doing so, they are the ones directly moving the securitization process. *Functional actors*, on the other hand, are a bit more complicated category. They are affecting the dynamics of the security relations in a particular sector and while the political decisions in the security field are influenced by them significantly, they do not have characteristics of neither *referent objects* nor *securitising actors* who actually would point out the necessity of security action in relation towards this object. Buzan et al. give a befitting example of *functional actors*: in the context of environmental sector of security it could be a company which is polluting the environment. It is not the object under an existential threat, nor it points out the need to securitize the subject, yet it significantly adds up to the security equation (Buzan, Wæver, de Wilde 1998). And again, these three roles could be relativized based on the taken perspective.

Before we start with the sector analysis, there is a need for even further defining as the terms „threat“ and „risk“ are oftentimes interchanged, thought to be one and the same thing or misunderstood completely and we cannot possibly hope to define them without also first defining „vulnerability“. We daresay that in security studies, knowledge of these words is as essential as the knowledge of the securitization theory itself. *Referent object* is a basal component of these words and as such, it is whose existence we are trying to ensure, whereas *threat* is anything, that could take the advantage of a *vulnerability* and, be it intentionally or coincidentally, endanger or even erase the existence of said *referent object*. The mentioned *vulnerability* is essentially a weak point or an opportunity for a *threat* to

be exploited in order to get access to *referent object's* existence. Finally, a *risk* is, to a certain extent, a combination of all said terms above: we can define it as a potential for a possible destruction or damaging of a *referent object* as a result of successful *threat* exploitation of a *vulnerability* (Threat Analysis Group 2021).

Now, the focus of this article lies in the societal sector. According to Copenhagen School, there are quite a few recurring casual topics within the context of this sector and one of them is migration, which is described as a situation when a certain bundle of persons is overloaded or disrupted by the influx of persons from the second bundle which results in the fact that the community of the first bundle is not going to be as before, since the said population will be formed by different people and by means of which the identity of the first bundle is being changed (Buzan, Wæver, de Wilde 1998). There are two situations in which this interchange may eventually result in. The first one is a *horizontal competition* which represents a situation when despite the fact that persons of the first bundle are still living on a certain territory, due to the growing and overwhelming cultural and linguistic influence of the persons of the second bundle, the persons of the first bundle are forced to change their way of life. On the other hand, there is also a *vertical competition* which portrays a reality, in which the people stop perceiving themselves as a community of the first bundle due to the foundation of a certain integration unit, or project (such as Yugoslavia, or European Union), or due to the influence of a certain separatist project (e.g. Catalonia, or Quebec). These are forcing the persons towards either more inclusive or more exclusive perception of their own identity. Interesting, and somewhat relating to the former is a situation of *population decline*, not natural however, but on account of epidemic, war, natural disaster, or controlled genocide, because in this case the population decline would also mean a decline of people identifying with a very specific identity which would consequently threaten its existence. This is nonetheless debatable since there is a need to differentiate between a threat towards a society and a threat towards an individual inside of said society (Buzan, Wæver, de Wilde 1998).

So the societal sector, same as any other sector, covers a plethora of different risks, threats and scenarios coinciding with social coherence and cohesion, which are no less integral to the wellbeing of the state than for example healthy economy or peace. One could say that society is a basic building unit of the state and should society be malfunctioning in its nature, then even other areas of the state will be affected. In the following part of the article, we are going to present a few of the dimensions, or rather fields that could prove to be threatening towards the states targeted by immigration.

### 3. Threatened society of today

First of all, it's needless to say, that the threats are seldom sector specific – exclusive for one sector and for this sector only. As was mentioned before, we could always find intersections. There is, however, always one sector that is predominant in the matter.

