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MASTER'S THESIS:

**«Changing patterns of global migration flows during the  
COVID-19 pandemic. Case studies of the Italian Republic  
and the Russian Federation»**

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## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>1. Migration processes as a socio-economic phenomenon in international relations during pandemics of viral diseases. Historical analysis of the phenomenon.</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>1.1 World migration flows in the system of international relations: notion; features; the UN statistical data.</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>1.2 Analysis of migration flows during global pandemics of the most renowned viruses.</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>1.3 Analysis of global migration flows in the context of the COVID-2019 pandemic in 2020.</b> .....	<b>23</b>
<b>2. Analysis of the state of migration flows in the European Union and the Russian Federation during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020.</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>2.1 Migration processes in the European Union.</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>2.2 Analysis of the migration dynamics in the Italian Republic. Governmental measures of migration regulation implemented during the pandemic.</b> .....	<b>46</b>
<b>2.3 State of migration flows in the Russian Federation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Governmental measures of migration regulation implemented during the pandemic.</b> .....	<b>57</b>
<b>Conclusions</b> .....	<b>71</b>
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	<b>74</b>

## Introduction

**Statement of the research problem.** The present Master's dissertation examines the processes of changing migration flows in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020 which affected the entire world community, including the European Union and the Russian Federation. The regions of the study were the European Union, the Republic of Italy, and the Russian Federation. The choice of the mentioned geographical regions was determined by their priority as a place of residence and employment for migrants in their pursuit to change (improve) their socio-economic status.

**The relevance of the research problem** is justified by the necessity to study migration processes in the context of the coronavirus pandemic which affected the whole world and the world community in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic became a new and very serious pandemic for all mankind, which covered all regions of the world, as it was with the Spanish flu in 1918-1920. From 2020 to the present, the world community continues to fight the pandemic within the framework of restrictions and through the use of developed vaccines against the virus in order to create herd immunity. The pandemic, declared in March 2020 by the World Health Organization, has had quite catastrophic consequences for the economic system and society of each state in the world, while also changing international relations between countries. The announced pandemic triggered a chain reaction all around the world, and above all, it was expressed in the closure of borders and the cessation of air traffic between states, which was a blow big enough for one of the most vulnerable categories of people, namely migrants. Migrants in the system of relations between states are people who try to find a better place for living in order to change their social and economic situation as compared with life in their state of origin. With the outbreak of the pandemic and the closure of borders, it was the migrants who fully felt the brunt of the development of the pandemic. Thus, they became hostages of the situation, because they are not citizens, do not have sufficient financial support, medical insurance, and most importantly, they do not have a full-fledged opportunity to withstand the situation in the society of the state in which they came in search of a better life and which shows both xenophobia and tolerance towards them. The relevance of the research topic is primarily due to the need to analyze the legal status of migrants during the spread of the pandemic, measures taken by the state and society to support migrants and suppress the spread of the virus among migrants, and the implementation of the process of employment of migrants during the pandemic. The informational data that abounded in the media, including data on the Internet in 2020, showed a rather negative picture of the attitude of the state and executive authorities to the problem of migrants, which cannot but worry the world community in the person of its supranational body, namely the UN, and, in general, the society of many states that have received migrants. In this work, migration flows and the measures taken for the socio-economic protection of the status of migrants in the context of the pandemic in 2020 will be analyzed. It is important to note that measures to protect migrants are a fairly important criterion of assessment of the attitude of the state and society to the implementation of

migration policy in the state and the fulfillment of international obligations in accordance with the provisions of international legal acts in order to ensure the protection of the rights of a migrant as a person and a citizen.

All these aspects are important in the context of the relevance of the problem under study and will be considered consistently and comprehensively in order to identify the historical and modern aspects of migration flows in the context of the spread of various pandemics and the COVID-19 pandemic, and also the solution of socially significant problems of migrants during the pandemic.

**The object of the study** is migration flows as a social and economic phenomenon in the system of international relations during the period of the spread of global pandemics and in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. An additional object of the study is the process of regional migration flows within the European Union and the Russian Federation under conditions of the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Subject of study:**

- provisions of international law in the field of international regulation of migration; European Union legal norms, statutory provisions of the legislation of the Italian Republic and the Russian Federation in the field of migration regulation and measures taken to ensure the rights of migrants;

- theoretical studies of Russian and foreign scientists analyzing migration as a socio-economic phenomenon, and migration flows in the context of the transboundary spread of virus pandemics and their impact on the development of states.

**The purpose of the study** is to identify factors that reveal the state of migration flows during the COVID 2019 pandemic; to carry out an analysis of statistical data that form a general image of migration flows and conditions that influenced the flows; to carry out an analysis of the measures taken by the authorities of states to ensure the observance and protection of the rights of migrants.

To achieve this goal, the following **tasks** have been set:

- to reveal the content of world migration flows in the system of international relations in the context of characteristics and statistics provided by the UN and the International Organization for Migration;

- to analyze migration flows during the spread of world pandemics of the most well-known types of viruses;

- to analyze the global migration flows in the context of the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020;

- to analyze the state of migration processes in the European Union;

- to analyze the dynamics of migration in the Italian Republic;

- to identify the state of migration flows in the Russian Federation during the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures of state regulation taken.

### **The degree of scientific elaboration of the problem.**

The problems of international migration were studied in the works of such authors as: Thomas K. Bauer, Richard E. Bilsborrow, Immanuel M. Wallerstein, Wilbur Zelinsky, Klaus F. Zimmerman, Aristide R. Zolberg, Everett S. Lee, Douglas S. Massey, Ernst G. Ravenstein, Michael P. Todaro, and others.

The institute of migration as a socio-economic process is studied by scientists in sociology, political science, economics, and law. The institute of migration is investigated in the works of the following legal scholars of Russia: Lyudmila Vasiliyevna Andrichenko, Damir Kamiliyevich Bekyashev, Dmitryi Vladimirovich Ivanov, Taliya Yarullova Khabrieva, and others,

Among the scientists of the Italian Republic, who analyze migration issues in the context of the national development of Italy, the works of the following scientists are included: Daniela Del Boca, Massimiliano Ferraresi, Antonio Golini, Alessandra Venturini, Salvatore Strozza.

Labor migration in Russia has always been a subject of scientific interest for Russian sociologists and economists. The following scientists were actively studying the problem of labor migration: Lyudmila Vasiliyevna Andrichenko, Evgenyi Anatoliyevich Malyshev, Vladimir Izyavich Mukomel, Inna Vladimirovna Plyugina, Leonid Leonidovich Rybakovsky, Sergey Vasiliyevich Ryazantsev, and others.

Migration issues within the framework of international public law and national legislation of the Russian Federation are studied in the works of the following authoritative scientists: Damir Kamiliyevich Bekyashev, Dmitryi Vladimirovich Ivanov, Taliya Yarullova Khabrieva.

The works of A.A. Alferov, A.A. Vartanyan, M. Kh. Isaeva, Yu. A. Prokhorova, O.A. Yakunina should be attributed to the number of dissertation research carried out over the past 5 years. A.A. Lukina conducted a study of the process within the framework of mathematical modeling of international labor migration.

**The novelty of the formulation** of the topic of the work is preconditioned by the need to analyze the state of migration flows during the spread of the pandemic in order to study the process itself, the conditions that influenced migration flows, taking into account the dynamic processes taking place around the world which were caused by the pandemic the scale of which is comparable to the Spanish flu pandemic. The paper also touches upon the conditions for a comparative analysis of the migration flows of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Italy, as one of the EU Member States that was most affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

**The theoretical and practical significance of the research results.** The theoretical significance of this dissertation research is that within the framework of the analysis of migration flows carried out by the author, a systematic approach is applied to consider the general situation with migrants in the context of the analysis of various indicators affecting the situation of migrants, and decisions made by the state and society in support of migrants during the pandemic in 2020. The practical significance lies in the fact that the conclusions made by the author on the basis of the conducted research can be further developed in terms of

further dissertation research, and can also be used in teaching and further full-fledged statistical analysis of migration flows for 2020-2021.

**Research hypothesis.** It is assumed that during the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a decrease in migrant flows in the world and in the regions that will be the subject of this study, which requires data analysis in order to confirm or refute the hypothesis put forward as part of the master's research.

**The research methodology** is based on the principles of scientific nature, consistency, objectivity and concreteness of truth, and the unity of the historical and the logical.

The methodological basis of the study is made up of: general scientific methods (deduction, induction, analogy; analysis and synthesis; concretization, abstraction, generalization; comparison and characterization, etc.) and particular scientific methods (statistical analysis of empirical data).

**The structure of the paper.**

The work consists of an introduction, two chapters, six paragraphs, a conclusion, and a bibliography. Chapter 1 is devoted to the analysis of migration processes as a socio-economic phenomenon in international relations evolving in the context of a pandemic of viruses; to factors in the development of migration flows during the spread of world pandemics of the most well-known types of viruses (paragraph 1.2.); and to the analysis of world migration flows in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 (paragraph 1.3.). Chapter 2 of the work examines the provisions on the analysis of the state of migration flows in the European Union and the Russian Federation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and the measures taken by the respective governments of the Republic of Italy and the Russian Federation.

# 1. Migration processes as a socio-economic phenomenon in international relations during pandemics of viral diseases. Historical analysis of the phenomenon.

## 1.1 World migration flows in the system of international relations: notion; features; the UN statistical data.

Migration flows have been historically known since ancient times, and to a large extent they were caused by wars, economic recessions, and the desire of human beings to improve their socio-economic status. The institute of migration is considered as an important object of analysis from the point of view of practical research due to its transboundary scale, as well as from the point of view of theoretical research as the object and subject of study of numerous sciences. Currently, migration is one of the most important institutions, the investigation of which is in the focus of research of many sciences, including demography, sociology, economics, political science, law, and psychology.

Migration and migration flows in general are characterized as a socio-economic phenomenon that influences the social development of states and their economic systems due to the impact of labour migration they experience. The vector of influence on numerous migration flows is diverse social factors of both regional and international nature. Analyzing migration issues, Vladimir Alexeyevich Iontsev writes, "Migration, as a rule, is of a labour, commercial, academic or educational nature, thus being one of the types of return migration".<sup>1</sup> Having mentioned migration above, it is necessary to note a rather important fact related to the reasons for migration, that still include similarly as many centuries ago, military actions, unstable economic situations in states, economic preferences for labor migrants, causes associated with pandemics of viral diseases, which acquired special relevance and significance in 2020 (in fact, in 2020 humanity from its historical perspective is again witnessing a historical-wave cyclism), and which will become the object of our analysis in the subsequent sections of this work.

In the 20th century, migration began to be recognized by all states as a socio-economic phenomenon, the result of which becomes the process of its systematic regulation by the norms and principles of international law started as well as the creation of institutional structures within the framework of the United Nations system, the purpose of which was to protect the rights of migrants, monitor migration flows, solve urgent problems related to migrants whose movement from one world region to another is caused by various socio-economic reasons.

Among the most important international legal acts regulating the status of migrants are the fundamental acts in the field of protection of human rights that can be found in migration policies of states and of the UN. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of December 10, 1948 is of fundamental importance in the aspect of migration policy. The provisions of the Declaration recognizes the right of

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<sup>1</sup> Iontsev V. A. International migration: population: theory and history of study, M.: Dialog-MSU, 1999, p. 25. (in Russ.)

everyone to move freely and choose a place of residence, to leave any country and return to that country, and to cross the borders of other states, as one of the forms of fundamental human freedoms (Article 13).<sup>2</sup> Provisions of Part 1, Clause 2, Art. 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of December 16, 1966, in its turn, also establish the dependence of the exercise of the right to freedom of movement on the legality of a person's presence on the territory of the respective state (Part 1, Part 2 of Article 12).<sup>3</sup> Proclamation of a the right to freedom of movement safeguarded by international law may not be subject to any restrictions other than those provided by law, necessary to protect state security, public order, health or morals of the population or the rights and freedoms of others, and are compatible with other rights recognized in the Covenant. The deprivation of this right can be exercised by deporting a foreigner on the basis of the relevant decision. The principle of freedom of movement and choice of residence was detailed in the provisions of the Declaration on the Human Rights of Individuals Who are not Nationals of the Country in which They Live dated December 13, 1985, by defining the aggregate rights of migrants and the states in which they are located. The Declaration prohibits racial discrimination, infringement of rights on racial grounds, expelling persons staying on the territory of another state due to ethnic, cultural, religious, national differences.

In the 21st century it has become obvious to the world community that migration and migration flows are becoming a global problem, and the old approaches to regulating this process are not as efficient as they used to be. Military actions in various regions of the world have become the main determinant, catalyst, vector that shape and direct migration flows, and that refers to the objective nature of migration flows. Migration flows have begun to actively influence the development of society and the state itself on the international arena. All this was the subject of discussion and led to the adoption of General Assembly resolution 68/4 of 3 October 2013 “Declaration of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development”. The Declaration contains a number of rather important points that are necessary for an objective understanding of migration on a global scale. These points became the result of a truly comprehensive dialogue of the world's states, which revealed the content and significance of migration for the global community in the new century.

The position of the world community on the issue of international migration boils down to the following:

- international migration is a multidimensional process of major relevance for the development of countries of origin, transit and destination, and in this regard international migration is also a cross-cutting phenomenon that should be addressed in a coherent, comprehensive and balanced manner, integrating

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<sup>2</sup> Universal Declaration of Human Rights (adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 10, 1948) // <https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html> (date of access: 10.12.2020).

<sup>3</sup> International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (adopted by resolution 2200 (XXI) at the 1496th plenary meeting of the UN General Assembly on December 16, 1966) // [https://www.un.org/ru/documents/decl\\_conv/conventions/pactpol.shtml](https://www.un.org/ru/documents/decl_conv/conventions/pactpol.shtml) (date of access: 10.12.2020).



development with due regard for social, economic and environmental dimensions and respecting human rights;

- the contribution made by migrants and migration to development in countries of origin, transit and destination, as well as the complex interrelationship between migration and development, is important;

- it was decided to work towards an effective and inclusive agenda on international migration that integrates development and respects human rights by improving the performance of existing institutions and frameworks, as well as partnering more effectively with all stakeholders involved in international migration and development at the regional and global levels;

- the commitment to address the opportunities and the challenges that international migration presents to countries of origin, transit and destination, was reaffirmed;

- recognition of the need for international cooperation to address, in a holistic and comprehensive manner, the challenges of irregular migration to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration, with full respect for human rights;

- recognition of the need to strengthen synergies between international migration and development at the global, regional and national levels.<sup>4</sup>

The provisions of the Declaration presented the issue of migration and migration flows as a complex process taking place on a global scale, which affects not only migrants themselves as representatives of society, but also the world community as a whole and individual states, whose concerted actions require a solution to the issue. The Declaration became the foundation for the next steps in solving problems at the international level within the framework of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants of 2016.

The 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants once again, like the Declaration of the High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, acknowledged a wide range of positive and negative trends in the international migration system. The provisions of the New York Declaration also recognized the positive contribution of migrants to inclusive growth and sustainable development. The benefits and opportunities of safe, orderly and regular migration are significant and often underestimated. At the same time, involuntary resettlement, displacement and irregular migration of large groups of people often create complex problems. The Declaration enumerates such negative trends in migration as cross-border political, economic, social and humanitarian consequences for the development processes and human rights, which require the application of global approaches and the adoption of global decisions because no state can solve this problem on its own due to the cumulative nature of the issues. Protracted refugee crises

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<sup>4</sup> Declaration of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, adopted by General Assembly resolution 68/4 on 3 October 2013. URL: [http://www.un.org/ru/documents/decl\\_conv/declarations/migrationdevelop.shtm](http://www.un.org/ru/documents/decl_conv/declarations/migrationdevelop.shtm) (date of access: 14.12.2020).

with long-term consequences for the refugees themselves, as well as for their host countries and communities, require increased international cooperation (paragraph 7).<sup>5</sup>

Overall, the main goal of the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants was the adoption of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. According to Talyia Yaroulovna Khabrieva, “The Global Compact on Migration will be the first agreement reached as a result of intergovernmental negotiations and concluded under the auspices of the United Nations, which will cover all aspects of international migration and will be multidimensional and comprehensive in its nature”.<sup>6</sup> The provisions of the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants 2016 contain a fairly wide non-exhaustive list of elements, which was supposed to be incorporated into a global compact within the framework of the entire international community. Without disclosing the entire, rather broad list, its most significant elements are outlined below:

- international migration is a multifaceted phenomenon of great importance for the development of countries of origin, transit and destination;
- international migration is a potential opportunity for migrants and their families;
- the contribution of migrants to sustainable development and the complex relationship between migration and development;
- promotion of orderly, safe, legal and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of a planned and well-conceived migration policy; this may as well include creating and expanding safe and legal migration channels;
- opportunities for expanding international cooperation in order to improve the regulation of migration;
- fight against human trafficking, smuggling of migrants and modern forms of slavery;
- protection of labor rights and creation of a safe environment for migrant workers and those in precarious jobs, protection of female migrant workers in all sectors, and promotion of labor mobility, including circular migration.

The list of elements reveals the potential directions of action of the entire world community to achieve goals related to the protection of migrants' rights and the implementation of the protection of migration processes as one of the conditions for the development of states and society.

On December 19, 2018, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration was adopted by the means of the UN General Assembly resolution. The provisions of the compact are not legally binding. It is a framework document for a cooperative mechanism based on the commitments made by Member States in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. Its provisions are aimed at developing international cooperation in migration issues between all relevant actors and was drafted with the understanding that no

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<sup>5</sup> New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, adopted by a General Assembly resolution on September 19, 2017. URL: [http://www.un.org/ru/documents/instruments/docs\\_ru.asp](http://www.un.org/ru/documents/instruments/docs_ru.asp) (date of access: 14.12.2020)

<sup>6</sup> Khabrieva T.Y. Migration Law: Comparative Legal Research: Monograph. - M.: IZiSP, Yurisprudentsia, 2019, p.281. (in Russ.)

state can independently resolve migration issues. Nevertheless, the Compact still respects the sovereignty of states and takes into account their obligations under international law. The cooperation mechanism laid down in the Global Compact represents the fulfillment process of 23 goals and a set of responsibilities of the subjects implementing them. The program activities through which the implementation of the goals is carried out are named as examples of best practices, and they serve as a vector of action for the world community and each state. The good causes, which were the determinants of the adoption of the Global Compact, have nevertheless provoked strong opposition and criticism in the European Union. Olga Yurievna Potemkina writes in this regard, "... in Europe, but also in other parts of the world, the population's demand for toughening migration policy and granting asylum is obvious, whereas the agreement is aimed at liberalizing the migration regime, which explains its rejection by many governments and political forces. Non-adherence to the Compact by a number of countries receiving migrants reduces the potential effect of its application. However, it can be useful for increasing the efficiency of regular migration and for regulating the employment of skilled labor, which recipient countries are interested in".<sup>7</sup> J. Kevin Appleby analyzing the role of the Global Compact, also points out the following, «the Global Compact emphasizes the need for Members States to accept and understand the importance of a whole-of-society approach to the Compact's implementation. States should view social actors as partners in achieving a common goal, and not as critics or opponents. Civil society, religious organizations, the private sector, migrant and diaspora organizations, as well as, trade unions all bring important perspectives and capacities to the implementation effort".<sup>8</sup> The 2013, the 2019 Declarations Provisions, and now those of the Global Compact contain a rather important aspect that reveals the importance of migration as an important positive process affecting social and economic development, which brings a positive result to the receiving states, but, at the same time, xenophobia towards migrants based on ethnicity is a vivid evidence of persistent prejudices (including imperial ones). According to Varvara Vladimirovna Bogdan, "The beginning of the development of international legislation in the field of migration was laid by the definition of fundamental human rights and freedoms, including the right of everyone to freedom of movement and choice of residence and measures to protect the rights of certain categories of migrants".<sup>9</sup> Analyzing migration processes and international acts regulating them, it can be pointed out that the process of legal regulation is dynamic, since the problems of migration are inexhaustible, and the international community, represented by the UN and the states that receive migrants, are interested in solving problems arising in the framework of migration processes. These issues are being addressed by the United Nations and the International Organization for Migration.

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<sup>7</sup> Potemkina O.Y. Global Compact on Migration - Success or Failure? // Nauchno-analiticheskiy vestnik Instituta Evropy RAN. 2018. No.6. p.90. (in Russ.)

<sup>8</sup> Appleby J., Implementation of the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration: A Whole-of-Society Approach //Journal on Migration and Human Security. 2020. Vol. 8(2), p.228.

<sup>9</sup> Bogdan V.V. The Right to Freedom of Movement and Choice of Place of Residence in The Context of Migration Legislation: on The Issue of International Legal Regulation // Problemi v rossiyskom zakonodatelstve. 2018. No 6. p. 64. (in Russ.)

Strategy of the global community in the field of migration and migration flows is implemented not only within the framework of the process of legal regulation, as an integral and important process, but also through the establishment and functioning of organizations providing this policy. The authority to regulate migration issues within the entire world community is vested in the International Organization for Migration (hereinafter, IOM). The predecessor of the IOM was the Provisional Intergovernmental Committee for the Movement of Migrants from Europe (PICMME) that soon after became the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM). The main prerequisite for the establishment of the predecessor of the IOM was the regulation of refugee flows in Europe after World War II. In the decades that followed, until 1989, the ICEM's activities were related to activities aimed at refugees and migrants throughout Europe. In 1980 the ICEM changes its name to Intergovernmental Committee for Migration (ICM), and in 1985-1986, the ICM is extending its «Migration for Development» program to African and Asian citizens. In 1989, the ICM becomes the International Organization for Migration (IOM) following the amendment and ratification of the 1953 Constitution. IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. IOM is part of the United Nations system as a related organization. IOM supports migrants around the world by developing effective responses to the changing dynamics of migration and is therefore a key source of advice on migration policy and practice. IOM's activities are guided not only by the above-mentioned principle, but also by the basic principles enshrined in the UN Charter, including the protection of human rights for all.

Researching migration issues in the framework of this study, it is also necessary to mention the concept of “migrant”. It is fundamental in the framework of this work because the migrant in the system of migration flows acts as the subject of legal relations and as a subject to the provisions of international law and regional legal acts. When it comes to the definition of “migrant,” the IOM Glossary recognizes that it is an umbrella term, not defined by international law, reflecting the generally accepted non-professional understanding of a person who leaves his usual place of residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons. The term includes a number of well-defined legal categories of people, such as migrant workers (or labor migrants); persons whose specific modes of movement are defined by law, such as smuggled migrants; as well as those whose status or means of transportation are not specifically defined under international law, such as foreign students, for example. IOM experts use two approaches in understanding the content of the term “migrant”, the inclusive approach that considers the term “migrant” as an “umbrella” term that covers all forms of movement, and the residualist approach which excludes those who are fleeing wars or persecution from the term “migrant”.<sup>10</sup> The presence of two approaches to understanding the meaning of the concept of “migrant” reveals different points of view and shows a pluralism of opinions, but nevertheless, the generally accepted approach to

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<sup>10</sup> Glossary on migration, IML Series No. 34, 2019 [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml\\_34\\_glossary.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml_34_glossary.pdf) (date of access: 17.12.2020).

clarify the meaning of the term is the approach according to which a migrant is a person who has left the country of his residence due to the presence of various reasons that determine the change in his civil status in the country of permanent residence.

An understanding of the processes of migration flows and the role of migrants in this process can be obtained through the analysis of statistical data published annually by IOM, which makes it possible to assess the migration issue on the scale of the entire world community.

According to the international portal of migration data, the number of international migrants reached 272 million in 2019, which is 14 million more than in 2017. Women make up 48% of the total number of migrants, about 38 million are children, 4.4 million are international students and 164 million are labor migrants. 74% of migrants are people of working age (20-64 years old). Nearly 31% of all migrants live in Asia, 30% in Europe, 26% in the Americas, 10% in Africa and 3% in Oceania.<sup>11</sup>

The World Migration Report 2020, prepared by IOM experts, is the most comprehensive annual report revealing the content of migration processes in the world, the statistical and economic data of which allow to conduct an analysis of all factors accompanying migration processes.<sup>12</sup> IOM data make it possible to assess migration flows in a system of various indicators, which include total number of migrants; gender composition of migrants; directions of movement of migrants (countries of origin and countries of destination) and a number of other indicators.

According to the provisions of the World Migration Report 2020 of the International Organization for Migration, the number of international migrants in the world in 2019 amounted to 272 million people (3.5% of the world's population), of which:

- 52% are men; 48% are women;
- 74% percent of all international migrants were of working age (20-64 years).

Considering the countries of origin of migration flows, IOM experts continue to call India the largest country of origin of international migrants. The largest number of migrants living abroad was in India (17.5 million), followed by Mexico and China (11.8 million and 10.7 million, respectively).

