The "New National Problem" in Europe: Problems of Migration Policy at the End of the 20th Century

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Abstract:

The article studies the specifics of the immigration problem that European countries were confronted at the end of the 20th century. The characteristic of the main models of the migration policy adopted by leading European countries is given.

The following models typical of various countries were singled out: the assimilationist model adopted in France, the segregationist model adopted in Germany, and the pluralistic model adopted in the UK. Their comparative analysis is carried out.

The case study of France is used to examine the main approaches, assessments and proposals formulated by liberal politicians to solve the immigration issue. The article analyzes the course of discussions in French political and intellectual communities in the 1980s and early 1990s.

The studied material can be used by historians, sociologists, and political scientists to study the migration policy of European states.

Keywords: *"new national problem", migration policy, models of the migration policy, Europe, immigration problems.*

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1. Introduction

In the last third of the 20th century, the traditional factors that created the national problem were supplemented with the consequences of the growing mass migration from the "trouble zone" to the more stable countries of the "golden billion" with a relatively high standard of living. This phenomenon was called the "new national problem".

Globalization processes, the gap in the level of existence of the population of different regions, the increased awareness of this gap and the transport revolution stimulated immigration flows. Every year, about 800-900 million legal and illegal immigrants moved around the world in search for better living conditions. First of all, this problem became urgent for the states of Western Europe. For example, the number of non-European population of 15 countries of the European Union on the eve of its expansion to the east in May 2004 exceeded 20 million, while in the early 1950s; it barely reached 300 thousand, that is, there was more than fiftyfold increase within the lifetime of two generations (Galkin, 2005). Thus, it can be stated that Western Europe has entered the new millennium with numerous growing ethnic minorities that differ from the indigenous population in confessional, linguistic and cultural aspects.

Mass immigration was a relatively new phenomenon for Europe at the end of the 20th century. Its character has changed seriously. Despite the measures taken under the impact of the economic crisis, European countries have turned from homogeneous in ethnic, confessional and cultural terms into multi-ethnic, multi-confessional and multicultural societies in a short period of time.

Naturally, such a situation cannot but affect the mood of the indigenous population of Western European countries. Already now, a cautious attitude toward "outsiders" has become the immediate result of the "new national problem". In a few cases, it grows into intolerance, manifestations of which can be observed both in everyday life and in the social field. The extreme right and extremist parties and movements, like the National Front in France, standing for adoption of tough anti-immigrant laws, take advantage of the existing situation. Under these conditions, tolerance should become an instrument and, moreover, a potential for further mutual development of Europe.

2. Methodological Framework

The migration policy of European states is the subject matter of the study in the article. The article is based on the principle of historicism (consideration of historical events, phenomena, processes in chronological development and in mutual connection with each other), a systems approach, and comparative-historical, chronological, problem methods. During the topic study, in explaining various aspects of migration policy and immigration problems, the approaches outlined in the theoretical articles of

Russian and foreign specialists were also taken into account. The application of these methods and approaches allows considering modern migration policy in its historical continuity, as well as showing the specifics of migration models.

3. Results

Immigration policy remains the prerogative of national governments. Attempts to develop common measures and steps at the European Union level have not yet been crowned with success. What are the main mechanisms for including immigrants in the life of the host state? The difference in approaches to the problem of immigrants' integration is well seen in the examples of France (assimilationist model), Germany (segregation) and Great Britain (pluralistic model). According to Sapego, *"the first model involves the rejection of immigrants from their former identity and the complete assimilation of the values and behaviors adopted in the new homeland. The assimilated immigrants, who practically do not differ from the population of the host country, can be considered as full members of society. Theoretically, successful assimilation seems to be beneficial both for a national state that strives to maintain cultural homogeneity and for immigrants, since it allows them to fully fit into a new community"* (Sapego, 2006).

France has a long experience of receiving immigrants and integrating them. The ethnic composition of immigrants was constantly changing. But after the collapse of the colonial empire, immigration mainly came from former African colonies. In France, a person who possesses French citizenship is considered a member of the national community. Any person, regardless of the origin country, who is politically loyal to France and shares its cultural values, can become a citizen of France. French legislation on citizenship is built on the principle of "right of land" (*Latin* – jus soli), which implies that a person born in the territory of the country automatically becomes a citizen of France. Though, the French government somewhat toughened this procedure, making amendments, according to which for the acquisition of citizenship, the children of migrants must submit motions after reaching 16 years of age. If such a person had police bookings or is not fluent in French, he or she may be denied citizenship (Malakhov, 2005).