Securitized topics rely on the perspective and for the purpose of this article we are going to look from the perspective of European Union (EU) member states. When discussing sustainability of society, under no circumstances can we omit the decreasing demographic curve of the EU. The estimates of Eurostat say, that from the demographic dividend, which had been positive for at least 40 years, is expected a decline for another 40 years – a negative curve (Reuters Graphics 2019). For instance, population of Germany should decrease from the contemporary circa 83 million to 74 million by 2050,

whereas the age median (in 1960 being 35 years) increased in 2013 to 45,3 years, in case of Italy it was 32 in 1960, and 44,4 in 2013 (Reuters Graphics 2019). These numbers add up even for other states such as Spain (from 30 to 41,3 years), Sweden (from 36 to 40,9), Great Britain (at that time still being a part of European Union, from 36 to 39,8) or Poland (from 26 to 38,7) (Reuters Graphics 2019). A similar trend could be seen in the context of age dependency. The contemporary expectation is that by 2050 there will be only two people in working age for each in retirement age and what's more, European Union in 2050 should stagnate on circa 500 million people, losing 49 million in working age (Boussemart, Godet 2017). Essentially, this means about 11 million potentially active workers less in Germany and about 7 to 8 million less in Spain and Italy – the declining trend, however, can't be applied globally – for instance, population of India should increase by 400 million people by 2050 (Boussemart, Godet 2017). Should we look on the numbers from World Population Prospects 2015, we can see that since 2015-2050, there is an estimated decline of people in Europe under 20 years by 8,4 million, in category 20-64 years its by 49,1 million, whereas an increase of people from 65 years and more by more than 51,2 million and what's more, out of this group around, 33,1 million will be 80 years old and more (UN – World Population Prospects 2015 Scenario Medium 2015). On the other hand, in the same time period the population of Africa should increase by 1,3 billion, out of which by 130 million only the population of northern Africa, which will inherently lead to greater migrational pressure on Europe, because even if only 1% of this African increase was to settle in e.g. France in the upcoming 30 years, it would mean a 13 million more people by 2050 (Boussemart, Godet 2017).

Immigrants have a great influence on the population of Europe (Carling, Erdal 2018, Eichler 2020). Even though the mortality rate in European Union was for the last couple of years higher than the natality rate, the population, in fact, rose in a one year's time due to net migration (Eurostat 2018). Population trends, however, are not consistent within European Union. While population of Malta, Luxembourg or Sweden increased rapidly, Lithuania, Croatia or Latvia rapidly decreased (Mohdin 2018). Further analysis, conducted by demographic research centre Population Europe found out that migration is actually the most essential factor when it comes to population increase in European countries. For Luxembourg, Cyprus, Malta, Spain, Austria or Sweden was migration a defining factor in context of population increase (Population Europe 2016, Mastilovic, Zoppi 2021). However, in certain countries, migration alone is not enough to make demographic curves even. In Italy, for example, a decreasing natality and increasing lifespan caused population to age drastically and while net migration helps, it is necessary to stimulate fertility, which decreased to its historical low (Mohdin 2018). A similar situation is typical for Germany, where population increased for the last couple of years due to the influx of migrants, but in a long-term perspective, not even the million refugees of 2015 can avert the demographic crisis of Germany (Mohdin 2018).

This is a textbook example of threat of a *horizontal competition* mentioned in the first part of the article. Should it continue at this pace, due to the significantly different demographic patterns at work in countries of destination and countries of origin there is a threat towards the collective identity of countries of destination and at this rate, the situation is unsustainable (Rigouste 2018).

To further elaborate on the sustainability, there is another issue, which is related to the demographic crisis, which has a potential to rise to various different implications. The issue in question is the lower performance of immigrants in numerous areas, such as labour market or education. To secure equivalent opportunities and rising social mobility for all should be an important goal for truly inclusive societies

(Kholodkovskii 2019). Immigrants and their children are one of the most vulnerable groups, since they tend to face a plenty of obstacles and are a part of population which constantly grows. In European Union, in country of destination the children of immigrants represent 9% of all young people from 15 to 34 years and 11% of all children under 15 and, at the same time, these children and youth tend to have lower achieved education and results on labour market than their peers with native-born parents, predominantly in those EU member-states, which noted an excessive immigration of people with low education (OECD 2017).

