

German experience of migrants integration

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The article presents a comprehensive analysis of the integration politics of Germany and identifies the features of its implementation, considers the history of migration processes in Germany, as well as the current migration situation. The migration politics of Germany and the measures taken by the German authorities to implement integration programs for immigrants are analyzed. The problems of integration of immigrants in modern conditions are determined. The sociocultural integration of immigrants is described taking into account their cultural and ethnic characteristics. An analysis is made of the problems and difficulties that arise during the adaptation of immigrants in German society. To achieve the goal, a number of methods were used, such as: the historical method, which made it possible to trace the stages of development of the German integration politics and to identify the factors that influenced the formation of the integration politics of modern immigrants; the method of statistical analysis that made it possible to determine the extent of immigration; method of system analysis, to obtain a holistic view of the current migration situation in Germany. Undoubtedly, the topic of migration, integration and adaptation of immigrants remains very relevant, especially for a united Europe. In Germany, a large number of the state reforms have been carried out to strengthen the effectiveness of the regulation of immigration flows and the implementation of integration politics. It seems, the experience of implementing the migration politics, the difficulties that had to be overcome along the way, and the results that Germany managed to achieve, which, thanks to the implementation of the politics of hospitality and open doors, became one of the countries with an extremely large number of immigrants, can be useful and interesting for other countries.

Keywords: German migration politics, sociocultural integration of immigrants, adaptation of immigrants, migration processes, European migration crisis.

Introduction

Such topics as globalization, integration, and migration have become one of the basic ones for the modern world. Migration is a complex and ambiguous process, it can push a society out of stagnation to a new turn of development, but it can cause an increase in conflicts, an increase in public discontent, shake the age-old foundations of society, and lead to a change in the image of the state. In particular, it is worth mentioning that the migration crises have significantly increased the scale of nationalist sentiment in Europe. It should be noted that this or that development of the situation directly depends on the migration politics carried out in the country, which underlines the relevance of this topic.

Today, the world is facing new constantly emerging challenges generated by the globalization and transformation of the international relations and world politics, but at the same time “the presence of the transnational agenda did not eliminate the considered heterogeneity of the political and geographical space of the modern world where the trends of unification and disengagement coexist” [1, p. 69].

With the recognition in 2010 by German Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel the failure of the multiculturalism politics, Germany has taken a new course of the integration politics, which is conventionally called the “politics of social integration and cultural and linguistic adaptation”. Within the framework of such a politics, the most important aspect is sociocultural integration, which involves the integration of immigrants into the social structure of society, the acquisition of sociocultural knowledge and skills necessary for their life in the new society, as well as the recognition of the values and norms of life of the host society by immigrants. At the same time, a prerequisite for immigrants is the study of the German language and the culture of Germany. The main tasks of the state in such a politics are to maintain national and state identity, as well as to develop the most balanced version of the management of cultural pluralism, which will meet the interests of the host society and at the same time take into account the basic needs of immigrants.

Of course, the integration politics covers not only sociocultural factors. In integration, according to the logic of the German Immigration Act of 2005, in addition to the social and cultural aspects, it is also customary to distinguish economic and political aspects. Economic integration involves the successful integration of an immigrant into the German labor market and their financial independence, and political integration means obtaining a residence permit in the country and acquiring citizenship. Political integration is inextricably linked to the social integration, which also implies that migrants and refugees receive rights to social benefits [2, p. 52].

Political and social integration is primary and fundamental, especially for refugees, as they are primarily in need of political protection and social assistance. For example, in Germany, all officially registered refugees have rights defined by the state, such as the right to housing, the right to work, and the right to receive material support and various social benefits. The main law regulating the provision of financial support to refugees is the “Law on Social Security for Asylum Seekers”. According to the law, every officially registered refugee can receive a monthly allowance to meet their needs and so-called pocket expenses [3]. Accordingly, the first and most important goal of migrants after arriving in Germany is to register and obtain, if necessary, official refugee status. The process of obtaining refugee status is quite complicated and lengthy.

