Karmen Medica[1]

Migrations from a Local and Global Perspective: Interactions and Reflections

Abstract: The article addresses several topical issues from the contemporary migrant context, both at the regional and global levels. When it comes to the European Union's sphere, the emphasis is on the issues of integration and mediatisation of the migrant context, as well as on the security situation. Among the general public prevails the opinion that it is migrants who most disrupt and threaten security. The terminology used in the migrant context has strong mechanical connotations.

Issues and dilemmas of integration are illustrated by selected examples from the UK, the Netherlands and Slovenia, and presented with references to the media discourse, selected literature and the author's previous research. The text questions the functionality of European migration policies and integration practices, which establish surveillance rather than interaction between migrants and the domicile population.

Keywords: migrants, security dilemmas, terminology, integration, the UK, the Netherlands, Slovenia

Migracije z lokalnega in globalnega vidika: interakcije in razmišljanja
Izvleček: V prispevku soočamo aktualnosti iz sodobnega migrantskega konteksta – na lokalni in globalni ravni. Kadar gre za prostor

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[1] Dr. Karmen Medica je izredna profesorica na Fakulteti za humanistične študije Koper. E-naslov: karmen.medica@fhs.upr.si.

EU, je poudarek na vprašanjih integracije in vse bolj prisotne medijacije migrantskega konteksta, ravno tako varnostne situacije. Za slednjo prevladuje mnenje, da jo v največji meri ogrožajo ravno migranti. Terminologija, ki se uporablja v migrantskem kontekstu, je konotirana izrazito mehanicistično.

Vprašanja in dileme integracije so osvetljene na primerih praks iz Velike Britanije, Nizozemske in Slovenije, predstavljena so skozi medijski diskurz, izbrano literaturo in raziskave avtorice. V prispevku se odpirajo dileme o funkcionalnosti evropskih migracijskih politik in integracijskih praks, s katerimi se na relaciji migranti in domače prebivalstvo vzpostavlja bolj nadzor kot interakcija.

Ključne besede: migranti, vprašanje varnosti, terminologija, integracija, Velika Britanija, Nizozemska, Slovenija

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Fear of migrants or migrants' fear

Contemporary modernisation and migration processes have made the issue of regulating migration policies and integration strategies a central interest in the social sciences despite the national security, which remains a primarily positive identification and target possibility.

Migration processes, particularly undocumented ones, inspire Europe and the larger world with fear – justified, according to some, by sundry forms of migrants' violence against the majority population and the state, by economic imbalance, by their concentration on the fringes of large cities, but also by the political and economic exploitation of their problems. Other causes of fear are contemporary political changes at both national and interna-

tional levels, as well as a growing collective desire for safety. This desire goes hand in hand with an economic crisis spreading even in the most affluent countries.

Due to economic conditions and based on the increasing need for manpower, the increased proportion of economic migrants will represent, despite the current economic crisis and recession, one of the main compensation mechanisms for the shortage of manpower on the labour market. However, the problem of immigration is not listed high on the agenda of the current European policies – it is mentioned predominantly under the heading "Security".

Globalisation, transports, and communication have speeded up and facilitated migration, which used to be far less simple and viable. While some routes of migration have been dictated by the historical ties of colonialism, trends have revealed that migrants, particularly since the fall of the Eastern bloc, have been looking for new destinations on the basis of suggestions by friends, agencies, families.[2]

Despite publicised reports of raids and threats of sanctions against lawbreakers, traffic in humans and – ever more frequently – human organs as well as prostitution are still on the rise.

Especially some of the people in transit across the Mediterranean are victims of human traffickers: women and children, who, even if they reach land safely, will be condemned to a life of exploitation and abuse.[3] Human traffickers are well aware of the legal loopholes; in fact, they run less risk than any other illegal activity would entail. Today the national states attempt to regulate the fluidity of labour in relation to the capital, while capitalism attempts

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[2] War migrants, refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq need special observation and reflection, which is why they are excluded from this context.
[3] *L'Espresso*, May 17, 2007, p. 10.

to set the price of labour on the basis of the global minimum, regardless of the global needs.[4]

With the increasing military enforcement of national borders and the severe penalties, the survey of migrations in the EU has yielded results that are far from ideal. How can a state defend itself against a process which is globally linked to its own development? How can migration offices form precise rules to distinguish legal migrants from illegal ones? In terms of the relationship between globalisation and migration, state laws often contradict each other.

