
Point of View

The social consequences of immigration are traditionally at the center of discussions about immigration policy. Native residents are largely unfriendly to newcomers, because they associate them with increased stress in the labor market, larger loads on the social infrastructure, a rise in crime and ethnocultural conflicts, and overall deterioration in living and working conditions of the native population. Meanwhile, in many developed countries that face an intensive inflow of foreigners, life satisfaction, which reflects the perception of social processes, is sufficiently high and has demonstrated positive dynamics in recent years. This article attempts to answer questions about how immigration affects the well-being of natives and how it tells on their objective position and subjective outlook.

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Social Effects of Immigration

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THE MANY FACES OF MODERN IMMIGRATION

The statistical data of recent decades show that international migration is a large-scale and, in spite of economic cataclysms, intensively developing process. According to UN data, in 2013 the worldwide number of international migrants, i.e., people who had been born outside their country of residence (foreign-born population), reached 231.5 million. In relatively more developed regions of the world (Western countries and countries with transition economies), migrants totaled 135.6 million, constituting almost one-ninth of the population of these territories. Note that their share in Switzerland, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada exceeded 20%, nearing 50% in Luxemburg (Fig. 1).

However, the dynamics of the number of migrants in the above group of countries is slowing down. The annual average growth rates in this group decreased from 2.3% in the 1990s–2000s to 1.5% in 2010–2013 [1]. Note that Ireland, Iceland, and Estonia have even seen a decrease in the number of foreign-born population since the late 2000s. This tendency was caused by consequences of the global recession, which led to a sharp reduction of the majority of migration flows to northern countries, accompanied by the intensification of backflows from them.

The crisis mostly affected labor migration, causing a large-scale drop in demand for migrant workers, especially in the industries of their traditional concentration, such as construction, trade, and hotel and restaurant businesses, which are rather sensitive to market fluctuations. Under mass unemployment, receiving countries erected protectionist barriers to foreign

labor. In 2007–2012, the overall flows of temporary migrants to the countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which are largely developed countries and transition economies, decreased by about one-fourth, including 64% for seasonal workers [2, p. 25]. The cohort of new migrants coming to the European Union from third countries for a regular job decreased in the above period by almost 40%. EU territory saw a decrease in the intensity of the free movement of population, mostly labor movement as well.

Despite the decrease, migration flows are still of mass nature and are characterized by a high concentration of individuals of active working age (25–44 years). This fact reflects the persistent demand for foreign labor of certain categories on the part of a number of sectors, primarily R&D, education, and healthcare, as well as the food industry and agriculture.¹ The structural character of this demand testifies to the significance of immigration in the accession of population and labor in developed countries and countries with a transition economy and, fundamentally, to the systemic character of its role in the economies of these states.

The restrictive character of modern immigration policy, which mostly affected the flows of unskilled workers, and its increased selectivity in favor of highly qualified and in-demand specialists manifested themselves in the cardinally different dynamics of the respective foreign born population groups. Over the

¹ This is evident from the growth of migrant employment in these sectors, which continued in many countries even at the height of the last global crisis. For example, in 2007–2009, migrant employment in the United States increased by more than 16% in the food-producing industries and by 18% in social assistance. In the European Union, it grew over 2008–2009 by almost 24% in residential care activities and by 7% in education [3, pp. 112, 113].

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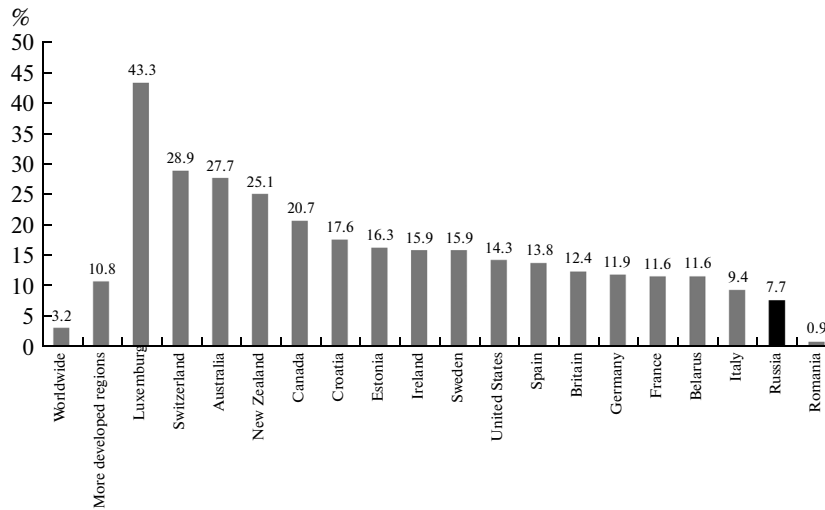


Fig. 1. Share of migrants in the population of some Western countries and countries with a transition economy, 2013, %.
Source: [1].

