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CAUSES AND MAIN ROUTES OF THE MASS IMMIGRATION TO EUROPE IN 2015

Abstract. The flow of immigrants into Europe is a phenomenon commonly known since the end of the Second World War. To a large extent it was the result of a colonial and then post-colonial relationship between metropolises and their overseas territories. Migration movements in Europe intensified after 1989 along with systemic changes in the eastern part of the continent.

The phenomenon of increased migration to Europe observed since March 2015 combines both processes: economic migration, which undoubtedly dominates in terms of number, and exiles, of a much smaller scale, but given as the cause of migration by almost all migrants. A new phenomenon is the fact that a large part of migrants constitutes uncontrolled migration, which in previous years was marginal. In 2015, asylum applications were submitted in EU countries by as many as 1.25 million people. The influx of refugees to Europe has become not only a demographic phenomenon, but also a political one, evoking strong political emotions. Mass migrations also seem to be an instrument of international policy implementation by key world powers.

The main purpose of the article was to present the background of the mass migration to Europe that took place in 2015. The main reasons for the decision to emigrate by the citizens of origin countries were shown, as well as the routes by which refugees flow into Europe.

Key words: mass migration, Europe, refugees, migrant routes.

1. MIGRATION IN EUROPE – INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of the article was to present the background of the mass migration to Europe that took place in 2015. In particular, to show the political and economic situation in the countries of origin that led to mass escaping, mainly of young men. An important goal was also to present the diversity of migration routes through which refugees reach Europe and to show the threats to them resulting from the different conditions of each route. Efforts were made to prove the

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hypothesis that mass migration in the years 2014–2015 was not unique in terms of the scale of the phenomenon, but that only the concentration of the inflow within a few months was distinctive.

The process of migratory influx into Europe has been a well-known phenomenon since the end of the Second World War. It was largely the result of the colonial and then post-colonial relationship between metropolises and their overseas territories. The right to live in a metropolis was granted to meritorious war veterans from the colonies. At the turn of the 1960s, when the decolonisation process began, officials from former colonies came to a metropolis, often with their families, disgraced by cooperation with the colonists. There were also influxes of metropolitan citizens who did not see any future for themselves in the emerging states, even though they had been sometimes born there. In some cases, a metropolis had to urgently evacuate entire social, ethnic or religious groups whose survival in a former colony was threatened by the seizure of power by hostile political forces, an antagonistic ethnic group or members of a different religion. One example was the mass flight of Christian Moluccans to the Netherlands, threatened by the Indonesian administration dominated by Muslims, or the flight of Muslims from India, not only to Pakistan, but also to the United Kingdom. The "Windrush generation", i.e. migrants from the Caribbean Sea basin flowing in the 1950s to metropolises: the UK, the Netherlands and France, belongs to the same category.

In particular, this phenomenon occurred when independence was the result of a victory over a colonial metropolis in a war for independence. Large migrations took place, e.g. from Algeria to France (mainly to Corsica), with as many as three different social groups participating in them, namely French colonists, especially wine growers, Christians, mainly from Kabylie, threatened by the victorious insurgent movement dominated by Muslims, and, to a smaller extent, also Arab representatives of the colonial administration, fearing restrictions for their anti-national activities.

However, that post-war migration movement was not significant and was surpassed by other trends, e.g. Jewish emigration to Palestine, transatlantic migrations, mainly to North America, migrations between the German occupation zones and then (until 1961) between both German states. There were also mass politically forced migrations in Eastern Europe: the displacement of Germans, resettlements of Poles, Hungarians, Macedonians, Tatars, etc.

That post-war migration wave, often politically inspired, led to the recognition of the emergence of the phenomenon of refugees. As early as 1951, the Geneva Convention recognised a refugee as a person who "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country" (Broniewicz, 2008, p. 1). Initially, the Convention was intended

to apply only to European refugees who emigrated from Europe before 1951, but after the events in Hungary in 1956 and the process of decolonising Africa, its application became more universal, as confirmed by the New York Protocol in 1967 (Pluta, 2008, p. 38).

At the end of the 1950s, a new stream of migrants appeared, which was not associated with the phenomenon of refugees, as its origins were the growing disproportions in the pace of economic development. Some rapidly developing Western European countries began to receive cheaper labour from beyond the Pyrenees (Portugal, Spain), Italy (there was also an internal wave of migration from the South to the well-developed North), Yugoslavia, Greece, Turkey, Ireland and Finland. Occasionally, migrants also came from communist countries: Hungary, Czechoslovakia and, starting in the 1970s, mainly from Poland (Rica *et al.*, 2013, pp. 6–7). During the 1970s and 1980s, the Pomaks people were exiled from Bulgaria to Turkey.

Migration flows in Europe increased after 1989 with political changes in the eastern part of the continent (Salt, 2006, p. 21). It was mainly the flow from the former communist states to the developed countries of Western and Northern Europe, amounting to an annual average of about 850,000 people (Salt, Almeida, 2006). There were at least three main waves in 1989: East German refugees through Hungary to the Federal Republic of Germany, people (mainly Hungarians) from Romania to Hungary during the last years/months of the Ceausescu regime, and from Bulgaria to Turkey.

Refugees (mainly from Yugoslavia and Afghanistan) were marginal in this process, with economic migrations accounting for the majority of the total. During that period, the number of asylum applications submitted in the EU Member states reached its peak, at almost 700,000, a situation which remained unique until 2014 (Sasnal, 2015, p. 10).

The currently observed (since March 2015) phenomenon of increased migration to Europe combines both processes: economic migration, which undoubtedly dominates in terms of numbers, and refugees, much smaller in scale, but cited as the cause of migration by almost all migrants (Linka, 2017, p. 5).

A new phenomenon is the fact that a large part of migrants is the so-called irregular migration, which in previous years was a phenomenon that was always present, but marginal in absolute numbers. Irregular migration is an "unauthorised crossing of a state border". It is also referred to in literature as illegal, undocumented or unauthorised migration (Morehouse and Blomfield, 2011, p. 4).

Christal Morehouse and Michael Blomfield identified 9 reasons why migration becomes irregular. Those are: illegal border crossing, entry using false documents, entry using legal documents but providing false information in those documents, overstaying a visa-free travel period or temporary residence permit, loss of status because of failing to renew a permit, failing to meet residence requirements or

breaching conditions of residence, being born into irregularity, absconding during the asylum procedure or failing to leave a host state after a negative decision, a state's failure to enforce a return decision for legal or practical reasons (tolerated stay). The fact that the EU has 27 different immigration systems, which are often incompatible, does not make things any easier, although the EU is working to harmonise them.

Until recently, irregular migration has been a marginal problem for the EU. As recently as in 2008, the number of irregular migrants residing in EU Member States was still below 1% of their populations, and irregulars accounted for 7–12% of all immigrants. The number of reported attempts to illegally cross EU borders has been steadily decreasing, from over 150,000 in 2007 to less than 120,000 in 2010 (Morehouse and Blomfield, 2011, pp. 6–7).

A dramatic change in the number of migrants arriving in the EU occurred in 2014 when more than 600,000 asylum applications were submitted, 55% of which were rejected. The largest uncontrolled inflow occurred in 2015. As many as 1.25 million people applied for asylum at that time. In the following year it was possible to somewhat slow down that phenomenon and subject it to greater control. By September 2016, only 314,000 migrants had arrived, half of the number that had arrived in the first year of the migrant crisis. As many as 34% of migrants were Syrians, 12% came from Iraq and Afghanistan. Over 70% of immigrants were men, 52% of whom were aged 18–34, i.e. young men of working age, suitable for military service (Matuszczyk, 2016, p. 9). It is worth noting that in 2013 more than 1.7 million immigrants came to the EU, but they were only legal immigrants. There is just over 1 immigrant per 1,000 inhabitants of the EU, so it is still a marginal population (Sasnal, 2015, p. 11).