In EU, 15% of natives with parents born outside EU have mother with maximum of elementary education or no formal education at all, which suggests that these people have harder starting point in life, what may partially explain their lower performances in educational system and labour market and according to OECD the fact, whether immigrant mothers have a job has an important impact on the results of their children, more than in case of their peers with native parents (OECD 2017). In a lot of European countries children with low-educated immigrant parents have a lower probability of graduating high school and higher education in comparison with natives with the same low level of education and there we can see a convergence in acquiring education between generations. Intergenerational increased mobility between children of parents born in EU is high. Across all levels of parent education, adult descendants with parents born in EU have higher employment rate than with parents born outside of EU (Rodriguez 2017). The same goes for higher levels of parent education as they do not improve chances on the labour market for children of immigrants with lower education born outside of EU as well as they improve chances of children born to native parents – native children born to parents with low education who are born outside of EU have hardly the same opportunities to find employment as their peers with low-educated native-born parents and having parents with a completed higher secondary education increases employment rate for natives with native parents by 10%, whereas this increase is just 5% for peers with parents born outside EU and the same equation works for parents with high education (OECD 2017). In Europe, the difference in employment between native-born children of immigrants from countries outside EU and children of natives is decreased with the level of achieved education of these children, which suggests that education is a stronger incentive for integration to labour market among children of immigrant parents than among children of natives, since low-educated natives with low-educated parents born outside EU have a lower employment rate by 8% than their peers with native-born parents (OECD 2017).

An extent to which parents bring their human capital is a key factor affecting education and results at the labour market in later stages of life. Furthermore, in EU and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) member states, immigrants are represented on lower employment and work levels, mostly on the lowest, especially in European OECD member states, in EU it is 15% of natives with parents born outside EU, whose mother haven't finished formal education, which is 5-times the share between native-born mothers (OECD 2017). Not only are immigrant parents on the lower levels of education, they also have a lot higher probability of being unemployed and even when they are employed they are in less qualified vocations (OECD 2017).

The performances of immigrants - be it on labour market or in education - are not security threats in itself for the country of destination, rather for the social cohesion as they give ground for prejudice and discontent, they well may be more of a catalyst to threat (Stephen 2018). These are the first steps to alienation of immigrants and division to "them" and "us", which is a fertile environment for social

incoherence resulting in aversions and finally societal threats. It is our understanding that the core issue of this security risk lies not in the individual immigrants as persons, but in the intensity of the migration flows and as we cannot stop immigration (nor should we be prone towards this notion), the only way is to manage it in sustainable fashion.

#### 4. The need for migration's sustainability

International migration is not something one can have an opinion on. It needs to be understood as a certain fact that is hardly changeable. With this said, there still is a need to manage it since – as we pointed out in the previous part – the migration in this intensity should prove unbearable in the future. However, as migration inherently is a human right, discussions about limiting, managing or in any way obstructing the opportunity of people to migrate in hope for a better life is a very sensitive subject prone to polarise (Young, Loebach, Korinek 2018). In this context, we consider the phenomenon of “sustainable migration” a matter of utmost importance as it contemplates both human rights and preservation side of the coin – both immigrants and the country of destination with its native society.

The concept of sustainable migration stands upon a very rational premise of costs and benefits that migration brings, which are essentially the positive and negative impacts brought about by the process. The word “process” is emphasized, considering that we shouldn't appoint the specific pros and cons solely to migrating persons, but rather to the whole reality of merging two (or more for that matter) sets of people together, as was indicated in the previous part. So the spectrum of the costs and benefits stems from the economic ones through social or political up to cultural and so on. Furthermore, researchers from the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) are asking a fundamental question: “for whom is the migration sustainable?” and apply a similar theoretical framework in analysing the topic as we did. Understanding of sustainable migration is substantial for the further policy development and as they state, when you try to develop a policy, you need to be aware of the different stakeholders' perception of the impacts, them being either benefits or costs (Erdal, Carling, Horst, Talleraas 2018).