The situation was most difficult with immigrants of Muslim origin. The immigration flows of Muslims were set in motion in the mid-1970s regarding the economic crisis that had broken out at that time, the growth of instability in the Middle East and North Africa and the pressure of fundamentalism. In France, hundreds of Muslim organizations defending the right to preserve Islamic identity were created. As a result, the French governments, which implemented the former model of assimilation, faced the organized, institutionalized resistance of the part of the French society. But, according to Sapego (2006) in France, though same as in other European countries, Muslims do not have consolidated unification. On the one hand, the lack of broad-based consolidation and fragmentation turned out to be beneficial to the authorities, as this weakened the Muslim community as a single political force

representing the interests of the country's population part. On the other hand, the absence of a single center hindered the establishment of an effective dialogue with Muslims and control over them, as sought by the French leadership, which set the task of Europeanizing Islam (Sapego, 2006). The socialists who came to power in 1981 tried to dramatically change the immigration policy by granting the right to vote at local (then national) elections to a part of immigrants, and by taking several measures to facilitate family reunification. These decisions led to an aggravation of the immigration problem and intensification of the discussion in political and intellectual circles.

Unlike France, the basis of German citizenship is the principle of "the right of blood" (*Latin* – jus sanguinis). The German model of the nation is built on an ethnic rather than a civil basis: according to the legislation of Germany, a person born on its territory does not become its citizen. German legislation on citizenship was relaxed in 1999 with the adoption of a law establishing that a person born in the territory of Germany can automatically obtain citizenship if at least one of his/her parents had been legally resident in the country for at least 8 years. Until recently, becoming a citizen of Germany was almost impossible in the absence of German roots. Therefore, both the first-generation immigrants and their descendants, having lived their whole life in Germany, were still not considered the citizens. Such a policy led to segregation, which is, separating the population of immigrant origin from German citizens. The German leadership did not try, like the French leadership, to force immigrants to adopt their customs, traditions and norms, because they regarded them as temporary workers. This policy was extremely short-sighted, especially after the emergence of new generations of immigrants (Sapego, 2006).

In the 1990s, a stormy debate was sparked by the theme of "computer Indians" on the pages of the German mass media. It was about the delivery of highly skilled programmers (mainly from India) at the request of the German industry, proposed by the left parties. Conservative politicians immediately responded with a demand to invest in their own German children, to train their cadres, putting forward the slogan "children instead of Hindus". However, the most important issue remains: how to get rid of Indians when they have their working contracts run out? (Pogorelskaya, 2005)

The UK faced the main inflow of migrants after 1948. Then the British Nationality Act was adopted, which formalized a single citizenship for the mother country and its colonies with the right to resettle and work in the UK. India, Pakistan and Bangladesh were the main suppliers of immigrants. Their "leadership" has survived to the present day. Initially, the British government restrained the influx of migrants and sought to assimilate them. However, over time, Muslim organizations in the UK began to gain influence and put pressure on the authorities. In 1962, the UK Islamic Mission was founded, which created the "Educational Muslim Trust" four years later and it began to put forward demands for the preservation of Muslim identity in children, which eventually they managed to achieve. In 1985, the notion of a

"multicultural way" was introduced. The essence of the new policy was the recognition by the state of numerous communities within the national society that have the right to live in their own circle, preserving their cultural heritage, national traits, customs, family ties, and to assert their rights at the national level (Chetverikova, 2005). According to Sapego, owing to this state policy, communities in the UK enjoy broad rights. However, this leads to the consolidation of group affiliation of persons with immigrant roots, although they may have little in common with them. The descendants of immigrants in different generations remain not included in the British society and are perceived rather as members of these groups than as individuals and British subjects; an ethnic approach is used towards them. According to the findings of the British Social Attitudes survey (2003), the British can hardly be called adherents of the multiculturalism idea. Only 16.4% of the population agreed with the statement that ethnic minorities should be provided with assistance to preserve their customs and traditions; 56.2% believe that groups should adapt and join the national society (Sapego, 2006).

