

Foreword

Minorities and Migrants in the Post-Communist Region during the Process of European Integration: New Challenges and Perspectives

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Regardless of the apparently successful enlargement process so far, there is a crisis in the search for a European identity. Although there is great variety of historical and cultural interpretations, even the basic blocs of European identity are not evident. Europe does not know the extent of its boundaries and it is not obvious who is European and who is not. This applies not only to individuals and cultures but also to states. Eastern or southern Europe and Russia can be seen as being 'European' in very different modes. Providing a positive answer to the question of what Europe means is difficult; the negative identity though usually appears more easily (see Delanty 2002). Social psychology confirms that the negative identity paradigm is more powerful than the positive. Yet contemporary European democracy is well aware that negation is not the solution.

It is sometimes argued that Europe is a reality regardless of theoretical difficulties to define it. However, the questions whether Europe is a Christian club, whether it is just a market economy area, or a secular political project of democracy is often very important to know for those who are not in the very centre of this reality. In the attempts to define Europeanness, it may not be so difficult to find oneself declaring that "we are European". However, it is less easy to answer whether we truly are just beneficiaries or rather suppliers, and whether we belong to the decision-makers. Discovering that we do not may add a very specific colour to our Europeanness.

Closure and openness will matter for both the core and the periphery of the new Europe. Those who publicly declare openness and condemn radicalism sometimes happen to be a closed and phobic group in their social practices. A new consideration of what intolerance and xenophobia is in the contemporary world is required. Even though at present it is hardly possible to imagine a person with a single and one-dimensional ethnic identity, policies of nation-states are often based on such a premise. The declaration and practices of multiculturalism are also to be seen in their contexts, because after simply declaring the equality of cultures it remains unanswered how different groups are inter-linked among themselves. Moreover, it is often the case of the post-communist states that multiculturalism is just a well-learned slogan. It was relatively easy to apply the rhetoric of multiculturalism to the so-called

national minorities, because the representation of cultural and ethnographic practices is often the main and only field of minority policies. Old declarations will need new interpretations.

The growth of migrant groups will indeed test if states have adequate minority policies. Is cultural representation enough? How can inclusion and civic involvement be developed? Is it legitimate to distinguish between historical ethnic groups and migratory ethnic groups? Which set of institutions will deal with issues of equality and diversity?

Many eastern European states have experienced emigration to Western Europe and for some time will remain the suppliers of migrants. On the other hand, there is an increasing awareness about another role eastern Europe may be expected to play, i.e. to absorb migrants and prevent them from migrating to other EU states. However, at the same time the post-communist states become transition or destination countries not only to the people from specific war-torn or impoverished areas of the world, but also to their own neighbours. Thus migration and ethnic diversity should not be seen as anything too exotic; it remains a regular part of regional experience.

Migration ladder is specifically actual issue for EU border countries such as the Baltic states. More generally, ethnic intermingling only reminds us of multiple identities, and various forms of diasporas may appear in the new settings of the enlarged Europe. New minorities can appear, old minorities can be joined by new migrants, and all of them will search for their place. The political elite of the Baltic states who declared a pro-EU stance were actually little concerned about the varying preferences and understanding of the public. Ethnic minorities often remained ignored in the process of public mobilisation related to EU membership. Such a marginalisation is not only problematic for democracy, it is also not rational from a political point of view. Instead of developing a sense of national identity in such circumstances, minorities are likely to transgress the national level, in other words, to be ethnic and European without having a national belonging. Another identity option interesting to consider in this context is the regional identity. Will the regional identities appear in eastern Europe as intermediary ones – between the state and ‘Europe’?

These questions refer to ethnic dimension that requires serious consideration in the whole post-communist region. On 21–22 November 2003 the Institute for Social Research in Lithuania organised an international seminar “Perceptions of European Integration: the Ethnic Dimension of Civic Life” which was sponsored by OSF-Lithuania. This issue of *Ethnicity Studies* introduces the readers to some of the papers presented at the seminar.

The articles included in the first part of the volume examine the issues related to formation of European identity and the dynamics between European, national, and ethnic identities. *Meilutė Taljūnaitė* (Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania) discusses the role of citizenship in the processes of social integration in the EU and presents an overview of essential dimensions of new citizenship

in the enlarged EU. *Irena Šutinienė* (Institute for Social Research, Lithuania) analyses data of qualitative research carried out in Lithuania in 2003 and examines how European identity is constructed at the level of individual. *Aksel Kirch, Mait Talts, and Tarmo Tuisk* (Institute for European Studies, Audentes University, Estonia) explore the attitudes of the urban population in Estonia towards the EU. The authors conclude that the membership of Estonia in the EU does not necessarily mean the loss of Estonia's national identity.