2. REGIONS OF CONDENSATION OF IMMIGRANT MASSES

Immigrants to Europe came from at least several dozen countries of the world. However, significant groups (over 10,000 annually) were arrivals from only a dozen countries, and the largest of them from only a few countries. They were the main cause of the current migrant crisis.

It is therefore worth taking a closer look at the structure of the territorial origin of the immigrants. As mentioned above, three countries were at the forefront of the most numerous migrant groups, with a third of them coming from Syria, followed by Iraq and Afghanistan. In 2015, the three were joined by immigrants from Kosovo and Albania, i.e. European countries. In 2015, the structure of territorial origin of immigrants was already different than in the first year of the migrant crisis (Table 1).

Table 1. Territorial origin of immigrants to the EU in 2015 (over 10,000 asylum seekers)

State	Number of asylum applications
Syria	383,745
Afghanistan	196,200
Iraq	130,320
Kosovo	72,215
Albania	68,740
Pakistan	48,550
Eritrea	47,030
Nigeria	32,255
Serbia	30,330
Iran	28,530
Somalia	22,830
Russia	22,515
Ukraine	22,415
Unidentified	21,010
Bangladesh	19,070
Northern Macedonia	16,120
Gambia	13,435
Sudan	11,810

Source: *Europe's migrant crisis…,* 2016.

3. THE ORIGINS OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ARMED CONFLICTS, GENERATING MASSES OF MIGRANTS TO EUROPE

The reason for the decision to migrate from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq were the open armed conflict in those countries. The primary issue was the personal safety of migrants, although the economic factor resulting from the devastation of a country's economy and the loss of jobs or sources of means for living must also be considered as important reasons for the decision to migrate. Political, religious and cultural persecution is hardly a significant reason, as there is no need to leave a country to avoid it, it would be sufficient to take refuge in areas controlled by political forces and factions with which one sympathises.

3.1. Afghan conflict

The Afghan conflict has the longest history, which has continued in this phase at least since the country overthrew its monarchy in 1973, i.e. 44 years ago. The main political force associated with the monarchy originated from the Pashtuns (Afghans). For centuries, they faced opposition from their neighbours in Afghanistan, namely Tajiks, Uzbeks, Turkmens and Baluchs, as well as the indigenous Hazaras, the ethnic group which lives only in Afghanistan (Jastrzębski, 2003, p. 244). However, the overthrowing of the monarchy did not result in democracy, but only in foreign policy being directed towards an alliance with the Soviet Union and the breaking of traditionally good relations with the United States (Modrzejewska-Leśniewska, 1996, pp. 357–358). In September 1979, there occurred a coup within the ruling party. The winning group sought apparent democratisation, stopped persecuting followers of Islam, and, in terms of foreign policy, distanced itself from the USSR and sought cooperation with the most important neighbours: Pakistan and Iran, as well as with the United States. In response to this change in Afghanistan's foreign policy, the Soviet Union launched an armed invasion of the country on 25 December 1979 and occupied it for a decade. Radical Pushtunian Islamists, as well as nations from the north of the country, i.e. Tajikis and Uzbeks, resisted the occupation forces. Ultimately, the Soviet losses and the great political changes in USSR caused that in February 1989 their troops withdrew from Afghanistan, but that did not end the civil war. After another coup in 1992, religious radicals seized power and proclaimed the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and a new multilateral civil war ensued. In 1994, Pashtun alumni of koranic schools from Pakistan, i.e. the Taliban, armed and trained by the United States and Pakistan, joined the conflict during the war for liberation from under the Soviet occupation (Calvocoressi, 2002, pp. 593–594). Those factions quickly gained an advantage over other sides of the conflict, occupying 96% of the territory of the country. In 1996, they captured Kabul and proclaimed the Emirate of Afghanistan. The war did not stop, however, as the Tajik army of Ahmed Shah Masoud, also a veteran of the struggle against the Soviet occupier, resisted them. At that time, Osama bin Laden, the Yemenite Saudi founder of the al-Qaeda (The Base) organisation, wanted globally for terrorism, also found refuge in Afghanistan (Odziemkowski, 2006, p. 216). The Taliban remained in power for longer on 75% of Afghanistan's territory, with the most extreme form of sharia at that time, striking at the foundations of social life and threatening Afghan civilisation. The rest of the area was managed by the internationally recognised Burhanuddin Rabbani, President of Afghanistan, Tajik by nationality.

That conflict, which had already lasted 23 years, did not, however, trigger significant supra-regional migration. In addition to internally displaced persons, there were a small number of immigrants who stayed on the territory of Pakistan and Iran. The influx of Afghan migrants to Europe, North America and Australia was small at the time.

Migration is inscribed in the social history of Afghanistan. In the 1960s and 70s, poor Afghanistan was a reservoir of labour for Pakistan, Iran and the Arab Gulf states, which were increasing their oil and gas production (Marchand, 2014, p. 29).

The first clear wave of increased emigration followed the Soviet invasion of 1979. By 1990, it had affected as many as 6 million Afghans, but was still directed almost exclusively to Pakistan and Iran. The highest migration rate existed in the years 1980–1985, when it amounted to -56.7 per 1,000 inhabitants. In the period following the end of the Soviet occupation, this trend was completely reversed, the migration rate for the years 1990–1995 was 44.4 per 1,000 inhabitants, i.e. the influx to the country exceeded the outflow (Marchand, 2014, p. 22) (Fig. 1).

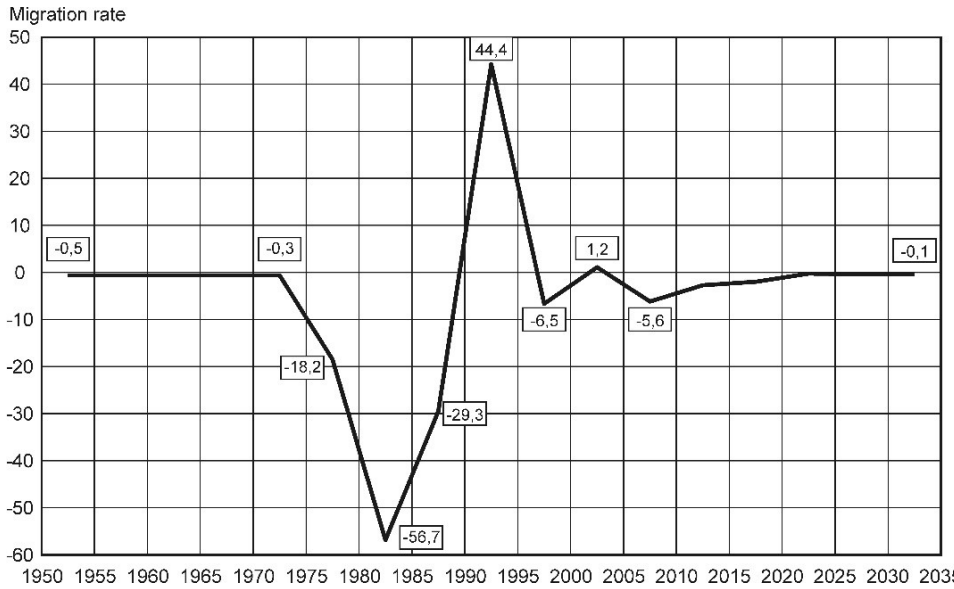

Fig. 1. Migration rate in Afghanistan in the years 1950–2035

Source: Marchand, 2014, p. 31.

Emigrants from previous periods returned to Afghanistan in the hope for peace and development of the country. Both immigration countries implemented repatriation programmes, Pakistan in 1990 and Iran in 1992 (Marchand, 2014, p. 31). Within the framework of repatriation to Afghanistan, 1.3 million people from both neighbouring countries were resettled voluntarily in the years 1992–1995.