Deregulation of labour makes the labour market easier to control at a global level, at the same time stimulating informal economy which involves migrants more than it does the resident labour force. The political and ruling elites are preoccupied with the issue of who belongs to the richer part of the world (Europe, the USA, Canada, Australia), who has a right to stay "here". In Europe, especially undocumented migrants are "invisible", and it is in the interest of many that they become even more so.

The questions increasingly raised in the official circles are: How safe are we from the "turbulent" migration flows in modern society? How safe are our jobs from migrants; how safe are our houses, streets? But the opposite question could be asked as well: How safe are migrants from the European need for new workforce, from their low birth rate, from desire for a fast income and extra profit?

Media—migrants interaction

The reporting of the media, especially the press, by using specific discourse strategies follows the ideology of the elite groups, which is demonstrated by the linguistic elements used by the dominant groups in relation to subordinate migrants and other minority

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[4] Tapinos, 1999; Torpey, 2000.

groups. The media language reproduces the ideological beliefs and common sense logic that become the subject of appropriation by individuals in society. The ideological dimension of media language includes the creation of specific social relations.

"People who are living in the EU illegally should be returned to the countries where they came from, but it should be done with dignity,"[5] says former European Commissioner Frattini in a press release from 2005. A semblance of concern – in fact a phobia about refugees and asylum seekers – is incessantly fuelled by campaigns against "bogus asylum seekers", "asylum seeking parasites", and "economic refugees", especially those coming from the so-called Third World. The very closure of borders, strict controls, and especially the visa regimes generate new migrants and a need for smugglers. And the intolerance-fostering political actions always find support in some of the mass media.

Articles, interviews, on-the-spot reports, commentaries, letters to the editor etc. can shed light on the perception of national security and on the relationship between the media and the public. This type of discourse, embedded in all spheres of everyday life, generates the sense of a "new threat", a "constant danger", a peculiar "panic circle". The latter may be interpreted as embodying the typical attitude to migrants. Yet on the other hand the media indirectly stimulate undocumented migrations themselves, painting pictures of a better life elsewhere. For people living in the east and south, the images of the affluent north and west as transmitted by global media networks are incentives not only to consumerism, but also to migration.

The media–migrant interaction is an integral part of the everyday social context at all levels of modern society, institutional and non-institutional.

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[5] *Delo*, September 2, 2005, p. 4.

Such dynamics promotes a whole range of social changes and processes. What has recently been in the forefront of such processes is the transition from mediation to mediatisation. Mediation is a transfer or transmission of communication by providing the media, and mediatisation includes the active participation of the media to communicate the social and cultural context within which this action can be understood and interpreted.

Mediatisation refers to the "beyond" (meta)changes of the media and forms of communication, which result in changes in daily life: in changes of personal and collective identities in the social relations and in the society as a whole. Mediatisation is increasingly and intensively changing the relationships between media and society.

Reports on migrants are dominated by a depersonalised approach, which encourages generalisation and reinforces stereotypes while failing to give a realistic picture of the situation. One of the problems identified is the lack of profiled people who could be presented as representatives of the migrant community. The fact is that the media and journalists often refrain from publishing information from certain sources.

The result of this circle is confirmed by the general opinion typically incurred by migrants only in non-standard cases, with a strong emphasis on sensationalism in the presentation topics. In addition, the integration of migrant communities largely depends on how much they are recognised, identified and found attractive at least by part of the public.

By changing the form and means of communication as well as the form of uniting people, forms of social power are also changing. Changes in dealing with migrant issues in the EU become evident at three levels: in the media, in politics, and in the terminology of everyday life.

EU terminology of migration

The omnipresence of migration flows in modern society draws attention to the fact that even migration terminology itself has become politically manipulative and conceptually useless. This is further confirmed by the terminology widely used in the official EU circles, which many find largely mechanistic and hence dehumanising.

The very terminology used by state agencies implies the potentially criminal nature of migrations, which therefore require increased surveillance, well-organised border controls, alerts to other countries, general principles, and all-round measures.

