мита «Восточного Партнерства» в Риге. Стратегической целью, которую обяза-
тельно необходимо намечать на ближайший период, должен быть выход на под-
писание рамочного соглашения о сотрудничестве между ЕС и Республикой Бела-
русь. По причине отсутствия этих договоренностей наша страна не способна
полностью участвовать в инициативе «Восточное Партнерство» и в значитель-
ном количестве иных европейских программ, что в переводе на цифры «упущен-
ной выгоды» равно сотням миллионов евро. Ограниченностью возможностей ча-
стично объясняются и откровенно слабые показатели Беларуси в освоении де-
нежных средств в рамках «Восточного Партнерства»: Армения — 157 млн евро, 
Азербайджан — 100 млн евро, Беларусь — 41 млн евро, Грузия — 180 млн евро, 
Молдова — 273 млн евро, Украина — 470 млн евро.

В целом стоит отметить, что развитие отношений Беларусь — ЕС и ЕС — Ев-
разийский Экономический Союз во многом будет зависеть от развития отноше-
ний Россия — ЕС. Геополитическая миссия «связующего звена», которую пытает-
ся примерять белорусское государство, может стать нашей задачей в рамках евра-
зийской интеграции, что в целом соответствует миролюбивым устремлениям оте-
чественной внешней политики. Недопущение конфликта между ЕС и РФ, сохра-
нение баланса сил и возможностей для сотрудничества является объяснимым ин-
тересом Беларуси, и эта линия уже реализуется на практике в качестве «особой позиции» белорусской стороны по ситуации в Украине, которую отдельные дол-
жностные лица государств ЕС назвали «независимой от России» (министр вто-
ричной политики Беларуси Л. Линкявичус). Думается, что речь идет не о противопостав-
лении России, а о сохранении возможности для диалога, в том числе в интересах евразийской интеграции, так как изначальный замысел евразийского проекта предполагал его перспективой создание зоны свободной торговли между ЕАЭС и ЕС как «единой Европы от Лиссабона до Владивостока». Очевидно, что возникновение такого мощного экономического союза на основе объединения сырьевых ресурсов России и технологических возможностей ЕС способно кардинальным образом изменить мировой порядок в пользу более справедливого мироустройства.

MIGRATION PROCESS AS AN IMPORTANT FIELD
OF THE EU-BELARUS COOPERATION

L. Titarenko, Dr. sc. in sociology, professor, Department of sociology, BSU

There are several programs provided by the EU with the aim to solve some problems
of mutual interests. As a part of the Eastern partnership (EaP) program Belarus has a pos-
sibility to cooperate in decision-making of cross-border migration processes between Be-
larus and the EU. Such cooperation can bring mutual benefits for both sides, including
the issues of regional stability (one of the EU priorities in the Eastern partnership). How-
ever, the EU insists on the common approaches to all six members of this program as well
as the acceptance of the “European values” and the EU legislative standards. As the leg-
islative approaches of two sides (the EU and Belarus) differ, the cooperation is not always
effective. Therefore, from the EU lens, Belarus is viewed as being behind all other EaP members because of the low linkages and approximation [1]. Additionally, as Belarus is in the Union with Russia, its migration processes are coordinated with Russia. As a result, Belarus is less involved in the interrelations and cooperation with the EU in migration and related issues (approval of frontier movements, readmission agreement, and visa facilitation) than it might be expected by the EU.

This situation may lead to misunderstanding of each other in the negotiations of migration issues, slow process of discussion of several technical aspects of the cooperation between Belarus and the EU. However, it is not in the interests of both sides to keep Belarus isolated as Belarus is situated in the borderland between the East and the West and can serve as a bridge between these two different neighbours.

Labour migration from Belarus to the EU follows a pattern of replacing migration. It means that Belarusians substitute those local employees in Central Europe who left for Germany, UK, etc. The number of Belarusian labour migrants to the EU is much less than to Russia. Thus, total departures of Belarusians to the non—CIS states are 10—15 per cent of migration flows, including those who left for a new permanent place of living. Migration to each neighboring country has specific features; however, in all cases labor mobility to the EU is a way to achieve a higher standard of living and better future perspectives than in Belarus.

However, much more non-Belarusians cross the EU-Belarusian border legally and illegally hoping to stay there for a long time or forever. Therefore, migration relates to the people of any citizenship who entered the EU from the territory of Belarus.

From the EU interests, migration regulation means readmission of all illegal migrants to the country bordering the EU. Belarus does not want to accept all potential migrants for whom Belarus is a transit to the West. For this reason it was necessary to sign an agreement on readmission with Russia.

The EU-Belarusian migration policy field of cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and the European Union covers the issues related to the so called illegal migrants entered the EU from Belarus. For the EU it is no difference whether these migrants are citizens of Belarus or not: according to the EU approach, all illegal migrants have to return to Republic of Belarus. Therefore, the EU insisted to sign an Agreement on readmission. The main concern of the EU is security: keep the border closed for all illegal migrants and use the resources of bordering countries for this goal.

From the approach of the Republic of Belarus, the country is not responsible for the non-citizens if their status in the EU is illegal. The pragmatic problem for Belarusian migration policy related to security issue is to control and regulate unwanted migrants who often use Belarus as a transit country to go to the EU. The policy regulation of migration of the third countries nationals to the EU through Belarusian borders is not simple as until recently Belarus had no readmission agreements.

