COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF IMMIGRATION POLICIES IN AUSTRALIA AND SWITZERLAND: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

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Abstract

Migration is a complex issue that incorporates the law, the economy and politics. Nowadays, migration has become more dynamic and is a complex phenomenon, which is connected not only to the social and economic situations, but to insecure and political circumstances as well. This paper examines issues pertaining to current role and development, as well as differences and similarities of the immigration policies of Australia and Switzerland in juxtaposition with each other. According to Swiss politician, Jacques Neirynck: "Switzerland and Australia, with about a quarter of their population born outside the country, are two countries with the highest proportions of immigrants in the western world"[1]. This article attempts to show the reasons for immigrants to enter Australian and Swiss turf and focuses on differences and similarities in the immigration policy of Australia and Switzerland. The researcher draws the conclusion that the Australian immigration policy is much more in favor of immigrants than Swiss one. As an Australian politician (who was the 22nd Prime Minister of Australia and the Leader of the Liberal Party 1975 - 1983) Malcolm Fraser said: "I believe there is a special obligation on Australians who have come or whose parents have come here in the post-war years, to work for and maintain that Australia, because that is the Australia they came to, that is the Australia that received them so warmly and that is the Australia to which they have already contributed so much in so many different ways" [2].

Keywords: Australia, Immigration Policy, Switzerland.

1. Introduction

Efforts by politicians to "solve" immigration issues often provide only a brief respite or generate an organized opposition, or create new controversies[3]. Annually, millions of people are crossing borders to seek a refuge, a new residence, work, study or various types of training, rest or medical treatment, being rescued from political, national, racial prosecutions or ecological disasters. People's desire and willingness to pursue opportunities shape the whole conglomerate of factors – social and economic, political, ethnic, religious, ecological, demographical, and other[4]. These and other types of migration movements are often united in the concept of international migration, which nowadays, has grown into a real international concern. It involves almost all the countries of the world.

Currently, Australia and Switzerland are two of the most attractive countries in the immigration

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[1] Neirynck, J., 2011. "Pour son bien-être, la Suisse doit rester une terre d'immigration". Le Temps (in French) (Geneva, Switzerland). Retrieved 2014-11-18

[2] http://www.australianinspiration.com.au/Quotes/Authors/F/FraserMalcolm.aspx

[3] Money, J., 1999. *Fences and Neighbors: The Political Geography of Immigration Control*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

[4] Kuznetsova, N. V., 2014. Changes in Points of Attraction for Migration Flows in the XXI Century. *Life Science Journal*, 11(8s), pp. 380-384 (ISSN:1097-8135). Available at: http://www.lifesciencesite.com.84

relations. Alongside with Canada, USA, and Norway these countries appear to be a sort of a promised land for people who wish to emigrate and settle down elsewhere their homes. Such countries are amongst the richest and with the highest living standards' GDP ratio per citizen.

2. Australian immigration policy

Early Australian immigration policy was restrictive to such an extent that the desire to limit immigration was a significant factor leading up to the federation of the Australian states in 1901. This restrictive attitude began to change in the post-World War II era[5]. The desire to control immigration was one of the most significant reasons for the Australian state joining together in a federation in 1901. Indeed, one of the first statutes to be enacted by the newly established federal parliament was the Immigration Restriction Act 1901 (Cth.)[6]. This legislation, passed with the almost complete agreement of all the parties, provided inter "alia" for the administration, at the discretion of a customs officer, of a dictation test of not less than fifty words "in any European language". The immigration of any person who failed this test was prohibited. Although the words of the statute were general in application, the dictation test was used to exclude non-white immigrants. The implementation of this test came to be known as the White Australia Policy[7].

Australia has been actively involved in immigration policies during several decades. It has been using its immigration policy to benefit the social, economic and demographic progress. The correctness of immigration policy based on the selection of young and highly skilled immigrants, who were necessary for the country's prosperity had been established. The modern immigration policy of Australia aims at achievements of the following objectives: immigrants' attraction, whose qualifications and professional experience comply with demands of the national economy; counteraction of illegal immigration; progress of principles of a multicultural society.