In the European Commission circles and documents, the following terms are the most outstanding: action, action plan, instruments, instrumentarium, mechanisms, operations.

Given the above, it seems perfectly reasonable to draw a comparison between migrants and slaves, which has been done by numerous scientists dealing with migration processes (Castels, Miler, Papastdergiadis, Bade, Vertovec): both terms refer to a non-free workforce subject to coerced movement. The comparison between migrants as workforce or "non-free workers" and slaves from the time of colonialism seems appropriate to Stephen Castles as well, for the following reasons: Migrants as a rule have limited access to health and economic rights, as well as to work contracts.[6] They are also frequently excluded from certain professions, senior positions and functions, and have problems acquiring work permits from individual employer. For this reason, workers (also in Slovenia) cannot seek employment with another employer, so that some are ultimately left with no alternative but to return to their home countries.[7]

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[6] Castles, 2006.
[7] Medica, Lukič, 2011.

The dynamic political deviations of the new world order (e.g. globalisation, the EU, the Schengen regime, deindustrialisation of the West) are radically changing the reasons for migration flows and creating new hindrances for migration.[8] A change has likewise occurred in the categories that define the notion of a migrant worker. Moreover, even the seemingly simple difference between an economic migrant and a political refugee may entail deportation in the former case and asylum in the latter.[9]

The pressure to protect the borders is increasing and the measures are evidently intended to protect the state apparatus rather than people. There is no doubt that increasing control of migrations is helping to obtain cheap labour.

One can notice the importance of the restrictions on movement or the right to enter and leave a country that the developed world has set up for all potential migrants. The strongly and rhetorically present legalisation of migration is becoming a volatile challenge. Migration became undocumented and illegal once new laws had been introduced, setting a new *modus vivendi*, new rules on movement in a given area.[10]

As long as there is a widespread public stereotypical conception of immigrants, as long as the attitude of the state towards immigrant workers and its political, religious and cultural expectations permit the immigrants to be scorned by their immediate community or at work and to be marginalised in the society at large, it is paradoxical to talk of the implementation of integration into the wider society.

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[8] Papastdergiadis, 2000.
[9] Medica, 2007.
[10] Bade, 2005.

Integration or stigmatisation

New research approaches strive to find answers to the questions: "Where are you from?" vs. "Where are you at?"

The German researchers Zimmermann, Gataullina and Constant,[11] used in their study on ethnic identity and ethnic belonging the so-called *ethnosizer* (a means of measuring ethnic identity).

The *ethnosizer,* a measure of the intensity of a person's ethnic identity, is constructed from information on the following elements: language, culture, societal interaction, history of migration, and ethnic self-identification. A two-dimensional concept of the *ethnosizer* assigns four statuses to immigrants: integration, assimilation, separation and marginalisation. The levels of integration, assimilation, separation, stigmatisation, and marginalisation are determined on the basis of individual characteristics, such as language, culture, social interaction, the time of immigration, and ethnic self-identification.

Among the immigrant groups in Germany, the intensity of ethnic identity is generally characterised by the following: ethnic identity is more persistent in females and in those who have received education in their home country, and it increases with the migrant's age at the time of entry. Young migrants are the most assimilated or integrated, Catholics and other Christians integrate and assimilate faster than other religions. Immigrants with college or higher education in the home country integrate very well but do not assimilate. Having some schooling is worse than no education for integration or assimilation. Those with tertiary education integrate more easily, but do not assimilate. Those with elementary education integrate and assimilate more slowly than those without any education. There are also individual differences: attachment to the homeland, parents, etc.

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[11] Zimmermann, Gataullina, Constant, 2006.

In the wider society, on the other hand, the stigmatisation of immigrant, ethnic or other groups is becoming a daily routine, manifested when members of those specific minority groups are equated with specific "problems". In such instances there is but a small step from a "black" to a "thief". This discrimination is not directed against all blacks, Arabs, Asians, Muslims, Jews, Roma, but only against those who are not ready to "integrate" immediately into "our" community according to our rules. The primary absurdity here is that people in particular circumstances are practically condemned before the fact – not for something that they have done, but for something that others might do in the future.