2000s, the growth in the number of highly educated migrants in the OECD countries amounted to 70%,² while that of migrants with a low level of education totaled 10% [4].

As a result, the specific weight of groups with third-level education in the total number of migrants of 15–74 years of age in the European Union increased from 23.1% in 2004 to 27.4% in 2013 and now exceeds the analogous indicator for the native population, 24% [5]. The share of highly educated migrants reaches especially high values in Canada (52%), Ireland (47%), Britain (46%), Bulgaria (42%), New Zealand (39%), and Australia (38%), exceeding by 10–20 percentage points (pp) the analogous indicator for the local population [4].

The weighty share of immigrants with third-level education, who are bearers of innovative human resources and integrate most rapidly into receiving societies, is the main asset of immigration. Tellingly, in 2013, the share of employment among them in the OECD countries was 77%, which was noticeably higher than among other categories of migrants. At the same time, the level of employment among immigrant specialists remains lower than that of native specialists (84%). Moreover, 30% of such migrants work in positions that are lower than their qualification, which is 1.5 times higher than in the analogous group of native workers [2]. This testifies to the fact that human capital that could potentially yield even higher socioeconomic return is substantially underused.

² This process was prompted by the rapid development of student migration, which, being a source of financial receipts and in-demand highly skilled workers, remains desirable for receiving countries. The number of foreign students in the OECD countries increased by 1.4 times over 2007–2012 and reached 3.4 million [2].

At the same time, over 2004–2013, the share of EU immigrants without high school diploma decreased from 40.2 to 36.8%; nevertheless, it remains substantially higher than among natives thus far (29.5%) [5]. The numerousness of this category is the main source of social problems in receiving countries. First, these problems are associated with the fact that a significant part of such foreigners arrive through family and humanitarian immigration channels, which are independent of the labor market. From 61 to 81% of the foreign-born population, who lived in 2008 in Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden, had arrived there for permanent residence as reuniting adult family members or refugees, or persons with a similar status [2]. The role of such channels in the structure of permanent immigration is increasing against the background of a sharp reduction in labor flows.³ Moreover, the flows of people seeking refuge are increasing. From 2010 through 2013, under the conflict in Syria and the difficult situation in a number of other countries, their number in the OECD countries grew by more than 60%.

The low level of employment among poorly educated migrants, which was 54% in the OECD countries in 2013, testifies to the excess of this labor category, which causes increasingly sharper competition in the respective segment of the labor market. In addition, the more significant difficulties of the primary socioeconomic integration of migrants arriving through family and humanitarian channels, which

³ Over 2007–2012, the total share of foreigners received for permanent residence in the OECD countries through the channels of family reunification, as persons accompanying members of the families of foreign workers, and as persons with a refugee or similar status increased from 47.9 to 51.3% (calculation based on [2, p. 22]).

manifest themselves in a noticeably lower level of employment compared to that of labor migrants, especially among women, necessitate adopting special state programs and, respectively, expenditures for their social support.

The fact that different cultures participate in modern immigration imparts additional acuteness to social problems. The low level of education of the majority of newcomers from developing countries, namely, 74% of those who arrived to OECD countries in 2010–2011 less than five years ago from Somali, 62% from Morocco, and 57% from Mexico [4], makes it more difficult for them to master the language of the receiving country and to assimilate its norms and values. The problem of the integration of such migrants has become extremely large scale with account for the fact that, from 1990 through 2013, 78% of the growth of the number of newcomers in northern regions fell to immigrants from southern regions and the share of the latter in the population of foreign origin in developed countries is currently about 60%, exceeding 80% in the United States and Canada [6]. The dominance of representatives of other civilizational “worlds” among migrants generates ethnocultural and ethnoconfessional risks for the receiving societies. The United States, where Spanish is the native tongue for more than 50% of individuals of foreign origin, exhibits tendencies toward hispanicizing territories with a high concentration of such residents. In the EU countries, the rapidly growing number of Muslims, who total 27% of all migrants and already amount to almost 5 million residents of France and Germany, endanger receiving societies with Islamization and the erosion of their national identity [7].