The articles included in the second part of this publication present and analyse substantial data on people's attitudes towards European integration in different countries. *Tadas Leončikas* (Institute for Social Research, Lithuania) analyses the dynamics of attitudes towards the EU in the main ethnic groups in Lithuania in 1999–2003. The author discusses the main factors shaping the attitudes of ethnic groups towards European integration. *Inese Šūpule* (Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, Latvia) analyses data of sociological research and referenda regarding EU membership in Latvia. The data reveals differences in EU perception among some social groups in Latvia. Some reasons for the negative attitudes towards European integration of the substantial part of Russian population in Latvia are discussed by the author. The perceptions of European integration by different social groups in Slovakia are insightfully investigated by *Ol'ga Gyárfášová* (Institute for Public Affairs, Bratislava, Slovakia). *Horatiu Rusu* (University "Lucian Blaga" of Sibiu, Romania) focuses on the characteristics of social groups in Romania that express negative or no attitudes towards the EU. The articles included in the second part of this volume introduce substantial empirical data and present insightful analyses of the material, allowing a number of common perceptions about the EU across the countries of eastern and central Europe to be noticed.

The articles included into the third part of the volume examine the social and economic situation of ethnic minorities and migrants in some European countries and discuss the influence of European integration on these groups. *Cesarina Manassero* (University of Turin, Italy) focuses on the legal situation of minorities and migrants in Italy. *Vera Klopčič* (Institute for Ethnic Studies, Slovenia) investigates the social and economic situation of Roma in Europe in general and in Slovenia in particular. *Simona Zavratnik Zimic* (University of Primorska, Science and Research Center of Koper, Slovenia) considers contemporary migratory processes in Europe in general and in Slovenia in particular and presents some models of the integration of new immigrants into host societies.

REFERENCES

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Pratarmė

Pokomunistinių visuomenių mažumos ir migrantai: Europos integracijos proceso iššūkiai ir perspektyvos

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Santrauka

Nors Europos Sąjungos plėtra sėkminga, pastebima tam tikra europietiškojo tapatumo paieškų krizė. Nors yra įvairių istorinių ir kultūrinių interpretacijų, pamatinės europietiškojo tapatumo atramos nėra aiškios: Europa nežino savo geografijos, neturi aiškių kultūrinių ir istorinių ribų. Neaišku, kas yra europietis ir kuo jis skiriasi nuo neeuropiečio. Pateikti pozityvų atsakymą į šiuos klausimus nėra paprasta; lengviau susiformuoja negatyvus tapatumas. Kai kurių tyrinėtojų nuomone, „Europos idėja atsirado iš priešiško ir nuo pat savo užuomazgų buvo palaikoma ne tiek konsensuso ir taikos, kiek konflikto ir skirčių“ (Delanty 2002: 7). Nors Europa dažnai atrodo neabejotina tikrovė, visgi klausimas, ar tai yra krikščionių klubas, ar tiesiog rinkos ekonomikos zona, ar sekuliarus politinis projektas, kuriuo siekiama plėtoti demokratiją, yra nevienodai svarbus atskirose Europos dalyse. Europietiškojo paieškos ES centre ir periferijoje gali būti gana skirtingos.

Mažumų savijautai besintegruojančioje Europoje ypač svarbu bus atvirumo ir uždarumo santykis. Atviros visuomenės ir pilietinių vertybių klausimas aktualus ir ES centrui, ir paribiems. Baltijos šalių politiniai elitai, tvirtai pasisakę už integraciją į ES, iš tiesų ne visuomet pakankamai dėmesio skyrė visuomenės grupių požiūriams ir preferencijoms. Su stojimu į ES susijusiame visuomenės mobilizavimo procese etninės mažumos gana dažnai liko nepastebėtos ir į šį procesą neįtrauktos.

Nors šiandien praktiškai neįmanoma įsivaizduoti žmogaus, turinčio tik vieną etninę tapatybę, daugelio valstybių – ypač Rytų Europoje – kultūros ir etninė politika grindžiama būtent tokia prielaida. Būtent todėl kartais atrodo, kad žmonių judėjimas ir etninė įvairovė – naujas iššūkis, nors iš tiesų šie procesai nėra nauji. Nepaisant palyginti sėkmingos ir subalansuotos Lietuvos etninės politikos, Europos šalių patirties kontekste keliami klausimai gali darytis vis aktualesni. Reikia numatyti, kad migraciją visuomenė paprastai vertina prieštaringai, ir įvaizdžiai bei realybė dažnai susipina. Todėl svarbu tinkamai identifikuoti realius procesus ir gerai suformuluoti klausimus, skirtus etninei

politikai. Kaip integruosime ir absorbuosime migrantus? Ar kultūrinės integracijos praktikos pakanka, kad užtikrintume mažumų integraciją, užkirstume kelią socialinei atskirčiai ir nelygybei? Kokiomis kryptimis reikėtų plėtoti etninę politiką?

Europietiškos tapatybės tapsmas – ilgalaikis ir daugiaplanis procesas, tad apie jį spręsti galima tik turint išsamią duomenų bazę. Tik tęstiniai stebėjimai gali aptikti pokyčių laike ir tik detali analizė gali atskleisti, pvz., konkrečių informavimo kampanijų poveikį. Kad gerai suvoktume europietiškojo identiteto formavimąsi, turime atlikti palyginamuosius tyrimus. Dalinis atsakas į lyginamųjų tyrimų stoką – Socialinių tyrimų instituto surengtas ir ALF finansuotas tarptautinis seminaras 2003-ųjų lapkričio 21–22 dienomis. Jo metu pristatytų tyrimų medžiaga pateikiama ir šios publikacijos straipsniuose.

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