The welfare state is being replaced by the market and market relations, but the fundamental field of activity is the everyday world of people, the everyday interaction with people different from "us". It is precisely in this context that the power and adapt-ability of ethnic and national identity models express themselves through everyday expressions, phrases, jokes, ambiguities. When it is a matter of everyday situations, of our responses to fleeting encounters with others, prejudices seem harmless, innocent. At such times we hardly notice them – precisely because they are so quotidian. But it is the unsettling quality of these everyday prejudices that they reach epidemic proportions very soon. The prejudices are then transformed into tools of aggression, they presage lynching, excuse all sorts of discrimination, persecution, witch-hunts, or abandonment of threatened groups to their "fate". Thus the *status quo* in a given society is supported, rationalised and legitimised.

To illustrate, let us consider a few characteristics in three coun-tries.

Migrant Belonging and Multicultural Societies – The Examples of Great Britain, Holland, and Slovenia

Great Britain has introduced various ways of adaptation to a number of areas of everyday life, including the way of dressing. An obvious example of this in practice is Sikhs, as they are not required to wear the motorcycle helmets otherwise required by law. Likewise, all Sikhs who are members of the police or other armed forces can choose whether or not to wear the uniform hat or their traditional turban. Some are granted a short break from the workplace for prayer for religious reasons, as many Muslims are employed there. At the national level the burial of the dead in a shroud rather than a coffin is allowed. When swearing oaths in court each individual has the right to swear by the holy book that accords with his religion or the tradition of this religion. Christians swear by the Bible, Muslims by the Koran, Hindus by the Bhagavad Gita, Sikhs by the Guru Granth Sahib …

Today's social workers, police and hospital staff are often trained in "multicultural behaviour" and informed about the customs of people from other ethnic backgrounds. It is precisely these public employees who encounter potential ethnic differences on a daily basis.

Despite the many positive changes that have occurred in the attitude to immigrants in the recent years, feelings of hatred or prejudice still exist among members of the majority population. The locals are often indignant at the immigrants because they "exploit" social privileges, health services, and so on. At the same time, it is evident that the British health system would probably collapse if the immigrants employed there were to leave.

British researchers (Taylor, Fraser, Vertovec) stress the necessity of identifying and of positively evaluating the cultural differences in the wider society, where the accommodation of the society to the immigrant groups should be progressive and broad. Many mul-

ticultural programmes are geared toward the shaping of British national and cultural identity, which, though it would include the cultural roots of all local as well as immigrant cultures, would aim for the creation of its own stability.

The Netherlands very early showed the characteristics of an informal immigrant society marked by multicultural variety. Because of the mass immigration from former colonies, the Dutch – albeit not until the 1960s – began to "appreciate" guest workers from less developed European countries.

In a traditionally pluralistic societal system, with a high degree of self-determination in the school and health systems, the press and politics, the minorities began to integrate themselves and their organisations. Nevertheless this did not prevent the extremely disproportionate distribution of unemployment among the ethno-social groups.

Despite the strong Dutch liberal tradition, the existence of various anti-racist organisations, and programmes providing intercultural education in school, it has been impossible to avoid xenophobia and prejudice. These have been directed primarily at the dark-skinned population, such as the Turkish, Moroccan, and Surinamese inhabitants, as well as those from the Antilles. Dutch analysts have raised the criticism that multicultural diversity with a limited autonomy of organised group interests may cause the permanent minorisation of these immigrant groups, which are in a societal position devoid of privilege.

When on November 2, 2004, a 26-year-old Dutch-born Islamic extremist of Moroccan heritage murdered the film director Theo van Gogh, the long-standing illusion of absolute freedom in Holland was destroyed. "All of the myths in which we had been living for the past 50 years, that we were progressive and tolerant, that we were the moral leaders of the world, collapsed. All larger Dutch

cities are divided into ghettos. Immigrants can feel in a thousand and one ways that we take them as being less worthy than we are," says the Dutch director Stan van Houcke, who is convinced that Holland-born children of immigrant parents live between two worlds.

The Dutch analyst Paul Scheffer[12] provides the example of a young Moroccan from Amsterdam visiting his parents' country, where he is regarded as eccentric, while he himself feels like a foreigner. In Holland he is more Moroccan than in the country of his heritage: he does not feel Dutch and is not understood as such by the environment. Such experiences cause dire confusion in young people and open the door to searching for identity. In this context, identity is to be understood from the viewpoint of an open society, not as something self-understood and abstract. It is the product of societal development and changes, and as such it must be respected, maintained and integrated into the majority society.