THE EFFECTS OF IMMIGRATION ON LABOR AND LIVING CONDITIONS

Numerous studies abroad and in Russia have been dedicated to objective social consequences of immigration. The impact of immigration on the objective indicators of the well-being of natives, such as the level of their employment/unemployment and compensation, the condition of social services and payments, and the dynamics of consumer prices and living conditions, was analyzed in detail. The results of these studies are contradictory. The effects of immigration vary significantly depending on the terms and territorial level of their manifestation; the economic situation; the ratio of humanitarian-to-labor flows in the composition of newcomers; and the professional-qualification, age, family, and ethnocultural characteristics.

At the same time, the discrepancies in such assessments are largely affected by differences in research methods used, for example, by specific features in the construction of macroeconomic models. The size of the net fiscal effect of immigration under calculation

can vary noticeably depending on whether we use a static or dynamic approach (the latter, in turn, can be used from the positions of the life cycle or intergenerational flows). The list of accounted immigrant-related budget revenue and expenditure items also has its effect (whether or not indirect incomes from immigrants are accounted for along with direct ones; whether or not national defense costs and expenditures for paying interest on the state debt, maintaining the urban infrastructure, and supporting other public goods are included in the list of costs proportionally to the number of immigrants). Note that the results of statistical analysis of the impact of immigration on the labor market largely depend on the assessments of the elasticity of the substitution between newcomers and local workers used.

However, such effects are rather positive and as a rule small scale. The salutary contribution of immigration to the socioeconomic development of recipient countries is explained by its role in the accession of labor, especially its in-demand highly qualified cohorts, as well as in the increase in the flexibility and efficiency of labor market operation and the stimulation of the dynamics and innovation development of the economy, which favor the creation of new jobs and an increase in incomes. This impact becomes stronger as the qualification and education level of immigrants increases.

It was established, however, that a mass flow of migrants often has a short-term negative impact on the labor conditions of local workers [8]. The recent global crisis confirmed this. The inflow of immigrants under the decreased demand for labor strengthened the tension in the labor market and prompted the growth of unemployment. At the same time, such an impact is often restricted to unskilled labor and the local level [9]. In the long term, however, as is stressed even by the famous American critic of the consequences of immigration G. Borjas, whose studies were based on US materials for 1990–2010, the groups of workers with a medium and high level of education, including previous migrants, even gain in earnings [8]. In addition, in the long term, their flow to the United States has a positive effect on the employment of the entire local population, including its unskilled groups [10]. According to works by F. Docquier, Ç. Ozden, and G. Peri, in the 1990s–2000s, the long-term impact of immigration not only on employment but also on the earnings of local workers, including unskilled, in all the OECD countries was always positive, although slight. In Canada, the United States, Britain, Switzerland, and Luxemburg, to which intensive migration flows were going, the positive effect of immigration on the level of employment and average compensation of local less skilled workers in the 1990s varied from 1 to 5%. The size of this effect increased as the share of highly qualified workers among migrants grew [11].

These processes are closely connected with the improvement of the quality of employment and the upward social mobility of the majority of local residents, which take place under the influence of immigration. Newcomers, upon encountering great difficulties in the labor market, including their low or unfit qualifications, fill jobs that are characterized by worse labor conditions and compensations and are often in little demand on the part of natives. By occupying such niches of socially necessary labor and thus releasing and sometimes displacing local workers from them, immigrants involuntarily favor shifts in the professional structure of the latter toward more productive and better-paid jobs. For example, the immigrants who arrived in 2000–2010 to European OECD countries occupied about half of the vacancies open at that time in the sphere of unqualified labor, including from 70 to 80% in Greece, Denmark, and Norway and at least 90% in Spain and Ireland. Moreover, the scale of this process directly correlates with the increase in the share of local workers who joined the labor market in those years and occupied positions of a higher qualification level [12]. Such improvements concern local unqualified workers as well, who, owing to the concentration of migrants in the sphere of physical labor, shift to occupations requiring better-paid communication skills and certain cognitive abilities [13]. In addition, the substitution of migrants for local workers in jobs characterized by high rates of occupational traumatism, heavy physical labor, shift work, and overtime decreases health risks for local workers.

We should bear in mind that the socioeconomic situation of migrants is usually substantially worse than that of natives. For example, in the EU countries, the average level of unemployment among migrants, which in 2013 reached 15.5%, exceeds 1.5 times the analogous indicator for native residents [5]. In the OECD countries, the share of poor workers (the total income per household is 50% lower than the median income across the country of residence) among migrants is 27%, which is two times higher than among local residents [2].