The second wave of increased emigration from Afghanistan was triggered by the takeover of power by the Taliban. Starting from 1992, mainly inhabitants of large cities and representatives of the well-educated middle class emigrated. They

went to Iran and Pakistan, where, unlike the first wave of migration, they were no longer happily accepted (Jastrzębski, 2003, p. 267). Over 300,000 people fled to Pakistan in the years 1991–2000. This time, UN assistance was no longer sufficient, and refugees settled in large cities instead of camps, seeking sources of income (Marchand, 2014, p. 32). Iran completely closed its border with the Emirate of Afghanistan, preventing a wider wave of emigration. Programmes to support and educate Afghans in camps and to encourage them to leave Iran also come to an end, which affected 190,000 Afghan refugees. In 1995–2000, the migration rate was again negative and amounted to -6.5 per 1,000 inhabitants (Marchand, 2014, p. 22).

Only the last phase of the Afghan conflict triggered an increased wave of migration, including to Europe. It was linked to the widespread resistance of minority nations to the Pushtune Taliban, the rejection of Sharia by some Pashtuns and, internationally, al-Qaeda's attacks on the WTC buildings in New York on 11 September 2001.

In view of the refusal of the Taliban Government to extradite Osama Bin Laden, who was suspected of having inspired the attacks, the United States declared war on Islamic terrorism and organised an international coalition of several dozen states ready to take part in action against Afghanistan. By January 2002, the allied military action led to the almost total displacement of Taliban forces from Afghanistan, and the country was divided by the allied forces into zones managed by the US Army and their allies. The allies also established a new, democratically elected Afghan administration with President Hamid Karzai at the head (Sobczyński, 2012, pp. 229–230).

In 2002–2012, repatriation programmes led to the re-emigration of 5.7 million Afghans, out of whom 4.6 million benefitted from the assistance offered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

However, that was followed by the largest wave of migration to date, initiated in 2001, when a part of the Pushtun population, supporting the Taliban, fled to Pakistan together with the Taliban.

The international military intervention in Afghanistan formally ended in 2014 with the transfer of control over the country to an allied-trained army and government police, but the war did not stop, as the Taliban regained not only their influence in the society, extending it even beyond the Pushtun ethnos, but also effective control over several provinces. A limited number of the allied forces, mainly from the United States, remained in Afghanistan.

It was that last phase of the conflict that fostered the condensation of migrant masses. Afghans are fleeing; mostly young men, capable of military service in the government army, or threatened with being recruited into Taliban troops. People are trying to escape government-controlled areas fearing the return of Taliban rule, which is highly probable with the indolence of the army infiltrated by Islamists, as well as the threat to their very existence, as the economy of the country is

crumbling despite less intense fightings; unemployment is massive and there are signs of a coming famine. Paradoxically, the phase of extinguishing heavy armed operations is a period of greater external migration than the civil war or both occupations, be it Soviet and allied. Migrants find it difficult to obtain refugee status, as it is easy to identify places where they could safely hide in Afghanistan itself, remaining under the care of international forces stationed there or in neighbouring countries (the country of first asylum), mainly in Pakistan. The vast majority of the so-called refugees from the last wave of 2014–2016 are treated as economic migrants, which usually does not give them a good position in EU Member States.

In 2013, 1.6 million refugees from Afghanistan were registered in Pakistan, and 840,000 in Iran. (Marchand, 2014, p. 34). However, both the social profile and other characteristics of the population were completely different from those who returned to the country. The vast majority of those refugees have been living outside Afghanistan for more than 20 years, and almost half of the registered refugees have been born outside their country of origin. The decision to repatriate is a very difficult one, and requires financial resources not only for travel, but also for adaptation in the country and support from the relatives living there, many of whom refugees had lost. Poorer families can only count on international aid, but it is diminishing every year.

Migration in Afghanistan has a mass character. According to Koser (2014, p. 11), 3 million people returned to the country in 1992–1993, 6 million emigrated in the 1990s, and 5.7 million returned to the country after 2002. However, this trend collapsed, as in 2011–2013 only 95,000 people from Iran and only 26,000 from Pakistan returned. Apparently, many have moved elsewhere – to Europe and Australia. In 2014, 4,243 Afghans were granted asylum in Australia. The increase in Afghan asylum seekers in Turkey is symptomatic, with 1,248 people in 2010, 2,486 in 2011 and as many as 14,125 people in 2013, i.e. in 2010–2011 the number of refugees from Afghanistan in Asia Minor doubled, and after another year, it increased tenfold (Koser, 2014, p. 3). In 2016, almost 13% of Afghan citizens lived in exile (Zirack, 2016, p. 1). In 2015, more than 175,000 Afghans applied for asylum in EU Member States, but Afghanistan is in fourth place after Syria, Eritrea and Iraq in the number of those who obtained the consent *(Migrant crisis,* 2016). Thus, the security situation in Afghanistan is seen by EU asylum officials as better than in Eritrea, a country where there is currently no armed conflict.

3.2. Conflicts in Iraq

Armed conflicts in another country of origin have a slightly shorter history than in Afghanistan. Iraq, a state created by British mandates in Turkish Mesopotamia in 1932, was also the scene of internal unrest resulting from a complex nationality and religious structure of its population (Tripp, 2009, p. 59). Quite

paradoxically, the period of longer political stabilisation coincided with the Second World War, during which Iraq became an area of concentration and regrouping of allied forces. Shortly after the war ended and foreign troops left Iraq, the country joined the Jewish-Arab dispute, participating in the Arab anti-Israeli coalition in the subsequent stages of that armed conflict. Iraq's participation in the Israeli conflict caused the exodus of 130,000 Jews from the country. Iraq was an active participant in all Arab-Israeli wars. The Hashemite monarchy collapsed in Iraq in 1958 and Iraq became a republic (Tripp, 2009, p. 185). The country severed its ties with the West, including military ones (Baghdad Pact), and began to move closer to the Eastern bloc. At that time, elements of Arab nationalism appeared, which caused an armed uprising of Kurds in the north of the country, lasting to this day, with short breaks. The Ba'ath Arab socialist party, which also ruled in Syria, took to power, and Iraq intended to create a pan-Arab socialist federation with Syria and Egypt. In 1970, a series of dictators were replaced by Saddam Hussein, whose rule led to the total collapse of Iraq, its ongoing defragmentation and several major military disasters. Hussein began his rule with a reorientation towards the West and the elimination of the Communist Al-Ansar guerrilla. In 1980–1988, he waged war with Iran, seeking annexation of part of Shiite Khuzestan along the Shatt al-Arab river. None of the parties to this conflict could consider themselves winners. After the end of the war, Hussein suppressed Kurdish insurgents in Operation Al-Anfal, committing genocide against some 200,000 victims.

Saddam Hussein's subsequent military decisions gave rise to the final collapse of Iraq. In 1990, Iraq attacked Kuwait and incorporated it as a province. However, that was met with an armed response from the international coalition of the West and most of the Arab states of the region. The armed intervention of the coalition, led by the United States, resulted in the defeat of Iraqi troops in 1991, restrictions on the international sovereignty of Hussein's government and the imposition of economic sanctions against Iraq, including control of oil trade. However, the West did not prevent the dictator from suppressing the anti-government uprisings of the Shiites in the south of the country and the Kurds in the north. In the latter case, the success of the Iraqi army was not complete, as in 1992 the Kurds created a separate geopolitical unit with a high degree of autonomy, which still exists today (Iraqi Kurdistan). Since 1993, Iraq has had no freedom to control its airspace and American Airforce has often bombed its cities.

The fear for Hussein's ability to use chemical and biological weapons against his opponents (which turned out to be unfounded) was a deciding factor in starting the final overthrowing of the dictator. After a victorious war, a coalition of several dozen Western and Arab states divided Iraq into occupying zones and dismantled its state structures. Iraq was taken over by the US occupying forces, but the state disintegrated into separate units: Shiite in the south, a politically stable Kurdish unit in the north, and a disintegrated Sunni area in the central part of the country.