The main country of destination for migrants is the United States of America (50.7 million international migrants). The selection by the IOM experts of the named countries of origin of migrants is primarily due to the desire of citizens of these states to find a more decent place to live and receive income, since a significant number of citizens in India and Mexico live below the poverty line. The United States of America is still the main country of destination for many migrants and not only from these states (for Latin American citizens, the United States is still a priority state of destination and citizenship), because the so-

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<sup>11</sup> Immigration & emigration statistics // [https://migrationdataportal.org/?i=stock\\_abs\\_&t=2019&m=1](https://migrationdataportal.org/?i=stock_abs_&t=2019&m=1) (date of access: 17.12.2020)

<sup>12</sup> World Migration Report 2020 // <https://publications.iom.int/books/world-migration-report-2020> (date of access: 24.12.2020)

called "American Dream" and the created image of the state of freedom and economic stability forms a strong motivation for migrants to move there.

Migration and migration flows in the world are caused, first of all, by the desire to achieve economic stability and to receive much higher income than in the country of the migrant's origin. All this, one way or another, forms one of the types of migration, which has received the name of labor migration. The IOM Glossary defines labor migration as follows: labor migration is the movement of persons from one state to another or within their country of residence for the purpose of employment. Labor migration is defined as a form of migration encompassing migrants moving both within the country as well as across international borders.<sup>13</sup> This choice is also justified by the significant number of people moving to the same country for the purpose of work, who sometimes face the same barriers or problems that are faced by international migrants, such as discrimination and integration difficulties. While such problems may be more serious for migrants crossing borders, they are not entirely absent for internal migrants. The IOM expert report indicates that the number of migrant workers has declined slightly in high-income countries and increased in other countries, indicating the following:

- between 2013 and 2017, high-income countries saw a slight decrease in the number of migrant workers (from 112.3 million to 111.2 million). The largest growth was observed in upper-middle-income countries (from 17.5 million to 30.5 million);

- globally in 2017, the number of male migrant workers exceeded the number of female migrant workers by 28 millions. There were 96 million male migrants (58%) and 68 million female migrants (42%) in total.

Labor migration as its ultimate goal, as it has been already indicated, has the intention to gain economic stability and well-being for an individual and his family. Employment of a migrant in the country of destination allows him to gradually form the possibility of relative economic stability, in which he can make remittances to his family or relatives in the state that is the place (source) of migration. International remittances of migrants have become a routine economic phenomenon that forms a separate type of financial relations and develops financial ties between states due to these money transfers.

IOM experts note that in 2018 the volume of international remittances increased to 689 billion US dollars:

- the three recipient countries with the largest volume of remittances were India (\$78.6 billion), China (\$67.4 billion) and Mexico (\$35.7 billion);

- the United States remained the largest sending country for remittances (\$68.0 billion), followed by the United Arab Emirates (\$44.4 billion) and Saudi Arabia (\$36.1 billion).

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<sup>13</sup> Glossary on migration, IML Series No. 34, 2019 [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml\\_34\\_glossary.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml_34_glossary.pdf) (date of access: 24.12.2020)

Data on the volume of international remittances by recipient countries correlate with data on the countries of origin of migration flows, which is characterized by the condition of interconnection within the framework of the migration process to countries. The second indicator, which concerns the United States as the largest country sender of remittances, is also quite logical due to the presence of a determinant of the ultimate goal of migration of many people from different countries. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are also major sending countries of remittances, which is understandable for reasons associated with the rather attractive image of states with large fossil fuels reserves, as well as of a place of work for many labor migrants in the Middle East and Asia.

Statistics on migration around the world prepared by IOM experts cover information on refugees, whose number in 2018 amounted to 25.9 million people, of which 20.4 million refugees were under the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and 5.5 million people were refugees under the mandate of the United Nations. The number of internally displaced persons as a result of violence and conflict reached 41.3 million, the highest rate on record since the monitoring center for internal displacement began its work in 1998.<sup>14</sup>

The analysis presented in this paragraph reveals a rather important provision on the role of the institution of migration and its legal regulation in the system of international relations. The institution of migration in the 21st century, as before, is an integral institution of international relations, which represents a combination of negative and positive factors that are recognized by the international community. At present, it has been fully formed and has a fairly large regulatory framework for regulation, the last element of which was the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Having a sufficient number of critics of its provisions, one should not deny its progressive significance and role in regulating migration. Over the past decade, the positive significance of the role of migration in terms of the growth and sustainable development of states has been noted in the provisions of a number of declarations and the Global Compact, but the main message of the latest adopted acts is a dialogue of society and states on streamlining, regulating and mutual solution of migration problems due to the impossibility of solving the problem with the capabilities of only one individual state. Update of the system of international legal regulation of the institution of migration in the 21st century has become the primary basis in a more serious approach to solving migration problems, which now requires global monitoring of the implementation of the provisions of the acts, which should become one of the sections in the report of the International Organization for Migration. The non-binding nature of the provisions of the Global Compact should not be a static element in the system of acts of international regulation of the institution of migration; for states it should become a vector of active actions to adopt domestic programs in the field of migration.

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<sup>14</sup> World Migration Report 2020 // <https://publications.iom.int/books/world-migration-report-2020> (date of access: 24.12.2020)

Summarizing this section, the following can be pointed out. Migration as a socio-economic phenomenon is recognized by the world community, which is characterized by a significant level of regulation of this process at the international level. The world community seeks to create a set of conditions that will ensure a civilized, orderly regulation of the process in practice, which will correspond to the principles of humanism because often migrants are essentially powerless people, despite a fairly extensive regulatory framework and numerous international institutions acting in the field.

The study of migration as a phenomenon and institution is carried out in the theoretical and practical spheres. The theoretical scope of the research is represented by the rational and interdisciplinary nature of the institution of migration, the study of its essence, object and subject from the standpoint of various sciences, and the research carried out within each of which makes it possible to analyze migration, creating a general picture of migration as a phenomenon that is formed under the influence of various factors that, in turn, scientists investigate within the framework of various approaches. The practical area of research of migration is aimed at analyzing the causes of migration, types of migration, its quantitative and gender composition, the financial and economic component of migration, legal and social security, compliance by states with the requirements of international acts, and violation of the rights of migrants. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, these factors have become the most relevant and pressing ones, and they will be looked into in more detail in the following sections.

The international community witnesses annually increasing migration flows and the root cause for this is socio-economic aspects, which means that labor migration forms the agenda for the analysis of migration, as people strive to improve their economic situation in the country of destination. In 2019, according to the International Organization for Migration, the number of migrants amounted to 272 millions (3.5% of the world's population), while in 2015, the number of migrants was 243 million people (3.3% of the world's population).<sup>15</sup> The world community seeks to implement and give migration flows not only an orderly and controlled character, but also to ensure the observance of the rights of migrants and to reduce the level of xenophobia and migrantophobia. Today, despite the extensive basis for regulating migration, conducting educational work, and informing the local population, the manifestation of xenophobia towards migrants is a fairly common phenomenon that carries a destructive element of building a society based on the principle of tolerance and understanding that migration is a natural process, which entails a change in the social and economic state of society and the state itself where the migrants reside.

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<sup>15</sup> World Migration Report 2020 // <https://publications.iom.int/books/world-migration-report-2020> (date of access: 24.12.2020)



## **1.2 Analysis of migration flows during global pandemics of the most renowned viruses.**

The period of pandemics of the most famous viruses around the world is characterized by many aspects, among which migration stands out. Migration during a pandemic of viruses shows not only the number of people who are trying to escape the pandemic, but also state capabilities during this period of time, which reflects the conditions for countering the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown quite clearly all over the world the unpreparedness of many states, including highly developed (financially and technologically), for pandemics of this level. Virus pandemics are a negative factor hindering the economic and social development of states since each pandemic carries a decline, first of all, of the economy and the desire of citizens and migrants to avoid infection, which is expressed in the need to leave the state. Migration flows during a pandemic are also characterized by both positive and negative factors, among the positive factors are the possibility of upgrading the social status benefiting from new conditions; the negative factor, in turn, does not allow the forced migrants to adapt quickly enough in the new state for various reasons, and above all the economic ones. In mentioning the new pandemic, it is needed to address first of all the pandemic of the Spanish influenza virus, which was rampant over 100 years ago. The Spanish flu pandemic was recognized as the most severe and fierce pandemic of the virus, which historians and doctors put on a par with the plague that raged in Europe in the Middle Ages. This type of virus was the first in a series of viruses over a century, which appeared with obvious consistency in different regions of the world, but the twentieth anniversary of the new 21st century was marked by the emergence of four pandemics of influenza viruses, which include pandemics: "SARS Pandemic" - 2002-2003; Avian influenza (H5N1) - 2004-2019; Swine flu (H1N1) - 2009-2010; and, finally, COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) – started in 2019. When talking about influenza virus pandemics over the past twenty years, it is necessary to mention a number of types of fevers that have flared up in various regions of the world along with pandemics of influenza viruses. These types of fevers include: Zika Yap Islands virus - 2007; cholera epidemic in Haiti - 2010; Ebola in West Africa - 2014-2016; Zika virus in South America - 2015-2016; Ebola fever in Democratic Republic of Congo - 2018-2020. The beginning of 2021 was marked by the re-emergence of Ebola in Guinea and avian influenza (in Europe, Russia, and the UK), which may also affect the overall epidemiological situation in the world. The general migration situation in the world at the moment remains difficult, and at the same time, the reappearance of the Ebola virus and avian influenza can also have a certain impact, but this process can be assessed in dynamics as part of its development over the next few months.

The Spanish flu pandemic has become the largest pandemic of modern times since the plague. The Spanish flu pandemic began in March 1918 and lasted until the spring of 1920 and remains the most devastating one in modern history. The second wave of the Spanish flu began in September 1918, catching the population of many countries by surprise, which also affected the heightened death rate of the population. In October 1918 alone, 195 thousand people died in the United States. The emergence of the Spanish flu virus in the United States coincided with a new wave of migration to the United States.

Assessing the situation with the Spanish flu in the United States and the wave of migration, Alan MacKraut writes the following, “In 1918, the United States was in the midst of the largest wave of immigration in its history. Between 1880 and the 1920s, 23.5 million newcomers arrived in the United States, most of them from Southern and Eastern Europe, but also from China, Japan, Canada, and Mexico. The onset of the influenza pandemic in the fall of 1918 occurred at a time when wartime dangers and dislocations had already slowed immigration to the United States. The total number of immigrants entering the U.S. had dropped to 110,618 in 1918 from 1,218,480 in 1914. At times, native-born Americans’ fear of disease from abroad became a rationale for an equally great and preexisting prejudice, fear of the foreign-born, or nativism. Nativists stigmatized particular immigrant groups as the carriers of specific diseases, rationalizing their prejudice with medical and public health arguments”.<sup>16</sup>

The presented opinion is evidence of migrantophobia towards people who arrived in the United States during the spread of the Spanish flu virus. This aspect clearly shows the presence of a factor of dismissive and arrogant attitude towards migrants regardless of time and territory. Alan MacKraut, examining the impact of the Spanish flu on migration flows in the United States, adds the following statement regarding certain categories of nationalities, “Denver had a large number of immigrant patients in its institutions. Still, there was anti-Italian sentiment. Some of it was generated by the nativist American Protective Association and the Ku Klux Klan. As in other cities, Italians in Denver were stereotyped as poor, slovenly, violent, and given to heavy drinking. Chinese people were often criticized by the native-born for being unhealthy, but the native-born did not wish to pay for newcomers’ care. Some 2.25 million Eastern European Jews arrived in the late 19th and early 20th-century era of mass migration, the second largest group after the Italians. Anti-Semitism and charges that the Jewish body was inherently inferior to the Christian body were ubiquitous in Europe. Not surprisingly, the Spanish influenza epidemic of 1918 aroused fears of anti-Semitism within the Jewish immigrant community”.

Such developments during the period of the spread of the Spanish flu are evidence of xenophobia and migrantophobia due to the low level of education and the immature attitude of society towards migrants. A similar development passes through the century after the Spanish flu pandemic and at the present time, during the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic these developments remain valid in society.

The SARS pandemic emerged in November 2002 and was a new virus sweeping the world until 2003. The hotbed of the virus was the Guangdong province in southern China. The SARS virus was characterized by viral pneumonia, which caused respiratory failure in a person who contracted it. The SARS pandemic spread to the regions neighbouring South China, such as Hong Kong and Vietnam, and later to the other countries of the world, but the largest number of cases was recorded in Southeast Asia: China, Hong Kong, Singapore. According to official data from WHO, “The number of cases passed 4000 on 23 April and then

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<sup>16</sup> MacKraut.A. Immigration, Ethnicity, and the Pandemic // Public Health Reports. 2010. Supplement 3, Volume 125, P.124-125.

rapidly soared to 5000 on 28 April, 6000 on 2 May, and 7000 on 8 May, when cases were reported from 30 countries. During the peak of the global outbreak, near the start of May, more than 200 new cases were being reported each day. Detection of new infections subsequently slowed, passing 8000 on 22 May”.<sup>17</sup>

The SARS pandemic became a new manifestation of the factor of the spread of viruses throughout the planet, and at the same time, it became a test for many states in terms of the possibility of forming an expanded system of sanitary and epidemiological counteraction to the spread of the virus. One of the negative factors in the spread of the SARS virus pandemic was the lack of prompt notification by China to the World Health Organization, which entailed a number of irreversible consequences, among which the belated start of the formation of a comprehensive system to combat the new pandemic that should have been considered a priority. WHO declared on July 05, 2003 that SARS outbreaks have been contained worldwide, but calls for continued vigilance.

The damage caused by the SARS pandemic was estimated at \$10.6-\$15 billion. China's losses amounted to \$2.2 billion, Hong Kong's losses amounted to \$1.7 billion, tourist flows from mainland China fell by 75-80%, and the entertainment and restaurant industries recorded an 80% drop in business.

A report from the International Organization for Migration confirmed that as a result of the SARS pandemic “worldwide there were 8,096 SARS cases and 774 people have died of the disease, which also had a negative impact on tourism, trade and travel. The SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) epidemic and its rapid spread throughout the region in early 2003 has apparently had little effect on labour migration. Most Asian economies have continued to grow steadily, which is thought to have blunted the impact of SARS on labour migration. China’s economy overcame formidable odds to grow at about 9.1 per cent in the third quarter of 2003, indicating that it had overcome any negative impact of the SARS outbreak, while Japan saw economic growth of over 6 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2003”.<sup>18</sup> The data of the International Organization for Migration are rather limited regarding statistics on migration and labor migration during a pandemic to assess its state since general data cannot reveal the general aspects of counting migrants during a pandemic. The general indication that the growth of economies in Asia has weakened the impact of the pandemic on labor migration presents an evidence that the measures taken by the world community to counter the spread of the pandemic (despite the rather late notification from WHO about the beginning of the spread of a new type of virus in Guangdong province) influenced to a certain extent on the possibility of migration of people and labor migration in particular. The SARS pandemic in 2002-2003 became new testimony of the impact of the virus on migration, in particular, a certain impact on labor migration that was pointed out.

The A/H1N1 swine flu pandemic is yet another pandemic in human history. It received the name "the Mexican" or "Mexican swine flu". Initially, Mexico and a number of US states became the territory of origin

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<sup>17</sup> Update 83 – One hundred days into the outbreak // [https://www.who.int/csr/don/2003\\_06\\_18/en/](https://www.who.int/csr/don/2003_06_18/en/) (date of access: 14.02.2021)

<sup>18</sup> World Migration. Costs and benefits of international migration 2005, P.105

and initial spread of "swine flu" in March-April 2009. The spread of the virus caused the introduction of the 4th level of danger by the World Health Organization on April 27, 2009, and with a subsequent increase to 6th level in connection with with the spread of the epidemic around the world. According to WHO estimates, in 2009 there were 18,449 deaths from the influenza virus. In August 2010, the World Health Organization announced the termination of the A/H1N1 influenza pandemic. In June 2010, the Health Commission of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe issued a statement that there was no swine flu epidemic at all in 2009, but there was simply a panic provoked by the statement of the World Health Organization. The statement by the Health Commission of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe stated the following:

- WHO has not moved swiftly to revise or re-evaluate its position on the pandemic and the real health risks involved, despite the overwhelming evidence that the seriousness of the pandemic was vastly overestimated by WHO at the outset;

- the EU Member-States should ensure that the private sector does not gain undue profit from public health scares and that it is not allowed to absolve itself of liabilities with a view to privatising profits whilst sharing the risks. In order to avoid this, member states should be ready to develop and implement clear national guidelines for dealing with the private sector and to co-operate with one another in negotiations with international corporations whenever necessary.

- Finally, the Assembly invites the pharmaceutical industry, including corporations and associations, to revise their own rules and functioning regarding co-operation with the public sector in order to ensure the highest degree of transparency and corporate social responsibility when it comes to major public health matters.<sup>19</sup>

The "swine flu" pandemic, despite the fact that its hotbed was recorded in Mexico, spread rather quickly throughout the world and its spread was not so long compared to other epidemics, although it resulted in a fairly large number of deaths. Nevertheless, assessing the scale of migration and migration flows during the spread of the swine flu virus, it can be stated that migration statistics during this period of time can be estimated within the framework of general statistics of migrants, which is carried out by the International Organization for Migration, since there is no more reliable migration statistics for the period of the swine flu virus pandemic. The total number of international migrants worldwide was estimated at 214 million people in 2010. This figure remained relatively stable as a share of the world's population, increasing by only 0.1%, from 3.0% to 3.1%, between 2005 and 2010. Despite the fact that the swine flu pandemic was recorded in Mexico (being its hotbed), and in a number of US states, in 2010 the United States of America was still home to the largest contingent of migrants from all countries of the world, while six of the ten countries with the largest foreign populations (France, Germany, Russian Federation, Spain, Ukraine, and

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<sup>19</sup> The handling of the H1N1 pandemic: more transparency needed // <https://pace.coe.int/en/files/12463> (date of access: 20.02.2021)

the United Kingdom) were in Europe. The United States was the leading destination for migrants in the world, hosting about a fifth of all migrants. Here, migrants made up 13.5% of the population, and they came mainly from Mexico, followed by the Philippines, Germany, India, China, Vietnam, Canada, Cuba, El Salvador and the United Kingdom. Migrants from Latin America and the Caribbean accounted for 53% of all foreigners born in the United States. Remittances in 2009, at the height of the swine flu pandemic, were estimated at US \$414 billion, of which over US \$316 billion went to developing countries, i.e., there was a 6% decrease from US \$336 billion in 2008.<sup>20</sup>

The Ebola virus since its appearance in 2014 in Guinea and Liberia and before the emergence of the COVID-19 virus, was a new and rather severe virus that caused numerous victims in a number of African states. A new outbreak of the virus was recorded again in Guinea in 2021. More than 11,000 people have died, including in Mali, Nigeria and the United States. The Ebola pandemic has impacted human migration in the region. Migration during the spread of the Ebola virus has become a negative phenomenon, as the movement of people in this region is characterized by increased intensity and uncontrolled borders, which influenced the spread of the virus by people while migrating, increased sanitary controls at points of entry and exit, suspension of air traffic and closure of borders. According to the 2020 report of the IOM experts “after this outbreak, African migrants faced stigmatization and xenophobia around the world.”<sup>21</sup> Migration flows during the spread of the Ebola virus are quite problematic to track due to the lack of data, which is also recognized by IOM experts, therefore migration in West Africa during the spread of the virus can be analyzed within the framework of the general migration data. Migration in West Africa is driven primarily by the region's labor mobility, conflicts and instability. The migration flows during the period of the Ebola virus spread since 2014 in West Africa can be characterized by persistence due to the presence of labor migration, but at the same time, strict measures for sanitary control of migrants were an obstacle to labor migration during this period of time.

Evaluating the list of pandemics of the most well-known viruses that have been given in this section, it can be indicated that migration and migration flows during pandemics were a natural socio-economic phenomenon that existed regardless of the pandemics. The pandemic certainly affected migration flows, but there is no need to talk about a strong impact on migration. A short example was given of migration to the United States during the Spanish flu pandemic, and in this case, it can be stated that the pandemic developed during the natural process of migration and migration flows in the United States, since this country in the period between 1918 and 1920 was considered one of the countries of destination to improve the socio-economic status of migrants (as well as it is nowadays). A concise analysis carried out in the framework of the study of the migration flows in the United States showed the presence of phenomena of migrantophobia and xenophobia, which are a negative background of migration flows.

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<sup>20</sup> World migration report 2010 the future of migration: building capacities for change. International Organization for Migration (IOM). 2010, P.115,117

<sup>21</sup> World Migration Report 2020. p 405

In the 21st century, states again have faced the challenge of new viruses and those pandemics that spread around the world at intervals of several years, including the spread of several viruses in different regions of the world simultaneously. The given examples of virus pandemics combined with the possibility of disclosing data on migration flows showed that migration flows during virus pandemics should be characterized as corresponding to natural migration flows within the data recorded by the International Organization for Migration. The reports of the International Organization for Migration do not fully record migration flows precisely connected to the virus pandemics; therefore the researchers can only rely on the IOM data, which is provided only by general data on overall migration flows during the periods of time when virus pandemics were recorded and announced. It can be stated that xenophobia and migrantophobia have been and remain a negative factor accompanying migration flows.

### **1.3 Analysis of global migration flows in the context of the COVID-2019 pandemic in 2020.**

The analysis of the current state of migration is nowadays a rather urgent issue, since the study of migration flows allows one to assess the situation with respect to various types of migration, and the actions of state authorities of various countries taken in order to comply with their international obligations. During the pandemic, migrants became hostages of the situation, public opinion, migrantophobia and the actions of the authorities. Currently, the information that is available provides an opportunity to study the situation of the state of migration flows in 2020 and after.

The COVID-19 virus pandemic shocked the whole world and became a test for all mankind, as it affected many areas of society and state, such as: healthcare, economy, transport, society. Within the framework of the pandemic that affected the above-mentioned spheres, migration and migration flows are directly related to the named spheres, because in these spheres and in other sectors, which for many states are of critical and strategic importance, migrants ensure their stable functioning on a daily basis due to the fact that often the work performed by migrants is considered to be marginal by the citizens of states, and also due to the fact that the employer would pay for the migrant's labor much less than for the citizen's one.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a public healthcare, socioeconomic, political, human rights and mobility crisis that has resulted in more than two million cases and more than one hundred thousand deaths (to date) and has severely impacted national economies around the world. As noted in the UN Secretary General's recently released summary on COVID-19, the pandemic is exacerbating preexisting inequalities, especially for migrants. The pandemic has already driven several countries into recessions and disrupted international supply chains for essential goods and services. While migrants by their very nature may not be more vulnerable or at risk of contracting infectious diseases, the latest news of COVID-19 outbreaks in migrant communities has shown how the conditions in which they migrate, live or work can affect the health outcomes for migrants themselves, and, as a consequence, for hosting communities. One of the most dramatic reactions has been the global suspension of international traffic in hopes of slowing the spread of the virus.

The suspension of international traffic has been a severe blow to migrants who are often unable to return to their country of origin. Analytical data posted on the information portal on migrants reveal the situation associated with the return of migrants to their country of origin who have become unwilling prisoners of the spreading pandemic since the beginning of the pandemic. India is the country of origin of the largest number of emigrants (UN DESA, 2019) and as of 2 November 2020, India's official repatriation operation had facilitated the return of more than 2.1 million stranded Indians from around the world (Indian Ministry of Civil Aviation, 2020). More than 600,000 undocumented Afghans returned from Iran and Pakistan between 1 March 2020 and 24 October 2020. Of these, 117,145 Afghans had returned in the first two weeks of March 2020 alone (IOM, 2020c). As of 30 October 2020, more than 136,000 Venezuelan migrants and refugees had returned to Venezuela from other countries in the region (IOM and UN OCHA,

2020). At its peak, 600 Venezuelans returned from Colombia daily and an average of 88 Venezuelans returned from Brazil daily via the border at Pacaraima (Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela, 2020). Between 1 April and 3 November 2020, IOM had assisted more than 37,600 migrants who were in quarantine facilities after returning to Ethiopia from neighbouring African countries and Saudi Arabia (IOM, 2020d).<sup>22</sup> The portal data are sufficient evidence of the impact of the pandemic on migration flows, the process of returning to the country of origin due to the impossibility of staying in the country of destination due to the pandemic and, as a consequence, the inability to get a job and receive adequate medical support. The lack of medical support for migrants has become a potentially high risk of possibly getting infected with the virus because reports from world media during the pandemic have become a vivid confirmation of many problems with healthcare systems in developed countries that could not resist the virus and provide medical care to their citizens, not to mention migrants. Nevertheless, migrants who returned to their country of origin also could not be provided with sufficient medical assistance, the example of the treatment of Indian citizens by the police during the pandemic and quarantine is sufficient confirmation of the state's intention to solve the pandemic problem by any means regardless of universally recognized principles and norms on human and civil rights.