In the last third of the 20th century problems of employment, social and cultural policies are often linked by the French political elite with the solution of the immigration issue. Right and left-wing French governments have tried various ways to combat immigration: encouraging the voluntary return of immigrants to their homeland, forced eviction, prohibiting the issuance of residence permits to illegal immigrants, changing the citizenship code, passing laws regulating different aspects of immigrants' life, etc. But at the same time, it was almost impossible to close the borders to immigrants who came along the line of family reunification. This changed the composition of immigration in France. There was a generation of children born in the territory of the country, who therefore automatically became French citizens.

However, there were restrictions on the employment of foreigners, their low educational level and income, the contradiction of the community model of social organization with French laws (Novozhenova, 2005). As noted above, the intensification of discussions on immigration problems was a consequence of the decisions made by the socialist government of F. Mitterrand. The right-wing opposition used them as a trigger for criticizing the "socialist experiment". Rapid popularity was gained by the National Front of J.-M. Le Pen, which encouraged anti-immigrant and xenophobic sentiments. Influential French intellectuals and sociologists, J.-M. Poizat, A. Touraine, joined these discussions. The general tonality of the discussions was as follows: the creation of a multicultural society is unacceptable for France, since the presence of various communities creates a threat to the republican model and secularism.

At the same time, the existing situation allowed politicians to propose their own solutions. For example, in the first half of the 1980s, members of one of the leading right-wing opposition parties, the Union for French Democracy (UDF) – A. Griotteray and B. Stasi proposed two approaches to solving the immigration issue.

In his book "Immigrants: shock", published in 1984, A. Griotteray estimated the number of immigrants at that time to be 4-4.5 million people, which, in his opinion, should be supplemented by rogue immigrants, immigrants' children, many of whom had French citizenship (Griotteray, 1984).

According to Griotteray, the growth of immigration was contributed by the measures of the socialist government: granting of the right to association, suspension of expulsion, simplification of permission for marriage, etc. Then the policy gradually was forced to become tougher. In such a policy, a mistake was made in the form of the coexistence of two contradictory principles: "the liberal principle of the free movement of people making immigration possible, and the interventionist principle of the Providence State, which takes on the burden of spending on housing and the reception of foreign populations, artificially encouraging it to immigration in the future" (Griotteray, 1984).

Griotteray believed that the "economic result of mass immigration" is "negative" in the past and the future. He highlighted several common misconceptions of supporters of immigrants' mass attraction: "lower cost" of pensions, the importance of paying family benefits to immigrants, the lower demand for educational benefits, the cost of unemployment among immigrants (Griotteray, 1984). A. Griotteray noted the deepening of the distance between the French and immigrants, primarily because they do not want assimilation and do not wish to restore contacts with their native country. He attached great importance to the Islamic factor in immigration, expressing his fear that after the Maghreb immigration the country would then face Turkish, Pakistani or Ceylon immigration, which would make the problem of assimilation even more difficult to achieve.

Griotteray criticized the idea of "multicultural" or "multiracial" France that was wide-spread among some politicians. Adoption of this idea would mean the adaptation of the French to "Quranic morals", which raises many problems exacerbated by the "awakening of Islam". For example, Muslim families begin to demand the permission of joint education in schools, and this raises the problem of the social insurance spread and, more broadly, the problem of French laws compatibility with the law of the Quran. Therefore, France, according to A. Griotteray, should reject the model of a multi-ethnic or multicultural society in which groups of people being sundered like the poles with the risk of collision and "minimal integration into the national community" would co-exist in one territory (Griotteray, 1984).

The restriction of legal entry opportunities, more stringent border controls, and the systematic expulsion of rogue immigrants could be measures to prevent mass immigration. It is necessary to reduce the immigrants' stay to the "temporary situation", giving them only limited rights, as well as to facilitate the return to their home country. Finally, the reform of the procedure for granting citizenship is required. This means that French citizenship must be given in the case of a French-

born parent or a French parent abroad or in France by a single French parent. Full integration into society, the French language proficiency, law-abiding behavior and the availability of work should be the condition for acquiring citizenship for foreign children It is necessary to introduce a five-year period that precedes the acquisition of citizenship by foreigners, which will ensure inclusion in the French society, quality and stability of employment, payment of taxes, knowledge of history and culture (Griotteray, 1984).