Under an official refusal to grant the status, migrants are obliged to leave the country within the time limit set to them. Besides, they are deprived of the assistance that was provided to them. Some migrants, despite the refusal, remain in Germany, which is considered illegal. Continuing to live in an illegal situation, these people join the ranks of migrants who are not included in the official German statistics. In turn, a positive decision to obtain refugee status allows a migrant to legally stay in Germany and provides an opportunity to obtain more comfortable housing. In addition, all refugees, including children, are paid social benefits. Adults are offered integration courses and an opportunity to get a job, and all children are required to attend school. Thus, the initial integration of refugees into the social life of Germany takes place [4].

Germany diligently strives to involve foreign citizens in its culture, and learning German is a prerequisite for living in Germany. Helping Germany to integrate immigrants was defined as a government task in the Immigration Act of 2005. Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel called on all immigrants in Germany, regardless of nationality and religion, to recognize the supremacy of the German Constitution, to speak German in the German society, and to adhere to the values of the “guiding culture” [5, p. 177].

According to the National Integration Plan [6], the most important areas of activity in the integration politics of the German Government can be identified as the following: integration through education; integration through the language learning; integration through the study of the German culture; implementation of the free access to the education and professional development; integration programs for women aimed at forming an idea of the upbringing of future generations; programs aimed at developing the institute of integration in small towns; a program aimed at promoting integration through the mass media; support for the activities of socially active immigrants.

On May 25, 2016, the German Government, due to the worsening migration situation, approved a draft law on improving measures for the integration of refugees. According to this draft law, migrants can count on even greater support from the state, while, at the same time, those migrants, who avoid integration for no good reason, will be reduced in social security. In addition, the federal states of Germany received the right to independently decide on the issue of resettling migrants. However, unlimited permission to stay in Germany is no longer granted automatically after 5 years, but depends on the level of the knowledge of the German language. “The approval of this law by the federal government is a significant event. The integration law complies with the principles of incentives and assistance”, said Chancellor Angela Merkel [7].

At the same time, it should be noted that, in the year of 2016, 25,375 people were deported from Germany. In 2017, 23,966 people were deported, and more than 4,000 were diverted from Germany to other EU countries [8, p. 38].

The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (*Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge*, BAMF) is the main state agency for migration and integration in Germany. The scope of activity of this department includes issues of granting political asylum, migration, integration and issues of deportation of migrants [9].

It is BAMF that implements integration courses for foreigners that were introduced in Germany in connection with the Immigration Law in 2005. During the courses, participants learn German, while learning to write letters, conduct a telephone conversation, make a CV in German and search for a job [10]. In addition, foreigners receive general information about Germany, its history, culture, and German values. Migrants are also required to be informed about the German legal system during the courses. Participants will also learn about the German mentality. Informing about this is very important, since immigrants come mainly from eastern countries, and, as it is well known, the mentality of the Western and Eastern cultures has cardinal differences [11]. These courses consist of language classes that take a total of 600 hours, as well as 100-hour introductory classes to acquire knowledge about the country. The National Assessment Committee monitors the content and relevance of course materials [11, p. 19]. At the end of the 660-hour course, participants take the final exam. Those who successfully pass the tests receive an official certificate of completion of integration. There are also additional integration courses. The cost of such courses is individual and depends on

how a person got to Germany. If the training was offered by the state, it takes almost all the costs [11, p. 19].

There are many volunteers in Germany who are ready to help refugees in the integration process (see [12]). An important role was also played by the local residents' accommodation of the refugees in their apartments. This practice and the associated interpenetration of the two cultures is one of the most striking manifestations of interculturalism in modern Germany [13, p. 199].