The above circumstances determine the high need among migrants for social help from the state. In 2007–2009, the share of recipients of transfers for the poor among migrants in the OECD developed and transitional countries was two times higher than among local residents; that of rent subsidies, 1.5 times higher; and the share of unemployment benefits, 1.3 times higher, the sizes of such payments and benefits per household being greater by 66, 50, and 11%, respectively [14]. Human migrations to rich countries often seem aimed at obtaining social subsidies and, consequently, are viewed as a factor of aggravating competition in the sphere of social transfers.

At the same time, the share of those who receive old-age pensions among migrants is 20% lower than

that among natives, and the volume of such payments per household is almost two times smaller. With account for the fact that the sizes of old-age pensions are many times, sometimes orders of magnitude, higher than other social transfers, the significantly smaller pension coverage of migrants often compensates for larger volumes of other types of social support for them. As a result, the net fiscal effect of immigration varies from a negative value of 1.1% of GDP in Germany and 0.5% in France to the positive 2% in Luxemburg and Switzerland; however, on average for the OECD, it yields a positive balance of 0.35% of GDP (with no account for public goods) [14]. It is evident that temporary labor migrants, as well as people with a high educational level, contribute to the budget of receiving societies much more than the state spends on them.

The inflow of foreigners sometimes raises prices for goods and services that are in demand among them, particularly, housing prices. On a macroeconomic scale, however, the arrival of new cohorts of migrants has a general disinflationary effect, the intensity of which, as a rule, is directly proportional to the growth rates of the share of immigrants in an economy. This effect is usually short term and weakens as the immigrants integrate into society.

We know many cases when old declining urban quarters owing to immigrants transform into dynamically developing areas enriched by new forms of culture and social organization. Immigrants largely ensure the operation of public utilities and keep cities clean. At the same time, the growing concentration of migrants, especially of another culture, in poor districts often worsens the living conditions of the local population living there, increasing the crime rate and the load on the social infrastructure. This is confirmed by the existence of a direct connection between the inflow of migrants to certain districts and the departure of natives from them [15].

Ethnocultural contradictions manifest themselves in sharper forms as well, such as the increasingly more frequent extremist actions of radical Muslims; the rise of xenophobic political parties, which mobilize several-thousand-strong protest marches against the Muslimization of Europe; and so on. At the same time, the current escalation of ethnoconfessional confrontation perhaps rests on political rather than on confessional causes. The growth of such conflict is largely provoked by the interference of receiving states in the affairs of Islamic countries, the lack of political correctness on the part of Western authorities and citizens relative to the religious feelings of Muslims, and so on.

Therefore, the objective social consequences of immigration are ambiguous. Its socioeconomic impact is rather positive. However, the ethnocultural

effects are often negative, especially in the sociopolitical sphere.

THE IMPACT OF OBJECTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF IMMIGRATION ON THE SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING OF THE LOCAL POPULATION

As opposed to the labor and life conditions that characterize the objective side of the well-being of a population, the subjective aspect of well-being manifests itself in cognitive and emotional assessments of life by people themselves. The comparison of such assessments provided by the population in the course of a Gallup poll⁴ in developed countries (41 countries, 2010–2012) [16] and the share of immigrants in their population (2010) [1] shows a positive interconnection between the above indicators (Pearson's correlation coefficient is 0.503 under $p < 0.01$). It is obvious that, as a rule, well-to-do countries attract migration; however, the subjective well-being of the population probably depends directly on the scale and dynamics of migration.

Although the influence of immigration on subjective well-being is poorly studied thus far and only a few studies have been conducted on this topic, their results echo the results of the above-mentioned works, testifying thus to the connection between such objective and subjective processes. In other words, since the life and labor conditions of natives are factors of satisfaction with life and its perception as happy, the influence of immigration on these summands of objective well-being is somehow reflected in the subjective well-being of the local population.

The work by A. Akay, A. Constant, and C. Giulietti, based on German regions for 1997–2007, shows a significant but rather weak positive effect from the 1 pp increase in the share of immigrants in the population of these territories on life satisfaction of the local population (according to Cantril's scale) by 0.041 points at $p < 0.01$ [17].

The results of W. Betz and N. Simpson, based on the materials of the European Social Survey (ESS) for 26 countries for 2002–2010, demonstrate that the inflow of foreigners exerts a small positive statistically significant and nonlinear effect on the local population's happiness and life satisfaction. The intensity of this influence of immigration depends on the latter's duration, being maximal for the flows of the preceding year. For example, under an increase in migration flows by 10%, the happiness level of natives increases in the following year by 0.07 points ($p < 0.01$) [18].

⁴ For the assessment of life, the Cantril ladder scale was used: the respondents were to assess their life by imagining it as a ladder on which step 10 represents the best possible life for the respondents, while step 0 is the worst.