The reason is a divergence of the migration policy interests of the EU and Belarus: their shared goal is the ‘soft security’ cooperation, while readmission is important only for the EU. Some other policy interests declared by the EU, such as human rights violation, are not officially recognized by Belarusian authorities, being at the same time an EU po-
itical precondition for further talks. When in 2011 the EU made a decision to open negotiations on readmission with Belarus, the Belarusian authorities pointed out that the EU proposal combined two issues — readmission and visas simplification. Belarusian authorities were ready to start the negotiations on visa simplification; however, they did not want to combine two issues. Therefore, it was declared that “this condition significantly complicates the decision” [2]. (BelaPAN 2011). As a result, readmission policies of those third-country nationals who transited through Belarus to the EU remain uncertain. Till now they are not taken back to Belarus.

The arguments for the current position of Belarus on readmission are numerous and lie in political and economic spheres. The main reason is that it is not in the interests of Belarus to accept back the third countries nationals unless there are no readmission agreements with the third countries.

Russia plays an important role in this issue due to the Union State conditions. Most third country nationals went to Belarus from Russia. Before the existence of readmission agreement between Belarus and Russia it is not possible to accept them back from the EU (if they are illegal) and bring to Russia. Perhaps, it is politically more important for Belarus and Russia to sign readmission agreement between them, and only after that Belarus can start the negotiations on the readmission agreement with the EU.

The first agreement was signed in March 2013 with Turkey [3]. Second was Kazakhstan. However, due to the longest common borders and non-visa regime, the most important readmission agreement for Belarus is one with Russia. This agreement was signed on November 15, 2013 [4]. Only after this agreement is signed and turned into force, Republic of Belarus can practically decide the issue of the readmission agreement with the EU.

The case with readmission proved the fact that the EU expected a success in using in Belarus the similar strategies and policies that were successful in other non-EU countries. However, there are limits for the EU geopolitical influence constituted by the other countries of the region. Although the reconstruction of socio-political spaces and borders in the post-soviet period made the EU much stronger and more influential than earlier in this region, it might be a mistake to underestimate the role of Russia and its influence on the former soviet republics. In case of Belarus the EU cannot use its most attractive stimulus in relations, the EU membership: Belarusian state is not interested in it as Belarus is a part of the Eurasian economic union. Therefore, there are no powerful instruments to force Belarus follow the EU rules and policies. The best way of cooperation is to find the issues of the mutual interests, i.e. consider both sides as equal partners and respect their interests.

The EU and Belarus have the main common interest in security cooperation in Eastern Europe, however, additionally to this sphere; their shared interests are limited. The key problem is that the EU always put several political and ideological conditions for cooperation. In Belarus all the EU policies became dependent on discourse on human rights (and later on the issue of political prisoners). As Belarusian authorities are not interested in discussing this sphere beyond their own limits, there is no hope for improvement of the situation following this way. Therefore, there exists “the very limited leverage of the EU over the country” [5, p. 143]. At the same time it is not the failure of the EaP program: it
is only a strong indicator to search for new instruments to implement this program, including those that will benefit both sides. In any case, the basic interest of the EU is to keep their eastern borders safe and secure; and realization of this interest requests the full cooperation with the border countries on the state level.

The EU-Belarus migration policy cooperation demonstrates that it has to benefit both sides. Therefore, when the EU tries to pursue only its own interests the cooperation may not reach the expected goal. The case with the readmission agreement shows that the EU method of ‘external governance’ does not always result in subordination of the other state; it may face a rejection reaction as in case of Belarus [6]. It is a common knowledge that the interests of all countries involved in construction of the new security system and reforming the common space should coincide or at least counted by other partners, even by the most powerful one, as the EU, in relation to a weaker state, Belarus. In such cases, like with any strategies of promoting the EU democratic goals, “a far deeper understanding of autocratic narratives is needed, associated with a much closer look at societal norms and values, as well as an individual country’s geopolitical resources and strategies” [7, p. 37].

Currently, cooperation in the field of migration policy demonstrates that there is no significant progress and significant financial contribution from the EU for this common issue that has an important influence on the situation of the border security. The EU and Belarus are limited in their actions by each other in strengthening the regional security through the common migration policy, as both sides try to pursue their own interests without any compromises.

The ideal model of the EU-Belarus relationship in this sphere seems to be based on the understanding of mutual interdependence and geopolitical interests within the existing geopolitical boundaries. This might bring to the necessity of mutual changes in their attitudes to each other, taking into account interests of regional cooperation. As the assessment of cooperation results between the EU and some other neighbor countries shows [8, p. 1026], interdependence and different types of cooperation are good instruments to promote democracy and improve the relationship between the states.

There is no consensus among the EU officials how to solve the situation with Belarus. However, there is still a hope for more realism and practicality in search for the new approach.

Analysis of the above-mentioned experts’ views made it possible to stress the practical necessity to find common interests and build on them when possible (regional stability, border control, migration) in reconstructing the EU-Belarus dialogue. Building the bridges is the most productive approach in the EU cooperation with the Republic of Belarus.

**REFERENCES**


Необходимость формирования добрососедских отношений с сопредельными государствами является одной из основных задач внешней политики Республики Беларусь. В частности, в приоритетах внешней политики ТГС (трансграничное сотрудничество) заявлено одной из сфер взаимных интересов в интенсификации партнерства с государствами — членами ЕС, а в соответствии с Декларацией о евразийской экономической интеграции приграничное сотрудничество выступает одним из способов дальнейшей интеграции стран ТС и ЕЭП [1; 2]. Кроме того, усиление тенденций регионализации мирохозяйственных связей позволяет рассматривать ТГС регионов как один из способов комплексного решения проблем их устойчивого развития. Поэтому изучение функционирования белорусских регионов в европейской системе ТГС является актуальной задачей.

Следует отметить, что главной особенностью ТГС белорусских регионов является очевидная зависимость условий и форм такого сотрудничества от интеграционного развития этих регионов в рамках ЕС и Беларуси.