The position in the issue of immigration of Poniatowski, the former minister of the Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's government, looked quite tough. To solve the problem of immigration, he proposed "access and rapid integration of the population of European origin," the absolute closure of borders for immigrants from the Maghreb and African countries, "the restoration of control over citizenship by the police", the immediate expulsion of illegal immigrants accused and convicted of offenses, the reform of the civil code, the abolition of the right of family reunification (with the exception for the citizens of European descent), assistance in return for the unemployed people of non-European origin, etc. (Poniatowski, 1985).

He believed that the policy pursued by the socialists destabilized the French society, and immigrants themselves, including those who were "able to work and assimilate". Later M. Poniatowski again wrote about the need to resist the "challenge from the south". In his opinion, this would mean taking a number of measures: close the entry for several years for any new immigration and stop family reunification, reopen the door for immigrants at an opportune moment, depending on the national interest and needs of the economy, while preferring immigration from Europe, expel rogue immigrants, the unemployed with experience, those convicted by justice and "instigators of unrest", to assimilate those who can and want to be assimilated, to struggle with multiculturalism and multiethnicity – "the sources of splits and conflicts" (Poniatowski, 1991).

For Poniatowski immigration of European origin is not a problem. *"We must help it when it is needed,"* he said. But for other sources of immigration, *"it will be necessary to establish quotas, as in the United States, depending on the needs and our economic interests". M. Poniatowski compared immigration with "a continental migration of the population, a silent and peaceful invasion of the Islamic and African population, which violates the balance of our societies"* (Poniatowski, 1990). He was critical of the socialists' decision to give immigrants the right to vote, blaming immigrants for aggravating the unemployment and forcing a rise in social spending (Poniatowski, 1990). In his opinion, now it was necessary to establish a "zero quota" for immigrants (in this he agreed with the theses of former President V. Giscard d'Estaing) and to review the rules for granting citizenship (to abolish the automaticity of its granting, to introduce examinations for knowledge of the French language, etc.) (Poniatowski, 1990).

The second approach to solving the immigration issue was suggested by B. Stasi, who declared immigration "a chance for France". He stated that most immigrants want to stay in France. Even though in the mass they retain their native nationality, they become French citizens, who must respect the laws and traditions, which results from their belonging to the national community (Stasi, 1984). He cites a survey of the French Institute IPSOS among immigrants, published on October 10, 1983.

According to this survey, 72% of immigrants believed that the French were dissatisfied with them because of the unemployment aggravation, 26% of immigrants refused to integrate into French society, maintaining their way of life, 25% were concerned about their own insecurity, 45% noted the increase in racism in France and determined the French as racists (35% did not consider them racists). At the same time, 66% were satisfied with their way of life against 34%, and 52% would like to stay in France, while 45% would prefer to return to their homeland (Stasi, 1984).

Stasi pointed to the crisis and economic causes that affected the consciousness of the French and their attitude towards immigration. In his view, the rooting of immigrants increases the "number of Frenchmen of foreign origin", which changes the nature of the problem. *"Regarding communities of foreign origin,"* wrote Stasi, *"it does not mean that their presence is desirable or not. The problem is legally settled: it is decided by granting citizenship".* But are the French able to understand the reality of "multiple France", accept coexistence with equality of rights and obligations with immigrants? Stasi saw the contradiction in the presence of the Islamic factor and the commitment of the state to secularism. He believed that during integration it is necessary to rely on the second generation of immigrants for several reasons: the young people making up this generation, having French citizenship, perceive republican responsibilities and obligations more easily; these young people are deprived of cultural guidelines, having torn away from their native country, but have not yet absorbed the culture of the host country at least because of age. However, Stasi also considers cultural factors, including the impossibility of recreating the native culture and preserving customs and traditions, Eurocentrism in French education, the religious aspect, which can create difficulties in the immigration policy (Stasi, 1984).

In contrast to the policy of assimilation, Stasi suggested a policy of inclusion. This would strengthen the social cohesion of the nation and preserve the right to a difference for immigrants. The policy of inclusion would have two purposes: the unification of the nation "around the values that make the basis for the French community", preserving national identity, and respect for the right to a difference. In the framework of concrete steps, the policy of inclusion would imply the construction of cheap social housing, adaptation in school, familiarization with French culture. At the same time B. Stasi believed that France could not accept immigrants in the same amount as it was before the crisis. Therefore, the reduction

of migration flows should be ensured by "stricter control at the borders" (Stasi, 1984).