The authors of both works explain this positive impact by objective effects associated with the use of foreign labor and affecting favorably the position of local workers, or at least their majority. Such an impact on the feeling of subjective well-being from goings-on, as well as from the anticipated improvement of the material security and social status of this part of native residents, can become stronger owing to the known effect of social comparisons with the worse social position and feelings of other groups.

Migrants are among the less well-to-do groups, which is evident not only from objective indicators, such as the level of employment/unemployment, compensations, and so on, but also from subjective ones. In particular, the Gallup Institute data point to lower life satisfaction among natives of other countries compared to local residents (Fig. 2). In addition, the former more rarely experience positive emotions, such as joy and happiness, and, on the contrary, more often suffer negative feelings, including anxiety, stress, anger, and sadness. The causes are, without limitation, discrimination; difficulties in adapting themselves to a new cultural environment; life in isolation from their families; social isolation; unreasonably high expectations; and a decrease in the social status compared to that before emigration, especially among people with a high level of qualification and significant career achievements.

At the same time, W. Ding's work reveals that an increase in the share of immigrants by 1 pp in Canadian regions causes a decrease in life satisfaction among the local population by 0.007 points (at $p < 0.01$) [20]. The author explains this negative, even if insignificant, effect, differently from that identified in Europe, by the fact that newcomers from non-Western countries, who trigger a hostile reaction in native residents, predominate among the immigrants.

Similar results were obtained by S. Longhi, who considers the influence of the structural characteristics of migration rather than its scale on subjective well-being. On the material of British counties, the author shows that, in regions with a significant diversity of migrants by country of origin and ethnicity, the white English demonstrate a lower level of life satisfaction than in quarters with a less diverse composition of the population (significance at 1%) [21]. This conclusion is in accordance with the data of the Open Society Institute (OSI) poll of 2010 in European cities: in quarters with a diverse composition and especially dominance of populations with other geographical and ethnic roots, trust in people, which is an important factor of subjective well-being, decreases [22].

At the same time, no significant feedback is observable between religious diversity and subjective well-being, which Longhi explains by the adaptation of the native population to the existence of different confessions and compact Muslim settlement [21]. The latter,

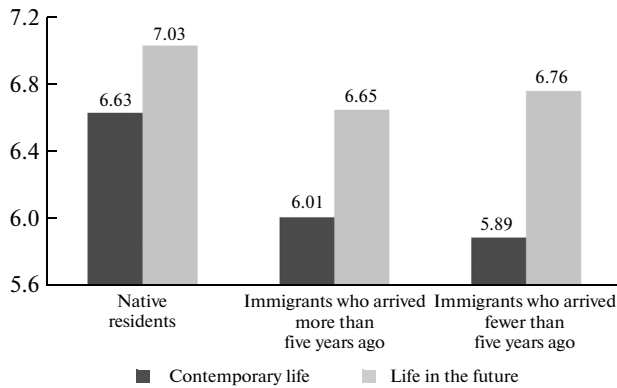


Fig. 2. Assessment of contemporary life and its prospects by native residents and migrants in the EU15 according to the Cantril scale (points from 0 to 10), 2009–2011.

Source: [19].

most likely, can be interpreted as a factor that minimizes the effect of their neighborhood.

However, the data of the above-mentioned OSF poll show that 69% of Muslims and 67% of non-Muslims think that good relationships between people of different confessions and ethnicities are observable in the district of their residence [22]. Islamic communities, despite their aloofness, exhibit certain signs of growing openness and readiness for intercultural interaction.⁵ Note that, although terrorist threats from radical Islamic groups worsen the attitude to Muslims in receiving countries [23], a significant part of their population, including 72% of the French respondents, 64% of the English, and 58% of the Germans polled in 2014 by the Pew Research Center, were kindly disposed to such immigrants [24].

The above-mentioned studies show that migration has a contradictory and, at the same time, weak influence on subjective well-being. Obviously, the factors of another ethnicity and especially different culture of immigration, which generate the risks of disintegration and destabilization in the receiving society, decrease the life satisfaction of the local population. At the same time, in Europe this impact is most likely “absorbed” by the positive effect of the total number of immigrants and the intensity of their flows on the social feeling of natives. This effect appears because human consciousness reflects objective, identified by many studies, enhancements in the natives' socio-economic position owing to immigration, although they may not attribute them to it directly. However, in assessing the effect of immigration on subjective well-being, we should account not only for objective but also for subjective factors of such influence, particu-

⁵ Sixty-one percent of European Muslims polled in 2010 felt they belonged to the country of residence, 49% identified themselves with it culturally, and 64% assumed respect for law as the main value of life in the receiving country [22].

larly, for the character of the local population's perception of the consequences of immigration.