Active support for migrants is provided by organizations of national minorities that carry out educational and adaptation functions. The most significant organizations in their activities are such as: "Federal Union of Migrant Women in Germany"; "Turkish community in Germany"; "German-Turkish Forum"; "German youth from Russia" [14, p. 105]. The founders and members of organizations of migrant associations, in most cases, are the immigrants themselves, who once arrived in Germany, respectively, they have an idea about the organization of life in Germany and know what specific points should be taken into account when assisting in integration [9].

In order to create a favorable atmosphere in society and to maintain stability in Germany, the possibilities of the mass media (media) are actively used. In this regard, the German authorities turned to the country's most influential and popular television and radio companies, such as ARD and ZDF.

The activities of the largest German commercial TV channel RTL can also be cited as an example. This company conducts various educational programs, trainings and competitions, the purpose of which is to reflect the problems of migrants, and the winners of such competitions get the opportunity to do an internship in the company. A similar politics is followed by the media, such as the Association of German Publishers, the Association "Our Home Germany", the Youth Press Union, the Association "Initiative D21", CIVIS Media Foundation, Werner Media Group and many others [14, p. 107].

Germany also pays special attention to countering the spread of xenophobia and racism in society. There are a number of public organizations in the country that counteract right-wing agitation and actively encourage assistance and daily interaction with refugees [13, p. 198].

"Germany is more focused than many other countries on the integration of refugees and migrants", says a UNESCO report entitled "Migrants, Displaced Persons and education: Building Bridges, not building Obstacles" [15]. The report noted that Germany paid great attention to the children of migrants. For example, Germany has allocated an additional 800 million euros for teaching German to migrant children in kindergartens for the period from 2016 to 2020. In addition, the authors of the report mentioned the significant success of Germany in attracting migrants and refugees to the labor market and helping them to obtain professional qualifications. In addition, the report points to the improvement of refugees' access to education, health systems and legal protection in Germany [16].

According to an OECD survey, more than 80 % of German residents consider it "important" or "extremely important" for migrants to adopt the German way of life. For 70 % of respondents, it is important that immigrants speak German, and for 60 %, an important criterion is a good education and professional qualifications [17].

It should be emphasized that the integration politics is based on the principle of bilateral cooperation. Germany has an obligation to ensure a stable social situation, a friendly atmosphere and to facilitate migrants' integration by providing various opportunities, as

well as identifying and removing obstacles to integration. Immigrants, for their part, must acquire German language skills, respect the fundamental values of German society, and adopt the German way of life.

The main difficulties and problems encountered in the adaptation of immigrants

The European migration crisis that began in 2015 has dramatically complicated the migration situation in Germany, having a significant impact on all spheres of society. Germany has become the leader among European countries in receiving migrants, registering about 2.14 million immigrants in the country. In addition, a large number of refugees, mostly from Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan, turned to Germany for help. In 2015, Germany received about 476,649 asylum applications. In the context of the migration crisis, German society became radicalized and opposed the “open door” politics. Opponents of the politics pointed to the dubious prospects for the integration of migrants and refugees into German society, as well as the increasing Islamization of society and the danger of terrorism. Part of the host community rejects immigrants, treats them negatively or with contempt. Undoubtedly, provocations and propaganda of the anti-immigrant politics, which is supported by the right flank of the German political spectrum, played a certain role in this [18, p. 104].

With the beginning of the migration crisis in Germany, crimes against immigrants began to be committed *en masse*. A large number of crimes were related to the attack on refugee shelters. It is known that in 2015, the number of such offenses increased almost 5 times compared to 2014. The Federal Office for Criminal Affairs registered 1,031 crimes against refugee shelters in 2015. Right-wing radicals were mainly involved in them [8, p. 43]. However, by 2017, the number of such crimes had significantly decreased. At the same time, there is a noticeable increase in crime among immigrants [8, p. 40].

Mass protests, demonstrations and crimes against immigrants caused a public outcry in Germany, and a part of the German population came out in support of immigrants. So, in 2015, actions began to take place all over the country, with such names as “Heart instead of bullying” or “Welcome to Germany!”, which were aimed at combating extremism and xenophobia [19].