The pandemic has had an impact on all types of migration and primarily on labor migration. Labor migration during the COVID-19 pandemic has taken the full blow of its negative impact, the consequences of which it continues to experience. Many labor migrants lost their jobs in the service sector and were forced to look for new sources of income and new jobs. The first wave of the pandemic that passed by the summer made adjustments to the possibility of improving the situation with work for labor migrants, but still the second wave and new lockdowns in a number of states again had an impact on the status of labor migrants (and primarily for unskilled labor) and the possibility of leading their labor activity in the host country. The new lockdown of January 2021 for a number of European countries again became a difficult test, especially for industries and services.

At the same time, the pandemic had a rather “positive impact” on labor migration of qualified medical personnel in many regions and states of the world, changing the strict requirements imposed by each state to labor migrants with medical education from third countries.

Migrants, regardless of where they work, make important contributions to address the pandemic but are also exposed to higher risks of contracting the virus. As an illustration, among the 20 countries with the highest number of COVID-19 cases as of 3 November 2020, available international data show that at least 8 countries – the United States, France, Spain, the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, Chile and Belgium – depend on foreign-born workers in the critical sector of healthcare services.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Migration data relevant for the COVID-19 pandemic // <https://migrationdataportal.org/themes/migration-data-relevant-covid-19-pandemic> (date of access: 18.01.2021)

<sup>23</sup> Migration data relevant for the COVID-19 pandemic // <https://migrationdataportal.org/themes/migration-data-relevant-covid-19-pandemic> (date of access: 18.01.2021)



The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development assessing the consequences of the pandemic and the possibilities of the healthcare sector in a number of states and regions, provides the following very detailed data showing the situation in the healthcare sector and with the status of migrants during the pandemic.

In response to COVID-19, a number of OECD countries (or states and provinces in the United States and Canada, respectively) have taken action to enable migrant health professionals to help meet the surge in demand for health care. These actions may take the form of facilitating renewal of working authorisation or recruitment, temporary and/or restricted licensure, fast-track processing of recognition of foreign qualifications or access to some jobs in the health sector.

In the United Kingdom, doctors, nurses and paramedics with visas due to expire before 1 October 2020 will have them automatically extended for one year. In France, non-licensed foreign-trained health professionals can work as support staff in non-medical occupations. Spanish ministries have launched urgent, coordinated action for the immediate hiring of foreign health workers willing to work in Spain. About 400 people have been recruited as of end April 2020. In Chile, in health emergencies, the national health service can hire foreign health professionals even if they have not their qualification formally recognised. In Australia, international nursing students can now work more than 40 hours every two weeks to alleviate pressure on the workforce.

A number of OECD countries have decided to expedite current applications for the recognition of foreign qualifications of health professionals (e.g., Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg), or to facilitate procedures (e.g., reduced language test in Germany, no in person meeting in Lithuania, adopt fee waivers in Ireland). Italy has adopted a decree that enable temporary licensing of foreign trained health professionals. In Germany, in Bavaria, foreign doctors may be offered permission to work as assistants for one year. Saxony has also urged foreigners with a medical background to identify themselves but has not mobilised them so far.<sup>24</sup>

The analytical data of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development cited above show a fairly positive picture of labor migration in the field of medicine for highly qualified medical workers from third countries but it is nevertheless necessary to reveal the potential negative aspects. Firstly, it is necessary to mention the potential for infection of labor migrant doctors with a virus in the process of performing their official duties, which can lead to death regardless of the original health condition. Secondly, the preferences provided by the executive authorities and the conditions for lowering the level of qualification requirements by the healthcare authorities should remain in force for labor migrants with medical education regardless of the decline in the pandemic. Focusing on the second thesis, it is to be said that the interests of the involved medical migrant workers should not suffer after the end of the pandemic and the removal of all restrictions,

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<sup>24</sup> Contribution of migrant doctors and nurses to tackling COVID-19 crisis in OECD countries // <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/contribution-of-migrant-doctors-and-nurses-to-tackling-covid-19-crisis-in-oecd-countries-2f7bace2/> (date of access: 20.01.2021)

which can lead to the return of strict requirements for the qualifications of medical personnel from third countries and, accordingly, the loss of their jobs. It is believed that this issue should be resolved not only at the level of the executive authorities of the states that have decided to reduce the requirements for medical personnel but also at the level of the International Organization for Migration. The protection of the rights of labor migrant medical personnel can be carried out by appealing to all states that have received labor migrant medical personnel in order to preserve the benefits associated with their legal status as a healthcare worker in the host state which provided him with the opportunity to work.

Despite the rather positive examples from all over the world related to ensuring the rights of migrants to work, some countries show directly opposite examples of dealing with migration issues during the pandemic, which indicates a violation of the rights of migrants. Sergey Vasiliyevich Ryazantsev, Alexey Dmitriyevich Bragin, Nikita Sergeyeovich Ryazantsev examining the situation with migrants in Northern Europe, point to the following negative example, “The situation in Denmark is markedly different from other EU countries. The authorities of the Scandinavian country did not provide any flexibility in extending documents for permanent residence. One of the requirements for obtaining a permanent residence permit is having a permanent job for a certain period of time. A large number of applicants have now lost their jobs due to social distancing measures, but no exceptions will be made for this type of applicants”.<sup>25</sup> Such an example bears a rather negative factor that reveals both socio-moral aspects of attitudes towards migrants, and legal ones related to the fulfillment of international obligations assumed by Denmark. Denmark's disregard for flexibility for migrants during the pandemic can be regarded as an actual social distancing (which became a measure of protection during the pandemic) from solving the problem and shifting it onto the shoulders of, first of all, migrants themselves, public organizations, International Organization for Migration, which does not correspond to the priority governing principle of the Global Compact on Migration, the essence of which is related to focus on the interests of people, its social component and care for people. Such behavior of an individual state characterizes the denial of the possibility of resolving migration issues and minimizing state costs, which is a continuation of the implementation and observance of the special position of Denmark set forth in Protocol No. 22 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. According to the special position of Denmark, none of the provisions of Section V of Part Three of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, not a single measure taken in accordance with this section, including within the framework of the common policy on migration and asylum, are mandatory for or applicable in Denmark, and no such provision, measure or decision in any way affects the competence, rights and obligations of Denmark.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>Bragin A.D., Ryazantsev S.V., Ryazantsev N.S., The Situation of Labor Migrants in Regions of the World: Challenges of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the Response of Governments // Nauchnoye Obozrenie. Seriya 1. Ekonomika i Pravo. 2020. No. 3. COVID-19 and mobility, p.11. (in Russ.)

<sup>26</sup> Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union: consolidated version 2016, Official Journal. 2012/C 326/01, 26.10.2012, p. 47-390.

Xenophobia and migrantophobia is also observed in another region of the world - Latin America, more precisely in Brazil, which also shows a negative attitude towards migrants, despite the rather extensive measures of international legal regulation in the field of migration. Maria Teresa Toríbio Brittes Lemos and Alexis Toríbio Dantas assessing the situation with migrants in Brazil during the pandemic, provide the following views on what is happening, “The COVID-19 pandemic in Brazil has been generating new forms of xenophobic manifestations against the presence of immigrants in the country. Since the appearance of Coronavirus in two Venezuelan children in Pacaraima, in the north of the country, and two deaths of Bolivian immigrants in the fabric factories of S. Paulo, protests against the presence of immigrants have taken on new dimensions. Accused of bringing the disease to Brazil, immigrants are victims of extreme violence ranging from physical torture, beatings to expelling and contempt. The enemy is not the virus, it is the immigrant, it is the foreigner, the other, the one who brought disaster, unemployment, occupying jobs in industries and services. Population displacements were contained by Executive Acts, Government Laws and, above all, suggesting to the population that immigrants bring the virus because of the lack of hygiene and sanitary habits”.<sup>27</sup> Xenophobia and migrantophobia during the COVID-19 pandemic are a negative factor affecting the social environment in the country and society as a whole. Shifting the blame onto migrants for lack of hygiene and sanitary habits is surprising, to put it mildly, because most migrants live in poor favelas, which often have no water supply and where authorities are afraid to enter, not to mention to provide medical services.

The examples of Denmark and Brazil are not the only ones that show a denial of the situation with migrants and a negative attitude towards them against the backdrop of a pandemic, which cannot but worry, because all this can become a leitmotif for the formation of migrant crime in countries and an increase in its volume, in Brazil, for example.

Joseph Chamie analyzing the impact of the pandemic on migration flows worldwide writes the following, “The coronavirus pandemic has largely brought human movement to a halt, which is unprecedented in modern times. In addition to the global restrictions on international travel, billions of people have been negatively affected by the pandemic’s expansive economic fallout. Many migrants have been obliged to return to their home countries. Due to the closure of borders and unavailability of transportation, some migrants became stranded in difficult living conditions and crowded detention centers, which facilitated the spread of the coronavirus. In addition to affecting various types of migrants and travelers, the pandemic has also significantly limited the entry and processing of refugees and asylum seekers. States and the international agencies should plan for the gradual reemergence of large-scale migration based on traditional push and pull forces, once a COVID-19 vaccine is widely available”.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Toríbio Brittes Lemos M.T., Toríbio Dantas A., Xenophobia and Migrantophobia in Brazil during the Covid-19 Pandemic // Nauchnoye Obozrenie.Seriya 1. Ekonomika I Pravo, 2020, No. 3, COVID-19 i mobilnost, p.89 (in Russ.)

<sup>28</sup> Joseph C. International Migration amid a World in Crisis, Journal on Migration and Human Security 202, Vol. 8(3), p.241

Evaluating the author's "forecast" about the "gradual reemergence of large-scale migration", it is necessary to take into account a number of factors, among which, first of all, it is necessary to highlight economic factors. The pandemic has greatly affected the state of the economies of all countries of the world. The repeated lockdowns introduced by the states again have an impact on the state of the economy. Industrial production is still viable in many countries but the service sector suffers large financial losses. Many states provide support to those who have lost their jobs and to business entities, but it is still necessary to understand that vaccination of people in states will entail not only a change in the situation associated with the pandemic, but also a change in economic processes associated with an increase in economic and industrial production, the purpose of which will be to overcome the economic crisis for each state which in fact became one of the negative backgrounds in the context of the pandemic. In this regard, for each of the states the priority will be the issue of eliminating unemployment among citizens of the states affected by the pandemic, while the issues of migration flows and employment of migrants will fade into the background, since ignoring the issues of employment of citizens in the state itself will entail public discontent and a potential crisis of power. Donald Kerwin and Robert Warren examining the contribution of migrant workers to the US economy during the pandemic, write the following, "The COVID-19 pandemic has created the clearest, most compelling view to date of the indispensable contributions of immigrants to the nation's well-being. Immigrants are working - often at great risk to their health and lives - to keep Americans safe, healthy, fed, and poised for economic recovery. Yet, paradoxically, large numbers also remain on the margins of US society. While nearly three-quarters of undocumented immigrants work in sectors officially deemed essential to the nation's critical infrastructure, they can still lose their jobs, and be detained and deported. Foreign-born essential workers face a high risk of infection, but workplace protections have been relaxed during the pandemic».<sup>29</sup>The views presented reveal amply two polar opposite points of view on the situation related to the status of migrants in society of the states where they are during the pandemic: subsequent and current. The opinion of Donald Kerwin and Robert Warren is quite important in terms of understanding the status of a migrant in the United States at present. The authors point out that it is migrants who provide the work of the sectors of industry and economy which are considered the priority ones from the point of view of ensuring the functioning of society and the state itself, but the pandemic, making its own adjustments to the current status of migrants, affects their health and increases a sufficiently high potential for job loss, which would lead to their weaker economic status, as well as the decreasing remittances to financially support their families in other countries.

Section 1.1. provided statistical data revealing the level of remittances of migrants. During the COVID-19 pandemic migrants continue to make remittances, but their volume declined in the first half of 2020. However, it recovered in the second half of 2020 having reached pre-COVID-19 levels and even

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<sup>29</sup> Kerwin D., Warren R, US Foreign-Born Workers in the Global Pandemic: Essential and Marginalized, Journal on Migration and Human Security 2020, Vol. 8, p. 289 (282-300)

hitting historic highs in several countries. For example, Pakistan where remittances accounted for almost 8% of GDP in 2019, had the highest monthly remittance volume on record in July 2020 (State Bank of Pakistan, 2020). In countries such as Mexico, Egypt and Nepal monthly remittances in the second and/or third quarters of 2020 increased year-on-year. Several factors may be behind this trend, e.g. exchange rate fluctuations combined with the effect of countries lifting tight restrictions during which ordinary household spending was limited and savings were higher – this may have played an important role in the decline and subsequent rebound of remittances volume.

An estimated 37% of all remittance inflows globally in 2019 were received in the 20 countries with the highest number of confirmed COVID-19 cases as of 3 November 2020 (GMDAC analysis based on World Bank, 2020). Globally, 7 of the 20 countries with the highest number of COVID-19 cases – the United States of America, India, the Russian Federation, France, the United Kingdom, Italy and Germany – were among the 20 countries from which the highest amounts of remittances were sent in 2018. Remittances sent from these seven countries alone made up more than 23% of all global remittances received in 2018 (ibid.). Remittances sent from the United States, countries in the Eurozone, the United Kingdom and Canada together accounted for an estimated 46% of remittances received in low- and middle-income countries in 2019.<sup>30</sup>

Emerging economies faced sharp currency depreciation in February-March 2020, while developed country currencies were generally strong during the same period. This may have led to the situation where regular volume of remittances sent was being converted to higher amounts in the receiving countries. Financial behavior of migrants during crises can also be a factor behind increasing remittances volume since migrants channel more of their savings to support their families in countries hit hard by the outbreak of COVID-19. As several major remittance sending countries faced the second wave of COVID-19 in the last quarter of 2020, this upward trend in monthly remittances will reverse since a number of countries re-introduce lockdowns.

Analyzing the state of migration and migration flows at present, several conclusions that characterize these processes in 2020 in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic can be drawn:

1. Decrease in and suspension of migration processes.

The pandemic has had a significant impact on the possibility of migration and migration flows. The announcement by the World Health Organization of a pandemic situation and the wide spread of the pandemic in a number of individual states (France, Italy, Serbia, India) led to the closure of borders and states, which led to the suspension of migration both to the countries of destination and the impossibility of arriving migrants to return to their home countries. Closing borders is an objective factor associated with ensuring the sanitary and epidemiological situation in each state, which is aimed at forming one of the

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<sup>30</sup> Migration data relevant for the COVID-19 pandemic // <https://migrationdataportal.org/themes/migration-data-relevant-covid-19-pandemic> (date of access: 23.01.2021)

components of the architecture of the general security of the state and protection of the rights of citizens to the safe sanitary and epidemiological situation. Migrants who experienced the impossibility of returning to their country of origin, in all senses became hostages of the objective factor of declaring a pandemic and closing borders. The factor of border closure and suspension of migration flows served as the primary basis for triggering a chain reaction which led to the emergence of other factors affecting the status of migrants and migration flows in the world in 2020;

2. Inability of migrants to return to the country of origin.

This feature has become a negative factor that does not allow migrants to fully carry out labor activities in the hosting country and, at the same time, does not allow them to return to their home countries in order to use the opportunities associated with the citizenship of their state;

3. Loss of jobs by migrants due to the pandemic and lockdowns.

The pandemic had an impact on the development of economic sectors, especially on the service sector. The loss of jobs by migrants had a negative impact on their economic condition and, in fact, brought them to the brink of poverty in the host states. Lack of work entails the inability to meet their basic needs nor meet the minimum payment for humane housing conditions;

4. Xenophobia and migrantophobia in a number of states.

Two socially negative phenomena generate a wave of hatred towards migrants and populism among the forces determined to use the factor of the pandemic and migrants for their own purposes. Reducing the level of xenophobia and migrantophobia should include measures of informational and medical nature. The informational factor should provide an explanation and justification of the status of migrants in society and the state; the medical factor, in turn, as the ultimate goal of its implementation, should imply, at least, a minimum medical provision for the needs of migrants;

5. Increasing possibility of contracting the virus due to the impossibility of obtaining qualified and prompt medical care.

Migrants are not citizens of the hosting states at the time of arrival in the destination state, which entails for them the lack of medical care in full as for citizens of the states, and carries the potential danger of contracting the virus due to the lack of minimal means of personal protection, which they are not able to acquire due to the lack of financial resources and workplace. Notwithstanding the stated above, it should still be pointed out that the International Organization for Migration carries out stronger surveillance and provides access to water at border checkpoints, as well as it takes hygiene measures throughout its activities in order to minimize the risk of infection;

6. Uneven process of making remittances.

The lack of jobs for migrants also negatively affects the ability to send remittances to their families as means of financial support during the spread of the pandemic. In 2020, due to the persistent presence of the pandemic, the summer period made it possible to increase the possibility of making remittances, which

changed the downward trend in remittances of migrants that could be observed before, but the second wave of the pandemic changed the situation - the newly introduced lockdowns by the states preserve the negative trend of migrants losing jobs and reducing the remittances volume;

7. Increase in the number of labor migrants with medical education and work experience.

The coronavirus pandemic has intensified the importance of certain occupations. Labor migrants with medical education in Europe, North and South America have become in demand, despite the fact that earlier strict requirements were imposed on persons with medical education originating in third countries, which is confirmed by softening qualification requirements to them.

The cited signs reveal the most significant aspects that accompany the migration processes during the COVID-19 pandemic. All the named features are presented as a system of unified socio-economic relations that exist within the framework of the institution of migration. The system of signs is characterized by interconnection and interdependence because these signs form a chain of possible influence on the occurrence of other signs. The largest number of signs is characterized by negative content and consequences. The analysis of the signs and the situation associated with migration and migration flows in general allows to point out that a rapid recovery of migration flows should not be expected, because there has been a second wave of coronavirus since the fall of 2020, which has entailed repeated lockdowns for many states. In the current circumstances, each state has to pay due attention to the situation with migrants in order to fulfill its international obligations on migration. It is necessary to focus on analyzing the situation with migrants in each state in order to minimize the risks of rising crime among incoming migrants who arrived both before and during the onset of the pandemic. It is required to adopt programs at the level of the hosting states for the purpose of providing minimum economic support for regular migrants.

## **2. Analysis of the state of migration flows in the European Union and the Russian Federation during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020.**

### **2.1 Migration processes in the European Union.**

Migration processes in the European Union during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 were subject to global trends and decisions of the organs of the EU as well as of the states' executive all around the world, with the situation with the coronavirus in the European Union having remained one of the most difficult for many countries in the community. The whole picture of the fight against COVID-19 can be characterized based on the situation of 2020 and 2021. In 2020, all countries of the European Union fought unequally against the spread of the virus, pursuing a policy of introducing lockdowns in order to prevent further spread of the virus, but at the initial stage of this fight, the situation was characterized by the confrontation of everybody to everyone in order to obtain additional volume of medicines and medical masks from suppliers, which was accompanied by crazy markups on the medicines sold. A very difficult situation with the spread of the virus in the spring of 2020 developed in Italy and Serbia, and medical military teams from the Russian Federation were sent to help in the fight against the spread of the virus.

It could seem that the first wave of coronavirus in the spring of 2020, which calmed down a bit by the summer, gave a number of states a chance to take a breath and give the service sector the opportunity to start working, but the second and third waves of coronavirus, which followed each other, again put many states of the European Union in difficult situation. The governments of several states have re-introduced lockdowns in order to prevent another wave of the spread of coronavirus among citizens. Speaking about citizens of states, the entire population of the states of the European Union is meant, which includes, among other things, migrants who have found themselves in states for various reasons, primarily socio-economic ones, which generate migration flows.

In 2021, the trends in the spread of coronavirus have still remained, despite the measures taken by the governments of the states. The situation remains difficult, but not hopeless, because with the counteraction to the spread of coronavirus by the existing measures, among which we include lockdowns, the process of treating patients, campaigning for the observance of restrictive measures and the mask regime. Moreover, vaccination of the population was added, which has been quite active in a number of countries and allows states' authorities to reverse situation gradually. However, the situation remains more difficult in certain spheres, because the closed borders regime remains among the urgent measures to counter the spread of coronavirus through visitors, including migrants.

The centers for migrants existing in the European Union were among the first to feel the impact of the situation with the coronavirus, as they were forced to close for quarantine, which led to the adoption of a few decisions by the European Commission. The European Commission published on April 16, 2020, guidance on the granting of asylum, resettlement and return procedures for migrants in a situation of a pandemic. The guidance indicates that "third-country nationals who apply for international protection must have their



application registered by the authorities and be able to lodge them. Particular attention should be paid to the situation of vulnerable persons, families and minors (including unaccompanied minors), and all applicants for international protection must be treated with dignity, and be, at a minimum, able to access, and exercise their basic rights. Member States shall grant to minor children of applicants and to applicants who are minors access to education under similar conditions as for their nationals”.<sup>31</sup>

The decision of the European Commission was one of the first in a series of measures aimed at ensuring the rights of migrants seeking asylum and finding themselves in a tough lockdown due to the first wave of coronavirus and the closed borders of the European Union.

Olga Yurievna Potemkina, assessing the initial actions of the European Union authorities, writes the following, “The introduction of control at internal borders as a means of countering the spread of the virus, in contrast to the actions of the Member States during the migration crisis, was less chaotic and did not inflict a tangible blow on the Schengen area, which could be reaffirmed by the desire of the EU countries to weaken and then lift control as far as possible. However, the likely prospects for an increase in the influx of asylum seekers in the absence of an updated system of distribution of refugee status applicants by country could once again jeopardize freedom of movement in the European Union.”<sup>32</sup> The situation with migrants in the European Union in 2020 and in 2021 remains difficult in all countries of the European Union and Europe in general. Migrants, as well as in other states in various regions around the world, were held hostage by the spreading coronavirus and were unable to return to their countries of origin due to the closure of borders.

### **Reduction in the number of immigrants in 2020**

According to Migration Data Portal, the pandemic has significantly reduced irregular travel to the EU in recent months. In April 2020, the number of detections of irregular border crossings on major migration routes in Europe fell by 85 percent from the previous month to around 900 cases, the lowest since Frontex began collecting border data in 2009 (Frontex, 2020). The record low numbers were mainly due to restrictive measures imposed by both EU Member States and third countries of transit and departure gates of migrants.<sup>33</sup>

In order to assess the situation with migrant flows in the European Union in 2020, the statistical data will be analyzed in comparison with previous years. The number of migrants in the European Union for the period 2015-2020 is shown in Table 1.

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<sup>31</sup> Communication from the Commission COVID-19: Guidance on the implementation of relevant EU provisions in the area of asylum and return procedures and on resettlement. Brussels, 16.4.2020. C (2020) 2516 final // <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/guidance-implementation-eu-provisions-asylum-retur-procedures-resettlement.pdf> (date of access: 01.05.2021)

<sup>32</sup> Potemkina O.Y. Global Compact on Migration - Success or Failure? // Nauchno-analiticheskyi vestnik Instituta Evropy RAN. 2018. No.6. p.94 (in Russ.)

<sup>33</sup> Migration data in Europe // <https://migrationdataportal.org/regional-data-overview/europe> (date of access: 03.05.2021)

Table 1. The number of migrants who entered the European Union for the period 2015-2020<sup>34</sup>

Indicator	Years					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of migrants	1 282 690	1 221 185	677 470	625 575	698 760	471 630

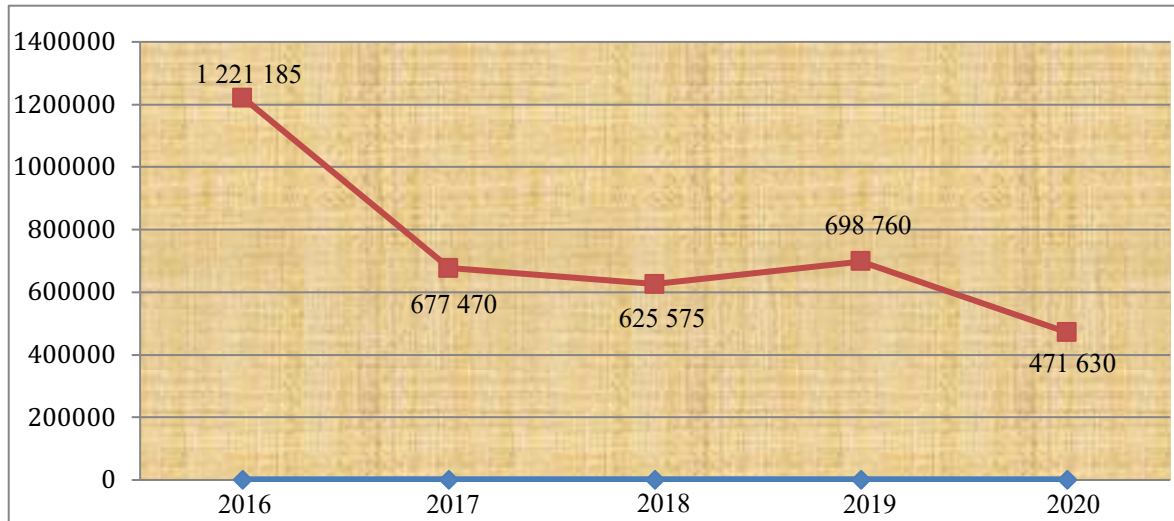


Chart 1. The number of migrants who entered the European Union for the period 2015-2020

The presented statistical data of the statistical office of the European Union (EUROSTAT) fully provide an opportunity to assess migration flows. When assessing migration flows, it is necessary to point out that flows do not have a clear upward trend since 2015. In 2015-2016 there is a significant increase in the number of migrants, but with a slight decrease in 2016. Starting from 2017 (677,470 people), there is a decrease in the flow of migrants by 7.67% (to 625,575 people), which in 2019 was again marked by an increase of 11.69% (698,760 people). Significant growth in the number of migration flows in 2015-2016 was due to the reasons for the emergence and expansion of the scope of local wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, the civil war in Syria, the subsequent military operation against ISIS in Syria, and military conflicts in Yemen and Pakistan.