We can define “sustainability” as “the ability to be maintained at certain rate or level”, or better yet “the ability to continue or be continued for a long time” (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries 2021). Therefore, the term sustainable migration insinuates a migration, that could be kept up indefinitely, without a withering influence on – since the relativity of the matter was correctly pointed out – either country of destination, country of origin, native society or immigrants themselves. To put it into our terms: it would no longer pose an existential threat to the referential object, which is – for the purposes of this article – the native society. Generally, however, it is a perspective oriented predominantly on the future as it tries to take into account even the long-term consequences, not necessarily only the immediate ones, even puts priority on them. Nowadays, the usual approach towards migration is that it's being promoted and the benefits being highlighted, but more realistic and constructive approach would be, as PRIO states, “to acknowledge that migration entails both costs and benefits to individuals and societies, and to address the distribution of those costs and benefits, now and in the future” (Erdal, Carling, Horst, Talleraas 2018). With all this considered, the four authors formulate a definition, which states that sustainable migration is a “migration that ensures a well-balanced distribution of costs and benefits for the individuals, societies and states affected, today and in the future” (Erdal, Carling, Horst, Talleraas 2018). As far as definitions go, they should be exact as much as possible and the word with certain vagueness to it in the definition is “well-balanced” as the interpretation of the word could vary. It is almost

impossible to put a universal example of just the right amount of migrational costs and benefits and it's not always as rational of a choice as it might seem. According to PRIO, there are two prerequisites for an effective way to build up relevant policies and it's "a sound understanding of the mechanisms that produce costs and benefits" on one hand and "a normative foundation for balancing potentially conflicting interests" at the other (Erdal, Carling, Horst, Talleraas 2018). This is very important to comprehend, since not every cost can be outweighed and not in every situation can state actually calculate and strive for better cost-benefit ratio. A catalyst for such situation is, for instance, a principle of non-refoulement<sup>†</sup> which when at play, there is no further reason on counting costs and benefits as there is no choice. However, there are scenarios in which the state's wellbeing can be actually dependent on the specific taken policy and the states should aim for the most favourable one in the specific circumstances. PRIO gives an example of situation when a "large-scale immigration of skilled manual workers can relieve labour market bottlenecks and stimulate economic activity, but at the same time erode hard-won labour standards and undermine recruitment to the trades in question" (Erdal, Carling, Horst, Talleraas 2018). So, for the state, it always comes to the dilemma and that is what we mean by calculation of the cost-benefit ratio. It is desirable for states to acknowledge, that migration impacts indeed are diverse and they should not be afraid to admit the reality that an ideal situation would be a migration scenario which is beneficial for the both sides. Not every is and should the situation be more costly than beneficial, then there is a need to reconsider. For costly migration, in its essence, is not sustainable and may prove to be a security threat.

As indicated above, there are several actors involved in the migration process, and although our primary interest is the recipient state and its society, we also consider it necessary to point out the ways in which the country of origin may be affected, whether in a positive or negative sense. However, when we talk explicitly about emigration, it is very difficult to summarize in any way its impact on the country of origin. There are too many changes and the multidisciplinary of migration issues is also a factor that makes it all difficult. In addition, the given variables are the characteristics of a given emigration, such as its type. Depending on whether it is labour migration, economic migration or refugees, the implications for the country of origin vary widely. Another important characteristic is the intensity of the given migration: in small numbers it is almost imperceptible, in large ones it is directly unsustainable. We can also mention the timing, directions of migration flows, specific characteristics of individuals, human capital, or the socio-political context in which the country of origin is present. Should we focus on labour migration the outflow of labour force is, of course, a basic category that comes to mind and is considered negative. This is true to some extent, but the relativity of this issue does not circumvent this area either, and remittances are an integral part of labour migration in the context of the country of origin. In fact, people of working age can be more beneficial in a low-income developing country by seizing the opportunity in a higher-income country and compensating their home country by sending remittances. In fact, remittances can make up a significant part of the GDP of many low-income countries. According to The World Bank data in 2017, remittances reached a record high of \$613 billion at the time, of which up to \$466 billion ended up in low- and middle-income countries (The World Bank 2018). The global coronavirus pandemic has partially disrupted the migration trends we are used to as many migrant workers who have worked abroad for a long time are returning home, but despite the prediction of remittances decrease which was significant, specifically estimated at 20% in 2020