The international community and the occupation authorities *de facto* accepted only the autonomy of Kurdistan, denying the Shiites' and Sunnis' similar rights (Zdanowski, 2010, pp. 496–497). That triggered internal conflicts with the Shiites, to whom the occupation authorities gradually handed over successive spheres of the country's social and economic life. They were the first to raise a rebellion against the occupants. Orthodox Shiite factions fighting against both Sunnis and allied forces also became radicalised. The first parliamentary elections in 2005 were boycotted by the Sunnis and the power, formally throughout Iraq, was taken over by the Shiite government. However, in practice it was not respected by the Kurds, Sunnis or even some of the Shiites. The 2010 elections also brought victory to the Shiites who continue to rule in Iraq.

In December 2011, the allied forces were largely withdrawn (a larger US contingent remained for training purposes), but the situation in Iraq did not stabilise. Taking advantage of internal fighting between Sunni factions, radical Islamist troops entered the northern part of Iraq from Syria, ravaged by a civil war. After capturing Mosul and getting several dozen kilometres from Baghdad, they proclaimed the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) in the occupied areas of Syria and Iraq. Only the Autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan effectively resisted the Islamist aggression and ultimately contributed to its complete elimination from the Iraqi territory in 2018.

The beginnings of mass migration of Iraqis were related to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait (Czajkowska and Diawoł-Sitko, 2012, p. 303) in 1990, when over a million refugees left the country (most of them migrated from Iraq). The emigration took place before the war and the allied Operation "Desert Storm". After the suppression of the uprisings in Iraq, the country was left by large groups of Shiites and Kurds, along with 300,000 Palestinians living in Iraq for decades, who fled to Jordan. Approximately 37,000 Arab Shiites emigrated to Saudi Arabia, while some 100,000 Iraqis fled to Jordan and Syria. In 2003, there were as many as 530,000 Shiite refugees from Iraq in Iran. The exodus of Kurds to Turkey and Iran, estimated at 1.85 million people, was even greater. A significant increase in emigration from Iraq followed the US invasion in 2003. However, before Hussein's dictatorship was overthrown, 30,000 refugees returned to Iraq. Another wave of migration was caused by the allied occupation and internal fighting between Sunnis and Shiites and the related terrorist attacks by al-Qaeda from February 2006 on the mosques of both faiths. In 2007, the number of Iraqi emigrants was estimated at 2 million and the number of internally displaced persons was about 1.7 million. With the intensification of the civil war, the number of emigrants increased. An additional group of migrants were the collaborators of the allied occupants, estimated, together with their families, at 100,000 people, who were attacked from several sides of the conflicted social groups. For them, however, the fate was particularly cruel, with only 69 people successfully finding asylum in the United States in 2007.

Emigrants from Iraq at that time were directed almost exclusively to neighbouring countries (about 2 million people), as much as 95% remained in the Middle East, where they were treated as temporary "guests", not refugees. Syria, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon and Iran, as well as the Gulf Monarchies, hosted the largest groups. Only Egypt and Turkey applied the Refugee Convention to Iraqis.

After 2006, Iraqis became the largest asylum-seeking group in the most industrialised countries, but only 17,800 Iraqis settled there by 2008, including 5,000 in the United States and 6,000 in Australia, with very few in Europe. The nationality-based composition of those immigrants was also significant. In Germany, as many as half of Iraqi refugees were Kurds, and in the UK up to 70%.

The latest wave of refugees from Iraq began after 2014, when the fighters of the so-called Islamic State entered Iraq from Syria, heading to the south of the country, where they soon reached the outskirts of Baghdad, having conquered the largest city in the north of the country – Mosul. They were stopped on the border of Iraqi Kurdistan.

Iraqi refugees travel by land via Turkey to the Aegean Sea and to the European part of Turkey, from where they try to cross the Greek-Turkish border by sea or river. The largest groups of Iraqis have so far reached Belgium (40,000 people) and Finland, the Netherlands and Norway (about 10,000 each). Belgium is generally chosen by refugees from the Baghdad area (Arabs), while Switzerland, Finland and Norway are chosen by refugees from Sulaymaniyah and Dahuk (Kurds) (Weiss, 2016, pp. 5–6). The gender structure of Iraqi refugees is also interesting, with 93% of them being men and only 7% women. The average age of a migrant is 29 years, as many as 2/3 of migrants are single and only 18% of them defined themselves as internally displaced persons at the time of the decision to emigrate, and 53% had a job at that time. Over 2/3 of refugees declared that they had an income in excess of $500 a month, 41% had a university degree and a further 46% possessed secondary education. 40% drew information about migration methods from oral transmissions, 23% from the media and 22% from the Internet *(IOM surveys Iraqi...,* 2016).

3.3. Civil war in Syria

The conflicts in Syria, which are causing mass emigration, did not appear just now, but have been going on for several decades. The Syrian state is a colonial creation, carved out by the Anglo-French occupiers from the Ottoman Empire after the First World War in the face of very strong Arab national movements. It was established within its borders with no prior tradition as the mandate territory of the League of Nations, with the authorities artificially created by importing a family of the sharifs of Mecca – the Hashemite from Saudi Arabia (cast on the thrones of Syria, Iraq and Transjordan) (Milczanowski and Sawicka, 2013, p. 78). During the

Second World War Syria, already as a republic, gained sovereignty, which allowed it to become a founding state of the United Nations in 1945 (Hitti, 1951, p. 704). The inherited borders inhabited by a mosaic of nations and several religions did not bode well for the internal cohesion of the new state. The established legal and political system pushed the Arab-Sunnite majority of the population from power and handed it over to religious minority groups (Alawites and Christians), which also satisfied the national minorities of Kurds, Druze and Turkmen.

Despite internal tensions, which sometimes turned into internal conflicts, Syria was not an emigration state at that time, on the contrary, it received immigrants, especially the Arab population fleeing Palestine. For many years after the war, Syria operated in a market economy system. However, after later military upheavals of the 1960s, the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party came to power, which also ruled Iraq until the removal of Saddam Hussein in 2003 (Zdanowski, 2010, pp. 233–251). Using the economic support of Arab oil countries, as a steadfast enemy of Israel, and with the military and political support of the USSR and the communist bloc, as well as the PRC, Syria maintained a relatively good pace of economic development for several decades.

The civil war in Syria, which broke out in 2011, was a reaction to the decades-long dictatorial rule of Ba'ath party presidents, first Hafez al-Assad, and after his death in 2000, the dictator's son: Bashar al-Assad (the presidential dynasty). The tradition of fighting against the Assad dictatorship in Syria dates back to the 1980s, when Hafez al-Assad seized power in Syria through a coup. His first victims in 1982 were the Muslim Brothers, an extreme Islamist group that made a failed assassination attempt on the President in 1980. Assad viciously suppressed the rebellious city of Hama, killing several thousand inhabitants (Milczanowski and Sawicka, 2013, p. 85). In June 2000, the son of the dictator, Bashar al-Assad, returned from emigration to become president. Being educated in the West, he gave the impression of a democrat, but he turned out to be a tyrant. The key to the social situation in Syria is the fact that the presidential family and almost the entire ruling elite are Alawites, a religious minority (Lundgren-Jörum, 2012). Syria is home to the majority of the world's Alawites (2.5 million), but this is only 14% of the country's population. Sunnis dominate, besides that there are also Druzes (3%), and 5% are Christians (mainly Orthodox). In ethnic terms, Syrian Arabs make up more than 90%, and the more important minorities are Kurds (east of the country), Druzes (south) and Armenians.

Inspired by the "Arab Spring" in January 2011, anti-government protests took place in Syria, which on 15 March 2011 transformed into a Sunni uprising (Czajowska and Diawoł-Sitko, 2012, p. 221). The authorities sent troops led by Alawites against the demonstrators, but the opponents of the regime, mainly Sunnis, started to desert from the Syrian army. The conflict escalated on 25 April 2011 when the army and security forces were used to suppress demonstrators in Daraa and civilians were massacred. The consolidation of opposition forces, owing to

increasingly widespread desertions from the army, took place at the end of July 2011, when the creation of the Free Syrian Army was announced. In response, government forces pacified Hama on 31 July, killing 100 people, and in August they attacked the country's largest port of Latakia and Deir ez-Zor in the east. Fighting also included the border areas with Iraq, inhabited by Kurds, who until then were neutral in the conflict. The international community did not take any action other than diplomatic at that stage of the uprising. For several decades, the Assad regime supported the Soviet Union (later Russia), Iran and Hezbollah from neighbouring Lebanon, and for some time China. Among Syria's neighbours, only Turkey supports the insurgents and it is the gathering spot for political refugees, who established the opposition Syrian National Council in Istanbul on 26 August 2011 to coordinate the fight against the dictatorship (Sobczyński, 2012, p. 239).