Most refugees experience traumatic experiences in connection with resettlement and crisis (military) actions in their countries, significant physical and psychological stress can negatively affect their behavior and contribute to the manifestation of violence and increased delinquency on the part of refugees [8, p. 40]. It is obvious that refugees often need professional psychological assistance, but in most cases it is not fully provided due to the lack of specialists, as well as the lack of interest and lack of understanding of the migrants themselves, mainly related to the language barrier.

It is clear that the German society is puzzled by the problem of security and is concerned about the growth of crime on the part of immigrants and refugees [20, p. 42].

Although organized criminal structures that host migrants and organize illegal border crossings are becoming increasingly active among refugees and migrants in 2017 [8, p. 42], in general, the overall crime rate in Germany has been gradually decreasing, reaching the lowest level since 1992 in 2018.

In addition to the growing security concern of the German population, there are a number of other problems associated with immigrants in German society. In particular,

the intercultural problems that arise in society and the rejection of immigrants by Germans are mainly caused by the weak desire of foreigners to integrate into German society. Of course, adaptation and integration into a foreign culture and society is a very complex and time-consuming process that requires a long time and serious effort [18, p. 101].

Numerous studies show that migrants who have arrived in another country for the purpose of permanent residence in it, as a rule, are focused on assimilation. On the other hand, refugees who are forced to leave their country for political reasons are not psychologically ready to break ties with it so quickly, and therefore the process of assimilation is more difficult for them. The main feature of successful cross-cultural communication is not the rejection of immigrants from their cultural values and the full acceptance of a new culture, but the ability to combine different value systems, through the development and adoption of new cultural norms and values. Mastering the cultural values of another society usually takes place through education. The position of the German authorities on the education of foreigners is quite clearly formulated: knowledge of the German language is the main and most important requirement for immigrants. However, not everyone successfully copes with this task [13, p. 194]. Accordingly, due to the lack of the knowledge of the German language, many migrants simply cannot be included in the labor force and become active members of society [13, p. 22].

The German authorities have high hopes for the children of immigrants. About a million people of the Muslim population are of school age, so the contribution of forces and resources to their adaptation, integration and development is a contribution to the future of German society. Migrant children are taught on an equal basis with German schoolchildren and are required to follow the same school curriculum. Experts note that the majority of migrant children have a fairly good motivation, they strive to learn the new language and succeed in their studies. However, Germany's public schools have faced many challenges, including class congestion, and a shortage of qualified staff, excessive workload for teachers and social workers, and the physical and emotional state of new students. All this undoubtedly affects the quality of education, and due to the large number of foreign children, not everyone is able to provide enough attention. Nevertheless, it seems that the distribution of refugees to ordinary secondary schools can be considered the most effective way of their adaptation and integration into German society [4].

However, Muslims, whose number in the German society is constantly increasing and who consider themselves already part of this society, are in favor of including aspects of the national culture and religion of immigrants in the educational program. Immigrant communities are trying to introduce their children to their national culture through their own means and resources. And Muslim leaders are pushing for the elimination of secular education and the creation of special ethnic schools. Germany's politics in relation to education is to preserve the leading role of the German culture and to involve the children of immigrants in the culture through teaching the German language [21, p. 83].

In the absence of the desire and desire of immigrants to study, or due to the inability to carry out this training, with insufficient qualifications and lack of knowledge of the German language, immigrants have great difficulties in integrating into the labor force [22].

With successful integration courses and proper professional training, migrants will be able to enter the German labor market, but this will take about two years. A survey conducted by the German Federal Association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry showed that from the arrival of a young refugee to the beginning of vocational training, an

average of 22 months pass, this time is spent on the consideration of an asylum application and on learning the basics of the German language [23, p. 108].