Self-reflection is of key importance for constructing identity, but it needs to involve the entire society, or it may have a boomerang effect.

Slovenia

The identity of ethnic minorities from former Yugoslavia requires a small digression. Although these minorities are not constitutionally recognised as such, their minority status was acquired through a change in the national-legal affiliation – that is, with the fall of Yugoslavia and with Slovenia's independence. The Slovenian example is not the classic immigrant situation. The swift development of industry after World War II depleted the greater part of the "reserve" workforce in the region, thus establishing the conditions for

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[12] Scheffer, 2011.

the employment of workers from other Republics of former Yugoslavia. According to some figures, the influx began around 1961, and by 1963 as many as 23,203 seasonal workers had come to Slovenia. Most of them came from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia.

A high percentage of these workers came from less developed regions, where opportunities for primary and further education were limited. Migrants from those times were predominantly unskilled labour, earning very low wages and coming from the poorest societal classes. A certain percentage of these people stems from the officer corps of the former federal state who remained in Slovenia; there are also those who came for schooling and higher education and remained. During the war in former Yugoslavia, refugees came as well, and some stayed in Slovenia. How the identity options of the ethnic minorities from the area of former Yugoslavia are to be identified still remains an open question.

Marijanca Ajša Vižintin calls for changes in the educational system, too. She claims that teachers have a substantial influence on the successful inclusion of immigrant and refugee children with their knowledge and attitudes. Even greater effectiveness would be achieved if the teachers who support the inclusion of migrant children were employed full-time rather than on temporary projects, and if the learning objectives and teaching content tackling those topics were included in multi-perspective syllabuses, including academic programs.

"As active citizens, teachers should respond to the prejudices and discrimination in their (school) environments, and through their knowledge and activities promote the development of intercultural education. A significant part of this involves the development of intercultural dialogue at their educational institution and in the local community, in line with genuine diversity (multilin-

gualism, multi-ethnicity, multi-religiosity) and, importantly, together with the immigrants."[13]

European policies and Slovenian context

The area of former Yugoslavia remains in Slovenia the most important source of foreign labour force, employed in a variety of ways.

Immigration from the former Yugoslav states is quite typical of Slovenia, as these migrants represent more than 85 per cent of all migrants. Like in other countries, increased migration from Asia (China, Thailand) is present as well. However, the share of migrants from non-European countries in Slovenia is very low, representing less than 3 per cent of all migrants.[14]

Workers from former Yugoslavia are actually a fixture in Slovenia as their destination country. They constitute the largest influx; there is continuity in social networking, and due to geographical proximity the transport between these countries is quite frequent. But there is also a counter scenario – migrant workers who are no longer needed are sent back to their original environment. Most migrant workers come from Bosnia and Herzegovina, a country with an extremely high unemployment rate.

The lack of norms and regulations concerning the standards of living in single homes and residential facilities allows both companies and individuals to determine the circumstances in which the workers will live. The adoption of the decree on living conditions for foreigners which was prepared in 2008 by a working group within the Slovenian Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs would significantly change the starting position of migrant workers and reduce the possibility of exploitation and exposure to dehumanising housing con-

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[13] Vižintin, 2018, 98.
[14] Pajnik, 2012,148.

ditions, which were presented and documented in the study.[15] The aforementioned decree would ultimately set the legal basis for the improvement of elementary living conditions of migrant workers.

The "renting" and recruitment of workers for a limited period of time, which assume their return to the country of origin and are defined as "circular migration",[16] have proved in practice to be a short-term solution which allows unlimited exploitation of workers. Circular migration further adds to the dehumanisation and marginalisation of migrant workers – in addition to dysfunctional control, inability to note the extremely poor working and living conditions, and limited protection, particularly in the construction sector.