The key feature of the Australian immigration experience is that immigrants are invited to Australia as the new settlers, to become part of the Australian society, with citizenship freely available after two years of succeeding in completion of certain requirements. Many immigrants have brought their families with them or, through a process of chain migration, have been reunited with parents and children in Australia over time. Such 'family' or group characteristic of Australian immigration is similar to the experience of immigrants in the USA, Canada and New Zealand, but in contrast to the 'individualistic' characteristics of other immigration to countries in Europe and the Middle East, immigrants are wanted only as temporary "guest workers" or are hired as the fixed-term employees. When they stayed on under such conditions, their citizenship rights will be denied or constrained (Castles & Miller 1993).

Australia fulfills a desire to ensure that immigrants settle smoothly into their new country and contributes effectively to its prosperity. To conclude, immigration policy of Australia has been altered in recent years to place an increased emphasis on the skills and employability of immigrants. In Australia, the resulting increase in the proportion of skilled immigrants indicates that this approach has been successful.

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[5] Hyndman, P., 1988. *Australian Immigration Law and Procedures Pertaining to the Admission of Refugees.*
Associate Professor of Law, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia.

[6] Act No. 17, 1901 Commonwealth Acts.
[7] For a comprehensive discussion of the White Australia Policy, see Willard, M., 1967. History of the White Australia Policy to 1920,
  2d edn, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

In contrast, the closest counterpart for Australia is Switzerland.

3. Swiss immigration policy

By the end of the 19th century, Switzerland had definitely made the transition from an emigration country into immigration country. The period before the First World War was characterized by complete freedom of movement and residence and the relatively easy acquisition of a Swiss citizenship. After the First World War, this laissez-faire attitude towards immigrants had changed, and in 1925, the federal government adopted the responsibility of regulating settlement conditions for foreigners[8].

The immigration policy of Switzerland after the Second World War was based on two principles: first, the foreign-born labor force should be used to counteract economic cycles, and therefore residence should be limited to a short period. Second, immigrants should only be employed in jobs for which the resident population showed no interest, and therefore migrants were almost exclusively low-qualified and mainly employed in a few sectors of the economy. To make the recruitment of migrant workers more efficient, the Swiss government had established treaties, first with Italy, then with Spain and later with Portugal and granted those countries exclusive rights to send workers directly to Switzerland[9].

There are obvious inequalities between immigrants and native citizens, such as suffrage or participation in political life. The Swiss citizens use migrant workforce to develop prosperity of the country. Immigrants may show little interest in the political life of Switzerland, but this is not a particularity of foreigners. It can be explained by two reasons according to Dayer[10]:

- The first generation of immigrants remains attached to their country of origin for a considerable period. Therefore, foreigners will be less preoccupied with Swiss politics than with the politics of their own country. They will return home to participate in the elections.

- Immigrants of the second generation are well integrated and have become adapted on the social, cultural and economic level. Enquiries with young people of 20-25 years of age demonstrate, however, that this age group often abstains from voting; this attitude concerns both native Swiss and foreigners[11].

According to Kosinski political consequences of immigration are purely on internal level of governance in the Swiss politics. They are being measured on the reduction of quantity of foreigners in Switzerland, tried to integrate them not only in economic, social and cultural spheres, but also political.

Switzerland, like many European states, has experienced the immigration of the largely lower-skilled workers. However, as a result of changes to the Swiss system introduced during the early

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[8] Cattaneo, M. A. & Wolter, S. C., 2015. Better Migrants, better PISA Results: Findings from A Natural Experiment. *Cattaneo and Wolter IZA Journal of Migration*, p. 418.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Dayer, A., 1991. *Immigrants et Politique: Attitude Politique des Étrangers et Place dans La vie Politique de la Suisse.* Unpublished research report, Department of Geography, University of Fribourg.

[11] Kosinski, L. A., 1992. *Impact of Migration on Receiving Countries.* International Organization for Migration (IOM), Geneva, Switzerland.

1990s and, more recently, the Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons, which came into force in the European Union (the EU) in June 2002, migration patterns are shifting[12]. Many highly skilled immigrants are now entering Switzerland from countries such as Germany, Italy, France, the smaller share of lower-skilled immigrants are arriving from regions such as the Balkans and from countries such as Turkey and Portugal.