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<sup>†</sup> Principle based in international law forbidding states the readmission of refugees to their countries of citizenship should they face persecution or their life there would be endangered.

compared to 2019, the outcome was not so dire in the end (The World Bank 2020). Despite the pandemic, low- and middle-income countries ended up receiving remittances of up to \$540 billion in 2020, just 1.6% less than in 2019, when low- and middle-income countries received \$548 billion (The World Bank 2021). However, it should be noted that The World Bank reports can only record money that has passed through official or formal channels, so the real amount of remittances can be significantly higher, according to The World Bank somewhere between one third and one half of all remittances (Adams, 2003). Also, in many developing countries, remittances make up a huge part of total GDP. In Tajikistan, for example, in 2013, remittances from cheap, low-skilled labour working in countries such as Russia, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan accounted for almost half of total GDP (Lemon 2019). Currently, the 9 countries that have the largest share of remittances in their GDP all have this value above 20% (The Global Economy 2021). However, the downside of labour migration lies in the brain drain, which is significant and unsustainable, especially in the context of developing countries. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), there are more African scientists and engineers in the United States at this time than in Africa as a whole (Conway-Smith, 2015) and several years ago, according to the IOM estimate, emigration from Africa accounted for the loss of \$9 billion in human capital and growth potential since 1997 due to the brain drain (Globalization 101 2018).

The overall perception of how migration affects countries, especially those receiving, has changed over the years. We can assume that public opinion has changed due to the intensity of migration flows. The generally optimistic view was dominant in the 1960s, deteriorating later in the 1970s, again at the turn of the millennium, the opinion turned positive, and today we can again see a general deterioration (Erdal, Carling, Horst, Talleraas, 2018). In this context, the example of the Federal Republic of Germany is also interesting, as it has a long tradition of migration flows to its territory and in 2015 there was still a generally positive opinion, even sympathy for migrants who filled unattractive job vacancies on the labour market for a long time. The beginning of the migration crisis in Germany was accompanied by various donations and contributions, civic engagement, voluntary initiatives, people offered refugees free German lessons and accommodation (Trines, 2017). However, it should be noted that Merkel's open door policy was not preferred by all Germans and the chancellor encountered an almost immediate decline in preferences (The Economist, 2015), and moreover, two years after the onset of the migration crisis, sentiment towards refugees began to turn rapidly negative and the then-open doors policy of the government was increasingly difficult to defend, mainly due to events such as the mass sexual assaults perpetrated by new immigrants during the New Year's Eve celebrations in 2015 or the terrorist attacks instigated by the Islamic State in 2016, many of which were perpetrated by asylum seekers (Trines 2017). Here we can see the polarization of society and the decline of social cohesion between individual members of society as a result of migration, the costs of which began to outweigh the benefits, has ceased to be only a security threat, but has become a reality. After a significant decline in political preferences and an increase in the preferences of anti-immigration and anti-Islamic political platforms, Angela Merkel eventually changed her policy and promised a ban on wearing burqas, and that the 2015 situation will not be repeated (Boreham, 2016). Also, after criticism over her pro-migration remarks at Davos, she proclaimed words of regret towards the previous management of the migration crisis saying "we were always proud of freedom of movement but we never really thought about protecting our external borders. Now we're working on our entry-exit system..." (Alexe, 2018).

In this regard, the literature suggests that various policies that affect the intensity of migration flows in some way have a significant impact on stimulating the cost-benefit ratio in favour of benefits. However,

restricting immigration is often difficult and impossible in the case of rightful refugees (as this would be contrary to international law) and it is therefore not surprising that most policies affecting migrants<sup>‡</sup> consider migration flows to be a matter of course and thus focus on getting as many benefits from the situation rather than apprehend the flows and influence them directly - as in the case of the trend of “labour export” policies of various developing countries, mainly in Asia (Erdal, Carling, Horst, Talleraas 2018).