The political and military situation in Syria was very dynamic, the forces that triggered the revolution and seemed to be the only alternative at the end of 2011, suffered military defeat against government troops and their allies, and were also internally disintegrated (Czajkowska and Diawoł-Sitko, 2012, pp. 221–226). There was a well-known failed military training of the opponents of the dictatorship by American experts at the cost of 500 million dollars which was eventually finished by only 50 people *(Fiasko...,* 2016). The forces of the democratic opposition were soon dominated by Islamist organisations, including terrorist ones, first by al-Qaeda and its local allies, and then the so-called Islamic State.

Despite mediation by the League of Arab States and the UN, the dictator carried out criminal rocket attacks on civilians and hospitals in Homs and Idlib, which was not condemned by the UN Security Council following a veto by China and Russia (Holliday, 2012).

As the conflict unfolded, other external forces joined it. Apart from Iran, Lebanon's Hezbollah and the Gulf Monarchies present there from the beginning, the United States, France, Russia, Turkey and Iraqi Kurdistan sent their troops to Syria (Milczanowski and Sawicka, 2013, p. 107). There was also a significant decomposition of the internal system, some of the opposition struck an agreement with Russia, Kurds or the dictator, others took the side of radical Islamists. The West basically lost its existing allies in the opposition and the ability to control at least a part of the country's territory.

Ultimately, the West lost any control over the process of resolving the conflict in Syria. In May 2017, Russia, Turkey and Iran announced the creation of the so-called safe zones in Syria, in areas controlled by the former democratic opposition, which were later almost completely eliminated my military forces by the same parties to the agreement and their populations displaced (except in the Idlib area, where fighting is still ongoing). In areas controlled by Syrian Kurds, on the border with Turkey, an autonomous federal unit called Rojava was established, which eventually helped the West defeat the so-called Islamic State in Syria in early 2019 and which conquered its capital Raqqa. However, Rojava is the object

of aggression of Turkish troops. The Alawite regime in Syria remained in power and, with the support of Russian, Iranian and Hezbollah troops, it regained control of most of the country's territory. The Islamists who dominated the anti-regime opposition are now only defending themselves near Idlib, attacked by Russia and Turkey and by the rebuilt Syrian army.

From the 1970s, Lebanon was a traditional emigration country for Syria, with more than 200,000 Syrian immigrants living there, most often undocumented, who emigrated there for economic reasons. In 2011, the number of such workers was estimated at up to 500,000, which was more than 9% of all the persons employed in Lebanon *(MPC-migration profiles: Syria,* 2013, p. 2).

Before the outbreak of the civil war, Syria was not, however, a generator of emigrant masses. On the contrary, it was a shelter for refugees from neighbouring countries. In 2010, there were 1.3 million refugees in Syria, including more than one million from Iraq (6% of the country's population) (Merelli, 2015).

Only after 2011 did a wave of Syrian migrants start moving to Europe by land. Of the 22 million citizens living in Syria, 250,000 are believed to have died as a result of military action, 7.6 million had to leave their homes but remained in Syria, and about 5.6 million people left the country. The vast majority of them, i.e. 4.3 million (76%), remained in neighbouring countries – Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq, while quite a large number fled to Egypt (Bel-Air, 2016, p. 1). The wave of Syrians coming to Europe is therefore only a small part of the total number of refugees from that country. By 2015, approximately 700,000 refugees from Syria arrived in Europe (not only Syrian Arabs, but also Palestinians and representatives of national minorities), i.e. 12% of all Syrian refugees, and only 470,000 people came to the EU (Bel-Air, 2016, p. 3). It is worth noting that before the civil war the main direction of economic emigration of Syrians was Saudi Arabia and the monarchies of the Arab Gulf. After the outbreak of the war, these countries were no longer willing to accept Syrians on a similar scale. Saudi Arabia reduced the number of accepted Syrians from 500,000 in 2011 to 420,000 in 2015. The Emirates also lowered the number of refugees they received, and Kuwait has reduced the number fivefold.

3.4. Other major concentrations of emigrants

The other two leading countries in the list of the largest providers of emigrants to Europe (with the exception of Kosovo and Albania which, as European countries, will not be included in the analysis of the inflow of refugees from outside the continent) are Pakistan and Eritrea. More than 40,000 refugees came from each to Europe. Although these two countries are not considered as territories currently undergoing warfare in a formal sense, armed conflicts exist *de facto* within their territories or they are involved in such a conflict with their neighbours.

Since its inception in 1947, Pakistan has been at war with India over Kashmir, a smaller part of which it controls (the so-called Azad Kashmir). This conflict took the form of an open war three times in 1947–1948, 1965 and 1971. Pakistan also supports armed uprisings in Indian Kashmir, for example in 1988, and in the 21st century it has also sponsored terrorist acts, not only in the disputed region, but throughout India. A serious threat to world peace is the documented fact that both sides of the conflict possess nuclear weapons.

The second conflict, to which Pakistan is not formally a party, is the civil war in Afghanistan, in which the secret services of Pakistan play an ambiguous role. In addition, the conflict involves the Pashtun tribes living in the Pakistani province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, particularly the tribal territories under federal administration of North and South Waziristan, Orkazai, Dir, Swat and Dera Ismail Khan, which are Afghan-inhabited and provide refuge for the Taliban. The ambivalent attitude of the Pakistani authorities towards the Afghan conflict has already prompted the United States on several occasions to take unilateral military action on the territory, but that did not lead to Pakistan breaking its alliance with the West.

The war in Afghanistan caused a huge wave of refugees to Pakistan, which is estimated at up to 2.5 million people (Kuszewska, 2016). At present, some of those refugees, after sometimes having lived in Pakistan for several years, are trying to enter Europe.

The third conflict in Pakistan is an internal one, the secessionist aspirations of the people of the Baluchistan province, which have recently been significantly silenced. Another reason for emigration is the situation in the Sindh province, including its capital Karachi, where there is frequent fighting between Muslims coming from India (Muhajiro) and the local population (also Muslims), which is formally caused by language issues. Violence between these communities broke out in 1971–1972 and 1995 *(Pakistan: conflict profile,* 2010). The permanent instability of the Pakistani political scene, frequent military upheavals, rigged elections, the impeachment of the most important people in the country and their persecution by political opponents are also conducive to immigration processes.

Despite that, Pakistan is a country with balanced migration in 2013, the number of immigrants slightly exceeded 4 million people, while the number of emigrants from Pakistan amounted to 4.2 million *(Pakistan migration profiles,* 2016, p. 2). The largest groups of refugees in Pakistan in 2013 came from Afghanistan – 2.3 million, India – 1.4 million, and Bangladesh – 186,000 (until 1971 the country was the eastern province of Pakistan) and Myanmar – 94,000 people. The traditional direction of migration for Pakistanis has been the United Kingdom, where they make up more than 5% of the population. Those migrations began before the Second World War and intensified after the division of the British Indies in 1947.

In 2013, however, the most important emigration destination for Pakistanis was Saudi Arabia (1.3 million), India (1.1 million), the United Arab Emirates (954,000), the United Kingdom (476,000) and the United States (339,000). Clear-

ly, it is mainly economic migration to the Persian Gulf, the United Kingdom and America.

In the case of refugees from Pakistan, the largest group consists Afghans, returning to their homeland (16,000 people in 2013), other refugee destinations are Canada (almost 12,000) and Germany (7,000). It is unclear, however, how many of these were Afghan refugees who left Pakistan after many years of staying there, but did not return to their homeland, choosing rich Western countries.