It is necessary to note that immigration policy of Switzerland in 21st century looks as follows:

— Introduction of a principle of free movement and universal residing of citizens (the principle operates on the states — members of the EU or EFTA). In other words, the person who will find the job has the right to stay in the country.

— Immigration is possible now only for the highly skilled and rich people.
— The Reunion of families. This is the major basis for resettlement in the country.

In line with a conclusion, I consider that immigration systems are reflected in the socioeconomic characteristics. Today, there are three basic types of the immigrants coming to Switzerland: highly skilled specialists, for instance, they come to Switzerland to work for others or begin their own businesses, or the rich people who come to live due to the abundance. Furthermore, the Swiss immigration law protects these immigrants. For many years, Switzerland has welcomed hundreds of thousands of political refugees from the hostile corners of the world and continues to do it. Nevertheless, the Swiss legislation does not allow "new settlers" to maintain the Swiss social system. Unskilled workers especially from Portugal, northern Spain and southern Italy, who come to the country, and are being offered the work and high Swiss salaries.

Conclusion

The main feature of migration is viewed by people of residence with its temporary, long-term and permanent goals. The first reason of migration is economic, the desire to a find decent job abroad and to improve living conditions. Secondly, the political asylum and lastly, the geographic factor and the frontier arrangement of the interfaced countries, where immigrants constantly dare to cross borders to work and live in adjacent states.

Australian and Swiss societies have been shaped more by immigration and immigrants than most countries in the world today. In 1999, 23.6 per cent of Australia's population were first generation immigrants (that is, were born overseas). This exceeds immigrants' presence in Switzerland (19.2%)[13]. This first generation of immigrants, together with their Australian-born children - the second generation - comprise over half of the population of Australia's largest cities of Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth. If we will compare immigration policy of Australia and Switzerland, then we can draw the conclusion that immigrants have inequalities in Switzerland but unite in Australia where "once people come to Australia, they join the team"[14], you can feel yourself like home, home sweet home. The Swiss citizens used migrant labor to boost economic growth of their country and where capacity to have civil rights obligations is still vested in the native citizens.

Apparently, Australian immigration policy is much more in favor of immigrants than Swiss one.

[12] Picot, G. & Hou, F., 2012. *Immigrant Status, Early Skill Development, and Postsecondary Participation: A Comparison of Canada and Switzerland*. Analytical Studies Branch Research Paper Series, Ottawa, Canada.

[13] Collins, J., 2003. *Immigration and Immigrant Settlement in Australia: Political Responses, Discourses and New Challenges*. Willy Brandt Series of Working Papers in International Migration and Ethnic Relations, 2(02).

[14] http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/t/tony_abbott.html

Thereby, emphasizing an idea of former Prime Minister of Australia, Malcolm Fraser I would like to quote: "... Australia as a nation with a sense of care and concern. That's so important for a cohesive society. It helps to build a sense of belonging. And, in terms of common decency, it's what should be happening elsewhere in the world. For God's sake, this is Australia, people should be treated with decency and humanity[15]."

Biography of Author

Parvina Mirayubova is currently a sophomore student of Masters in International Relations at the Faculty of Political Science and Journalism, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland. She earned a Master degree in Philology from Saint-Petersburg State University in Saint-Petersburg in 2012. She studied Linguistics in the Scholarship Program of the Government of the Republic of Poland for Young Academicians in Warsaw and Gdansk. She has participated in the WEI International Academic Conference Proceedings in 2015 at Harvard University, Boston, Massachusetts, USA. Currently, her research interests include the fields of international relations, immigration policy of Australia and Switzerland, migration law and diplomacy.

[15] http://www.australianinspiration.com.au/Quotes/Authors/F/FraserMalcolm.aspx

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xi. Willard, M., 1967. *History of the White Australia Policy to 1920*, 2d edn, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

Other Resources:

xii. http://www.australianinspiration.com.au/Quotes/Authors/F/FraserMalcolm.aspx
xiii. http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/t/tony_abbott.html