Another issue in the integration of immigrants into the world of work is the issue of religious tolerance and acceptance of cultural traditions. In April 2018, Germany and several other countries adopted laws prohibiting the wearing of headdresses and items of clothing that cover the face in certain places [24]. As a result, Muslim women who wear the hijab cannot get a job, which also contributes to an increase in the unemployment rate of citizens of foreign origin [5, p. 176].

Thus, the unemployment rate among migrants and refugees is quite high and amounts to 40–80 %. According to the Institute of German Economics, with the influx of refugees, the unemployment rate in the country increased by 1.5 %. In the first half of 2017, only 203 thousand refugees were involved in labor employment, 54 thousand of them were underemployed [25]. At the same time, according to data from September 2017, 55.2 % of the 4.3 million recipients of social security benefits were immigrants. In 2013, this figure was 43 % [26]. As of May 2018, according to the report by the German Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, BA), 300,000 migrants were employed in Germany. However, most of the refugees who arrived during the migration crisis still do not have a job and prefer to sit on social benefits [27].

Immigrants, who use social security, put enormous pressure on the country's financial system. In 2019, the German authorities allocated 6.85 billion euros for social housing and benefits for migrants [28].

Young Muslim migrants tend to be socially excluded because of their low level of education and low chances of successful employment, which in turn is the cause of poverty. And since the Basic Law of Germany guarantees freedom of religion, they compensate for this by religious, cultural and ethnic hyperidentification, which contributes to the active spread of Islam in Germany [29, p. 374].

Today, Islam is the second religion in Germany after Christianity. Currently, there are about five million Muslims living in Germany, making up approximately 6 % of the country's population. According to the German statistical portal Statista, there are already more than 2.8 thousand prayer houses of mosques in the country, the largest of which are located in Berlin, as well as in Frankfurt am Main and Mannheim [30].

Interfaith contradictions are still an acute problem in the German society. The main cause of concern in the society is the growth of followers of the radical Islam. German law enforcement agencies note the growing influence of the extremely conservative Islamic movement-Salafism, despite the fact that they are a marginal minority, but pose a danger to society. The exact number of followers of Islamic fundamentalism is quite difficult to name, so there are no official data [31, p. 45].

According to the Federal Service for the Protection of the Constitution, 28 radical Islamist groups with a total number of more than 32 thousand people operate in Germany. The most well-known terrorist groups of the Islamist trend in Germany are: ISIL¹, Hamas, Hezbollah, and Ansar al-Islam [32, p. 122]. Along with these groups, there are also quite legal Muslim organizations in Germany that do not pursue the goals of military “global jihad”, but see themselves as representatives of the interests of the Muslim part of the population. The largest organization that “defends the rights of Muslims” is the “Islamic

¹ Organization is forbidden in Russian Federation.

Community of Milli Görüs”, which has more than 26.5 thousand activists. Currently, there are more than 50 centers belonging to this group in Germany. They spread their understanding of the future of Germany as a Muslim country among the population [32, p. 122].

Germany is trying to counteract the Islamization of the country. The Federal Service for the Protection of the Constitution uses special methods of combating extremism, introducing its agents into extremist organizations. In the federal state of Saxony, which has recently been characterized by increased activity of various extremist organizations, there is a special police unit that not only counteracts the involvement of young people in radical movements, but also controls such organizations through constant searches and pressure [33, p. 103].

So, we can identify several main problems that arise when adapting immigrants in German society. First, it is, of course, the issue of security and the increase in crime associated with the increased flow of migrants and refugees. Secondly, it is the reluctance of migrants to integrate into the new society. In addition, problems for immigrants arise in connection with the religious aspect. Thus, in Germany, the unemployment rate among the immigrant population is increasing. In addition to unemployment, we should mention the problem of excessive use of social benefits by immigrants, which puts pressure on the German financial system. The whole complex of these difficulties causes an increase in the negative attitude towards immigrants on the part of the host society. The last but not least problem is the spread of Islam in Germany, which leads to sectarian contradictions and conflicts, the growth of extremism among radical Islamic groups and the growing influence of organizations seeking to change the constitutional system of Germany.