THE PERCEPTION OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF IMMIGRATION BY THE LOCAL POPULATION

The contradictory nature of the effects of immigration determines the ambiguity, sometimes ambivalence, of their perception by the local population. The dominant trend, however, is a strengthening negative attitude to the national consequences of the mass inflow of foreigners. According to the 2013 poll of the German Marshall Fund (GMF), the population of the United States and the majority of the EU countries under poll is inclined to view immigration as a problem rather than a resource for a country's development and considers it as a burden on the service sector [25]. According to the VTsIOM (Russian Public Opinion Research Center) data for 2013, 65% of Russians associated immigration with growth of crime and corruption and 56%, with an increase in competition in the labor market [26]. Local residents are mostly concerned with the inflow of immigrants from developing countries.

At the same time, in the opinion of the overwhelming majority of the GMF respondents, immigrants enrich the culture of receiving countries; favor the filling of vacancies, compensating for the deficit of labor; and, owing to business activity, create additional jobs [25]. According to Gallup data, 63% of the population of the United States in 2014 considered immigration useful for the country [27].

The influence of the consequences of immigration on the subjective perception of well-being of the residents of receiving countries has not been assessed practically at the statistical level. This topic was touched upon only in a work by the Russian researchers T.A. Ryabichenko and N.M. Lebedeva. The authors interpret the attitude of the local population to immigration from the positions of perceived threats to economic and cultural well-being from outgroups, including immigrants. They establish a direct connection between the character of the perception of general national consequences of immigration and the subjective well-being of the residents of the receiving countries.⁶

Later ESS data (2012) for 29 countries also point to the existence of such connection. In states where native residents (born in the country of residence) critically assess the general economic and sociocultural consequences of immigration, the indicators of satisfaction with life and its perception as happy are, as a rule, lower. In particular, this concerns Portugal, Rus-

⁶ Based on the materials on Russia, Germany, Britain, and Israel from the ESS database for 2010 [28].

sia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Estonia. More positive assessments of the consequences of immigration often correspond to higher life satisfaction, as is the case, for example, in Denmark, Iceland, and Sweden (see table).

Note that the effect of the opinion of the local population about national consequences of immigration on the indicators of its subjective well-being is statistically significant but rather weak. Pearson's correlation coefficients vary from 0.18 to 0.21 at $p < 0.01$. In addition, the assessments of the consequences of immigration in the majority of countries are positioned in the interval from 4 to 6 points on an 11-point scale; i.e., they tend to neutrality. This means that the degree of negative attitude, if any, is rather low. To all appearances, the above-mentioned perceived threats to the economic and cultural well-being of natives are not so strong as to change substantially the social feeling of the latter (Fig. 3). In this respect, indicative is the example of Russia, where, against the background of a growing negative attitude to migrants, VTsIOM noted a substantial increase in life satisfaction. In June 2009, only 29% of Russians were satisfied with their life, while in 2014 this figure was 51%; 25 and 11%, respectively, were dissatisfied (the rest were partially satisfied and partially dissatisfied) [30].

A number of other surveys show that the perception of the consequences of immigration at the local and personal levels is much less critical than at the national level. This regularity or at least expressed tendency manifests itself in the results of regular Eurobarometer polls. In the fall of 2014, 18% of EU residents attributed immigration to one of the two most important problems of their country, but only 5% considered it as such for them personally, while, in the rating of the most significant problems, immigration occupied 3rd place in the first case and only 11th in the second [31].

Although some native residents think that their earnings decrease because of the inflow of foreigners or that someone from their family has lost his/her job, there are sympathetic assessments of microsocial consequences of immigration. For example, according to Eurobarometer data, in 78 out of the 83 European cities and their suburbs surveyed in 2012, the attitude of the majority of residents to the presence of foreigners was positive.⁷ Note that the number of such cities noticeably increased compared to 2009. The perception of the presence of immigrants in the cities more closely correlates with the life satisfaction of their population (0.492 at $p < 0.01$) than the perception of the national consequences of immigration, which testifies to a much greater effect of the former than the latter on subjective well-being. The integral character of the

⁷ For example, Luxemburg, Kraków, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Oslo, Ljubljana (Slovenia), Burgas (Bulgaria), and Cluj-Napoka (Romania) number about 90% of such respondents each [32].