Among the reasons for the increase in refugees in Europe in 2015, it is also necessary to include a decrease in funding for refugee camps in Turkey, Lebanon, which affected the reduction in the diet of refugees and the need to change the socio-economic status and motivation to search for a better life in economically developed Germany or Sweden, where there are extensive immigration communities. All these factors were the main ones in this period of time until 2020. In 2020 the situation worsened due to the spread of coronavirus around the world. Therefore, in 2020, a decrease in the number of migrants by 32.51% can be

<sup>34</sup> The number of migrants who entered the European Union for the period 2015-2020 // [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/migr\\_asyappctza/default/table?lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/migr_asyappctza/default/table?lang=en) (date of access: 06.05.2021)

observed, which was caused by the closure of borders due to the spread of the coronavirus and the further measures taken to suppress its further spread during the year.

The migration crisis remains a topical issue for a united Europe. The consequences of its initial phase in 2015-2016 echo now, during the pandemic. In November 2020, the Paris police dismantled 500 tents set up by migrants in the Place de la République. According to non-governmental organizations, more than 450 migrants were in the square on the evening of November 23. Parisian police dismantled about 500 tents set up by migrants in Place de la République on Monday evening (November 23, 2020) in protest to the liquidation of their camp outside the capital. This was reported by the police prefecture. "Earlier on Monday, the associations "Utopia 56" and "Médecins du monde" called for tents to be erected in Place de la République after a camp was dismantled in the metropolitan suburb of Saint-Denis on November 17, in which police estimated about 4 thousand people. Most of the refugees were accommodated in temporary centers, while the fate of about 1,000 people remained unresolved".<sup>35</sup> This situation is quite indicative in the context of the spread of the second wave of the pandemic and migration policy in the European Union, which shows the unresolved problems associated with migrants. The media report makes it possible to clearly see the actions of the authorities of the French Republic in resolving the issue of migrants, their placement, and the provision of medical assistance. De facto, a certain degree of populism can be seen in the words of politicians about solving migration issues and conducting a systemic migration policy, but in reality, the authorities try not to notice the problem of migrants, and even more so, they do not solve the issues of medical support and the fighting the spread of coronavirus among migrants. All this shows the problem of the collision of interests of individual states of the European Union trying to solve the problem of migrants in their own state, the implementation of the general principles of migration policy in the European Union, and respect for the human rights of a migrant arriving in Europe. Currently, there is no "golden mean", because the pandemic that hit the European Union makes adjustments to the implementation of migration policy, but its global solution is currently impossible to predict due to the next wave of the pandemic. The European Union in 2020, as well as in 2015, does not have a clear policy to address the problem of migrants in the context of the spread of the coronavirus pandemic. The examples that have been given above show that individual states are trying to resolve the issues of migrants in order to curb the social explosion.

In the situation of suppressing the spread of coronavirus, the problem of combating the pandemic in the states of the European Union came to the fore. In this situation, where many states are also striving to ensure the protection of their citizens from the spread of the pandemic among them, the problems of migrants have faded into the background, and migrantophobia along with protests against migrants became commonplace in 2020. Protection of human rights, compassion, justice, as legal and moral categories fade

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<sup>35</sup> "Paris police dismantled 500 tents set up by migrants in Place de la République" // <https://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/10079327> (date of access: 06.05.2021)

into the background, because the issue of the survival of migrants during the pandemic is left in the hands of migrants themselves, while the states of the European Union are only tightening requirements and closing borders, placing migrants in temporary accommodation centers in quarantine, which in fact can only be placed into the category of "small measures of assistance" to migrants. But nevertheless, it must be stated that the migration policy in the European Union is undergoing certain shocks, since there is no clear action plan. Each state acts as it considers necessary in the current situation, and the number of migrants to the European Union is not decreasing despite the report of the representatives of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The openness of borders and, as a result, the high mobility of migration flows does not contribute to the observance of two principles of suppressing the spread of coronavirus: social distance and quarantine. According to representatives of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "The number of refugees arriving in European countries in 2020 amounted to 95 thousand people, that is, it decreased by 23% compared to 2019 (123.7 thousand people) and by 33% as compared to 2018 (141.5 thousand people). Based on these data, we can say that the situation with newcomers to Europe is now manageable".<sup>36</sup>

UN data on the number of migrants for 2020 also provides an estimate of the statistics on migrants produced by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

In order to assess the situation with flows of migrants in the European Union in 2020, the statistical data that are reflected in Table 2 will be analyzed.

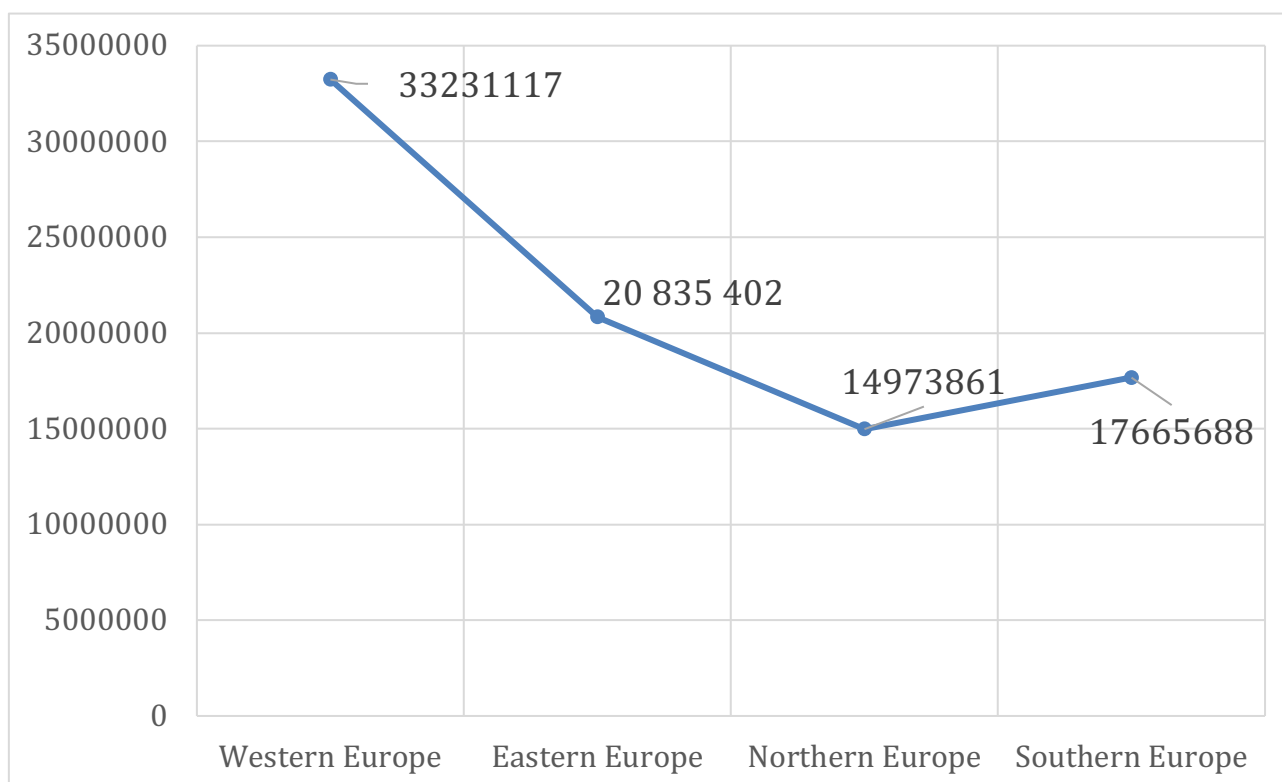
Table 2. Number of registered migrants of both sexes who entered the European Union in mid-2020<sup>37</sup>

Indicator	Region of Europe			
	Western Europe	Eastern Europe	Northern Europe	Southern Europe
Number of registered migrants	33 231 117	20 835 402	14 973 861	17 665 688

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<sup>36</sup> The Global Appeal and Supplementary Appeals // <https://www.unhcr.org/the-global-appeal-and-supplementary-appeals.html> (date of access: 07.05.2021)

<sup>37</sup> Department of Economic and Social Affairs. International Migration 2020 Highlights // URL: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/news/international-migration-2020> (date of access: 07.05.2021)



*Chart 2. Number of registered migrants of both sexes who entered the European Union in mid-2020*

Statistics show that the largest number of registered migrants chose Western Europe as their final destination, with the smallest number of migrants was registered in Northern Europe. Such data are still objective evidence that Western Europe is the most attractive region for migrants, at the same time, Northern Europe, due to its geographical location and climatic factor, is in the last place for migrants as a destination, which, however, does not reduce the number of migrants seeking to get to this region of Europe.

### **Access to health care**

For the European Union, solving the problems of migrants in the current situation became one of the issues that needed to be resolved, but this problem was not among the priorities, because for the bodies of the European Union and the EU Member States, the most urgent problem was the fight against the spread of coronavirus and the provision of the healthcare sector of the states with medicines and medical personnel, as the spreading pandemic exposed the many challenges that doctors and citizens faced. Assistance to migrants in the policy of countering the spread of coronavirus faded into the background, as the European Union sought at the initial stage of the spread of the virus to ensure the issue of establishing minimum order in the field of compliance with the protection of citizens and their treatment, but nevertheless, it must be recognized that in the upcoming days and months, the authorities of the European Union were able to provide assistance to migrants as well. Assessment of the situation with the spread of coronavirus and the medical care provided to migrants have been and remain one of the topical issues, since migrants are deprived of proper medical care and they are not involved in the provision of medical care, as medical workers write about. Bernhard Wenly, Sarah Wenly, Anthony Magnano, and Elizabeth Paul, indicate, “The

younger age of migrants, especially those who arrived recently, could constitute an advantage for the aging European populations. Younger patients have lower rates of severe illness due to COVID-19 and may contribute to herd immunity, which may ultimately be necessary to protect the vulnerable. During the pandemic, the universal inclusion of migrants in health care systems could help to ensure testing, tracking and tracing in the whole population. European societies need to provide both care and information to immigrants. This pandemic is a challenge for the whole population, but the necessary active inclusion of immigrants in the health care systems could also help with the long-term integration of migrants in Europe”.<sup>38</sup> The opinion of doctors is indicative from the point of view of a demographic analysis of the situation in the European Union and assistance to migrants who could become part of the European society in the long term, but migrantophobia in Europe still exists, as well as low levels of tolerance towards migrants.

During the spread of the pandemic throughout the European Union, the World Health Organization adopted a guideline that is advisory in nature. This guideline is intended for use by healthcare authorities to guide the actions of health care providers for refugees and migrants. WHO has recognized that refugees and migrants may have more health risks and vulnerabilities than the general population, and often face particular barriers to accessing healthcare services. This is especially important to ensure that systems for disease surveillance, early warning, response, access and delivery of care, and risk communication are in place. This part of population as a group is also particularly at risk of stigma and discrimination because of the measures that can be taken during an emergency response. Refugees and migrants can live in conditions that make them particularly vulnerable to respiratory infections, including COVID-19. These include situations such as overcrowded living and working conditions, physical and mental stress, and various types of deprivation due to lack of housing, food and clean water. Among the barriers that trigger migrants to contract the virus, the guideline identified lack of access to health services, physical barriers to accessing health facilities, and legal, administrative and financial barriers.

WHO assigns to the Member States of the European Union the following:

1. All national health initiatives should provide all migrants with measures to ensure the protection of the human right to health;
2. Compliance with the disease control measures recommended by WHO should be ensured to refugees and migrants without the introduction of unreasonable test and quarantine measures;
3. Ensure that prevention, diagnostic and infection control measures such as hygiene guidelines for respiratory infections, including influenza and COVID-19, are also accessible to refugees and migrants;

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<sup>38</sup> Wernly, B., Wernly, S., Magnano, A., Paul, E.; “Cardiovascular health care and health literacy among immigrants in Europe: a review of challenges and opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic” // Journal of Public Health (Berl.), 2020

4. Provide information in appropriate languages by translating written materials and identify appropriate communication technologies, as migrant and refugee groups may not have access to scientific online resources.

The recommendations adopted by WHO for the European Union once again became a reminder and confirmation of numerous negative factors that relate to the status of migrants in any country in the world. Among the most negative are the following: stigmatization and discrimination against migrants, lack of information and full access to healthcare due to the status of a migrant who does not have a residence permit or citizenship.

### **Impact of the pandemic on employment**

The pandemic had a significant impact on the employment of migrants which was due to quarantine measures and a general uneasiness in the economies of the member states of the European Union. Migrants who became hostages of the pandemic in the European Union stayed in migration centers or camps for refugees and migrants, which was obligatory as a part of quarantine measures. This factor did not allow migrants to carry out labor activities due to the impossibility of obtaining a work permit. In several European countries, the level of employment of migrants has decreased (e.g., Slovakia), at the same time, it is migrants who have always been that part of the labor relations system who performed low-skilled work. As of 2019, migrants were represented more than citizens of the EU member states in the following areas as workers: cleaners and assistants - 13.3% (3.2% EU citizens); construction workers - 6.5% (3.8% EU citizens); agricultural and fishery workers - 2.5% (0.7% EU citizens).<sup>39</sup> The presented data are data for 2019, but it should be remembered that the trend of employment of migrants in low-skilled labor persists in 2020 adjusted to the impact of the pandemic and the reduction in the number of employees in this area. However, the issues of employment of migrants for the Member States of the European Union were also on the agenda and were resolved positively, for example, in the Republic of Italy, but with a number of significant restrictions on the areas of employment. Most migrants during the pandemic could not find a job, including in low-skilled jobs, but at the same time, many EU member states eased the requirements for migrants with secondary and higher education in health care, since during the first wave of the pandemic, the Healthcare systems of Member States needed additional workforce for nursing and medical positions which made it possible to employ migrants and eliminate the problem of lack of specialists. In the message of the EU Commission it was stipulated, “Member States are encouraged to provide access to the labor market and to assist applicants and recipients of international protection with medical education to recognize their

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<sup>39</sup> Employment of immigrants // [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/statistics-migration-europe\\_en#developmentsin20192018](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/statistics-migration-europe_en#developmentsin20192018) (date of access: 03.05.2021).

professional qualifications or status in order to support the national health care system in view of COVID 19”.<sup>40</sup>

### **Xenophobia**

Throughout 2020, the situation with migrants in the European Union was very difficult and tense, which was caused by protests from both opponents and defenders of the migration policy in Europe. The beginning of 2020 was not yet marked by a large wave of the pandemic, but indeed it was marked by protests of migrants against living conditions in the Moria camp on the Greek island of Lesbos in mid-January, following violence and severe overcrowding (almost 20,000 people were living in facilities originally intended for less than 3000 people). Analysts of the portal InfoMigrants stated that “Throughout the year, there will be more protests by Moria residents, demanding better living conditions and transfers to the Greek mainland. Later that month, Greek locals on the Aegean islands go on strike and stage demonstrations to demand the transfer of migrants away from the islands and a closure of island camps”.<sup>41</sup>

In February 2020, the situation remained tense in the Balkan region, namely between Greece and Turkey. On February 27, 2020 Turkey announced that it would no longer try to prevent refugees and migrants from entering Greece, but at the border, Greek border patrols were trying to stop the refugee-migrant influx. In connection with what was happening in Greece and Greece's attempts to stop migrants from crossing the border, migrant defenders arranged protests and demanded the evacuation of Greek island camps in connection with the coronavirus pandemic in Europe. Only in April 2020 and during 2020 the Greek authorities carried out the resettlement of migrants from overcrowded island camps such as Moria to the mainland. However, even though this measure reduced the number of migrants in the Moria camp, it did not completely solve the issue. In the circumstances of the beginning of the spread of the first wave of coronavirus and the closure of borders, many countries of the European Union managed to restrain the movement of migrants, but the problem of providing assistance to migrants in the context of the spread of the first wave became rather urgent, since migrants were deprived of minimal means of protection. Public organizations and volunteers, in fact, were the only force that helped migrants in that situation by distributing food, and the minimum means of protection against the spread of coronavirus.

The situation in the Greek camp is described fairly well by the following example – “COVID-19 has exacerbated already sub-standard conditions for pregnant women in some island camps. Pregnant women shared stories of “sleeping in overcrowded tents on the ground lined only with thin mats or blankets, returning to these conditions within days of caesarean births” (Margolis, 2020). Disruption of maternal

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<sup>40</sup> Communication from the Commission COVID-19: Guidance on the implementation of relevant EU provisions in the area of asylum and return procedures and on resettlement. Brussels, 16.4.2020. C (2020) 2516 final // <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/guidance-implementation-eu-provisions-asylum-return-procedures-resettlement.pdf>. (date of access: 04.06.2021)

<sup>41</sup> Migration to Europe in 2020: The year in pictures // <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/29181/migration-to-europe-in-2020-the-year-in-pictures> (date of access: 03.05.2021)





## Community assistance

The difficult situation with the spread of the pandemic revealed a negative attitude towards migrants and unfounded protests against migrants, who became hostage to the pandemic and the prejudice of the population of the European Union Member States. However, the pandemic had positive examples of solving the problems of migrants in the period of 2020 for migrants themselves:

- The City of Geneva (Switzerland) has broadened the scope of its social emergency services, i.e. those addressing the needs of people living in precarious situations, so to be able to provide help and assistance to undocumented migrants;
- Portugal has granted all migrants, including asylum seekers, with pending residence permit applications the same rights as citizens, in order to ensure everybody who needs it has access to social security, unemployment allowances and health care;
- Ioannina (Greece) has paid particular attention to the need of raising awareness about prevention and response to COVID-19 among migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in urban settings and in the refugee camp;
- In Barcelona (Spain), residence and work permits have been delivered to immigrants to enable them better facing the health, social and economic crisis. A procedure for the fast regularization of all migrants who had applied for and were pending residence and work authorizations has been launched. More agile procedures to facilitate the recruitment of immigrant health personnel have been put in place;
- Cartagena (Spain) has detected migrants' family units in need with a special focus on undocumented migrants. It has further coordinated the distribution of food and basic hygiene products and provided specific advice in situations of difficulty (payment of rent, loss of work, renewals of demands and extension of deadlines, procedures with the administration; unemployment, non-contributory pensions, praying for the end of Ramadan, business plans, etc.). In addition, job offers are compiled and sent to families that may be interested.<sup>44</sup>

The society is multipolar, protests against migrants are side by side with protests to help migrants, and the above examples show such positive examples, which are sufficient evidence of a tolerant attitude towards migrants who find themselves in a difficult situation due to the pandemic on a par with citizens of European states, but the life of the former is doubly more difficult for the inability to get a job during the pandemic and receive medical care due to the lack of citizenship or a residence permit. Assessing the possibility of integrating migrants into the society of the European Union states through the provision of housing, a team of authors points out the following, "The reception of migrants and refugees should cover emergency reception, as well as long-term settlement, accommodation. While national level policies are principally interested in the former, it is the more local level initiatives that are able to deliver the latter. The

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

local is therefore a space in which the relationship between civil society and governance becomes a vantage point to observe forms of social (and other) capital at work in migrant and refugee incorporation”.<sup>45</sup>

Certain positive examples of assistance to migrants in various parts of the European Union have been identified above, which demonstrates the factor of tolerance and the desire to help migrants who find themselves in difficult life situations due to the pandemic. Aid measures and its sizes differ, but this suggests that during the pandemic, the state and public organizations have been able to mobilize forces to solve the problem of migration in order to prevent both a social explosion among migrants, and to suppress the facts of migrantophobia among citizens.

### Remittances

The period of the pandemic also had a significant impact on the number of migrants' remittances in 2020. The pandemic reduced the ability to work, which negatively affected the economic income of migrants and their ability to send remittances to their relatives. Data analysis will be based on World Bank data as of October 2020 for a number of European Union Member States. The amounts of remittances of migrants from the European Union for the period 2015-2020 are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Amounts of remittances of migrants for the period 2015-2020<sup>46</sup>

Country	Years. Amounts of remittances (in mln US dollars)					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Germany	18 249	19 438	21 699	24 351	23 936	22 024
Italy	9 068	8 781	8 842	9 907	9 577	10 187
France	12 792	13 284	13 799	15 075	15 088	15 038
Greece	1 870	1 800	2 083	2 287	2 666	2 725
Czech Republic	1 376	1 659	2 056	2 786	3 447	3 265
Sweden	1 460	1 633	2 046	2 084	1 917	1 766

The World Bank data for a number of countries in Western, Eastern, Southern, and Northern Europe for 2015-2020, in some cases, have a tendency to an increase in the amount of remittances, as well as their heterogeneous nature in the years preceding 2020. Remittances in certain states in comparison with previous years can be characterized by an increase in amounts (Italy, Greece), as well as a decrease in 2020 (France, Germany, Sweden). The data for Germany is a vivid example of an approximately 8% drop in the amount of remittances compared to the previous year due to the pandemic and the situation with migrants. In general, it should be noted that such a heterogeneous nature of the amounts of remittances of migrants is characterized

<sup>45</sup> Nasar Meer, Claudio Dimaio, Emma Hill, Maria Angeli, Klara Oberg, Henrik Emilsson. “Governing displaced migration in Europe: housing and the role of the «local» // Comparative Migration Studies. 2021. Volume 9. № 2.

<sup>46</sup> Migration and Remittances Data // <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/migrationremittancesdiasporaisues> (date of access: 31.05.2021)

by both a general situation with the pandemic and regional factors that took place in 2020. The beginning of the pandemic was marked by a tough lockdown in all states of the European Union, but by the end of the year, it would seem that the initial situation with the pandemic in Germany turned into a new wave and a lockdown, which of course as a result, led to a decrease in the possibility of carrying out work activities and the ability to carry out remittances. The same situation is typical for the Czech Republic and migrants' remittances, where the number of remittances also decreased. The first severe wave of coronavirus for Italy was difficult for all citizens of the state, but in the context of the analysis of the amount of remittances, this situation makes it possible to show that the amount of remittances increased in 2020, which was primarily associated with measures to regulate the situation with migrants, and giving them the opportunity to carry out labor activities, albeit in a number of areas. The World Bank provides the data for 2020 in full, which permits to fully assess the data on the amounts of remittances by countries, which were selected based on the geographical location of certain regions of the European Union.

### **Conclusion**

Summing up the research carried out in this paragraph, it is necessary to point out that migration flows to the European Union have decreased compared to previous years, which is associated with the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. The spread of the first wave of the pandemic led to the need for the Member States of the European Union to close their borders, which automatically deprived the migrants of the opportunity to return to their country of origin. But this factor allowed the states to reduce all migration flows, regardless of the types of migration. The pandemic in the European Union exposed the problems of the community itself in the context of unresolved problems of migration policy, which worsened in 2020. Numerous refugee camps in the European Union and their unsettledness, combined with the problems of social and medical provision of migrants in the camps, led to social explosions both in the camps themselves, and among the wide public throughout Europe, which demanded a solution to the problems. At the same time, anti-immigrant sentiment grew among the societies as an opposition to the defenders of migrants. All this shows that the European Union should come to a solution to the problem of migration policy and not kick this problem around between each other. Each state of the European Union should fulfill the requirements of international law in terms of ensuring the situation of migrants and undertaking obligations to fulfill the right of migrants to access health care, which migrants were sometimes deprived of during the first wave of the pandemic in the European Union with the burden of responsibility for the health of migrants and for suppression of the spread of the virus falling on the shoulders of public organizations and volunteers. The lack of a common policy and a general solution to migrant issues entails anti-immigrant sentiments in society, since the authorities do not seek to resolve migration issues and inform society about the measures taken in the field of accepting migrants in each state. The economic situation in a number of countries of the European Union and high taxes exacerbate the situation, since citizens of the states are not

ready to accept migrants, believing that they will take jobs, and the income of citizens of states will decrease due to the impossibility of carrying out labor activities in a workplace that the migrant will occupy. This is what happened in Italy when the government was criticized for the measures taken to employ migrants.

