



IMMIGRANTS AND EUROPEAN IDENTITY IN THE 21st CENTURY

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EUROPEAN UNION



28 member-states

Population – 508 million

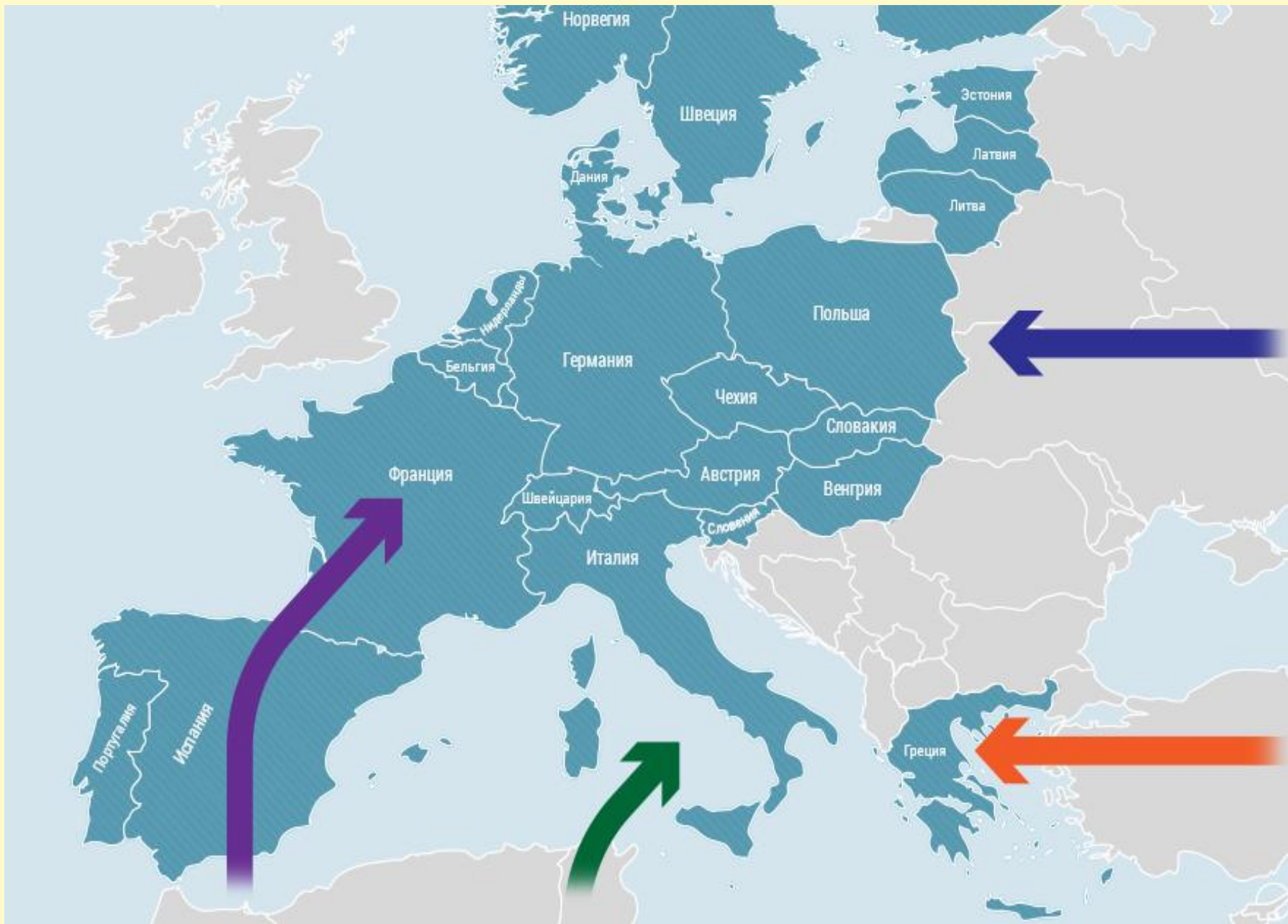
Gross domestic product – 18400 billion \$

GDP per person – 36 220 \$

In the 21st century, European states face serious demographic challenges, brought to life by the declining birth rates and increasing duration of life of the population.

The birth rate in the European Union is 1.4, while simple reproduction requires 2.1.

To maintain the achieved level of life and production, they require additional work force.



In 1990s, one of the most important manifestations of globalization has been the noticeable increase of migration flows.

The number of immigrants in Europe reached 30 million (unofficially over 80 million). Afro-Asian Muslims made up about 70%.

Adaptation of Afro-Asian population in Europe is not easy. Young people of the third generation though they were born and raised in Europe, show more interest in their roots, and are not interested in European values and peculiarities of European civilization. Those arriving in the 21st century are not interested in that too.

Immigrants have already broken the ethnic and cultural balance in Europe. That becomes a threat to European identity, which is of great importance to present ideological constructions of the united Europe.

Migrants do not want to integrate into the local communities.

In places of compact residence, they actually try to set their own rules.

They try to approve the superiority of Islam in education as well.

They simply try to convince West European society that Islam is so special that it has the right to dictate any terms.

Today it is not a surprise that in European countries prejudice against Asians and Africans is clearly manifested. Anti-Islamic sentiments grow up as well. According to polls, 39% of the British, 67% of the Danes, 72% of the Dutch, 75% of the Swedes recognize the distrust of the Muslims.

The tension grows in European society. People see the cultural basis of the European countries eroding. Due to that the question of how to save their culture and traditions, European identity in general became very important.

All the mentioned above circumstances substantially added to the troubles caused by the transition to a postindustrial society and globalization. Material conditions of existence of many people altered to worse and influenced their political views, sympathies, values.

The struggle for economic survival very often brings people together on the principle that blame "others". Therefore, foreigners have become very important topic for the member states of the European Union. Accordingly, the slogans of protection of national identity and limitation of the rights of immigrants come to the fore.

By the beginning of the 21st century, it became obvious that nationalism has become one of significant factors in the development of contemporary European society.

Nationalist movements are gaining strength, and political parties that use nationalist rhetoric achieve electoral success.

Important feature of new nationalism - desire to protect already existing, but weakening nation-state from the negative events of nowadays.

Today the national identity is still successfully resists European identity. Despite the intensity of the formation of European identity, for most people national identity is still preferable.

It is not surprising, that nationalist parties today are also show their negative attitude to European integration, to the EU enlargement and to the projects of centralization of its administrative structures.

"Euroscepticism" became an essential part of the media and scientific literature. Eurosceptics grow in numbers and the supporters of the nationalist ideas become more and more noticeable among them.

At the elections to the European Parliament in 2009, parties speaking from the standpoint of Euroskepticism received the tangible support of the population. For the first time two cross-party euroskeptic alliances appeared in the Europarlament.

- Europe for freedom and democracy
- European conservatives and reformists

After the elections, the media in different countries reported regularly on the increasing numbers of the eurosceptics on the continent from Norwegian Kirkenes to Crete.



Nationalists and Euroskeptics have indeed achieved notable success at the national elections to the European Parliament held on 22-25 May 2014. Now they account for more than 150 seats out of 751.

Thus, in the 21st century the ethnic and cultural balance in Europe has changed due to the immigrants. A process of erosion of the European identity takes place.

Today it is impossible not to notice the growing fears among many European peoples about losing their national identity.

Therefore, in the 21st century nationalism is gaining strength on the European continent, becoming one of the typical features of contemporary European society.

One of the main priorities of the new nationalism is to protect national identity from the immigrants, changing immigration policy of the authorities in their countries.