At the beginning of March 1990, a wave of crimes committed by immigrants from North Africa swept through France, triggering a wave of xenophobia and racism, but also a very strong response from public opinion. On March 28, F. Mitterrand, former President of France, invited the leaders of the majority and the right opposition to the Elysee Palace to adopt a joint plan for "fighting against racism". A few days later, the opposition held "general states" on the problem of immigration. During these events, it was proclaimed that France cannot be an immigration country. They recognized the need to combat illegal immigration by tightening border controls and issuing visas, creating an information network of data. Delegates of the "states" declared the need to abolish the "Joxe's law" (Minister of the Interior in the government of F. Mitterrand, who reformed immigrant legislation and granted the autonomous status to Corsica) and advocated the determination of a new legal framework for granting asylum.

Other proposals concerned the fixed stay in France for foreign students and foreigners working under contract, the preservation of the automatic reunification of families only for holders of long-stay cards (10 years), integration through education, the fight against immigrant ghettos, the preservation of religious freedom within the framework of French laws, the reform of the code of citizenship (UDF info, No. 17, May 1990). The "General States" confirmed various visions of events and the problem. Although it was possible to reach a visible agreement on the need to revise the citizenship code, reform the right of asylum, it was much more difficult to do with the social rights of immigrants. In the latter case, the positions of N. Sarkozy and J. Chirac, both former Presidents of France, were harder than the proposals of Stasi. Already after the end of the "general states" on May 16, 1990 the UDF and the Gaullist Party – Rally for the Republic (RPR) demanded the government to abandon its intention to grant the right to vote in local elections to foreigners and initiate the reform of the citizenship code.

Nevertheless, in the early 1990's, against the backdrop of the unresolved problems of employment and the economic difficulties of the left government, the debate on immigration again worsened, taking the form of extremely harsh statements. The impetus for this was the holding of the "general states" of the opposition on the problem of immigration in the spring of 1990. The speech of the former president of France and one of the opposition leaders V. Giscard d'Estaing on the problem of immigration was polemical. Declaring that he approved any form of combating racism, Giscard pointed out that the granting of voting rights to immigrants is contrary to Article 3 of the Constitution and, along with the idea of a "multicultural society", is rejected by most of the French.

V. Giscard d'Estaing distinguished several groups of immigrants: 1) immigration of European origin, which began in the mid-19th century and became part of the

French cultural heritage; 2) Frenchmen of the first generation, i.e. children born in France by foreign parents (2.5 million) and who chose French citizenship or naturalized persons; the only problem that concerns them is the problem of integration, therefore it is necessary to create an Integrity Commissioner who will follow such a policy; 3) foreigners living in France (4.5 million). "France is not an immigration country", Giscard stated. Consequently, administrative means are needed to achieve the "zero immigration quota".

Stay of foreigners in France poses two problems – their right to become the French and their behavior during their stay. The acquisition of citizenship is determined by the "right of land," when the place of birth is considered, and the "right of blood", when the nationality of the parents determines the nationality of the children. To change the situation Giscard offers four actions: 1) reform of the Nationality Code; 2) the abolition of provisions allowing foreign parents on behalf of minor children born in France to obtain French citizenship, which allows such parents to obtain a temporary residence permit; 3) the abolition of special provisions for residents of former colonial countries and the introduction of a single general legal regime; 4) the French citizenship obtained as a result of marriage could be taken away in case of divorce and should not be transferred through a new marriage.

Giscard noted that the right of asylum should not be extended to EU citizens and members of the Council of Europe. "A foreigner granted asylum can enjoy all human rights guaranteed by the constitution, but except for civil rights," he stressed (Forum des Clubs Perspectives et Réalités. No.1, May 1990).

On September 21, 1991 V. Giscard d'Estaing published a hard-core article on "Immigration or invasion" in *Le Figaro Magazine*. In it, he expressed the wish that France should "return to the traditional concept of acquiring French citizenship, the concept of the right of blood". This is dictated, in his opinion, by the ease of people's movement and the openness of borders. "A Frenchman is born if born of a father or mother of French origin", Giscard thought. Similarly, he proposed restricting the acquisition of citizenship through naturalization and urged to legislatively determine the criteria that give the right to this. Finally, Giscard likened migratory flows to "invasion".

V. Giscard d'Estaing identified three factors of immigration: the disparity in development between rich and poor countries, the availability and lowering of the relocation cost, the demographic explosion in Africa and the recession in Europe. He pointed to a change immigration, with a growing percentage of people of African descent (34.5% in 1989) (Giscard d'Estaing, 1991a).