The number of migrants in the European Union in 2020 decreased compared to previous years, which is confirmed by Eurostat statistics, but this fact is not an evidence of the lack of the intention of migrants to enter the European Union, which is confirmed by the experts of the High Commissioner for Refugees. This fact can also be confirmed by numerous refugee camps that had to be set up in haste in a number of states. The factor of the decrease in the number of migrants in 2020 can be attributed to the situation caused by the spread of the pandemic, which will subsequently entail new flows of migrants due to the re-opening of borders and the return of the sanitary and epidemiological situation to a normal one. The migration situation in the European Union has also been analyzed in the context of the volume of migrants' remittances in 2020 and in comparison with previous years. The volumes of remittances of migrants in 2020 show that in a number of states they decreased compared to the previous year, in a number of states they had a pronounced upward trend compared to the previous year, which indicates the objective factors of the possibility of working after the recession of the first wave of the pandemic. The analysis of the flow of migrants showed that in 2020 there was a decrease in the flow of migrants, which was caused by the pandemic, but the overall picture of the number of migrants wishing to enter the European Union remains quite high due to the desire to improve their standard of living. It may be suggested that in the period of 2021, the European Union should take more balanced measures to protect the rights of migrants and their medical support in order to eradicate the practice of neglect of the status of migrants and their children.

## **2.2 Analysis of the migration dynamics in the Italian Republic. Governmental measures of migration regulation implemented during the pandemic.**

The COVID-19 pandemic has dealt a terrible blow to the population of the Italian Republic and to the general situation in the country as a whole. It also led to numerous deaths among the population. Italy was one of the first countries to take this terrible blow from the pandemic. The analysis of the data at the start of the pandemic and death rates in the context of the spring 2020 were dreadful. As of March 24, 2020, the number of infected people was almost 70 thousand people, 6.8 thousand people died. For the Italian Republic, as well as for many countries in the world, the fight against the invisible virus has become a priority for survival, and measures of sanitary and epidemiological control during the period of its onset were the only condition for confronting the spreading pandemic. At the State level, decisions related to the closure of borders and restrictions on the crossing of citizens across the borders and within the Republic itself were made quite promptly, which was an important factor in stopping the spread of the virus within the framework of quarantine. Schools, universities, theaters, cinemas, clubs, restaurants and bars, sports facilities, beauty and hairdressing salons, and clothing stores have been closed throughout Italy since March 11, 2020. Numerous industrial enterprises of the Republic were closed, and employees of the companies were transferred to remote work. Only pharmaceutical sphere and grocery stores continued their operation, which allowed citizens to provide themselves with food and medicine in a difficult period of time.

The issue of struggle and survival came to the fore. Emergency assistance to the Republic in order to prevent the consequences of the pandemic was provided also by the Russian Federation, among other countries. Starting from March 22, 2020, 15 aircraft of the Russian Aerospace Forces arrived in Italy with military virologists and specialists of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation in the field of epidemiology. They delivered eight teams to the Apennine Peninsula to fight the coronavirus, which included doctors, virologists, epidemiologists, as well as equipment for diagnostics and disinfection measures. This assistance has become a fairly significant factor in the fight against the pandemic in several regions of Italy that have been most affected by the spread of the virus pandemic.

### **Reduction in the number of immigrants in 2020**

The period of the pandemic affected not only the citizens of the Republic, but also migrants who work in many areas of industry, as well as in other states, ensuring the development of the economic system of the State. To understand the state of migration and migration flows in the Italian Republic for the period of 2020, the statistical data for assessment is provided below.

The total population of the Italian Republic as of mid-2020 was 60.5 million, with the total number of international migrants (men and women) as of mid-2020 being 6,386,998 thousand. The share of international migrants as a percentage of the total population as of mid-2020 was 10.6%. The total number of immigrants (international migration stock) as of mid-2020 was 6.4 million. The data on the total number of

migrants in mid-2020 is large enough to show that Europe is one of the most important destinations for migrants from the Middle East, Africa and Asia. As it is known, Italy is a state through which migrants from African states enter Europe, and the number of migrants wishing to enter Europe through the Italian sea gates is not decreasing. The number of those who arrived in Italy by sea in 2020 was 34,134 people, as of March 3, 2021, the number of migrants was 5,305 people. At the same time, among the types of migrants in Italy, a special place is occupied by labor migration, which has a heterogeneous nature. Most of all, the number of labor migrants falls on those who seek to get from the northern regions of Africa to Europe through Italy. The number of labor migrants received by the Republic in 2015-2018 is reflected in the Table 4.

Table 4. The number of labor migrants who entered the Italian Republic for the period 2015-2018<sup>47</sup>

Indicator	Years			
	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of labour migrants	13.8 thousand people	5.9 thousand people	4.8 thousand people	8.3 thousand people

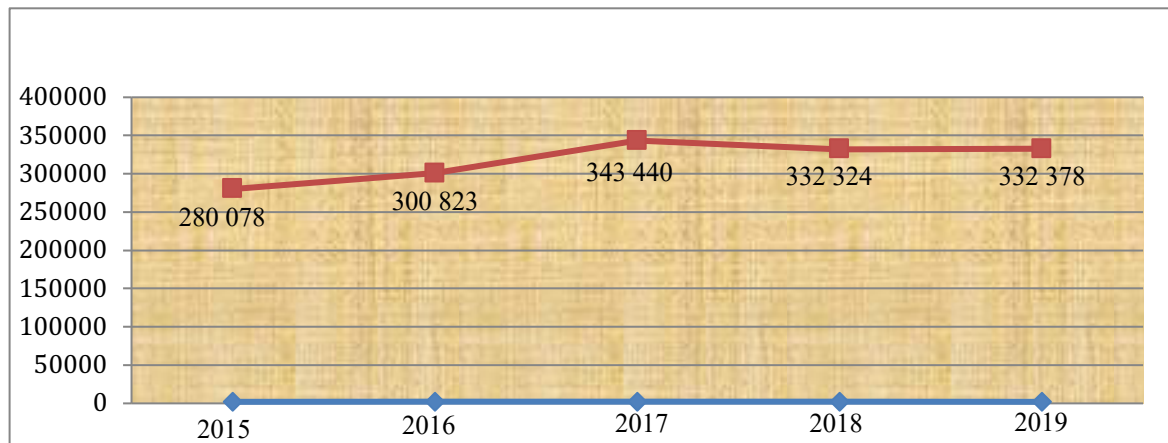
The statistical data presented in Table 4 reveal the situation with labor migrants entering the territory of the Italian Republic and quite fully reflects its heterogeneous nature on the territory of the Republic, since it has neither stable growth, nor a stable decline, in contrast to statistical data on migration (in general) to the Italian Republic. for the period from 2015 to 2019, which are reflected in Table 5.

Table 5. The number of migrants who entered the Italian Republic for the period 2015-2019<sup>48</sup>

Indicator	Years				
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Number of migrants	280,078 persons	300,823 persons	343,440 persons	332,324 persons	332,378 persons

<sup>47</sup> The total number of labor migrants who entered the Italian Republic for the period 2015-2018 // [https://migrationdataportal.org/data?i=inflow\\_work&t=2018&cm49=380](https://migrationdataportal.org/data?i=inflow_work&t=2018&cm49=380) (date of access: 12.04.2021)

<sup>48</sup> Total number of migrants who entered the Italian Republic during the period 2015-2019 // <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tps00176/default/table?lang=en> (date of access: 12.04.2021)



*Chart 3. The number of migrants who entered the Italian Republic for the period 2015-2019*

The time period from 2015 to 2019 also shows that up to 2017 there was an increase in the number of migrants who entered Italy. After 2017, there was a decrease in the number of migrants who entered Italy, but in 2018-2019 the number of migrants remains stable, only slightly increasing. Unfortunately, the general data on migration to Italy in 2020 by Eurostat is not publicly available, therefore, a picture of the number of migrants in 2020 can be drawn only on the basis of data from the Migration Data Portal. According to the official data of the Statistical Service of the Italian Republic, the total number of non-citizens of the European Union who received a residence permit in the Republic in 2020 was 3,615,826 people, of which 1,333,665 were short-term residence permits, and 2,282,161 were long-term ones.<sup>49</sup>

The statistics reveal general data on the number of migrants, which shows certain advantages for those arriving in the Italian Republic in order to change their socio-economic status. The COVID-19 pandemic changed the statistics on the number of migrants who arrived in 2020 due to the introduction of restrictive measures by the Government of the Italian Republic to ensure sanitary and epidemiological measures, which led to a shortage of labor migrants for certain industries.

The beginning of the pandemic was marked by numerous cases of infection and death from COVID-19, which entailed a system of actions by the State and its organs in order to counter the spread of the virus in the country. During 2020, the Council of Ministers adopted decrees aimed at introducing measures to counter the spread of the virus, i.e. creation of a wide system of lockdowns and measures of sanitary and epidemiological provision of the population. The measures that were governed by decrees were updated with the adoption of each new decree during the year. Without giving in this paragraph all the anti-quarantine measures, only a few of them will be indicated, which were applied to the entire population of the Republic. These included (but were not limited to):

<sup>49</sup> Residence permit for non-EU citizens in 2020 in the Italian Republic // <http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?lang=en&SubSessionId=5ecff963-0560-40f2-86e4-a153ded663e3#> (date of access: 14.04.2021)



- constant availability of respiratory protection with self (throughout the whole country). Citizens must wear protective equipment in all enclosed spaces other than private homes, and in all open spaces. Social distance must be observed in all public places and during public events, including sports;
- disinfection of workplaces;
- the activity of the catering service is allowed until 24:00 hours.

### **Impact of the pandemic on employment**

The first wave of the pandemic made it obvious that the adoption of additional measures was necessary in relation to migrants, which ensure the smooth functioning of many spheres and infrastructure of the Republic. First of all, the decisions should have affected industry and agriculture. The agrarian industry in Italy depends, among other things, on the labor of migrants who work in the fields every year. The pandemic raised the issue of the further operation of the agricultural sector and the adoption by the Government of decisions on the labor of migrants in the agricultural sector, which also forced farmers to turn directly to the government to resolve the issue of legalizing migrants because the closure of the borders led to a shortage of migrant labor force.

On May 19, 2020, the Law on Urgent Measures in the Field of Healthcare, Labor and Economic Support, and Social Policy Related to the COVID-19 Emergency Epidemiological Situation was adopted. Article 103 of this law became the basis for regulating the legal status of migrants during the spread of the pandemic but it did not solve all the problems associated with migrants in Italy. Firstly, the law identified only 3 areas in which the situation of migrants can be legalized, these areas included:

- a) agriculture, animal husbandry, fishing and aquaculture and related activities;
- b) helping a person for himself or for his family members suffering from diseases or disabilities that limit their independence;
- c) domestic work supporting family needs.

Secondly, the legalization of migrants is carried out through the implementation of two methods that employers can choose. The first method gives the employer the opportunity to apply for the legalization of an undocumented employee who is already working in one of the above sectors. The second way gives the migrant the opportunity to apply for a temporary permit, which can be converted into a six-month work permit, but at the same time, the migrant must have a work permit that expired after October 31, 2019; the migrant must have previously worked in one of the required sectors; he or she must provide proof of presence in Italy by 8 March 2020.<sup>50</sup>

So, the law regulated the status of illegal migrants, and in this case, the provisions of the law caused justified criticism. In an effort to implement regulatory measures regarding the legal status of migrants on

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<sup>50</sup> Decreto Legge 19 maggio 2020, n.34 Misure urgenti in materia di salute, sostegno al lavoro e all'economia, nonché di politiche sociali, connesse all'emergenza epidemiologica da Covid-19 // [https://www.governo.it/sites/new.governo.it/files/DL\\_20200520.pdf](https://www.governo.it/sites/new.governo.it/files/DL_20200520.pdf) (date of access: 17.04.2021)

the territory of the Republic, the Government approved only a number of areas in which the status of migrants is legalized, which shows only partial regulation of the situation with labor migrants, providing in general only the agricultural sector with workers, which speaks of half measures that are not to solve the problem of migrants during the pandemic, because the agricultural sector cannot accept all incoming migrants as workers. Government measures restrict the access of migrants to work in other spheres and industries, which is a rather negative factor, both for the development of the State's industry and the status of migrants during the pandemic. By implementing such measures in the Republic, the Government legalizes their status and imposes on them a number of duties that will allow them to carry out labor activities in accordance with the requirements of the law. The measures that were regulated in art. 103 of the law mentioned above attracted criticism and opposition from the Italian political party the Five Star Movement, indicating that work in the agricultural sector should have been provided to Italian citizens, not migrants or refugees.

The requirements of the law do not apply to migrants in respect of whom the executive authorities made a decision on expulsion; put a ban on entry into the State; in respect of whom a sentence has been passed; or which are considered a threat to public order or state security

Analyzing the provisions of Art. 103 of the Law, a rather negative factor that was not reflected in the provisions of the article should be mentioned. What is meant here concerns medical care and housing. The provisions of the article provide only measures to legalize the legal status of illegal migrants in a situation of force majeure associated with the spread of the pandemic and the inability to return to the state of origin. Summarizing the above said, it can be confirmed that the measures taken by the Government of the Republic of Italy cannot be fully recognized as aimed at protecting the rights of migrants in the field of ensuring employment in all industries and ensuring the rights of citizens to accommodation and provision of medical care.

Assessing the role of the law, Giovanni Farese highlights the following important points related to its adoption, “It was also meant to deal with dangerous situations such as illegal tent camps in the countryside of Apulia and Calabria where migrants live in dire sanitary conditions in the midst of the coronavirus emergency – the vast majority of farmhands in Southern Italy come from Africa. The law has three goals: supporting the economy; promoting human rights; and improving health conditions and welfare. It was accompanied by a harsh debate within Italian public opinion and marked the first positive cultural shift in migrant policy in many years”.<sup>51</sup> The opinion expressed by the author in his thesis cannot be assessed positively since above there have already been pointed out the shortcomings of the law as one of the government's regulatory measures within the framework of migration policy during the pandemic. Among the negative factors that accompanied migrants during the spread of the pandemic in Italy is the lack of due

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<sup>51</sup> Pádraig Carmody, Gerard McCann, Clodagh Colleran, Ciara O'Halloran. COVID-19 in the Global South: Impacts and Responses. Bristol University Press. (2020).- P. 142.

attention to migrants who were placed in temporary detention centers. A large number of migrants in the centers, the lack of medical supplies, hygiene products - all this accompanied migrants during their stay in the centers, which became the object of harsh public criticism and protests in the form of hunger strikes among migrants in temporary accommodation centers. Stefano Gali, analyzing the situation, writes the following, "And if a decision is made in Barcelona to immediately close the detention centers, Italy seems to be ignoring this recommendation. The detainees stopped eating at the checkpoint of the Palazzo San Gervasio in the province of Potenza. On March 23, 2020, 40 detainees reported that they were on hunger strike, stating that they were worried about their health and fear of contracting the virus and could not contact their families. "There are no social workers. We do not know how long we will stay here and what will happen to us. There are no precautions for us. We are here. Some are even more than six months old". And they claim that some of them cannot stay isolated because they suffer from some mental problems".<sup>52</sup> It can be assumed that such a development of events in relation to migrants was due to two factors: a strong "tsunami" of the pandemic and the impossibility of taking adequate measures in the current situation in Italy; and the consequences of the taken security measures under the Mateo Salvini Law.

The implementation of the migration policy in Italy in relation to migrants was continued in the fall of 2020, when a circular from the Ministry of Labor and Social Development of the Republic of Italy was adopted. A circular from the Ministry of Labor has established a quota of 30,850 people who can enter Italy for seasonal and non-seasonal work. The so-called "Flussi quota" equals to 12,850 people, according to the circular, and consists of the following shares:

- 100 foreign nationals from non-EU countries residing abroad and trained in their countries of origin
- 100 workers of Italian descent on the part of at least one parent up to third degree of direct line of origin living in Venezuela;
- in the sectors of freight transport on behalf of third parties, construction and hotel tourism - 6,000 nationals of countries who have signed or are about to sign special agreements on cooperation in the field of migration.
- 4500 non-seasonal workers from Eastern Europe, Asia, South America, and Africa;
- 1,500 non-seasonal workers, citizens of countries with which agreements on cooperation in the field of migration come into force in 2020.<sup>53</sup>

In addition, the decree provided that within the maximum quota, for reasons of seasonal work in the agriculture, as well as in the tourism and hotel sectors, non-residents of the European Union living abroad are allowed within the share of extra 18,000 people.

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<sup>52</sup> Stefano Gali. Che fine faranno quei migranti rinchiusi nei Cpr e a rischio contagio? // <https://left.it/2020/03/30/che-fine-faranno-quei-migranti-rinchiusi-nei-cpr-e-a-rischio-contagio/>

<sup>53</sup> Decreto del Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri del 7 luglio 2020 «Programmazione transitoria dei flussi d'ingresso dei lavoratori non comunitari nel territorio dello Stato per l'anno 2020». // <https://www.informazionefiscale.it/IMG/pdf/dpcm-del-07072020-decreto-flussi-2020.pdf> (date of access: 20.04.2021)

The provisions of the circular are sufficient evidence of the solution of the issues of admission of migrants in the industry of the Italian Republic. The circular established a total maximum quota of 30,850 people as a transitional framework for the number of workers from non-EU countries who could enter Italy in 2020 for seasonal and non-seasonal work and self-employment reasons. The government has taken effective measures to attract labor migrants within the allocated labor quotas in order to provide migrants with work in the framework of non-seasonal work. The adoption in the 4th quarter of 2020 of such a decree made it possible to provide work for labor migrants from other states, and at the same time, it allowed to ensure the continuous functioning of the industry and infrastructure of the State. However, the adoption of the circular is justifiably again coming under criticism from political parties and movements, which will call for providing citizens of the Republic with work to support them in order to create jobs and generate income for them during the difficult period of the spread of the pandemic.

### **Access to health care**

The list of measures is quite extensive, here only the most important ones from the point of view of ensuring the sanitary and epidemiological well-being of the population have been listed. These measures also extended to migrants, who were also caught by the pandemic in the Republic, but the real situation with ensuring access of migrants to medical services and hygiene products was far from the measures declared by the authorities. During the pandemic, migrants became the least protected category of the population, which could not afford, due to the lack of sufficient financial resources, to provide themselves with medicines and sufficient food, therefore, for migrants, the only way to fight and survive during the pandemic in the Republic was to comply with quarantine measures to ensure not getting infected with the coronavirus and survive.

Assessing the actions of the Republic's executive authorities in relation to migrants during the first wave of the pandemic, Sebastian Carlotti points out the following, "In three months since the outbreak, no measure was adopted to ease, for instance, the access to the National Health Service or to provide other useful instruments to protect migrant communities from the virus. Only at a later stage, the Government conceived a Decree to regularize a small number of undocumented migrants in order to be employed in agriculture and care work. On the other side, the Government agreed to close its harbours to migrant boats rescued outside the Italian SAR (Search and Rescue) zone. The containment of the virus entailed the introduction of general limitations to movement and the recommendation to stay home in order to protect public health. In contrast, no measures have been taken by the Italian Government to support the living conditions of undocumented migrants and refugees who do not have a place they can call home".<sup>54</sup> Salvatore Geraci, Maurizio Marceca, and Silvia Declich analyzed the impact of the pandemic on migrants and noted

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<sup>54</sup> Carlotti S. Migration Policy and Health Insecurity. Italy's response to COVID-19 and the impact of the Security Decree // RIVISTA TRIMESTRALE DI SCIENZA DELL AMMINISTRAZIONE. - 2020.- № 2.- p.5-6, 8.

that, “in March-April 2020, in the first months of the pandemic, the COVID-19 epidemic curve among foreigners indicated a higher risk of hospitalization (and therefore the level of clinical severity). After the end of the lockdown, the percentage of foreigners by the number of total infections increased starting in mid-June and then declined at the end of July”.<sup>55</sup> The two presented opinions sufficiently fully reveal the measures of State regulation of relations with migrants in Italy during the spread of the virus, which primarily affects the decision on the issue of medical support for migrants. In fact, Sebastian Carlotti's opinion is a fairly complete analysis of the actions of the executive authorities in this area, which he criticizes and does so quite reasonably because his position affects two important factors: 1) the health of migrants and ensuring migrants' access to medical care; 2) and as a consequence of the first factor, the provision of quarantine measures to prevent the spread of the virus among the population thanks to the suppression of infection among migrants. The lack of access to medical care for migrants inevitably led to an expansion of the factor of the further spread of the virus.

### **Community assistance**

During the coronavirus pandemic in Italy in 2020, measures to support migrants were formed at two levels: state and interstate, including at the level of international organizations that are part of the UN structure.

UNICEF provided comprehensive assistance to children of migrants who arrived in Italy in 2020. According to coordinator of the UNICEF Refugee and Migrant Response in Italy Anna Riatti, “The pandemic puts these children even further at risk. In Italy, this includes unaccompanied boys and girls, young migrants and refugees as well as families with small children. We support outreach teams who provide vital health screenings, distribute hygiene supplies and share information to vulnerable children and families living in informal settlements. We reach young refugees and migrants with vital health information through U-Report on the Move and Facebook Live sessions. We support remote counselling and psychological support for refugees and migrants, over the phone or online. This support extends to guardians and foster care families who need support and stress management. This crisis also exacerbates past traumas: some young migrants and refugees experience isolation and frustration, some face episodes of discrimination or lack information, with girls at risk of increased partner violence, and limited access to services”.<sup>56</sup> Anna Riatti's quote contains quite important provisions that characterize the situation with migrants in Italy, in particular with the children of migrants because they do not have access to information and face discrimination. Discrimination is an integral "companion" of migration flows since society, when faced with migrants, sees migrants as people who encroach on their usual way of life, work and differ from them in the

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<sup>55</sup> L'impatto della pandemia sulle popolazioni migranti // <https://www.epicentro.iss.it/migranti/dossier-statistico-immigrazione-2020-pandemia> (date of access: 15.04.2021)

<sup>56</sup> Anna Riatti. COVID-19 support for refugee and migrant children in Italy // <https://blogs.unicef.org/blog/covid-19-support-refugee-migrant-children-italy/> (date of access: 15.04.2021)

level of education, upbringing, and culture. As it can be seen, according to the coordinator, discrimination accompanies minors, as well. Migrants often join the ranks of the homeless. Alberto Barbieri writes, "Migrants and refugees are particularly vulnerable to the effects of CoViD-19 and are overrepresented among the homeless population in Italy and Europe. An active screening and surveillance program for the homeless is essential in large urban centers, as well as in informal settlements overcrowded with migrants and refugees in rural southern Italy (for example, Piana di Gioia Tauro in Calabria and the Capitanata area in Puglia) where hygiene and living conditions are very bad".<sup>57</sup> Representatives of the World Health Organization Hans Henri Paul Kluge, Zsuzsanna Jakab, Jozef Bartovic, Veronika D'Anna, and Santino Severoni also pointed out the following, "refugees and migrants are potentially at increased risk of contracting diseases, including COVID-19, because they typically live in overcrowded conditions without access to basic sanitation. They are over-represented among the homeless population in most member states - a growing trend in EU-15 and border and transit countries. Furthermore, international migrant workers and refugees can be affected by income loss, health-care insecurity, and the ramifications that come with postponement of decisions on their legal status or reduction of employment, legal, and administrative services".<sup>58</sup> The arguments that were presented in the opinions of the authors are another confirmation of the typical situation related to the realization of the rights of migrants to minimum sanitary requirements and medical care, but during the COVID pandemic, this issue has acquired particular relevance, which in 2020 was faced with the State's protection of the rights of citizens of the Italian Republic in the first place and the provision of medical assistance to migrants in the second place. In 2020, in the Republic of Italy, it was public organizations, volunteers, and the church that provided the largest volume of assistance to migrants, as opposed to the part of society that was against migrants and expressed xenophobia towards migrants.

### **Xenophobia**

Despite the acts adopted by the international community, a decrease in the level of tolerant attitude towards migrants in Italy has not been observed. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in Italy was marked by anti-migrant sentiments in society, including against Chinese citizens, but the issue of attitudes towards migrants in Italy has historical roots, which are associated with the acceptance of migrants from Africa to Sicily. The issue of attitudes towards migrants during the pandemic in 2020 has become a rather urgent problem. However, at the same time, the actions of the authorities in relation to migrants have been criticized due to the rejection of appropriate measures in relation to migrants and the current security policy according to the law of October 4, 2018, No. 113, better known as "Salvini Decree" or "Security Decree". The Salvini Decree aims to create a security system in the Italian Republic with the migration policy under

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<sup>57</sup> Alberto Barbieri. CoViD-19 in Italy: homeless population needs protection // *Recenti Progressi in Medicina*. - 2020.- № 5.- p.1-2.