Due to the deepening economic crisis and increased levels of social vulnerability of the population, the current problems regarding migrant workers have been further intensified in the recent years. For this reason it is often impossible to establish the appropriate substantive continuity and temporal distance, especially in field work, selection and processing. The baseline survey was carried out to draw attention to unbearable living conditions and overcrowded workers' homes. However, at the end of the research, we reached quite the opposite conclusions. The economic crisis and recession, and above all, the unsafe operations of construction companies led to financial fractures, bankruptcies and collapses of what were once construction giants in Slovenia.

The analysis of European policies on economic migration and the Slovenian case within that context point to two fundamental

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[15] Karmen Medica: *"Poklicali smo delovno silo, prišli pa so ljudje"* – Analiza socialne strukture in integracijskih strategij tujih delavcev v Sloveniji (*"We called for workforce, but it was people who came"* – Analysis of the social structure and integration strategies of foreign workers in Slovenia). Research project 2008–2012.

[16] Vertovec, 2007.

goals: firstly, the quest for effective strategies to attract migrant workers and, secondly, the setting-up of mechanisms for the implementation of the temporary nature of their stay and work to prevent permanent settlement of migrant workers in the European Union. The ongoing practice suggests that the state encourages immigration when it needs new workforce, while at the same time not providing for the proper integration of immigrants. On the other hand, in periods of increased unemployment and socio-economic crisis, immigrants often find themselves in the scapegoat position, caught in the often dysfunctional legal frames which prevent adequate access to social security.

The comments and reflections carried out in this study are closely related to social, economic, legal, security and many other causes and consequences of migration processes. As such, they are directly related to everyday life in all spheres of society. The focus of this complexity is on the process of globalisation, rapidly growing economy, low birth rate, Europe's population, economic crisis and recession.

Integration or extortion

While from the theoretical point of view integration has almost reached its qualitative peaks, practice has turned out to be far less one-dimensional: quite the contrary, in fact.

Instead of focusing on the integration and inclusion of these migrant workers, who are needed in this country on a long-term basis, we can only talk about the absence of any form of integration in actual practice as well as the absence of any strategic consideration thereof.

We can agree with Mojca Pajnik[17] that integration both as a concept and as a policy orientation of migration management

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[17] Pajnik, 2012.

provides in Slovenia new reflections on the contradictions of integration.

The starting points for the formulation of a migration policy in the EU and Slovenia indicate two basic approaches to migration management with regard to the economic aspects of migrations:

The first approach focuses on the regulation of migrant flows. The second approach targets measures concerning migrants who are already in the host state: in their cases integration is referred to as the most important instrument. With reference to circular migrations, however, the latter approach gives the increasingly emphasised integration a contradictory interpretation of circularity.

Another danger that such "circular" migration may cause lies in a potential transformation of this public policy into a means of supervision and exploitation of migrant workers. On the basis of field work and of direct interviews conducted with migrant workers, we have arrived at the following alarming conclusions:

Status granting as an instrument of extortion. This conclusion is related to the system of migrant circulation, which has been changed by employers into a system of extortion, since a certain status or permit is granted only if the conditions are met. The confounding effect of this pattern is illustrated by the example below, which we identified in an interview conducted with workers from the workers' residence hall of the company Primorje d.o.o. on October 5, 2010:

A person worked for four years and eight months at Euro stan nepremičnine d.o.o., where the employer paid all his contributions and registered him. Then he was transferred to another company, where he has not been registered, even though the employer keeps promising him for some time now that he will do so. He is only four months away from the right to permanent residence and he would like to know what he can do. Another worker from the same company told us that the employer threatens him that he will de-

stroy his visa and will not pay him the money he owed him... This company does not pay its workers regularly.

(Izola, Workers' Residence Hall of Primorje, d. o. o., October 5, 2010)[18]

During our research[19] we found on several occasions that employers used extremely effective means to pressurise workers by subjecting the granting of status to various conditions, as well as by refusing to (fully) inform them.

The parallel migration market – the third conclusion, which derives from the actual treatment of the circular migration problem – means that a parallel migration policy was formulated during the period of intensive economic growth just before the economic and social crisis. This particular policy may be defined by the aforementioned pattern of extortion of workers: the rules are exploited for the granting of certain long-term statuses and identified as an informal, quasi-personnel migration policy mainly implemented by employment agencies. According to the Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia, the latter are often not registered at all.