Alexander Betts and Paul Collier, who wrote a parallel study on sustainable migration to researchers at PRIO, provide a partially different view of the topic. They recognize that migration can also be predominantly effective, for example when there are economic or even social and cultural benefits for both the destination and the countries of origin. Enterprises in Europe need workers and are still on the trend of relying directly on them. In the United Kingdom, employers face a 15% labour deficit after Brexit and, as mentioned above, many developing countries receive far more finances in remittances than in foreign direct investment, however, according to Betts and Collier, for other benefits to really outweigh the costs, migration must be sustainable (Betts, Collier, 2018). From their point of view, sustainable migration means the ability to withstand over time and the protection of advantageous migration, while eliminating the destabilizing consequences that are currently increasingly relevant to migration policies throughout Europe (Betts, Collier, 2018).

For example, at the beginning of the new millennium, the Scandinavian countries were characterized by their open, social and liberal governments, which strongly supported social inclusion and integration policies, had rich social support systems, liberal asylum policies and were generally textbook examples of welfare states (Roy 2018). However, as immigration rates significantly multiplied in 15 years, overly open immigration and asylum policies have begun to make welfare states effectively failing to actually provide “welfare” for all citizens because immigration management is so costly for the state budget that the government simply cannot afford it. In other words, if a welfare state is to be sustainable, immigration must also be sustainable. Opinions began to emerge that the concept of a welfare state was in direct conflict with an open immigration policy, and the Danish Social Democrats began to reconsider their approach to it. According to the Danish Ministry of Finance, immigration from third world countries costs the Danish treasury DKK 30 billion, or €4 billion, which is then missing from the budget for the central activities of the welfare state (Nedergaard, 2017). In their statement, the Social Democrats proclaim that “as Social Democrats we believe that we must help refugees, but we also need to be able to deliver results in Denmark via local authorities and for the citizens. For the Social Democratic Party, it is about finding the balance between helping people in need and ensuring the coherence of our country and continuing to be able to afford the high level of welfare provision that characterizes our society” (Nedergaard, 2017). In this statement, we can see a parallel to the concept of sustainable migration in the context of finding a balanced cost-benefit ratio, although this is not directly labelled such. They continue “we have therefore been tightening asylum rules and increased requirements for immigrants and refugees. And we will continue to pursue a tight and consistent asylum policy, which makes Denmark geared to handling refugee and migratory pressures” (Nedergaard, 2017). It is not just a promise as Denmark is the first country to revoke the status of more than 200 Syrian refugees in the spring of 2021,

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<sup>‡</sup> We intentionally do not use the term “migration policies” as it can also subsume rules, which may positively or negatively affect the situations of migrant workers, or people with a migration background in general, but may not fall under the migration policy agenda.

arguing that several areas of Syria are no longer under direct threat and therefore there is no reason for Denmark to continue to provide protection (Murray 2021).

The example of Germany or Denmark shows, that states are actually sensing the threat and we can see them making a sort of precautions. The reason behind the change of Angela Merkel's or Danish Social Democrats' policies was not only the fiscal implications, but even the social and political ones. They realized that their preferences were plummeting, they saw the discontent of their own citizens and a rise of far-right subjects, criminality and even terrorism. These all are symptoms of absencing social cohesion. As such, we lean more closely towards the understanding of Betts and Collier, when they state that "migration must be acceptable to a large majority of citizens through the normal democratic process and meet the long-term self-interest of the receiving and sending societies and of migrants themselves" (Betts, Collier 2018). In the statement, they go beyond the definition of their Norwegian counterparts from PRIO as their understanding is more technocratic. Betts and Collier put a more societal point of view, when they understand sustainable migration as "migration that has the democratic support of the receiving society, meets the long-term interests of the receiving state, sending society, and migrants themselves, and fulfils basic ethical obligations" (Betts, Collier 2018). Societal aspect is absolutely integral for this concept to work and should we not take into account the need for migration to be maintained at sustainable level, with a regard to the receiving state's society, then said society's sustainability is in question.

## **Conclusions**

The goal of this article was to elaborate on the security implications related to immigration mostly from the perspective of the receiving state. Based on the security sector division theory of Copenhagen School, our primary interest was the societal sector and how it could be potentially threatened by migratory flows or rather the collateral phenomena brought about with them.