<sup>58</sup> Hans Henri P. Kluge, Zsuzsanna Jakab, Jozef Bartovic, Veronika D'Anna, Santino Severoni. Refugee and migrant health in the COVID-19 response // [www.thelancet.com](http://www.thelancet.com). -2020. - Vol 395. April 18.

the decree aiming to limit the access of asylum seekers to the reception system and the provision of public services to migrants.

### Remittances

The period of the pandemic significantly reduced the ability of migrants to work and make remittances, which negatively affected the financial situation of migrants in the Republic of Italy and the ability to provide assistance to their families in the countries of origin. The statistical data on remittances of migrants from the Italian Republic in 2020 can be retrieved based on the statistics of the World Bank as of October 2020 in comparison with the period from 2015 to 2019 in Table 6.

Table 6. Amounts of remittances of migrants for the period 2015-2020.<sup>59</sup>

Country	Years. Amounts (in mln US dollars)					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Italy	9 068	8781	8842	9 907	9577	10187

The World Bank statistics on remittances from 2015 to 2020 from the Italian Republic show a heterogeneous nature of flows, which cannot be unequivocally assessed in terms of an increase or decrease in the amount of remittances. What is certain to say is that from 2016 to 2020 there was an increase in the volume of remittances of migrants. In 2020, the volume of transfers increased compared to 2019 despite the pandemic. The first severe wave of coronavirus for Italy was difficult for all citizens of the state, but in the context of the analysis of the amount of remittances, this situation makes it possible to show that the amount of remittances increased in 2020 as a whole, which was primarily due to measures regulating the situation with migrants and giving them the opportunity to work, albeit only in a number of areas.

### Conclusion

Summing up the analysis of the situation related to the migration policy of the Italian Republic during the COVID-19 pandemic, carried out in the paragraph, the following conclusions are needed to be drawn.

The rapid spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Italian Republic endangered the mass infection of both citizens of the Republic and migrants who were present or arrived in the Republic. The counteraction of the executive authorities to the spread of the pandemic was aimed at creating a wide and comprehensive system for ensuring the sanitary and epidemiological well-being of the population by means of quarantine measures. The system of quarantine measures introduced by the Italian government affected the entire population of the Republic, regardless of citizenship. However, ensuring the rights of migrants by providing them with hygiene products and medical care during the quarantine period was not fully guaranteed nor fulfilled, which became the object of criticism of society in the state and interstate organizations. Ensuring

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<sup>59</sup> Migration and Remittances Data // <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/migrationremittancesdiasporaissues> (date of access: 01.06.2021)

the rights of migrants to means of protection, hygiene, and food was taken over by the Catholic Church, public organizations, and volunteers, which made it possible to reduce tension during this period of time, but did not solve all problems with migrants since migrants in temporary accommodation or detention centers in various regions of Italy became hostages of the situation with the pandemic, including the children of migrants. The attitude of society towards migrants in Italy during the pandemic was not unanimous in the context of the provision of medical assistance (respiratory protection, nutrition) and employment. The measures of state regulation to create jobs for migrants in 2020 made it possible to resolve the issues of employment of migrants, but did not resolve all issues, primarily the issues of medical provision and treatment during the pandemic. The Italian Republic, as well as other states, regardless of the region, paid more attention to the citizens of the state in the framework of providing medical care; in relation to migrants, the executive authorities made managerial decisions that ensured measures to regulate the administrative and legal status of migrants and their employment, but only in part employment and legalization of migrant status. Migration flows during the pandemic in 2020 were suspended due to the closure of borders, but at the end of the year, the State took measures aimed at increasing the quota for labor migrants in order to ensure the further development of the economic system of the country. The following quote gives the most complete picture of the status of migrants during the COVID-19 pandemic, “The COVID-19 crisis has thrown into relief the position of migrant workers as “second class citizens,” a colloquialism loosely used to connote segments of a populace who simultaneously belong and do not belong. The strange dichotomy of citizen and non-citizen ignores contributions legal migrants make, such as leadership of corporations and nonprofit organizations, scientific and academic research, and athletics. Despite often possessing burgeoning bank accounts, migrants feel that their statuses within a foreign society are lower by virtue of their nationality, ethnicity, skin color, and other factors. Many experience lower socioeconomic statuses and are subject to poor working conditions...”<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Glenn W. Muschert, Kristen M. Budd, David C. Lane, Jason A. Smith. Social Problems in the Age of COVID-19 Vol 2: Volume 2: Global Perspectives. Bristol University Press, Policy Press. 2020. p.73. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv15d81tx>.



### **2.3 State of migration flows in the Russian Federation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Governmental measures of migration regulation implemented during the pandemic.**

The situation with the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the whole world, and the Russian Federation is no exception. The Russian Federation is a destination country for migrants from the CIS countries, primarily the countries of Central Asia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, and Armenia. These migration flows are existant due to the implementation of labor activities of citizens from these states in the Russian Federation. The pandemic affected, first of all, labor migrants, as they became the most vulnerable category of the migrant population in the Russian Federation during the pandemic. The analysis of the issue put in the title of this paragraph will be carried out in a consistent citation of the opinions of scientists in the periodicals and statistical data provided by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, revealing the situation on migration flows in the Russian Federation in 2020.

The adoption by the executive authorities of regulatory measures during a pandemic is consistent with the natural and legislative regulation of the implementation of issues of ensuring domestic policy in connection with the difficult epidemiological situation. The State, represented by the executive authorities and the President of the Russian Federation, step by step (based on the development of the situation in the country) took measures to restrict movement across state borders and the status of foreign migrant citizens during the pandemic.

Currently, the legal status of foreign citizens is regulated by the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 274 "On temporary measures to regulate the legal status of foreign citizens and stateless persons in the Russian Federation in connection with the threat of the further spread of the new coronavirus infection (COVID-19)" dated April 18, 2020. During 2020, the content of the Decree changed in terms of extending the validity of documents and legal facts related to the presence of foreign citizens on the territory of the Russian Federation. In accordance with the Decree, it was suspended for the period from March 15, 2020 to June 15, 2021 inclusively the duration of:

- the periods of temporary stay, temporary or permanent residence of foreign citizens and stateless persons in the Russian Federation, the periods for which foreign citizens and stateless persons are registered at the place of stay or registered at the place of residence, if such periods expire within the specified period;
- the timing of voluntary departure from the Russian Federation of foreign citizens and stateless persons, in respect of whom a decision has been made to administratively expel from the Russian Federation in the form of a controlled independent departure from the Russian Federation, to refuse to allow entry into the Russian Federation or about the undesirability of stay (residence) in the Russian Federation;
- the validity period of the following documents that expire during the specified period: visa, temporary residence permit, residence permit, migration card with expiring marks, refugee certificate, certificate of consideration of an application for recognition as a refugee in the territory Russian Federation in essence, and certificate of temporary asylum on the territory of the Russian Federation.

Furthermore, in accordance with the Decree, from March 16, 2020 to June 15, 2021:

- foreign citizens and stateless persons who arrived in the Russian Federation in a manner that does not require a visa, have the right to apply for the issuance (renewal) of a patent without taking into account the requirements for the deadline for filing documents for its registration, for the stated purpose of the visit;

- employers and work (services) recipients who have received, in accordance with the established procedure, permission to attract and use foreign workers, subject to the implementation of the established restrictions and other measures aimed at ensuring the sanitary and epidemiological well-being of the population, have the right to apply for the issuance (extension) of a permit for work for a foreign citizen or stateless person who arrived in the Russian Federation in a manner requiring a visa. Such a permit is issued (extended) without taking into account the requirements for the declared purpose of the visit of a foreign citizen or stateless person for any period up to June 15, 2021 inclusive;

- foreign citizens are allowed to leave the Russian Federation to their states of citizenship (without transit through the territory of other foreign states) according to documents that prove their identity and are recognized in the Russian Federation in this capacity, if the validity of such documents has expired after 14 March 2020.<sup>61</sup>

At the same time, the privileges provided for by the Decree do not apply to the obligation of foreign citizens to register at the place of stay. Thus, foreign citizens who arrived in the Russian Federation before and after the "closure of borders" must be registered at the place of stay within the time frame established by law. A similar obligation remains for foreigners also in the event of a change in their place of stay (moving to a new place of actual residence within the territory of the Russian Federation), if such a change occurred after March 15, 2020.

To prevent the spread of coronavirus infection in Russia, the Government and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia have adopted temporary measures to restrict entry through the Russian borders and rules for extending expiring deadlines for documents defining the legal status of foreign citizens and stateless persons on the territory of the Russian Federation. The Government of the Russian Federation adopted Order of the Government of the Russian Federation of March 16, 2020 No. 635-r (restricting entry to the Russian Federation); and Order of the Government of the Russian Federation of March 27, 2020 No. 763-r (restriction of border crossing, i.e. exit-entry through the border for foreigners, with the exception of a number of categories).

In pursuance of the order of the Government of the Russian Federation dated March 16, 2020 No. 635-r, on April 20, 2020, the Letter of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia No. 1/2964 dated March 19, 2020 "On additional measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus infection (2019-nCoV)" was signed,

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<sup>61</sup> Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 274 of 18.04.2020 (revised from 02.01.2021) "On temporary measures to regulate the legal status of foreign citizens and stateless persons in the Russian Federation in connection with the threat of the further spread of a new coronavirus infection (COVID-19)" // Ofitsialnyi internet-portal pravovoy informatsii // <http://www.pravo.gov.ru> (date of access: 15.03.2021)

according to which the following measures of state regulation in the field of migration were taken in relation to migrants:

1. upon application by foreign citizens who arrived in the Russian Federation on the basis of visas, the validity of existing visas was extended up to 90 days, regardless of the purpose of entry into the Russian Federation, and in the event of their expiration, a decision was made to extend the period of temporary stay of foreign citizens until 90 days upon a reasoned application (in any form) for the extension of the period of temporary stay with the subsequent issuance of transit visas to leave the Russian Federation;

2. upon application by foreign citizens who arrived in the Russian Federation in a manner that does not require a visa, including in accordance with international treaties of the Russian Federation on short-term visa-free travel for certain categories of citizens, as well as in case of expiry of the permitted period of temporary stay, corresponding decisions can be made on extending the period of temporary stay up to 90 days on the basis of a reasoned application (in any form) to extend the period of temporary stay, if necessary, with the subsequent issuance of transit visas for leaving the Russian Federation;

3. if migrants did not have migration cards, the duplicates of them were issued, and migration registration was also carried out. It was also underlined that migration registration authorities should refrain from applying administrative measures against foreign citizens related to administrative expulsion, deportation, or readmission for violation of migration legislation;

4. upon identification of foreign citizens who are on the territory of the Russian Federation in violation of the established order of stay, explanatory work was carried out with them about the need to regulate their legal status in the Russian Federation;

5. the acceptance of documents, registration and issuance of permits for the attraction and use of foreign workers and work permits for foreign citizens were continued, as well as the acceptance of applications for the grant of a patent without the need to travel outside the Russian Federation and, consequently, to bring to administrative responsibility under Article 18.20 of the Code of Administrative Offenses of the Russian Federation;

6. in the event of the expiry of the validity period of the temporary residence permit or residence permit, a decision was made to extend the period of temporary stay up to 90 days on the basis of a reasoned application (in any form) to extend the period of temporary stay.<sup>62</sup>

The list of measures taken on the basis of legal acts of the President of the Russian Federation, the Government, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation is quite extensive and it was aimed at creating a broad system for protecting the rights of migrants, which they possess in accordance with the law on the legal status of foreign citizens. The measures that are provided for in the provisions of acts of executive authorities are a legal basis for removing responsibility from migrants for non-compliance with

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<sup>62</sup> Letter of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia No. 1/2964 dated 03.19.2020 "On additional measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus infection (2019-nCoV)" // SPS «KonsultantPlyus»

legislation during the pandemic, which became a force majeure circumstance, and for providing them with certain opportunities on the basis of acts.

The COVID-19 pandemic has radically changed the situation in the Russian Federation, including in relation to migrants, and especially in relation to labor migrants. It is labor migrants that are the most numerous group of migrants in the list of types of migration in the Russian Federation. The situation with the pandemic showed quite negative phenomena associated with the information agenda and the awareness of society and the State about the virus, which in general also had a negative impact on the situation around labor migrants.

At the height of the pandemic, Natalya Aleksandrovna Voronina and Vladimir Aleksandrovich Volokh pointed out the following, “Migrants are deprived of any support from the State. Against this background, a real threat to security arises - there is an increase in the activity of terrorist recruiters. Migrants find it difficult to access medical care, although, as noted, doctors in Russia do not deny treatment to migrants with COVID-19. Currently, there has been a significant reduction in the number of jobs, which in the context of a slight decrease in the total number of labor migrants in the Russian Federation leads to a significant increase in unemployment among them. Thus, they are forced to look for any job available. The consequence of this situation is a sharp increase in shadow employment with wage dumping. Unemployment and illegal work, as a rule, contribute to the growth of offenses, pose a threat to public safety, entail the development of unsanitary conditions in everyday life and other negative manifestations in public life, which is extremely undesirable in the context of a pandemic”.<sup>63</sup> Such assessments of the situation at the height of the first wave of the pandemic are characterized by alarmist sentiments because the general situation in society was quite tense and it was caused by the whipping up hysteria regarding the pandemic as a whole and the further social and economic development of the State and society after the restrictions were lifted. In addition, the State, represented by its medical and sanitary-epidemiological services, did not have a clear picture of the fight against the virus, let alone possible treatment. One thing is certain: the pandemic has led to an increase in unemployment, both among Russian citizens and among migrants. The increase in crime among migrants and the increase in terrorist activity were not confirmed; during this period of time since law enforcement agencies carried out operational-search measures aimed at ensuring security.

### **Reduction in the number of immigrants in 2020**

In the context of the topic of the work, the substantial amount of attention should be given to the data on the flows of migrants in the Russian Federation in 2020 during the pandemic, which can be reflected in this paragraph through the statistical data of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation presented in Table 7.

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<sup>63</sup> Voronina N.A., Volokh V.A. Migration policy in a new reality: way out of the pandemic // VLAST.- 2020.- № 4.-26-32.- p. 28.

Table 7. Statistical data on the migration situation in the federal districts of the Russian Federation in 2020

Federal Districts (FDs)	Issued Invitations	Issued Visas	Migration registration				
			by purpose of entry				
			Tourism	Study	Work	Personal	Other
Central FD	78899	88611	123062	83606	1044009	402125	78738
Northwestern FD	13528	28579	128516	54783	685403	124297	83191
Southern FD	7212	20572	39250	24317	114742	113366	27337
North Caucasian FD	1845	7680	3196	6013	19649	17090	8831
Volga FD	14609	39036	9105	60168	146310	84046	37787
Ural FD	5069	8297	4828	10926	114156	55221	21126
Siberian FD	5589	11787	51478	21897	129713	61695	21769
Far Eastern FD	9332	19924	25003	3346	104845	11993	16546

The data presented in Table 7 quite fully disclose the number of persons registered in the Russian Federation in 2020. The most important for the research are the data on the number of labor migrants which was reflected in the table per the federal districts of Russia. The largest number of labor migrants in 2020 was registered in the Central, Northwestern, and Volga Federal Districts. The largest number of labor migrants in the three federal districts is due to the concentration of financial resources, civil and industrial facilities under construction, presence factors of federal cities (Moscow and Saint Petersburg), developed urban infrastructure, and the ability to earn much more money than in the state of origin or in other federal districts of Russia. All these factors attract labor migrants to these cities and, in general, to the regions that are part of the named federal districts.

At the beginning of the study on migration flows in the Russian Federation in 2020, it was mentioned that the largest number of labor migrants in the Russian Federation come from the countries of the former USSR, mainly from the countries of Central Asia. Table 8 reflects statistical data on migrants from the CIS countries who arrived and were registered in Russia in 2020 with purpose of studies and work.

Table 8. Statistical data on the migration situation in the Russian Federation in 2020 with distribution by CIS countries

<b>Countries</b>	<b>Studies</b>	<b>Work</b>	<b>Personal</b>
Republic of Azerbaijan	4554	60818	54906
Republic of Armenia	4004	69024	32976
Republic of Belarus	5335	85590	86226
Republic of Kazakhstan	30494	60461	101994
Kyrgyz Republic	190312	190312	34750
Republic of Moldova	3366	49378	43431
Republic of Tajikistan	15127	507225	106324
Republic of Uzbekistan	18430	1011028	104495
Ukranian Republic	10115	148063	204269
Turkmenia	29293	3906	3632

So, the presented statistical data is a fairly complete evidence of the migration situation in Russia in 2020 during the pandemic. Three goals of migrants and, accordingly, the migration registration of citizens from the CIS republics have been identified, which are of the highest priority both directly for migrants and for the goal of state registration within the framework of state migration policy. Labor migration is the most common type of migration in the world and within the framework of Russia's migration policy. Every year the number of labor migrants in Russia is increasing, in 2020, there was a decline in the migration flow, since because of the pandemic, the number of migrants decreased.

Statistical data allow to point out five CIS countries with the largest number of registered labor migrants who seek to work in the Russian Federation. These include (in descending order):

1. Republic of Uzbekistan - 1,011,028 people;
2. Republic of Tajikistan - 507,225 people;
3. Kyrgyz Republic - 190,312 people;
4. Ukrainian Republic - 148,063 people;
5. Republic of Belarus - 85,590 people.

Traditionally, for many years, labor migrants from Central Asian countries have made up the majority among labor migrants. In 2020, labor migrants from the listed countries also made up the majority. Labor migrants from Central Asian countries come to the Russian Federation in order to earn money since the level of remuneration is much higher than the one they can rely on in the country of origin but in general their work is estimated quite low. In addition, labor migrants carry out labor activities in positions that are considered low-paid, not prestigious, and labor-intensive in terms of the cost of physical resources by citizens of the Russian Federation. Therefore, citizens from Central Asian countries undertake those types of work, such as, for example, work at construction sites, cleaning, auxiliary workers, including in the food industry, etc. Migration flows of citizens of Central Asia to Russia quite fully reveal the conditions for the formation of labor migration patterns during the pandemic, namely the main countries of origin of labor

migrants. All this is due, among other things, to the well-established social ties between the republics and citizens of the former USSR, who know (albeit often not very well (to a greater extent this applies to young people)) the Russian language, and share common cultural aspects that connected peoples within the former USSR. Labor migrants from Belarus and Ukraine are among the States that also form the mass of labor migrants in the Russian Federation. Despite the rather complicated political relations between the Russian Federation and Ukraine, the number of labor migrants from Ukraine exceeds the number of migrants from Belarus, which is part of a Union State with the Russian Federation.

In order to best reflect the migration flows of labor migrants in the Russian Federation during the pandemic, a comparison is made within the time framework of 2018-2020, which is reflected in Table 9.

Table 9. Statistical data on the migration situation for labor migrants in the Russian Federation for the period from 2018 to 2020 with distribution by CIS countries

Countries	Labor Migration		
	2018	2019	2020
Republic of Azerbaijan	186 167	194 929	60 818
Republic of Armenia	207 945	210 460	69 024
Republic of Belarus	134 690	163 410	85 590
Republic of Kazakhstan	111 464	136 208	60 461
Kyrgyz Republic	351 959	453 702	190 312
Republic of Moldova	177 468	174 150	49 378
Republic of Tajikistan	1 018 497	1 179 423	507 225
Republic of Uzbekistan	2 007 407	2 107 302	1 011 028
Ukrainian Republic	460 662	435 528	148 063
Turkmenia	2 779	4 813	3 906
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 659 038</b>	<b>5 059 925</b>	<b>2 185 805</b>

The presented data also make it possible to indicate quite fully that during the period between 2018 and 2019 there was an increase in the number of labor migrants from the CIS states, primarily from the states of Central Asia, followed by more than a two-fold decrease in 2020.

These mentioned-above States include:

1. Republic of Uzbekistan - 2,107,302 people. in 2019;
2. Republic of Tajikistan - 1,179,423 people. in 2019;
3. Republic of Kyrgyzstan - 453 702 people. in 2019;
4. Republic of Ukraine - 435,528 people. in 2019.

Ekaterina Mikhaylovna Shcherbakova, analyzing the situation of migrants in 2020, writes the following, “In 2020, after the introduction of restrictive measures in connection with the pandemic of the coronavirus infection COVID-19, the volume of migration movements has significantly decreased. According to data for the period between January and June 2020, 272.6 thousand people arrived in Russia from other countries for permanent residence or long-term stay, which is 16% less compared to the same

period last year (323.6 thousand people), but, at the same time, roughly corresponds to the values of the same period in 2018 (272.1 thousand people). According to operational data for January-July 2020, the largest decrease in the number of arrivals occurred in April (-45%). In July, there was a slight increase (+2%) compared to the same month in 2019. Among those registered at the place of stay in January-June 2020, immigrants from Uzbekistan (1,786 thousand people, or 35% of total) and Tajikistan (976 thousand people, or 19%) prevailed. There were noticeably fewer immigrants registered at the place of stay from Ukraine (397 thousand people), from Kyrgyzstan (372 thousand people), Kazakhstan (197 thousand people), Armenia and Azerbaijan (180 thousand people, each), China (150 thousand people), Belarus (151 thousand people) and Moldova (112 thousand people). The number of immigrants from other countries registered at the place of stay did not reach 40 thousand people”.<sup>64</sup>

So, the general data for the period between 2018 and 2019 are evidence of an increase in the number of labor migrants from the CIS countries, mainly from the countries of Central Asia. The pandemic of 2020, which led to the closure of borders with the CIS countries, led to a decrease in the flow of labor migrants, which had a negative impact on the subjects of migration relations - both on the State and directly on migrants. Labor migrants were deprived of the opportunity to work and make financial transfers to their relatives (remittances), finding themselves on the brink of survival due to the difficult situation because of the inability to obtain labor income, and the potential for contracting the virus.

### **Impact of the pandemic on employment**

After having analyzed the overall migration statistics, it is also necessary to touch upon the issue of employment of labor migrants from the beginning of the pandemic to the end of 2020. The issue of employment of labor migrants since the beginning of the pandemic is quite relevant, as well as the similar issue with the employment of citizens Russian Federation. The beginning of the pandemic was characterized not only by the adoption of strict sanitary and epidemiological measures, which generally led to a long-term quarantine, but also by a slowdown in economic growth in many sectors of the economy, which generally led to a recession and the impossibility of fulfilling obligations by companies during the pandemic, and, consequently, all of the above led to the reduction and dismissal of labor migrants due to the difficult situation. In this regard, it is desirable to cite the opinions of scientists who rather critically assess the past situation with the employment of migrants during the pandemic. Analyzing the situation, Vladimir Aleksandrovich Volokh writes, “Migrants were among the first to join the ranks of the unemployed. This is due to both the social crisis and unresolved legal issues. Researchers note the accumulation of a large number of migrants in Moscow and other large cities. At the same time, employers in the southern regions

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<sup>64</sup> Shcherbakova E.M. Migration in Russia, results of the first half of 2020 // Demoscop Weekly. 2020. No. 871-872, <http://demoscope.ru/weekly/2020/0871/barom01.php> (date of access: 25.03.2021)



declare a shortage of workers in agriculture”.<sup>65</sup> Sergey Vasilievich Ryazantsev, assessing the situation, also writes, “The COVID-19 pandemic has transformed the migration situation and revealed gaps in the migration policy of the countries of Central Asia and Russia. Travel restrictions and border closures have highlighted the vulnerability of stranded migrants exposed to unsanitary conditions in crowded airports and checkpoints. Hosting countries should arrange online applications for migrant workers who lost their jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic and would allow them to travel to regions where there is not enough labor to maintain economic stability”.<sup>66</sup> The data of the portal “Kommersant” says the following, “After the restoration of work of almost all types of business in Russia, most migrants returned to their jobs or found new ones. In some industries, there is even a shortage of workers. This is typical for those spheres of employment where hard physical labor is needed, stressed the President of the Federation of Migrants of Russia Vadim Kozhenov, “We have about 5 thousand vacancies hanging on the site. We cannot find workers there yet because we do not see any activity on their part”.<sup>67</sup> Such opinions about the development of the situation based on the data of correspondents are another evidence of the negative trend associated with the status and opinions of labor migrants about the possibility of engaging in labor activity. It is also a factor of mistakes made by the State that could change the situation with the employment of migrants. Anzhela Nikolayevna Dyachenko, assessing the mistakes of the authorities, writes the following, “Also during the pandemic, the Main Directorate for Migration Issues of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia announced that they would not deport foreign citizens and annul their documents. However, due to the legal illiteracy of migrants, the measures taken by the State did not fully show their effectiveness - many labor migrants still continued to pay for the patent because they were afraid to be “expelled” from Russia after the end of the pandemic and the opening of the borders due to non-payment of the patent”.<sup>68</sup>

### **Access to health care**

The period of the pandemic showed the vulnerability of migrants to the spread of the virus and their inability to receive medical assistance in full. Analysts recorded that despite the greater concentration of migrants in one place, they were more disciplined in terms of compliance with quarantine measures. However, this factor does not allow to avoid infection since many migrants were at risk. Measures to regulate the legal status of migrants did not provide for the solution of issues of medical support, but nevertheless, the legal status of migrants allowed them to use medical services as labor migrants, who have

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<sup>65</sup> Voronina N.A., Volokh V.A. Migration policy in a new reality: way out of the pandemic // VLAST.- 2020.- № 4.-26-32.- p. 28.