The integration of immigrants in Germany in modern conditions is complicated by the presence of such serious problems as the significant scale of immigration, the significant cultural gap between immigrants and German society, as well as the socio-economic marginalization of immigrants. Therefore, in the context of the migration crisis, Germany is tightening its integration politics. Currently, the politics of social integration and cultural and linguistic adaptation is relevant for Germany. Despite the obvious advantages and achievements of the integration politics, Germany still has problems with the adaptation of immigrants, which it seeks to solve through intercultural dialogue and the achievement of interfaith understanding, which reduces the tense situation in society.

Conclusions

Germany has a vast experience in immigration politics, in order to improve the efficiency of regulating immigration flows and implementing integration policies, a large number of state reforms were carried out, which made Germany one of the most regulated countries in the world regarding the stay of immigrants on its territory. Germany faces many challenges related to the settlement of the problem of integration, the quality of which will determine the level of integration of immigrants, the cohesion of society, and the preservation of the cultural image of Germany. The characteristic factors influencing the process of sociocultural integration of immigrants in Germany include: awareness and acceptance of Germany as the country of immigration by the German society, the predominance of a tolerant attitude towards foreigners in society; implementation by the state of an even distribution of migrants in the country and prevention of ghettos; the increasing Islamization of the German society; implementation of integration courses, including the study of the language, culture and history of Germany, the functioning of the German society; implementation of

civil integration courses, during which social competence is formed and courses that are targeted, depending on the categories of migrants; availability of training and advanced training courses for adult immigrants, created for the successful integration of migrants into the labor market; compulsory attendance of migrant children in schools and the study of the German language, culture, and history of Germany; active coverage of the integration of immigrants in the German media. The influence of German television channels, forming a positive perception of immigrants in German society.

The experience of Germany undoubtedly deserves attention from other European countries that need to form their integration politics towards immigrants and are in the process of constructing a national and state identity.

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Немецкий опыт интеграции мигрантов

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В данной статье представлен комплексный анализ интеграционной политики Германии и обозначены особенности ее реализации. Авторы рассматривают ретроспективу миграционных процессов в Германии, а также современную миграционную ситуацию. Предлагается анализ миграционной политики Германии и тех мер, которые предпринимает правительство ФРГ для реализации интеграционных программ для иммигрантов. Определены проблемы интеграции иммигрантов в современных условиях. В статье также описывается социокультурная интеграция иммигрантов с учетом их культурных и этнических особенностей. Проводится анализ проблем и трудностей, возникающих при адаптации иммигрантов в немецком обществе. Для достижения поставленной цели авторами был использован ряд методов, таких как: исторический метод, который позволил проследить этапы развития интеграционной политики Германии и выявить факторы, повлиявшие на формирование интеграционной политики современных иммигрантов; метод статистического анализа, позволивший определить масштаб иммиграции; а также метод системного анализа, который был использован для получения целостного представления о текущей миграционной ситуации в Германии. Несомненно, тема миграции, интеграции и адаптации иммигрантов остается весьма актуальной, особенно для объединенной Европы. В ФРГ было проведено большое количество государственных реформ для усиления эффективности регулирования иммиграционных потоков и реализации интеграционной политики. Представляется, что опыт реализации миграционной политики, трудности, которые пришлось преодолевать на этом пути, и результаты, которых удалось добиться Германии, ставшей благодаря реализации политики гостеприимства и открытых дверей одной из стран с чрезвычайно большим количеством иммигрантов, может оказаться полезным и интересным для других стран Европы.

Ключевые слова: миграционная политика Германии, социокультурная интеграция иммигрантов, адаптация иммигрантов, миграционные процессы, европейский миграционный кризис.

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