

Summary of Ph.D. thesis

Contemporary Belarusian Refugee Problem and Models of Resolving Refugee Problem in International Relations

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The present dissertation seeks to explore a broad perspective of solving the refugee problem which is considered to be a complex of initiatives undertaken by the actors of international relations on global and regional levels in order to prevent and eliminate causes as well as regulate and mitigate negative consequences of the problem. The focal point of the dissertation is the contemporary model of solving the refugee problem as well as the examination of its practical application on an international level. The model was examined based on the example of the Belarusian refugee problem.

The main research problem of the current Ph.D. dissertation consists in the search for the answer to the question: how is the contemporary model applied in international practice in relation to the contemporary Belarusian refugee problem and to what extent is its application effective? Due to the complexity of the main research problem, its resolution is based on solving a range of derived problems. This defined specific research steps which determined the shape and structure of the whole dissertation.

The dissertation consists of the introduction, four interrelated chapters and the conclusion. The introduction includes methodological and theoretical basic foundations of the dissertation; particularly, it presents the problems, objectives and hypothesis of the research as well as the explanation of the applied theoretical perspective along with the method and research techniques.

The first chapter is devoted to the genesis and evolution of the model aimed to resolve the refugee problem in international relations. The main idea of this chapter is the presentation of the contemporary model of solving the refugee problem. The formation of this model is shown as a result of the consequent actions taken by the international society

and its members in relation to the refugee problem throughout the 20th century. The starting point for the research is the question of resolving the refugee problem in the interwar period as well as directly after World War II. Subsequently, the research explores the Cold War model of refugee problem resolution. The main emphasis is put on the presentation, largely critical, of the international reactive refugee regime, the main objective of which is to ensure the protection of refugees in host countries. In relation to this, an in-depth analysis of legal instruments in the scope of the refugee problem and its resolution has been conducted as well as the activities of UNHCR regarding the resolution of the refugee problem are examined. The main part of the second chapter shows the development of the proactive model aimed to resolve the refugee problem in the period of the post-Cold War. The chapter also deals with the analysis of the early warning system as well as the root cause approach. The aforementioned model is a normative system which encompasses political values, norms of behavior and rules of a political game as well as approaches and limits towards the resolution of the refugee problem. From this point of view, legal and ethical factors, which affect the essence and shape of the contemporary model of refugee problem resolution, were carefully examined. The nature of the preventive actions, which are basis for the root cause, is the source for many theoretical and practical difficulties; therefore, in the current chapter of the dissertation, in order to explain the most problematic aspects of the presented approach, its main dilemmas have been studied. Due to the fact that the principle of non-interference with the international affairs of a sovereign state is an issue related to one of the most complex perspectives on the root cause approach, it will be especially emphasized. On top of the above mentioned concerns, the dissertation also touches upon interesting and at the same time complex issues related to the independence of the root cause approach and social changes taking place in the countries of origin. It also relates to the positioning of the root cause approach in the hierarchy of a state's goals and interests, and evaluates the effectiveness of unilateral and bilateral forms of cooperation in the context of solving the refugee problem.

The second chapter deals with the genesis and the essence of the contemporary Belarusian refugee problem. The majority of deliberations were preceded by the synthetic presentation of the full scope of statistical research which was conducted based on the data of the UNHCR, EU and its Member States. The main part of this chapter concentrates on the analysis of the refugee phenomenon against a background of the formation process of the Belarusian political system as well as the operation of the party system and non-

governmental organizations of this state. The main aim of this chapter is identify the root cause of the refugee movement from Belarus.

The following chapters of the dissertation look into the application of the earlier defined model of resolving the refugee problem in international practice on the example of the contemporary Belarusian refugee phenomenon. The third chapter deals with the research analysis on a global level, particularly, presents the relations between UNHCR and Belarus in the context of resolving the Belarusian refugee problem.

The fourth chapter throws light on the regional cooperation focused on the resolution of the Belarusian refugee problem. The analysis covers two areas of the external relations of the European Union: asylum and human rights policies which have a great potential impact on the root causes of the problem in question. This particular chapter detects the deviations which occurred during the application of the contemporary model of solving the refugee problem in the international practice of the EU. The analysis begins with the presentation of the genesis and essence of the EU external asylum policy as well as the examination of its capability to resolve the problem of Belarusian forced migration. Subsequently, the chapter looks at the EU policy applied towards Belarus from human rights perspective as well as the effectiveness of the EU actions taken towards the Belarusian refugee problem. Finally, the chapter studies the place and role of Russia in the resolution of the Belarusian contemporary refugee problem. The main accent is placed on the obstacles faced while solving the Belarusian refugee problem which stem from the role the Russian Federation plays in the question under discussion.

The last chapter of the dissertation assesses whether the defined research problems have been solved and whether the research objectives have been achieved. Finally, the research results evaluate the extent to which the dissertation hypothesis has been confirmed.

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