<sup>66</sup> Ryazantsev S.V., Vazirov Z.K., Garibova F.M. «Stranded on the Borders» between Russia and the Homeland: Migrants from Central Asia Countries during the COVID-19 Pandemic // Scientific review. Series 1. Economics and law. 2020. No. 3 (COVID-19 and mobility).- P.54-55.

<sup>67</sup> “The pandemic destroyed stereotypes about migrants” // Kommersant, 08.07.2020 <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/4407869> (date of access: 18.03.2021)

<sup>68</sup> Dyachenko A.N. Migration situation in Russia during the COVID-19 pandemic (on the example of labor migration) // Vestnik YURGTU (NPI).- 2020. - № 5.- p.69-70.

also been eligible for social contributions. However, this issue remained open during 2020. In 2020, certain steps were proposed to form a complex of social, medical (including treatment of all diseases on the basis of insurance available to foreign workers) and economic measures that would allow those wishing to return home and prevent the spread of the epidemic among those remaining in Russia.<sup>69</sup> According to the authorities, medical assistance to migrants is duly provided but there is no clear data on the full implementation of the process of providing medical care. In fact, migrants can count only on minimal assistance, but the issue of medical assistance to migrants from the state has not been fully resolved at the legislative level. While assessing the medical provision of migrants, the quote by Evgenyi Aleksandrovich Varshaver can be used, “Mass situations of hunger and homelessness, as well as extremely high morbidity with a severe course of the disease requiring hospitalization, apparently did not happen among them [migrants]”.<sup>70</sup>

### **Community assistance**

Despite the measures taken by the State and mistakes made during the development of the pandemic, it should be noted that the pandemic showed many aspects of the attitude towards the flows of labor migrants in the Russian Federation.

The aspect related to the attitude towards migrants was highlighted in the context of "forecasts" about the growth of crime among labor migrants during the pandemic but this is only one side of the coin and this side, accordingly, represents the attitude of society towards migrants, which can be characterized as a negative factor. The positive factor of attitudes towards the problems of labor migrants during the pandemic can be characterized from the standpoint of the actions of citizens and society within the framework of rendering assistance to labor migrants. Sources of assistance to labor migrants were national communities, ethnic communities, the representative offices of the Ministries of Labor of CIS Member States in Russia, citizens of CIS Member States who collected money and necessary aliments to be handed over to fellow citizens in Russia, and also ordinary citizens of the Russian Federation. For example, in Moscow, assistance to labor migrants was organized within the framework of the Sakhovat center, specially created to provide assistance during a pandemic. Among the representatives of the society of the Russian Federation, not only sympathetic citizens can be included, but also representatives of business. Assistance to labor migrants was provided directly by the business community of the Russian Federation and business immigrants from CIS Member States who are currently citizens of Russia. Assistance to labor migrants has become a significant factor in their ability to survive the pandemic in the Russian Federation because the pandemic entailed for them the inability to return to their countries of origin and the inability to carry out labor activities.

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<sup>69</sup> “Pandemic against aliens” // Vedomosti, 27.04.2021 // <https://www.vedomosti.ru/opinion/articles/2020/04/27/829122-pandemiya-chuzhiih> (date of access: 28.05.2021)

<sup>70</sup> Rocheva A.L., Varshaver E.A., Ivanova N.S. (2020) Vulnerable Groups in Disasters: Solidarity and Trust in Government as the Basis for Migrant Strategies in Russia During the COVID-19 Pandemic. Monitoring of Public Opinion: Economic and Social Changes. No. 6. P.502. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14515/monitoring.2020.6.1714>

## **Xenophobia**

The pandemic exacerbated the problems of society and migrants, and above all the attitude towards migrants because the reduction of jobs during the pandemic put the economy at risk. Russian citizens who have lost their jobs cannot find a low-paid job since spheres with low pay have been usurped by the diasporas which inevitably entails a negative attitude towards migrants. However, experts' assessments of xenophobia towards migrants differ but if evaluated as a whole, it was rather moderate in comparison with the European Union because many mass events were banned, and society was able to express all the negativity in the digital space, i.e., in social networks or on the Internet. Nevertheless, assessing fairly objectively the situation with the manifestation of xenophobia, it is necessary to draw a parallel to the data that have been already indicated. In the second half of the year 2020, a number of sectors of the economy experienced a shortage of worker, which could become an opportunity for employment of Russian citizens and migrants.

The Moscow Bureau for Human Rights, in its report "Manifestations of Aggressive Xenophobia and Radical Nationalism in Russia in January-October 2020", indicated that no significant public or protest actions of a radical nationalist character were observed in ten months of 2020. The author of the report, Alexander Brod, although he agrees that statistics and opinion polls do not record a sharp surge in incidents motivated by ethnic hatred, characterizes the situation as "an alarming calm". He draws attention to the fact that socio-economic problems provoke a search for the "guilty" ones, and often this is the migrants and representatives of national minorities who become them.<sup>71</sup>

## **Migrant crime**

A fairly widespread informational message at the beginning of the pandemic was the topic of the growth of crime among labor migrants in Russia, which once again confirmed the fact of xenophobia and migrantophobia. At the same time, this topic was voiced quite often by many people, including government officials. On June 9, 2020, Deputy Chairman of the Security Council of the Russian Federation Dmitry Medvedev pointed out the following, "It is not excluded that crime will increase among migrants who have lost their jobs due to the coronavirus pandemic and the economic crisis caused by it, and nevertheless, decided or were forced to stay in Russia. Due to the restrictions introduced by almost all countries, they [migrants] cannot return to their homeland, and this can significantly aggravate the crime situation, lead to an increase in the number of crimes in this area".<sup>72</sup> Evgenyi Aleksandrovich Varshaver expressing his expert opinion on allegedly "the growth of crime among migrants", wrote the following, "This forecast was beneficial both to nationalist-minded commentators and to those who advocated organizing assistance to

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<sup>71</sup> "COVID has reduced the level of conflicts. Moscow bureau for human rights publishes report on xenophobia in 2020" // Kommersant, 10.11.2020 // <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/4565509> (date of access: 24.05.2021)

<sup>72</sup> "Medvedev warns of risks of rising crime among migrants who have lost their jobs" // TASS, 09.06.2020, <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/8687177> (date of access: 17.03.2021)

migrants. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, as of May 20, 2020, compared to April 2019, the number of “criminal acts committed by foreigners [decreased] by 9.6%, including murders - by 14.3%, mugging - by 7,8%, robberies - by 28.6%, thefts - by 5.9%”. It can be assumed that the decrease in the number of crimes is associated with a decrease in the number of movements and interactions during quarantine, and in order to understand the real impact of quarantine on the crime rate, it can be reasonably argued that “outbreaks of migrant crime” and, in particular, the growth of property crimes, did not happen, contrary to some forecasts”.<sup>73</sup>

The informational reason that served as a factor of negative attitude towards migrants in the context of the possible involvement of migrants in the growth of crime, can also be refuted on the basis of analytical and statistical data of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation. According to the analytical data of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, for the period from January to September 2020, the number of crimes committed by foreign citizens and stateless persons on the territory of Russia decreased by 2.1%, and by 4.9% - in relation to them; for the period from January to September 2019, 27.3 thousand crimes were committed by foreign citizens and stateless persons on the territory of the Russian Federation, which is 10.2% less than in January-September 2018. The general characteristics of the crimes committed by migrants from the CIS Member States for the last 3 years is as follows: migrant citizens from the CIS Member States committed 30,835 crimes in 2020 (-0.6%); in 2019 - 31010 (-9.7%); in 2018 - 34,323 (-5.3%).<sup>74</sup> The statistics of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation are sufficient evidence of false beliefs caused by the hyperbolized idea of an increase in the number of migrant crimes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Such an exaggeration of the situation with the "growth" of crime among migrants is caused, first of all, by the assessment of the situation associated with the closure of borders, the impossibility of carrying out labor activities and the impossibility of returning to the state of origin. This factor, as it can be seen, did not acquire a negative trend. On the contrary, there was a decrease in the growth of crime among migrants, even though insignificant, within 0.6% in relation to the number of crimes committed in 2019. In general, we can characterize the quantitative characteristics of crime among migrants in 2020, which is at the level of 2019. The analytical and statistical data of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation serve as vivid evidence that refutes the negative forecasts put forward during the pandemic on the crime situation with migrants. The decrease in the crime rate among migrants can be characterized from the point of view of the use of the State's authority to implement sanitary and epidemiological measures, as well as, compliance by labor migrants on an equal basis with citizens of the Russian Federation with quarantine measures.

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<sup>73</sup> E.A. Varshaver. The situation of foreign labor migrants in Russia during the coronavirus pandemic // Monitoring ekonomicheskoy situatsii v Rossii. Tendentsii i vyzovy sotsialno-ekonomicheskogo razvitiya.- 2020 - № 20(122).- p.8.

<sup>74</sup> The state of crimes. Crimes related to foreign citizens and stateless persons // Ministerstvo Vnutrennikh Del Rossiyskoy Federatsii, <https://мвд.рф/folder/101762> (date of access: 17.03.2021)

## Remittances

Assessing the impact of the pandemic on migrant flows in 2020 in the Russian Federation, it is necessary to dwell in a little more detail on the remittances of labor migrants during this period of time. The fall of the economy, the loss of jobs by migrants, all these factors have had a severe impact on the possibility of sending remittances. As per Olga Sherunkova, “According to the Central Bank of the Russian Federation, the market for cross-border transfers in Russia decreased by 3.8% in 2020, to \$ 40.1 billion. Many labor migrants were not able to get to the Russian Federation due to the closure of borders against the background of the pandemic, and this fact influenced heavily the results. The lowest volume of transfers was in the second quarter of 2020, when the hard lockdown began - \$8.7 billion, in the remaining quarters the volume of transfers fluctuated between \$10.2 and \$10.8 billion. In 2016, the volume of transfers amounted to \$35.9 billion with transfers varying depending on the final destination country. If the volume of transfers to CIS countries in 2020 fell by 14.4%, to \$11.0 billion, then to non-CIS countries, it increased by 0.9%, to \$ 29.1 billion. The main bulk of money transfers to CIS countries accounted for Uzbekistan (\$4.4 billion), Tajikistan (\$1.7 billion) and Kyrgyzstan (\$1.7 billion)”.<sup>75</sup> The increase in the volume of remittances in the third and the fourth quarters of 2020 from Russia was due to a partial economic recovery, the realization of the possibility of transferring (deferred demand), the seasonal nature of work in a number of industries, and the onset of Muslim holidays in late July - early August, which also determines the increase in money transfers to the CIS countries. The growth in the number of remittances was also influenced by the demand for supply of labor resources. Closed borders did not contribute to the inflow of new labor migrants, so those migrants who survived the pandemic could choose a work with a larger salary due to the increased demand for labor resources against the background of the lifting restrictions and gradual economic recovery. Traditionally, the states of Central Asia, in particular Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan, are the final destination for transferring money from labor migrants. Remittances from Russia to the CIS countries have a significant impact on the economies of States and on the support for families of labor migrants because they depend on these transfers, for example, Tajikistan is one of the most dependent on remittances of labor migrants in the world.

Therefore, data on remittances of labor migrants also make it possible to sufficiently complete the picture of the impact of the pandemic on migration flows in 2020 in the Russian Federation. The remittances factor complements the cause-effect formula. Job losses reduced economic and production growth, sanitary and epidemiological restrictions had a significant impact on the possibility of remittances at the beginning of the pandemic, i.e., during the first lockdown, but in the third and fourth quarters of 2020, remittances from Russia began to grow again. Thus, the factor of the pandemic could not sufficiently negatively affect the possibility of remittances by labor migrants in 2020 – for sure, there was a decrease in the volume of

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<sup>75</sup> Sherunkova O. Remittances remained at home. The volume of cross-border transactions of individuals fell to a minimum since 2016 // Gazeta «Kommersant». - 2021.- №45. - p. 8 // <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/4730773> (date of access: 27.03.2021)

remittances, but it recovered by the end of the year allowing migrants to provide financial support for their relatives.

## **Conclusion**

Assessing migration flows in the Russian Federation during the COVID-19 pandemic, following conclusions must be drawn.

Firstly, the pandemic has inflicted a severe blow to the economic condition of migrants because the closure of state borders (including with the CIS states) resulted in the cessation of migration flows, primarily flows of labor migrants. The introduction of a non-working day (quarantine) regime in the Russian Federation and its subsequent extension in all regions of the State led to the termination of labor migrants' activity, and as a result, to the termination of receiving wages and the impossibility of making remittances to families in the country of origin, as well as, loss of place of residence;

Secondly, the onset of the pandemic required government authorities to make managerial decisions in order to ensure the rights of migrants in accordance with federal and international legislation. The decisions taken were aimed at ensuring the rights of migrants and labor migrants, in particular. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that the measures taken did not contribute to the ability to leave the Russian Federation in due time, for example, many migrants were unable to cross the border in the Orenburg region - if they had purchased tickets for the flight, the migrants could not return the money or neither could they cross the border.

Thirdly, the difficult situation with the pandemic did not become the cause of many predictable factors. Public associations, communities, business communities, and ordinary citizens tried to provide all possible assistance to migrants, to support them morally and financially.

Fourthly, the waves of the pandemic made changes in the general situation in the State and economy. After the first wave, there was a slight upturn in the economy, which contributed to the employment opportunities of migrants and remittances to their families.

An objective analysis of the situation with migrants in Russia and the measures taken by the State showed that in the difficult circumstances of 2020, the State and society sought to provide assistance to migrants, ensuring the protection of their rights, supporting them at the level of public associations and citizens. Starting from 2021, the Russian Federation is gradually opening borders (including air traffic) with the CIS states, which allows migrants to leave and enter the Russian Federation while taking into account the requirements related to compliance with sanitary and epidemiological norms. Summing up, it can be said that the situation with the migrant flows is changing, but it is not possible to predict its change in terms of ensuring the opportunity for migrants to carry out labor activities in a stable manner.

## Conclusions

The research carried out in the Master's dissertation on the topic "Changing migration patterns during the COVID-19 pandemic" revealed a lot of problems that the world community had to face during the pandemic, and above all the ones that migrants had to face as subjects of migration relations. The COVID-19 pandemic dealt a tangible blow to the economic system of the world community as a whole and to many regions of the world which affected both citizens of states and migrants from various states who sought to get to countries with the most favorable socio-economic conditions. Migrants as subjects of socio-economic relations became hostages of the pandemic since the measures taken by many states at the stage of the first wave of the pandemic were aimed at closing borders and applying a wide range of quarantine measures aimed at ensuring the sanitary and epidemiological situation inside countries. Nevertheless, the quarantine measures taken did not become a salvation for migrants because the states did not have a clear action plan aimed at helping citizens, let alone migrants, which was a rather negative factor in relation to migrants. During the first wave, migrants were deprived of the opportunity to receive medical care and were at high risk of contracting coronavirus due to them living in migrant accommodation centers, refugee camps, places of residence with the same migrants in the same room for the lack of funds to rent at least a small space for separate living. A similar situation was typical for many states, including the member states of the European Union and the Russian Federation. When conducting a study of migration flows, the European Union was chosen as the largest region for the study, as well as the Republic of Italy and the Russian Federation for a comparative study in the context of analyzing those measures and indicators that were adopted by the state and which have been considered to be the most significant ones in the study. The pandemic in the European Union exposed the problems of the community itself in the context of unresolved problems of migration policy which worsened in the period of 2020. Numerous refugee camps in the European Union and their unsettledness together with the problems of social and medical provision of migrants in the camps, led to social explosions in the camps themselves, and also among the public across Europe which demanded a solution to the problems, but in contrast to the defenders of migrants, anti-immigrant sentiment grew among the society.

In the process of analyzing the state of migration flows in the European Union and the Russian Federation in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, following conclusions were made:

1. Migration flows in 2020 decreased compared to previous years, which was caused by the closure of borders and the subsequent restriction of movement during the period of quarantine measures that automatically deprived migrants of the opportunity to return to their country of origin regardless of their location in the European Union or in the Russian Federation. This fact confirms the hypothesis that has been put forward in the introduction of this master's research, which indicates that the pandemic has had a significant impact on migration flows in the world and in the regions of the world that have been chosen as

the object of research. The decrease in migration flows was due to the spread of the pandemic and the need for states to implement strict sanitary and epidemiological requirements for the entire population.

2. The closure of borders and the introduction of quarantine measures led to a restriction of the employment opportunities of migrants because both the sphere of services and production in industries were in a state of restrictions imposed as per decisions of state bodies. In the second half of 2020, despite the second wave of the pandemic, in the Republic of Italy, measures were taken to employ migrants in certain areas which even though comparatively efficient, was not enough to solve the problems associated with employment in full. In the Russian Federation, in the second half of 2020, there was a shortage of migrants in industries that usually resorted to migrant labor. Later on, migrants were able to return, including to the job positions they used to occupy before the pandemic and which they lost at its beginning.

3. During the pandemic, migrants were deprived of the possibility to receive a full-fledged medical support which endangered their lives, health, and also formed a risk factor for infection and further spread of the disease among migrants. The detention of migrants in the accommodation centers for migrants and refugee camps in the European Union in order to comply with quarantine measures did not allow to ensure their right to free movement and medical care. The lack of a common policy and a general solution to migrant issues led to anti-immigrant sentiments in society since the authorities did not seek to resolve migration issues and inform society about the measures taken in the field of accepting migrants in each state;

4. Measures of state regulation adopted by public authorities in the Republic of Italy and in the Russian Federation were aimed at regulating the legal status of migrants in the context of the spread of the pandemic which was dictated by the necessity to ensure the legality of their presence in the state and ensure the observance of international obligations. However, although measures of state regulation solved a certain part of the issues of legal status, it did not provide guarantees in the field of medical care which can be, therefore, attributed to a gap in measures of state regulation;

5. The lack of full-fledged assistance from the state authorities was replaced by the help of citizens, business, and society as a whole. In the European Union, assistance to migrants was expressed in the provision of emergency social assistance by a number of states, the payment of unemployment benefits and provision of medical services. In the Russian Federation, the issue of medical care for migrants was also on the agenda and was addressed by the health authorities in order to provide equal medical care to migrants, including measures to prevent coronavirus;

6. Migrant crime during the pandemic caused public concern but the measures of state regulation aimed at observing quarantine became a shield against the growth of crime rates which soothed the alarmist sentiments in society in connection with the alleged forecasts of an increase in crime among migrants;

7. The decline in migrant flows in the first half of 2020 had an impact on the decline in migrant remittances which used to allow migrants to provide financial support to their relatives in their country of origin. The second half of 2020 and the employment measures taken by the states allowed migrants to return



to work and start making financial transfers, the volume of which decreased at the beginning of the year. The pandemic factor was not able to sufficiently negatively affect the possibility of sending of the remittances by labor migrants in 2020.

Assessing the status of migrants during the pandemic, it can be pointed out that the authorities of the European Union, the Republic of Italy, and the Russian Federation should take regulatory measures in terms of providing medical care for migrants during the ongoing pandemic which should be expressed in the form of vaccination; and also in terms of definition of industries where migrants can be employed to restore the economic system of the European Union, the Republic of Italy, and the Russian Federation. The adoption of managerial decisions will allow to ensure the solution of issues of social security, and employment of migrants, which were not fully resolved at the stage of the first wave of the pandemic, and in fact were entrusted to public organizations, the business community, volunteers, and the Church. The pandemic has not ended, and the solution of migrant issues requires further analysis to minimize possible risks and to reduce the impact of new waves of the pandemic since the economic system of any state, including those industries in which migrant labor is traditionally resorted to, requires the use of their labor. This aspect has a corresponding character, which will ensure the recovery of the economic sectors, the service sector, and the employment of migrants.

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## Summary

**The relevance of the research problem** is justified by the necessity to study migration processes in the context of the coronavirus pandemic which affected the whole world and the world community in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic became a new and very serious pandemic for all mankind, which covered all regions of the world, as it was with the Spanish flu in 1918-1920. From 2020 to the present, the world community continues to fight the pandemic within the framework of restrictions and through the use of developed vaccines against the virus in order to create herd immunity. The pandemic, declared in March 2020 by the World Health Organization, has had quite catastrophic consequences for the economic system and society of each state in the world, while also changing international relations between countries. The announced pandemic triggered a chain reaction all around the world, and above all, it was expressed in the closure of borders and the cessation of air traffic between states, which was a blow big enough for one of the most vulnerable categories of people, namely migrants. Migrants in the system of relations between states are people who try to find a better place for living in order to change their social and economic situation as compared with life in their state of origin. With the outbreak of the pandemic and the closure of borders, it was the migrants who fully felt the brunt of the development of the pandemic. Thus, they became hostages of the situation, because they are not citizens, do not have sufficient financial support, medical insurance, and most importantly, they do not have a full-fledged opportunity to withstand the situation in the society of the state in which they came in search of a better life and which shows both xenophobia and tolerance towards them. The relevance of the research topic is primarily due to the need to analyze the legal status of migrants during the spread of the pandemic, measures taken by the state and society to support migrants and suppress the spread of the virus among migrants, and the implementation of the process of employment of migrants during the pandemic.

**The object of the study** is migration flows as a social and economic phenomenon in the system of international relations during the period of the spread of global pandemics and in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. An additional object of the study is the process of regional migration flows within the European Union and the Russian Federation under conditions of the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Subject of study:**

- provisions of international law in the field of international regulation of migration; European Union legal norms, statutory provisions of the legislation of the Italian Republic and the Russian Federation in the field of migration regulation and measures taken to ensure the rights of migrants;
- theoretical studies of Russian and foreign scientists analyzing migration as a socio-economic phenomenon, and migration flows in the context of the transboundary spread of virus pandemics and their impact on the development of states.

**The purpose of the study** is to identify factors that reveal the state of migration flows during the COVID 2019 pandemic; to carry out an analysis of statistical data that form a general image of migration flows and conditions that influenced the flows; to carry out an analysis of the measures taken by the authorities of states to ensure the observance and protection of the rights of migrants.

To achieve this goal, the following **tasks** have been set:

- to reveal the content of world migration flows in the system of international relations in the context of characteristics and statistics provided by the UN and the International Organization for Migration;
- to analyze migration flows during the spread of world pandemics of the most well-known types of viruses;
- to analyze the global migration flows in the context of the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020;
- to analyze the state of migration processes in the European Union;
- to analyze the dynamics of migration in the Italian Republic;
- to identify the state of migration flows in the Russian Federation during the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures of state regulation taken.

**The novelty of the formulation** of the topic of the work is preconditioned by the need to analyze the state of migration flows during the spread of the pandemic in order to study the process itself, the conditions that influenced migration flows, taking into account the dynamic processes taking place around the world which were caused by the pandemic the scale of which is comparable to the Spanish flu pandemic. The paper also touches upon the conditions for a comparative analysis of the migration flows of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Italy, as one of the EU Member States that was most affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

**The theoretical and practical significance of the research results.** The theoretical significance of this dissertation research is that within the framework of the analysis of migration flows carried out by the author, a systematic approach is applied to consider the general situation with migrants in the context of the analysis of various indicators affecting the situation of migrants, and decisions made by the state and society in support of migrants during the pandemic in 2020. The practical significance lies in the fact that the conclusions made by the author on the basis of the conducted research can be further developed in terms of further dissertation research, and can also be used in teaching and further full-fledged statistical analysis of migration flows for 2020-2021.

**Research hypothesis.** It is assumed that during the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a decrease in migrant flows in the world and in the regions that will be the subject of this study, which requires data analysis in order to confirm or refute the hypothesis put forward as part of the master's research.

**The structure of the paper.** The work consists of an introduction, two chapters, six paragraphs, a conclusion, and a bibliography.