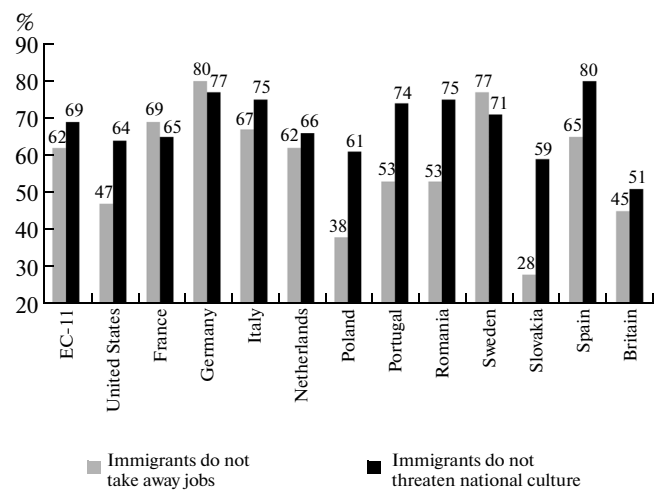


Fig. 3. Share of respondents who disagree with the statement that immigrants deprive local residents of jobs and create a threat to national culture, 2013, %.

Source: [25].

assessments given in the cities provides grounds to presume that, in the ideas of the population, the benefits from immigration exceed its costs, including sociocultural.

The noticeable discrepancies in the assessments of the consequences of immigration at the microsocial and macrosocial levels and in the effects of these assessments on subjective well-being can be explained as follows. We can assume that, in assessing the consequences of immigration for their country, people express their civic stance on this issue. They are inclined to rely not on personally determined but rather on certain external criteria, formed under the action of vague and distorted ideas of the population about immigration and its real consequences at the macrolevel under a lack of objective information about them. Mass media strengthen the existing prejudices relative to immigration and stir up xenophobia. They often cover only the most sensational aspects of this already highly politicized problem and feed imaginary dangers of immigration, seeking to put the blame for problems in the receiving countries on it.

The inadequacy of the perception of immigration was vividly confirmed by the results of the 2014 poll of the British sociological service Ipsos Mori. In particular, this survey revealed that the aggregated assessment of the share of Muslims in the population by the respondents was in a marked contrast to official statistics and many times overstated their number. The former indicator was 31% and the latter 7.5% in France; 19 and 5.8%, respectively, in Germany; and 21 and 5%, respectively, in Britain [33]. The "visibility" of immigrants from developing countries, particularly Muslims, who are different in outer appearance, speech, and behavior; mark the places of their resi-

Assessments of economic and sociocultural consequences of immigration by the local population and its subjective well-being in some European countries (points from 0 to 10), 2012 [29, 30]

Country	National-scale influence of immigration ¹			Life satisfaction ²	Level of happiness ²
	on living conditions	on culture	on the economy		
Bulgaria	5.2	5.5	4.9	4.3	5.3
Britain	4.4	4.9	4.3	7.3	7.5
Germany	5.3	6.2	5.7	7.5	7.6
Denmark	6.0	6.2	5.0	8.6	8.4
Ireland	5.1	5.2	4.5	6.7	7.1
Iceland	6.5	6.7	5.9	8.0	8.2
Spain	5.2	6.1	5.1	7.0	7.6
Netherlands	5.3	6.2	5.2	7.8	7.8
Norway	5.6	5.9	5.8	8.1	8.2
Poland	6.0	6.7	5.5	7.1	7.3
Portugal	3.8	4.9	4.3	5.9	6.4
Russia	3.2	3.6	3.8	5.8	6.2
Slovakia	4.3	4.8	3.9	6.6	6.7
Slovenia	4.8	5.4	4.4	7.0	7.3
Finland	5.6	7.1	5.4	8.1	8.1
Czech Republic	4.2	4.2	4.0	6.6	6.6
Switzerland	5.2	5.9	6.0	8.3	8.2
Sweden	6.3	6.9	5.6	7.9	7.8
Estonia	4.8	5.6	4.9	6.3	6.9

¹ In the course of the poll, the respondents were asked the following questions: “In your opinion, does the fact that people from other countries come to your country tell well or badly on its economy?”; “Does the inflow of people from other countries destroy or enrich the culture of your country?”; and “Is your country as a place for life becoming better or worse as people from other countries come there?” The response scale varied from 0 to 10, where 0 designated an extreme negative assessment (“bad for the economy,” “destroys the culture of our country,” and “is becoming worse,” respectively), while 10 was the maximal positive assessment (“good for the economy,” “enriches the culture of our country,” and “is becoming better”). Having adopted 5 points as a neutral assessment, we consider lower assessments negative and higher ones positive.