When discussing topics such as migration, it is essential to understand the relativity of the subject. It depends highly on the taken perspective and thus it is only natural to apply securitization theory as an epitome of relativization and as such, we have put society of the receiving state to the role of a referent object or an entity that is under an existential threat within the societal sector of security. Needless to say, incoming immigrants do not necessarily need to pose a threat of physical harm, but from the societal perspective, there is a plethora of vulnerabilities to be exploited. As we didn't want to get distracted from the societal sector by turning our attention towards a political one (which has a lot in common considering threats and risks with the societal), we overlooked phenomena such as rise of far-right platforms or terrorism on purpose and focused solely on two clear societal challenges: demographic crisis of the European Union and the lower performance of immigrants on the labour market.

An impact of demographic crisis in relation to immigration has only secondary implication for the native society. That is, immigrants have no connection to the declining demographic patterns of European societies, in fact, they can prove to be a positive factor in various ways. However, the threat lies in what the Copenhagen School describes as horizontal competition, which means that due to the overwhelming cultural influence of foreign people, the native society is starting to lose its characteristics. Should we set loss of identity traits of the state as a referent object aside, societal threat lies in the presumptions and

concern of native people regarding the immigrants, which could lead to radicalization and disintegration of social cohesion which is vital for the functioning of the state. Furthermore, as data shows, persons with immigrant background tend to constantly achieve worse results on the labour market and in school, which is yet another ground for disruption of relations between societies expected to merge and in the end, affects even the states performance. More than anything, it is a catalyst for various challenges the state will eventually face, society-wise.

A need for a rational perspective has led leaders as well as several researchers to look for an alternative in the form of the so-called sustainable migration, which is a concept counting the costs and benefits of immigration. Every migratory flow has a different cost-benefit ratio and what these researchers propose, essentially, is that states decide whether to support or rather limit such migration for their own wellbeing. This could be from the position of the receiving state as well as the state of origin.

Immigration from developing countries to developed countries is increasing and heading towards unsustainability, what many European leaders realized and started acting accordingly by tightening their asylum and immigration policies. We are aware that in certain cases there is no choice, specifically when it comes to human rights and people seeking refuge, but states should not be oblivious toward their own sustainability and their own interests. Every state's primary goal is to secure its own and their citizens' welfare, therefore it is essential to take into account the fact, that should immigration be left unsustained, the opportunities for a better life sought by immigrants may be still more difficult to find.

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**Tomáš BEŇUŠKA**, MA is an internal PhD Candidate and researcher at the Department of Security Studies of Faculty of Political Science and International Relations of Matej Bel University (MBU) in Banská Bystrica. His activities consist of teaching various courses, consulting theses and conducting research on securitization of international migration from the perspective of the receiving states and finding more effective way of incorporating migrants to the native society. He is the author of a number of papers and articles related to the political sciences, security and defence published worldwide.

**ORCID ID:** [orcid.org/0000-0001-7562-7092](http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7562-7092)

**Pavel NEČAS**, Dr.h.c. Prof. Dipl. Eng. PhD., MBA is professor at the Department of Security Studies and the Vice-Dean at the Faculty of Political Science and International Relations of Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica. His research is focused on political-military strategic issues, particularly in defence and security policy, international relations and international security studies. Since 2004 he served as a Curriculum Planning Branch Chief at the NATO Defence College in Rome, Italy. Having completed the tour, he was appointed to a position of Vice-Rector for Science at the Slovak Armed Forces Academy and subsequently as the Rector of the Academy. Afterwards he assumed the duty of the Defence and Security Adviser at the Slovak Permanent Representation to the European Union in Brussels, Belgium. Then, he held position of Rector at the University of Security Management in Kosice, Slovakia. Professor Nečas is an experienced European researcher and the author of a number of monographs, books, papers and articles related to the political sciences, security and defence published worldwide.

**ORCID ID:** [orcid.org/0000-0001-7743-0453](http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7743-0453)

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