## **Chapter 1. Migration processes as a socio-economic phenomenon in international relations during pandemics of viral diseases. Historical analysis of the phenomenon.**

### **1.1. World migration flows in the system of international relations: notion; features; the UN statistical data.**

Migration flows have been historically known since ancient times, and to a large extent they were caused by wars, economic recessions, and the desire of human beings to improve their socio-economic status. The institute of migration is considered as an important object of analysis from the point of view of practical research due to its transboundary scale, as well as from the point of view of theoretical research as the object and subject of study of numerous sciences. Currently, migration is one of the most important institutions, the investigation of which is in the focus of research of many sciences, including demography, sociology, economics, political science, law, and psychology.

Migration and migration flows in general are characterized as a socio-economic phenomenon that influences the social development of states and their economic systems due to the impact of labour migration they experience. The vector of influence on numerous migration flows is diverse social factors of both regional and international nature.

In the 21st century it has become obvious to the world community that migration and migration flows are becoming a global problem, and the old approaches to regulating this process are not as efficient as they used to be. Military actions in various regions of the world have become the main determinant, catalyst, vector that shape and direct migration flows, and that refers to the objective nature of migration flows.

The position of the world community on the issue of international migration boils down to the following:

- international migration is a multidimensional process;
- the contribution made by migrants development in countries of origin is important;
- it was decided to work towards an effective and inclusive agenda on international migration.

The provisions of the New York Declaration also recognized the positive contribution of migrants to inclusive growth and sustainable development. The benefits and opportunities of safe, orderly and regular migration are significant and often underestimated.

On December 19, 2018, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration was adopted by the means of the UN General Assembly resolution. The provisions of the compact are not legally binding. It is a framework document for a cooperative mechanism based on the commitments made by Member States in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. Its provisions are aimed at developing international cooperation in migration issues between all relevant actors and was drafted with the understanding that no state can independently resolve migration issues. Nevertheless, the Compact still respects the sovereignty of states and takes into account their obligations under international law.

The concept of “migrant” is fundamental in the framework of this work because the migrant in the system of migration flows acts as the subject of legal relations and as a subject to the provisions of international law and regional legal acts. When it comes to the definition of “migrant,” the IOM Glossary recognizes that it is an umbrella term, not defined by international law, reflecting the generally accepted non-professional understanding of a person who leaves his usual place of residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons.

According to the international portal of migration data, the number of international migrants reached 272 million in 2019, which is 14 million more than in 2017. Women make up 48% of the total number of migrants, about 38 million are children, 4.4 million are international students and 164 million are labor migrants. 74% of migrants are people of working age (20-64 years old).

According to the provisions of the World Migration Report 2020 of the International Organization for Migration, the number of international migrants in the world in 2019 amounted to 272 million people (3.5% of the world's population), of which:

- 52% are men; 48% are women;
- 74% percent of all international migrants were of working age (20-64 years).

Considering the countries of origin of migration flows, IOM experts continue to call India the largest country of origin of international migrants.

Summarizing this section, the following can be pointed out. Migration as a socio-economic phenomenon is recognized by the world community, which is characterized by a significant level of regulation of this process at the international level. The world community seeks to create a set of conditions that will ensure a civilized, orderly regulation of the process in practice, which will correspond to the principles of humanism because often migrants are essentially powerless people, despite a fairly extensive regulatory framework and numerous international institutions acting in the field.

The study of migration as a phenomenon and institution is carried out in the theoretical and practical spheres. The theoretical scope of the research is represented by the rational and interdisciplinary nature of the institution of migration, the study of its essence, object and subject from the standpoint of various sciences, and the research carried out within each of which makes it possible to analyze migration, creating a general picture of migration as a phenomenon that is formed under the influence of various factors that, in turn, scientists investigate within the framework of various approaches.

## **1.2 Analysis of migration flows during global pandemics of the most renowned viruses.**

The period of pandemics of the most famous viruses around the world is characterized by many aspects, among which migration stands out. Migration during a pandemic of viruses shows not only the number of people who are trying to escape the pandemic, but also state capabilities during this period of time, which reflects the conditions for countering the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown quite

clearly all over the world the unpreparedness of many states, including highly developed (financially and technologically), for pandemics of this level.

The Spanish flu pandemic was recognized as the most severe and fierce pandemic of the virus, which historians and doctors put on a par with the plague that raged in Europe in the Middle Ages. This type of virus was the first in a series of viruses over a century, which appeared with obvious consistency in different regions of the world, but the twentieth anniversary of the new 21st century was marked by the emergence of four pandemics of influenza viruses.

The Spanish flu pandemic has become the largest pandemic of modern times since the plague. The Spanish flu pandemic began in March 1918 and lasted until the spring of 1920 and remains the most devastating one in modern history. The second wave of the Spanish flu began in September 1918, catching the population of many countries by surprise, which also affected the heightened death rate of the population. In October 1918 alone, 195 thousand people died in the United States. The emergence of the Spanish flu virus in the United States coincided with a new wave of migration to the United States.

The SARS pandemic, most widely known as atypical pneumonia, emerged in November 2002 and was a new virus sweeping the world until 2003. The hotbed of the virus was the Guangdong province in southern China.

A report from the International Organization for Migration confirmed that as a result of the SARS pandemic “worldwide there were 8,096 SARS cases and 774 people have died of the disease, which also had a negative impact on tourism, trade and travel”.

The A/H1N1 swine flu pandemic is yet another pandemic in human history. It received the name "the Mexican" or "Mexican swine flu". Initially, Mexico and a number of US states became the territory of origin and initial spread of "swine flu" in March-April 2009. According to WHO estimates, in 2009 there were 18,449 deaths from the influenza virus. In August 2010, the World Health Organization announced the termination of the A/H1N1 influenza pandemic.

The Ebola virus since its appearance in 2014 in Guinea and Liberia and before the emergence of the COVID-19 virus, was a new and rather severe virus that caused numerous victims in a number of African states. A new outbreak of the virus was recorded again in Guinea in 2021. More than 11,000 people have died, including in Mali, Nigeria and the United States. The Ebola pandemic has impacted human migration in the region. Migration during the spread of the Ebola virus has become a negative phenomenon, as the movement of people in this region is characterized by increased intensity and uncontrolled borders.

In the 21st century, states again have faced the challenge of new viruses and those pandemics that spread around the world at intervals of several years, including the spread of several viruses in different regions of the world simultaneously. The given examples of virus pandemics combined with the possibility of disclosing data on migration flows showed that migration flows during virus pandemics should be

characterized as corresponding to natural migration flows within the data recorded by the International Organization for Migration.

### **1.3 Analysis of global migration flows in the context of the COVID-2019 pandemic in 2020.**

During the pandemic, migrants became hostages of the situation, public opinion, migrantophobia and the actions of the authorities. The COVID-19 virus pandemic shocked the whole world and became a test for all mankind, as it affected many areas of society and state, such as: healthcare, economy, transport, society.

The suspension of international traffic has been a severe blow to migrants who are often unable to return to their country of origin. Analytical data posted on the information portal on migrants reveal the situation associated with the return of migrants to their country of origin who have become unwilling prisoners of the spreading pandemic since the beginning of the pandemic.

The lack of medical support for migrants has become a potentially high risk of possibly getting infected with the virus because reports from world media during the pandemic have become a vivid confirmation of many problems with healthcare systems in developed countries that could not resist the virus and provide medical care to their citizens, not to mention migrants.

The pandemic has had an impact on all types of migration and primarily on labor migration. Labor migration during the COVID-19 pandemic has taken the full blow of its negative impact, the consequences of which it continues to experience. Many labor migrants lost their jobs in the service sector and were forced to look for new sources of income and new jobs. The first wave of the pandemic that passed by the summer made adjustments to the possibility of improving the situation with work for labor migrants, but still the second wave and new lockdowns in a number of states again had an impact on the status of labor migrants (and primarily for unskilled labor) and the possibility of leading their labor activity in the host country.

At the same time, the pandemic had a rather “positive impact” on labor migration of qualified medical personnel in many regions and states of the world, changing the strict requirements imposed by each state to labor migrants with medical education from third countries. In the United Kingdom, doctors, nurses and paramedics with visas due to expire before 1 October 2020 will have them automatically extended for one year. In France, non-licensed foreign-trained health professionals can work as support staff in non-medical occupations.

During the COVID-19 pandemic migrants continue to make remittances, but their volume declined in the first half of 2020. However, it recovered in the second half of 2020 having reached pre-COVID-19 levels and even hitting historic highs in several countries.

Analyzing the state of migration and migration flows at present, several conclusions that characterize these processes in 2020 in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic can be drawn:

1. Decrease in and suspension of migration processes;
2. Inability of migrants to return to the country of origin;
3. Loss of jobs by migrants due to the pandemic and lockdowns;

4. Xenophobia and migrantophobia in a number of states;
5. Increasing possibility of contracting the virus due to the impossibility of obtaining qualified and prompt medical care;
6. Uneven process of making remittances;
7. Increase in the number of labor migrants with medical education and work experience.

The system of signs mentioned above is characterized by interconnection and interdependence because these signs form a chain of possible influence on the occurrence of other signs.

## **Chapter 2. Analysis of the state of migration flows in the European Union and the Russian Federation during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020.**

### **2.1 Migration processes in the European Union.**

Migration processes in the European Union during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 were subject to global trends and decisions on creating countermeasures against coronavirus of the organs of the EU as well as of the states' executive all around the world.

The centers for migrants existing in the European Union were among the first to feel the impact of the situation with the coronavirus, as they were forced to close for quarantine, which led to the adoption of a few decisions by the European Commission. The European Commission published on April 16, 2020, guidance on the granting of asylum, resettlement and return procedures for migrants in a situation of a pandemic.

#### **Access to healthcare**

Assessment of the situation with the spread of coronavirus and the medical care provided to migrants have been and remain one of the topical issues, since migrants are deprived of proper medical care and they are not involved in the provision of medical care, as medical workers write about. During the spread of the pandemic throughout the European Union, the World Health Organization adopted a guideline that is advisory in nature. This guideline is intended for use by healthcare authorities to guide the actions of health care providers for refugees and migrants. WHO has recognized that refugees and migrants may have more health risks and vulnerabilities than the general population, and often face particular barriers to accessing healthcare services.

#### **Impact of the pandemic on employment**

Migrants who became hostages of the pandemic in the European Union stayed in migration centers or camps for refugees and migrants, which was obligatory as a part of quarantine measures. Most migrants during the pandemic could not find a job, including in low-skilled jobs, but at the same time, many EU member states eased the requirements for migrants with secondary and higher education in health care.

#### **Xenophobia**

Throughout 2020, the situation with migrants in the European Union was very difficult and tense, which was caused by protests from both opponents and defenders of the migration policy in Europe. The

beginning of 2020 was not yet marked by a large wave of the pandemic, but indeed it was marked by protests of migrants against living conditions in the Moria camp on the Greek island of Lesbos in mid-January, following violence and severe overcrowding.

### **Community assistance**

The difficult situation with the spread of the pandemic revealed a negative attitude towards migrants and unfounded protests against migrants, who became hostage to the pandemic and the prejudice of the population of the European Union Member States. However, the pandemic had positive examples of solving the problems of migrants in the period of 2020 for migrants themselves:

- Portugal has granted all migrants, including asylum seekers, with pending residence permit applications the same rights as citizens, in order to ensure everybody who needs it has access to social security, unemployment allowances and health care;
- Cartagena (Spain) has detected migrants' family units in need with a special focus on undocumented migrants. It has further coordinated the distribution of food and basic hygiene products and provided specific advice in situations of difficulty (payment of rent, loss of work, renewals of demands and extension of deadlines, procedures with the administration; unemployment, non-contributory pensions, praying for the end of Ramadan, business plans, etc.). In addition, job offers are compiled and sent to families that may be interested.

During the pandemic, Member States of the EU and public organizations have been able to mobilize forces to solve the problem of migration in order to prevent both a social explosion among migrants, and to suppress the facts of migrantophobia among citizens.

### **Remittances**

Remittances in certain states in comparison with previous years can be characterized by an increase in amounts (Italy, Greece), as well as a decrease in 2020 (France, Germany, Sweden). The data for Germany is a vivid example of an approximately 8% drop in the amount of remittances compared to the previous year due to the pandemic and the situation with migrants. In general, it should be noted that such a heterogeneous nature of the amounts of remittances of migrants is characterized by both a general situation with the pandemic and regional factors that took place in 2020. The beginning of the pandemic was marked by a tough lockdown in all states of the European Union, but by the end of the year, it would seem that the initial situation with the pandemic in Germany turned into a new wave and a lockdown, which of course as a result, led to a decrease in the possibility of carrying out work activities and the ability to carry out remittances.

### **Conclusion**

Summing up the research carried out in this paragraph, it is necessary to point out that migration flows to the European Union have decreased compared to previous years, which is associated with the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. The spread of the first wave of the pandemic led to the need for the Member States of the European Union to close their borders, which automatically deprived the migrants of the

opportunity to return to their country of origin. But this factor allowed the states to reduce all migration flows, regardless of the types of migration.

## **2.2 Analysis of the migration dynamics in the Italian Republic. Governmental measures of migration regulation implemented during the pandemic.**

The COVID-19 pandemic has dealt a terrible blow to the population of the Italian Republic and to the general situation in the country as a whole. It also led to numerous deaths among the population. Italy was one of the first countries to take this terrible blow from the pandemic. The analysis of the data at the start of the pandemic and death rates in the context of the spring 2020 were dreadful. As of March 24, 2020, the number of infected people was almost 70 thousand people, 6.8 thousand people died.

### **Reduction in the number of immigrants in 2020**

The total population of the Italian Republic as of mid-2020 was 60.5 million, with the total number of international migrants (men and women) as of mid-2020 being 6,386,998 people. The share of international migrants as a percentage of the total population as of mid-2020 was 10.6%. The total number of immigrants (international migration stock) as of mid-2020 was 6.4 million. The COVID-19 pandemic changed the statistics on the number of migrants who arrived in 2020 due to the introduction of restrictive measures by the Government of the Italian Republic to ensure sanitary and epidemiological measures, which led to a shortage of labor migrants for certain industries. During 2020, the Council of Ministers adopted decrees aimed at introducing measures to counter the spread of the virus, i.e. creation of a wide system of lockdowns and measures of sanitary and epidemiological provision of the population. The measures that were governed by decrees were updated with the adoption of each new decree during the year.

### **Impact of the pandemic on employment**

On May 19, 2020, the Law on Urgent Measures in the Field of Healthcare, Labor and Economic Support, and Social Policy Related to the COVID-19 Emergency Epidemiological Situation was adopted. The law identified only 3 areas in which the situation of migrants can be legalized, these areas included:

- a) agriculture, animal husbandry, fishing and aquaculture and related activities;
- b) helping a person for himself or for his family members suffering from diseases or disabilities that limit their independence;
- c) domestic work supporting family needs.

Furthermore, the legalization of migrants is carried out through the implementation of two methods that employers can choose. The first method gives the employer the opportunity to apply for the legalization of an undocumented employee who is already working in one of the above sectors. The second way gives the migrant the opportunity to apply for a temporary permit, which can be converted into a six-month work permit, but at the same time, the migrant must have a work permit that expired after October 31, 2019.

The measures taken by the government of the Republic of Italy cannot be acknowledged as fully targeted at the protection of the rights of migrants in the sphere of ensuring labour activities in all industries

as well as in the sphere of ensuring their rights to medical assistance. The implementation of the migration policy in Italy in relation to migrants was continued in the fall of 2020, when a circular from the Ministry of Labor and Social Development of the Republic of Italy was adopted. A circular from the Ministry of Labor has established a quota of 30,850 people who can enter Italy for seasonal and non-seasonal work.

### **Access to healthcare**

During the pandemic, migrants became the least protected category of the population, which could not afford, due to the lack of sufficient financial resources, to provide themselves with medicines and sufficient food, therefore, for migrants, the only way to fight and survive during the pandemic in the Republic was to comply with quarantine measures to ensure not getting infected with the coronavirus and survive.

The measures of state regulation related to medical provision of migrants are criticized reasonably enough since the lack of access to medical care for migrants inevitably led to an expansion of the factor of the further spread of the virus.

### **Community assistance**

During the coronavirus pandemic in Italy in 2020, measures to support migrants were formed at two levels: state and interstate, including at the level of international organizations that are part of the UN structure.

### **Xenophobia**

Despite the acts adopted by the international community, a decrease in the level of tolerant attitude towards migrants in Italy has not been observed. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in Italy was marked by anti-migrant sentiments in society, including against Chinese citizens. Anti-migrant sentiment was observed throughout the year because it was due to the factors of the hosting of migrants in the accommodation centers and of the adoption of the Law on urgent measures in the field of health care, labor and economic support, as well as social policy related to the emergency epidemiological situation with COVID-19.

### **Remittances**

The statistical data on remittances of migrants from the Italian Republic in 2020 can be retrieved based on the statistics of the World Bank as of October 2020 in comparison with the period from 2015 to 2019 in Table 1.

Table 1. Amounts of remittances of migrants for the period 2015-2020.

<b>Country</b>	<b>Years. Amounts (in mln US dollars)</b>					
	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Italy	9 068	8781	8842	9 907	9577	10187



### 2.3 State of migration flows in the Russian Federation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Governmental measures of migration regulation implemented during the pandemic.

The Russian Federation is a destination country for migrants from the CIS countries, primarily the countries of Central Asia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, and Armenia. These migration flows are existant due to the implementation of labor activities of citizens from these states in the Russian Federation. The pandemic affected, first of all, labor migrants, as they became the most vulnerable category of the migrant population in the Russian Federation during the pandemic.

The legal status of foreign citizens is regulated by the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 274 "On temporary measures to regulate the legal status of foreign citizens and stateless persons in the Russian Federation in connection with the threat of the further spread of the new coronavirus infection".

The COVID-19 pandemic has radically changed the situation in the Russian Federation, including in relation to migrants, and especially in relation to labor migrants. Traditionally, for many years, labor migrants from Central Asian countries have made up the majority among labor migrants, and this trend remained in 2020. In addition, labor migrants carry out labor activities in positions that are considered low-paid, not prestigious, and labor-intensive in terms of the cost of physical resources by citizens of the Russian Federation.

#### Reduction in the number of immigrants in 2020

In order to best reflect the migration flows of labor migrants in the Russian Federation during the pandemic, a comparison is made within the time framework of 2018-2020, which is reflected in Table 2.

Table 2. Statistical data on the migration situation for labor migrants in the Russian Federation for the period from 2018 to 2020 with distribution by CIS countries

Countries	Labor Migration		
	2018	2019	2020
Republic of Azerbaijan	186 167	194 929	60 818
Republic of Armenia	207 945	210 460	69 024
Republic of Belarus	134 690	163 410	85 590
Republic of Kazakhstan	111 464	136 208	60 461
Kyrgyz Republic	351 959	453 702	190 312
Republic of Moldova	177 468	174 150	49 378
Republic of Tajikistan	1 018 497	1 179 423	507 225
Republic of Uzbekistan	2 007 407	2 107 302	1 011 028
Ukranian Republic	460 662	435 528	148 063
Turkmenia	2 779	4 813	3 906
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 659 038</b>	<b>5 059 925</b>	<b>2 185 805</b>

According to operational data for January-July 2020, the largest decrease in the number of arrivals occurred in April (-45%). Among those registered at the place of stay in January-June 2020, immigrants from Uzbekistan (1,786 thousand people, or 35% of total) and Tajikistan (976 thousand people, or 19%) prevailed.

### **Access to health care**

The period of the pandemic showed the vulnerability of migrants to the spread of the virus and their inability to receive medical assistance in full. Measures to regulate the legal status of migrants did not provide for the solution of issues of medical support, but nevertheless, the legal status of migrants allowed them to use medical services as labor migrants, who have also been eligible for social contributions. However, this issue remained open during 2020.

### **Community assistance**

The positive factor of attitudes towards the problems of labor migrants during the pandemic can be characterized from the standpoint of the actions of citizens and society within the framework of rendering assistance to labor migrants. Sources of assistance to labor migrants were national communities, ethnic communities, and also ordinary citizens of the Russian Federation.

### **Xenophobia**

The pandemic exacerbated the problems of society and migrants, and above all the attitude towards migrants because the reduction of jobs during the pandemic put the economy at risk. Russian citizens who have lost their jobs cannot find a low-paid job since spheres with low pay have been usurped by the diasporas which inevitably entails a negative attitude towards migrants. However, experts' assessments of xenophobia towards migrants differ but if evaluated as a whole, it was rather moderate in comparison with the European Union because many mass events were banned, and society was able to express all the negativity in the digital space, i.e., in social networks or on the Internet.

### **Migrant crime**

According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, as of May 20, 2020, compared to April 2019, the number of “criminal acts committed by foreigners [decreased] by 9.6%, including murders - by 14.3%, mugging - by 7,8%, robberies - by 28.6%, thefts - by 5.9%”. It can be assumed that the decrease in the number of crimes is associated with a decrease in the number of movements and interactions during quarantine. On the whole, there was a decrease in the growth of crime among migrants, even though insignificant, within 0.6% in relation to the number of crimes committed in 2019.

### **Remittances**

The volume of transfers to CIS countries in 2020 fell by 14.4%, to \$11.0 billion, while to non-CIS countries, it increased by 0.9%, to \$29.1 billion. The main bulk of money transfers to CIS countries accounted for Uzbekistan (\$4.4 billion), Tajikistan (\$1.7 billion) and Kyrgyzstan (\$1.7 billion). The increase

in the volume of remittances in the third and the fourth quarters of 2020 from Russia was due to a partial economic recovery.

## **Conclusions**

The COVID-19 pandemic dealt a tangible blow to the economic system of the world community as a whole and to many regions of the world which affected both citizens of states and migrants from various states who sought to get to countries with the most favorable socio-economic conditions. Migrants as subjects of socio-economic relations became hostages of the pandemic since the measures taken by many states at the stage of the first wave of the pandemic were aimed at closing borders and applying a wide range of quarantine measures aimed at ensuring the sanitary and epidemiological situation inside countries.

In the process of analyzing the state of migration flows in the European Union and the Russian Federation in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, following conclusions were made:

1. Migration flows in 2020 decreased compared to previous years, which was caused by the closure of borders and the subsequent restriction of movement during the period of quarantine measures that automatically deprived migrants of the opportunity to return to their country of origin regardless of their location in the European Union or in the Russian Federation;

2. The closure of borders and the introduction of quarantine measures led to a restriction of the employment opportunities of migrants because both the sphere of services and production in industries were in a state of restrictions imposed as per decisions of state bodies. In the second half of 2020, despite the second wave of the pandemic, in the Republic of Italy, measures were taken to employ migrants in certain areas which even though comparatively efficient, was not enough to solve the problems associated with employment in full. In the Russian Federation, in the second half of 2020, there was a shortage of migrants in industries that usually resorted to migrant labor. Later on, migrants were able to return, including to the job positions they used to occupy before the pandemic and which they lost at its beginning.

3. During the pandemic, migrants were deprived of the possibility to receive a full-fledged medical support which endangered their lives, health, and also formed a risk factor for infection and further spread of the disease among migrants. The detention of migrants in the accommodation centers for migrants and refugee camps in the European Union in order to comply with quarantine measures did not allow to ensure their right to free movement and medical care. The lack of a common policy and a general solution to migrant issues led to anti-immigrant sentiments in society since the authorities did not seek to resolve migration issues and inform society about the measures taken in the field of accepting migrants in each state;

4. Measures of state regulation adopted by public authorities in the Republic of Italy and in the Russian Federation were aimed at regulating the legal status of migrants in the context of the spread of the pandemic which was dictated by the necessity to ensure the legality of their presence in the state and ensure the observance of international obligations. However, although measures of state regulation solved a certain part

of the issues of legal status, it did not provide guarantees in the field of medical care which can be, therefore, attributed to a gap in measures of state regulation;

5. The lack of full-fledged assistance from the state authorities was replaced by the help of citizens, business, and society as a whole. In the European Union, assistance to migrants was expressed in the provision of emergency social assistance by a number of states, the payment of unemployment benefits and provision of medical services. In the Russian Federation, the issue of medical care for migrants was also on the agenda and was addressed by the health authorities in order to provide equal medical care to migrants, including measures to prevent coronavirus;

6. Migrant crime during the pandemic caused public concern but the measures of state regulation aimed at observing quarantine became a shield against the growth of crime rates which soothed the alarmist sentiments in society in connection with the alleged forecasts of an increase in crime among migrants;

7. The decline in migrant flows in the first half of 2020 had an impact on the decline in migrant remittances which used to allow migrants to provide financial support to their relatives in their country of origin. The second half of 2020 and the employment measures taken by the states allowed migrants to return to work and start making financial transfers, the volume of which decreased at the beginning of the year. The pandemic factor was not able to sufficiently negatively affect the possibility of sending of the remittances by labor migrants in 2020.