² The respondents were asked the following questions: “Taking into account all sides of your life, to what extent are you happy?” and “Taking into account all sides of life, to what extent are you overall satisfied with life?” On the 11-point scale, the answers “very unhappy” and “are not satisfied at all” corresponded to 0, while the answers “very happy” and “are fully satisfied” corresponded to 10.

dence by minarets; and so on, leads to overestimating the threat of their demographic and sociocultural expansion.

An equally bright indicator of the artificial design of negative attitudes to immigrants is the share of respondents who hold that “there are too many immigrants in the country.” The 2014 GMF poll established that people who are unfamiliar with official statistics adhere much more often to this opinion than those who know such data (Fig. 4).

As is known, immigrants, especially highly qualified, are concentrated in large cities, where their human capital can be used more efficiently. The close contacts of natives with immigrants in the workplace and in everyday life often help form a positive personal

experience of interrelationships with migrants⁸ and improve the perception of their presence. Finally, it is obvious that, although people are concerned with events in their country and worldwide, which they consider through the prism of personal life, what happens personally to them and in their closest social environment is, as a rule, much more important for their subjective well-being. At the same time, because of the “favoritism towards the native city” (when people are inclined to think that their life in this city is bet-

⁸ For example, according to the GMF poll of 2014, native residents largely state that they have friends among immigrants: 69% in the United States, 84% in Sweden, 66% in Germany, 64% in Spain, 63% in France, 59% in Greece, and 58% in Britain and the Netherlands. In Russia, this indicator is 39% [34].

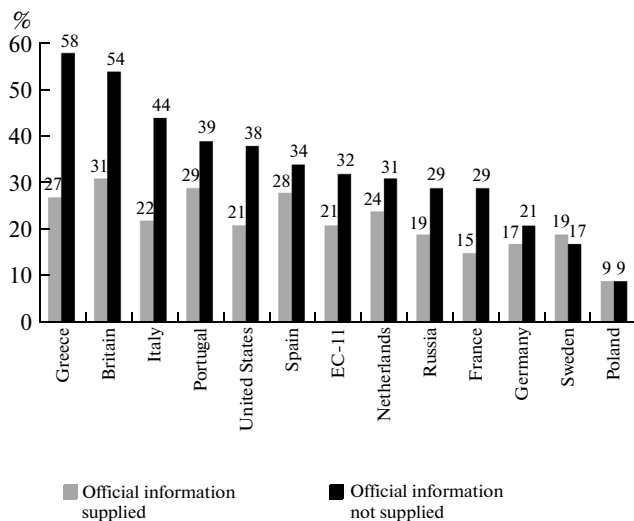


Fig. 4. Share of people who believe that there are too many immigrants in the country among the respondents who were supplied/not supplied with official information about the number of immigrants in the country, 2014, %.

Source: [34].

ter than on average across the country), the obtained positive assessments can be somewhat overrated.

* * *

Our study shows that the impact of immigration on the well-being of the local population is rather small and its character is debatable. Judging from the widely spread negative attitude to immigration in receiving societies, which manifests itself in the results of sociological polls; active support for xenophobic political parties; many-thousand-strong marches of protest against Islamization of Europe; and so on, a significant part of the population is inclined to see social evil in immigration. Indeed, the inflow of migrants of another culture creates serious threats to national identity and the lifestyle established in Western societies. The growing competition on the part of immigrants in the labor market increases the risks of unemployment and a decrease in incomes, which are encountered primarily by local unskilled workers. These objective processes, which lead to the growing concerns of local residents, decrease their life satisfaction and worsen their emotional state.

Negative attitudes of the population with respect to immigration favor the tightening of immigration policy relative to in-demand economic categories of foreign workers as well. These attitudes contribute to the formation of inadequate approaches to integration policy; their implementation can lead to a new round of the escalation of social contradictions connected with immigration.

At the same time, the inflow of foreigners, as a rule, favors the improvement of the socioeconomic position of the majority of society, which positively affects subjective indicators. This effect is supported by the fact that the opinion of people about the impact of immigration on their personal life and the life of their family members and their native city is much more concrete, adequate, and sympathetic compared to abstract, distorted, and hostile ideas about its consequences at the national level. The native residents' more favorable perception of the influence of immigration on microsocial processes that tell on them personally and on their closest social environment affects their subjective well-being much more significantly compared to the negative assessments of macrosocial costs and threats from immigration. The positive social effect of immigration probably surpasses the negative one.

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