One of the most extreme implications of this system is illustrated by the example of two workers from Bulgaria, which was documented in August 2010. Before they came to Slovenia, an employment agent promised them great earnings. The workers said that they worked without payment for a full month, from morning till evening. It was only when they tried to find their employer that

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[18] Medica, Lukić, 2011.

[19] Karmen Medica's research project: "*We called for work-force, but it was people who came*" – Analysis of the social structure and integration strategies of foreign workers in Slovenia.

they realised he was gone. The two Bulgarian workers returned home with the assistance of the Bulgarian Embassy, and their employer disappeared without a trace. On the other hand, such a system brings the purported employers enormous profit.

This led to the creation of a parallel system of migrations on the labour market that has developed its own vocabulary. Just how dangerous the implications of this system are is shown even by the mere use of words. As has been revealed in our interviews with workers, their "employers" treat them as slaves, for which reason workers begin to identify themselves as "slaves" as well.

Police activity aims at protecting the system – the social and political domination, which includes regulating the labour market. The latter is nowadays achieved primarily by tracking economic migrants, refugees, and migrants without papers. The measure of success is a well-organised raid, the number of captured people, border control. In measuring success by such standards, the police are often joined by the media. Improved control of the border crossings and striking news items about captured fugitives on the crime pages create the impression that we are safe, secure, well provided for and, of course, well-informed.

Despite the current situation, economic crisis and recession, Slovenia remains an immigration country dependent on migrant workers, mainly in construction. Migrant workers have become a topic of everyday politics, media, education[20] and science,[21] through

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[20] According to the latest data for November 2010, the Register of Employment Agencies contains 194 such agencies. Accessible at: http://www.mddsz.gov.si/si/delovna_podrocja/trg_dela_in_zaposlovanje/posredovanje_in_zagotavljanje_dela/ .

[21] See the annual report of the Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia for 2009. Accessible at: http://www.id.gov.si/fileadmin/id.gov.si/pageuploads/Splosno/porocilo_2009.pdf.

which we also face the prospect for the development of Slovenian society as a whole.

In Lieu of a Conclusion

Migrations have become the principal phenomenon for understanding contemporary global problems: poverty, unequal development, human trafficking, multiculturalism and even terrorism. Nowadays, they affect the economic and social foundations of most states, having increased so drastically that no one can foresee their various manifestations, not to mention their consequences. Their omnipresent effects in today's society reveal that migration-related terminology has become a subject of political manipulation, and that its concepts have proved inapplicable to reality.

Recently, the use of the instrument of circular migration has been on the increase. Its principal aim is to fill the gaps in the labour market, particularly that of the EU, to facilitate the development of the migrants' countries of origin, and to prevent circular migration from turning into permanent. In theory, the rotational concept of circular migration has proved contradictory; in practice, it has proved to be inapplicable in the long run and unacceptable from an ethical point of view. The fixed-term employment of workers, based on an assumption of their return to their country of origin, is only a short-term solution; instead it would seem more reasonable to transform the more or less short-term and discontinuous migration policies and integration strategies, models and concepts into continuous and applied ones.

Identity changes, belonging and non-belonging are actually an echo of the challenge represented by the presence of different cultures in a society, including the contributions made by these groups, and through maintaining contact with their home culture. The key identifications in society take place at the local, micro level, in various

forms of everyday contact with the inhabitants of a specific region.

The feelings of belonging to the domicile population or to the various minorities and migrant communities should not be mutually exclusive. The common goal is to establish a dialogue of communication in the public space for all. Decisions, strategies and programmes of political and media elites in modern societies have proved insufficient to establish social cohesion and balance in practice. Interactive integration into society is viable when integration is accepted by all social actors: migrants, media, politicians, and above all "ordinary" people.

If no-one (the immigrant and native populations, the ethnic minorities and the majority population) is prepared to play a role, then the desired results will not be brought about even by the best models and concepts of integration, or by any measures or intentions. The former prevalence of adaptation and integration into the new environment, arising from the Darwinist assumption that one has to *"adapt or die",* is being surpassed. New processes are increasingly adopting the evolution proceeding from primary adaptation to universal progress in the new environment. The positive integration praxis can now be summarised in another phrase*:* *"Adapt and integrate, integrate and thrive."*

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