Eritrea is the last of the countries that generates more than 40,000 refugees to Europe. Like Pakistan, Eritrea is currently not at war, but has been until recently with its neighbour Ethiopia, from which it separated in 1993 (Gebru, 2003, pp. 232–241). It also has bad relations with other neighbours, Sudan, where it supported separatist tendencies and Djibouti, where it supported only one ethnos – Afar (also living in Eritrea), against Issas (Somalis). In 2008, there were even border fights between Eritrea and Djibouti.

The reason for the mass fleeing of men from Eritrea, however, is not the lost war with Ethiopia in 1998–2000, but the oppression of the country's government (Prus, 2015). Eritrea's political system, based on the left-wing ideology of a single legal party, is supported by the dictatorial power of the Maoist President Isaias Afawerki, a hero of the war for the country's independence turned tyrant. Eritrea is a classic totalitarian dictatorship, ruled by secret police using torture; 300,000 people imprisoned without trial. Public surveillance is common, and the law does not work. There are remnants of the slave system here, and there are public executions. Mandatory military service for all men lasts 18 months, but it is often illegally extended, even for life. Old people have also been conscripted into the army. Desertion is punishable by a fine of $3,000 (equivalent to six years' average income). The country was turn to ruin by fifty years of Ethiopian occupation, when the province was treated as an internal colony, followed by a liberation war and a war with its neighbour, and is now in a tragic economic situation. Hunger is a common problem. In the ranking of freedom of the press, Eritrea is lower than North Korea (Górzyński, 2015). All that means that young people under the age of 18 are trying to escape to Sudan in order not to be drafted. Over the last decade, 300,000 people, or 5% of its population, left Eritrea.

The main directions of economic migration of Eritreans (in 2013) were the neighbouring countries – Sudan (144,000) and Saudi Arabia (40,000), the United States (36,000), the United Kingdom (20,000) and the UAE (17,000). As far as political refugees from Eritrea are concerned, the largest group went to Sudan (112,000), Ethiopia (64,000) and Israel (37,000, those were Ethiopian Jews, ancient followers of Judaism, evacuated from Ethiopia and Eritrea, without the consent of their governments, by Israeli special forces), Italy (11,000) and Switzerland (10,000) *(Eritrea migration profile*, 2016).

The inflow of refugees from the rest of the world to Europe does not exceed 40,000 people per year. Among those countries there are also several other Eu-

ropean countries (Russia, Ukraine, Serbia, North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey, Moldova, Montenegro), but this is intra-continental migration, which was not analysed in this study. The list also includes all the countries of the Southern Caucasus. Other emigration countries are Asian and African states, recently troubled by wars, such as Sierra Leone, the Ivory Coast, and those in which wars continue, e.g. Libya, The Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia or Yemen, as well as relatively peaceful ones, such as Iran, Mongolia, Bangladesh, Ghana or Togo. In this group of emigrant concentrations there is also one of the fastest developing countries in the world – China and only one American country – Haiti.

4. REGIONS OF CONCENTRATION OF MIGRANTS AND MIGRANT ROUTES TO EUROPE

I have already identified the main areas of condensation of migrant masses travelling to Europe, so it is necessary to indicate the routes from these places to other concentration points before finally reaching the Old Continent (Konarzewska, 2007, p. 92) (Fig. 2).

Two such concentration areas can be identified: the Middle East (Turkey) and the Mediterranean coast of Africa (mainly its western tip – Morocco and the central part of Libya). In the Middle East, the number of refugees and internally displaced persons is estimated at 14 million (Sasnal, 2015, p. 11). Practically a large part of Turkey is a refugee concentration area, both southeast, a region bordering Syria and Iraq, where large numbers of refugees live in camps, and the country's Aegean coastline, both in Asia and Europe.

In Morocco, the largest areas of concentration of refugees, mainly from West Africa, are the south of the country, including the occupied Western Sahara, from where refugees try to migrate by sea to the Spanish Canary Islands, and northern Morocco, the Tangier area (the route through the Strait of Gibraltar to Spain) and the Spanish exclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, which can be reached by land without the risk of sailing, through high border fences. In Libya, the concentration area are the central and eastern parts of the Gulf of Sirte, outside the control of the government in Tripoli, where power is exercised by local Islamic militias, including those linked to the so-called Islamic State. From the Gulf of Sirte and the Libyan-Egyptian borderland, refugees try to cross the Mediterranean Sea towards Greece. However, from western Libya, which is also beyond government control, it is closer to the Italian island of Lampedusa, but it is also easier to come across patrols from the European Border Guard Agency (Frontex), whose task is not so much to protect this border as to rescue drowning refugees. They are transported to camps in Italy for further migration procedures. Occasionally one

hears of a boat with refugees being turned away, but only when the people are not in danger of drowning. This encourages smugglers to use equipment that is in a very poor condition, which guarantees that refugees will be taken if they have not already drowned.

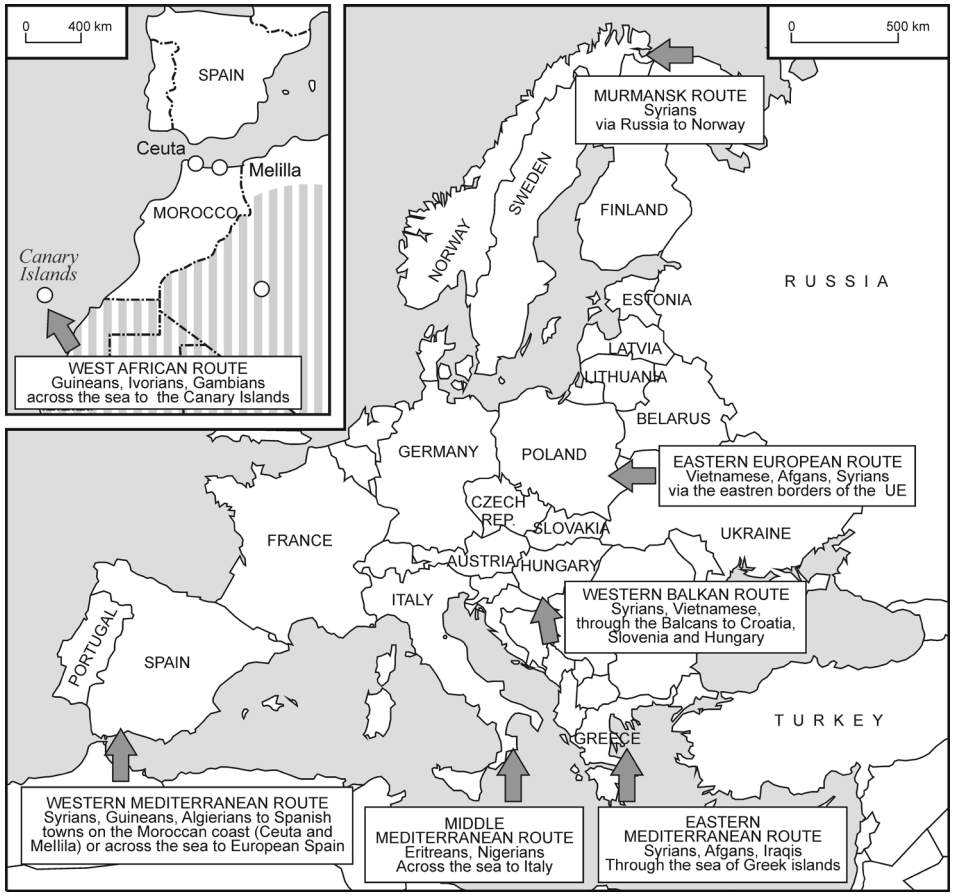

Fig. 2. Refugee migrations routes to Europe

Source: own work based on https://blogs.esri.com/esri/ esri-insider/2016/12/18/ mapping-migration-trends-to-europe (accessed on: 7.04.2017)

By far the largest group of refugees has been choosing the Eastern Mediterranean route, mainly because of the highest concentration of refugees in Turkey, and also because of the shortest section of the dangerous sea crossing. The Asian continent is sometimes no more than 2 km away from the Greek islands of the Sporades archipelago. In practice, there are longer distances to swim, as in the narrowest places it is not possible to load a boat on the Turkish shore or to unload it on an island, due

to the cliffs on the shore. However, no more than 15–20 km is enough to cover this route. The waters are also relatively poorly controlled by the Greek navy and night rides are very likely to be successful. However, the conditions in the canals between the islands are treacherous, hence tragic sinkings of entire units are frequent. In the first half of 2014, 132,000 refugees reached Europe via the Eastern Mediterranean route. The largest group of 78,000 people were Syrians, 33,000 were Afghans, while less than 7,000 came from Pakistan. In 2015, according to Frontex data (published on 3 July 2017), as many as 885,386 people arrived in Europe via this route, but only 182,534 a year later. That means that between 2015 and 2016, the EU agreement with Turkey reduced the number of migrants from this direction to less than a quarter of the original figure (Kokot, 2017, p. 10).