As a proposal, Giscard spoke of the possibility to suspend the entry of foreigners into the country by establishing a "zero quota" of immigration, returning rogue immigrants to their homeland, introducing the conditions of the French language proficiency and respect for the customs of France for those seeking French

citizenship, conferring city mayors more powers to control settlement of foreigners in their communes. Giscard stated that "France is not able at this time to receive new foreigners on its land". He believed that "arrival based on family reunification cannot continue to exist for the reason caused by it". Giscard proposed the introduction of ten-year tenure of foreign parents in France before the birth of their children or for naturalization and citizenship (Giscard d'Estaing, 1991a).

In the comments that followed the publication of the article, Giscard d'Estaing, in fact, did not change his proposals. He confirmed that changing the strategy entails a significant risk. He stressed the government's duty to "integrate young Frenchmen, especially Muslims" already in their first generation, but at the same time pointed to the difficulty in the success of this campaign. Finally, he spoke in favor of the need to increase the aid for countries from where immigrants came, for studying with their leaders the possibilities to keep the population within their countries (Giscard d'Estaing, 1991b).

It is characteristic that Giscard's demarche was in some way consonant with the mood of the ordinary French. For example, according to the poll, 77% offered to expel illegal immigrants from the country, 40% offered to expel all the immigrants who were unemployed for more than a year from the country, and 69% supported removal of all immigrants-offenders. Also, 52% of the respondents considered it necessary to prevent the entry of new immigrants into the country. At the same time, 59% considered it undesirable to abolish the principle of automatic granting of citizenship from the age of 18 for children born in France from foreign parents, 66% called for questioning the naturalization of the past ten years, 73% considered it necessary to strengthen the powers of the mayors to control over the immigrants' deployment in their communes, 46% considered it desirable to obtain prior permission in the Prefecture for the marriage of an alien with a Frenchman or a Frenchwoman, 45% favored easier obtaining of French citizenship for legal immigrants, and finally 49% considered it undesirable to abolish the possibility of reunification with families for immigrants (Le Figaro Magazine, 21 September 1991).

4. Discussion

Theoretical issues of the migration policy of European governments were studied by Novozhenova (2005) and Pogorelskaya (2005). General problems of immigration are considered in the writings of Galkin (2005) and Sapego (2006). Nationalism as a political ideology is studied in the article of Malakhov (2005). Approaches of French liberals to the problem of migration are studied in the research by Shmelev (2008).

For a long time, the problem of migration was considered exclusively in the economic context, as one of the policy directions of European governments. However, with its aggravation, the question arose about the analysis of its origins, the course, the effectiveness of the measures taken and the search for ways out of the

migration crisis. At the same time, most analyzes were limited to operating with statistical data and describing the measures taken by European governments. Given the policy of political correctness, the analysis of the immigration problem did not affect the political environment except for the extreme right-wing nationalist circles (for example, the National Front in France). Meanwhile, the problem of immigration and migration policy was actively discussed and studied in political circles of different ideological orientation. Virtually no attempts were made to compare the proposals of different political forces and their influence on the formation of a common migration policy. This article is intended partly to fill this gap, referring to the experience of French liberals in the context of the development of European models of migration policy.

5. Conclusion

The last third of the 20th century was for West European governments a period of awareness of the immigration problem importance. Under the influence of the energy crisis of the 1970s, European countries tried to revise their immigration policies in the direction of tightening. However, not all measures taken have led to the desired results. The flow of immigrants has steadily increased, causing a painful reaction of society.

Moreover, tough anti-immigration rhetoric stimulated the process of transforming temporary immigrant enclaves into permanent ones, facilitated the consolidation of immigrants and the rejection of complete assimilation. In this regard, the experience of France, which has set a course for liberalizing immigrant legislation after the socialists, came to power, proved indicative. The measures taken, instead of restricting and regulating immigration, led to its strengthening and lack of control, although they extended the social rights of migrants. There was a threat to the integrity of the national community. The tone of the socio-political discussions demonstrated the severity of the problem. In its course, the first comprehensive measures to solve the immigration issue were proposed.

In general, the discussions demonstrated that the French remained attached to their secular and republican political system, were ready to accept the assimilating model of immigrants' integration, but viewed the formation of a multicultural society with extreme caution.

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