The Middle Mediterranean route from Libya to Italy or Greece is the longest and most dangerous. That is due both to the distance to be covered, at least 300 km and sometimes more than 400 km, and to the quality of the equipment used by the smugglers, which is much worse than in Turkey, and the scale of the overloading of the vessels. That is also due to the fact that refugees from Turkey can choose to travel by land, so there is competition for maritime carriers, which reduces costs, and they are much richer than African refugees, which makes their transport much more comfortable and safer. The Middle Mediterranean route was used by mid-2014 by 91,000 refugees to Europe, including 24,000 from Eritrea, 11,000 from Nigeria and less than 10,000 from other sub-Saharan African countries. According to Frontex, in 2015 153,946 people came to Europe via this route, and in the following year 181,126 people, an increase by 18% (Kokot, 2017, p. 10).

The third route, i.e. West Mediterranean route, leads from Morocco to the Iberian Peninsula (mainly to Spain) and is not long. The Strait of Gibraltar does not exceed 30 km in width, but it is very busy, so it is difficult to cross it unnoticed or to navigate. There have been cases of this route being crossed for several days, when refugee boats were thrown off by waves far to the east on the Costa del Sol. There is also a popular land route to Spanish towns on the Moroccan coast. In 2015, less than 7,000 refugees reached Europe via the Western Mediterranean Route. It is also dominated by Syrians (under 4,000), who arrive from Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan or Egypt to Morocco safely, probably by plane. In addition, this route is the most convenient for the inhabitants of West Africa – the Guineans (under 700) and the Ivorians (350 people). According to Frontex data, 7,164 persons arrived in Europe in 2015 via the Western Mediterranean route and 10,231 in the following year, i.e. an increase by 42% (Kokot, 2017, p. 10). Fortunately, this route is the least frequented and the large increase in migration from this direction does not mean a dramatic increase in the number of migrants.

The fourth route is the Western Balkan one, connecting the current flow from Turkey and Libya to Greece with the one that leads by land through the European part of Turkey to Greece or Bulgaria and further through Romania and Hungary or former Yugoslavian states to Austria and Italy, and finally to Germany *(Którędy...,*

2015). The Western Balkan Route is the second largest, with almost 102,000 refugees in mid-2014. The group was dominated by Afghans and Syrians (almost 30,000 each) and Kosovars (23,000).

There is also a fourth route, the Eastern European one, from the Black Sea (Moldavian-Romanian border) in the south to the Barents Sea in the north. On this route, the largest groups of non-European refugees get from Ukraine and Belarus to Poland and from Russia to Finland and Norway, but these are trace numbers. It is peculiar that there have been attempts by Middle Eastern immigrants to cross the Finnish-Russian border in Lapland by bicycle. In the case of Poland, refugees from Chechnya, Southern Caucasus and Mongolia dominate in this direction. In mid-2014, there was an influx of only 717 people, dominated by Vietnamese (less than 200), Afghans (175) and Georgians.

The most dangerous for migrants is the land African route leading from condensation countries in sub-Saharan Africa, through the desert to the north, to the Mediterranean coast (Fig. 3). Not only are the natural conditions and the lack of infrastructure a challenge, but also the lack of any state structures and the domination of local fighters and people's militias in rebellious areas in the countries along the migration route – Sudan, Niger, Libya and Mali. It is precisely the political instability that fosters the maintenance of these routes, and the insurgents have made human traffic their source of income. Many refugees are murdered, almost everyone is robbed, and women are raped. The cost of relatively safe transport by organised crime groups is so great that it sometimes involves contributions from the entire village of an emigrant. Not infrequently, they have to pay extra tribute for buying him out of captivity.

The route from South and Central Asia to Europe looks different. Refugees use relatively well-developed transport, i.e. road and rail infrastructure. They sometimes use their own cars (e.g. Syrians), local transport, and the richest of them even travel by plane. It is only the last stage of the journey, through the Aegean Sea or the land "green border", that must be paid for dearly.

The route from Senegal through Mauritania, Western Sahara and Morocco is similarly convenient and relatively safe. It can be travelled by bus and train. In the case of attempts to get from Morocco to Ceuta and Melilla, there are no costs for the final stage. Larger groups of refugees gather at the border and, at the same time, throw themselves at the barbed wire border fences. The Spanish border police is not able to detain everyone in a group of several hundred. Those detained and deported to Morocco try again and again until they succeed. Outside the traditional routes, refugees have recently been trying to mark out new ones, e.g. from Albania via Kosovo to Serbia (Rujevic and Jarecka, 2016).

A new phenomenon is the support given to refugees by NGOs, which send ships on migration routes to save the lives of refugees and transport them, taken from the sea or overloaded boats, to an EU Member State, usually to Italy. Critics argue that this action inspires more refugees to take the risk of migration, hoping

to be saved more securely if smuggling does not go ahead as planned. There were even theories about facilitating the work of smugglers and even about collaborations between the smugglers and NGOs, such as Jugend Rettet. Migrants were transported from Libya by boat directly to the organisation's vessel, Iuventa, not rescued from the sea (Hlebowicz, 2017a, p. 12; Smith, 2017, p. 47). Proactiva Open Arms has also been suspected of such practices (Cusumano and Pattison, 2018, p. 53). It is estimated that as many as 40% of migrants arriving in Italy in 2017 (i.e. about 44,000) were transported here by NGOs.

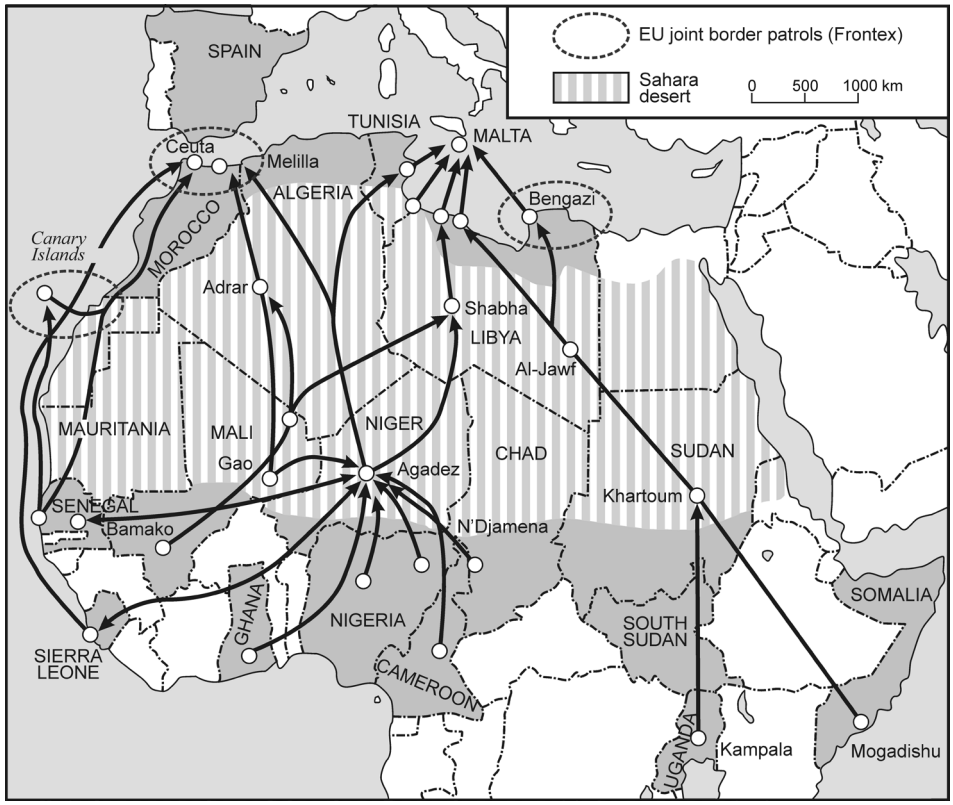

Fig. 3. African refugee migration route

Source: own work based on http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/6228236.stm.

In August 2017 the Italian government agreed with the transitional Libyan authorities and designated 60 units, including 6 ships, to fight against migrants in order to prevent the landing of migrants on Italian territory and send illegal migrants taken from boats back to Libya with a guarantee of their human rights there (Hlebowicz, 2017b, p. 13; *Between...,* 2018, p. 8). In 2019, the new Italian government successfully fought these "legal smugglers", despite the outrage of global public opinion,

preventing them from going ashore for several weeks. Unfortunately, these organisations, which facilitate human trafficking, use blackmail to force other countries (Portugal, France and Spain) to accept refugees caught at sea.

5. POTENTIAL DESTINATIONS FOR MIGRATION

Almost all refugees to Europe have well-defined destinations. Those include only a few of the most developed EU countries, primarily Germany and the United Kingdom, followed by the Netherlands, Sweden and non-EU countries, i.e. Switzerland and Norway. Rich Austria, Spain or Italy are no longer attractive destinations, while Greece, Hungary or Poland are only transit countries which, if it were possible, the refugees would leave within a few hours.

As the EU effectively locked its land borders in 2016, forcing neighbouring countries to stop refugees at their borders, large groups of refugees were stranded in Northern Macedonia, Croatia, Serbia and on Greek and Italian islands. Large transit camps were set up there, where groups of refugees stayed, e.g. Idomeni on the Greek-Macedonian border. Those refugees who managed to get into the EU but were heading for the British islands were detained on the English Channel coast in a nomadic camp near Calais (Januszewska, 2016, p. 75). It was then administratively dissolved and the migrants living there were scattered across various centres throughout France.

Some EU Member States defending themselves against refugees have secured parts of their borders with fences and walls. The Hungarians thus closed their border with Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia and Romania, and Austria fenced its border with Slovenia. The Germans separated themselves from Austria and Greece, and Bulgaria from Turkey. Non-EU North Macedonia has fenced off its border with Greece.

Table 2. Asylum applications submitted in some EU Member States between 2013 and 2016

State	2013	2014	2015	2016	2013–2016
EU	431,090	636,960	1,322,825	1,259,955	3,650,830
Germany	126,705	202,645	476,510	745,155	1,551,015
Sweden	54,270	81,180	162,450	28,790	326,690
Italy	26,620	64,625	83,540	122,960	297,745
France	66,265	64,310	76,165	84,270	291,010
Hungary	18,895	42,775	177,135	29,430	268,235
Austria	17,500	28,035	88,160	42,255	175,950

Table 2. (cont.)

State	2013	2014	2015	2016	2013–2016
UK	30,585	32,785	40,160	38,785	142,315
Belgium	21,030	22,710	44,660	18,280	106,680
the Netherlands	13,060	24,495	44,970	20,945	103,470
Greece	8,225	9,430	13,205	51,110	81,970
Poland	15,240	8,020	12,190	12,305	47,755
Spain	4,485	5,615	14,780	15,755	40,635

Source: Eurostat 2017.

According to data released by the EU's Statistical Office, the first year of the latest wave of migration, i.e. 2013, saw 562,700 migrants coming to the EU. In subsequent years, a significant increase in their number to 1,257,000 in 2016 was recorded, followed by a slight decrease to 1,204,300 in 2016.

The largest number of refugees in the period 2013–2016 chose Germany as their destination, with 1,555,000 people, Sweden 327,000, Italy 298,000, France 291,000, Hungary 268,000, Austria 176,000 and the United Kingdom 142,000 people (Table 2). Groups significant in number also applied for asylum in Belgium (107,000) and the Netherlands (103,000). Only 82,000 people stayed in Greece. Poland accepted almost 48,000 asylum applications (Eurostat, 2017).

The reasons for such a choice of destinations are a result of the level of economic development of those countries, the traditional migration direction functioning for years and the already existing diaspora of a given nation. For example, migrants from Pakistan almost exclusively go to the United Kingdom, refugees from Francophone Africa to France, from Libya to Italy, Kurds to Germany and Switzerland, Kosovars to Switzerland, Sweden and Germany, Moldovans to Romania, and Ukrainians and Belarusians to Poland.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The influx of refugees to Europe has become not only a demographic phenomenon, but also a political one, evoking fervent political debates. The Hungarian government held a referendum on 2 October 2016 on the acceptance of the refugee relocation plan proposed by the EU. In fact, the EU proposed resettlement to Hungary of only 1,294 refugees from Greece and Italy. Prime Minister Viktor Orban called for refugees to be sent back to their first country of asylum, to the north coast of Africa or to an island where the EU will provide them with living

conditions. Also in Poland, the refugee issue has become one of the key matters in several election campaigns and is still the subject of political negotiations and a means of fostering fear in the society. As numerous polls show, Poles are strongly opposed to accepting refugees other than those from Eastern Europe.

As it has been proven earlier, migrations to Europe are not a new phenomenon, rather a permanent one, with the migration wave of 2014–2015 not significantly larger than before, but different from the previous ones in terms of the structure of the countries of origin and the social structures of migrants and some condensation within a few months, while the traditional inflow of migrants was more evenly distributed throughout the year. The number of migrants arriving in Europe is a small proportion of the refugees from emigration countries, the vast majority of whom remain in neighbouring countries, in particular in the Middle East.

The areas of emigrants' condensation were created as a result of long-lasting armed conflicts, including civil wars in the emigration countries, but the directions of this migration very rarely and only to a small extent were towards Western Europe. It was the intervention of the United States in those long-standing conflicts at the beginning of the 21st century and the involvement of US troops, with some participation in a coalition of other democratic countries, that not only led to an intensification of migration processes from conflict areas, but also to a change of direction of those migrations towards Europe, instead of neighbouring countries. In the case of the Syrian conflict the Russian military intervention was decisive. It is significant that the United States and its richest Arab allies have only marginally become the target of this migration. The majority of the migration wave of 2014–2015 had to be received by the richest countries in Europe, but also by some of the poorer countries such as Northern Macedonia, Serbia, Greece and Turkey.

Only two of the few major routes that refugees take to enter Europe are really significant – the Eastern Mediterranean combined with the Western Balkan, and the Central Mediterranean. The largest groups of refugees reached Europe through these routes – approximately 90% in total.

Migrants are generally targeting only two countries: Germany and the United Kingdom, and the declared reasons for migration include war and persecution, although in reality the vast majority of Middle Eastern refugees are economic migrants, whose status in their countries was above average, with little threat to their livelihoods. Their wealth, health and education allowed them to leave their homeland relatively comfortably (by public transport, including planes or their own cars), hoping to find an appropriate job in Europe.

The migration wave of refugees from 2014–2015 was effectively halted in the following year, mainly thanks to the agreement between Germany and Turkey, and the closing of the borders for refugees by Balkan states, but it is still causing strong political reactions, disproportionate to the scale of the phenomenon.

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