

SUMMARY

Subject of the thesis: Foreign policy of Belgium at the present stage.

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Relevance of the research issue is determined by the fact that Belgium is a characteristic example of a small highly developed European country and at the same time a unique state within the European Union. Thanks to its central position in Europe, as well as the experience of combining the two key European cultures - the Romance and the German, it occupies a special position in the system of European integration. Modern demographic problems of Belgium, associated with immigration mobility, are typical for many developed countries of Western Europe. The capital of Belgium holds one of the leading positions in the development and spread of the pan-European mentality.

Belgium is the only federal state in Western Europe with acute ethnopolitical territorial problems. The existing and actively developing confrontation between the two largest ethnic groups is not only an acute problem for the Belgian authorities, but also a negative aspect affecting the policy of achieving unity and conflict-freeness in the EU. The existing contradictions are manifested in all spheres of the population's life: economic, social, linguistic, cultural, and political. All components of the conflict are closely intertwined. Its further development is hampered by various factors, including the special "peacekeeping" role of Belgium in the EU. Also the evolution of Russian-Belgian relations in the period of sanctions is relevant, presenting a specific scientific, practical and universal interest.

The object of research is the foreign policy of the state.

The subjects of research is the foreign policy of Belgium at the present stage.

The purpose is the analysis of Belgium's foreign policy at the present stage.

Research objectives:

- to study the legal framework for the formulation and adoption of foreign policy decisions;
- to analyze national interests in the foreign policy sphere;
- to characterize the geopolitical position of Belgium;
- to identify the strategic directions of Belgium's foreign policy at the present stage;
- to analyze the current state of Russian-Belgian relations.

Scientific novelty:

- it was revealed that in addition to the threat of Belgium's disintegration into certain regions and the problems of "Flemish separatism", immigration and integration of migrants, the problem of spreading the idea of radicalism in the part of Belgian society becomes urgent;

- it is revealed that Belgian-Russian relations will have a tendency to further development, despite the EU's sanctions policy, mainly in the field of economy and security issues and the fight against terrorism.

Structure: two chapters, four paragraphs, the conclusion, bibliography list of used literature from 137 sources, including 65 sources in foreign languages, and five applications. The total volume is 72 pages.

Summary: Belgium is one of the smallest member states of the EU and one of the most densely populated countries in Europe with a population of over 11 million (2017). Belgium is located on the most geostrategic part of the northern European plain: between the Atlantic Ocean and the Ardennes forests leading to the foothills of the Eifel Range on the modern German-Belgian border

The capital of Belgium, Brussels, is home of the European Union (EU) and NATO. It is no accident that Brussels was chosen as the headquarters of the EU, since its inherent weakness was considered to be the ideal "compromise country" for the establishment of the bloc's headquarters, since it would never become as strong as France, for example, potentially monopolizing the agenda of an international organization.

However, in a country, a symbol of the European Union, the tendency of separation between the two ethnic groups of the majority is so strong that it threatens to lead to the disintegration of the state.

The Belgians, soberly assessing their limited opportunities for independent action in the international arena, nevertheless intend to influence the solution of issues that are of practical interest or "moral value" for them. To this end, they intend to use, above all, the channels of the European Union and the United Nations.

With this strategic orientation, the main foreign policy priorities of the country for the near future are also involved: promoting in strengthening the international potential of the "transformed" European Union and in reorganizing the global mechanisms of international relations through the cardinal reform of the UN and its institutions. At the same time, the Belgians do not forget to emphasize the traditional priority of their participation in NATO and the EU. As far as possible, Belgium intends to maintain its foreign policy "profile" in a number of specific international issues: building a new European security architecture, Central and South Africa; organization of the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines.

The country plays a significant role in the broader context of European and international politics. Belgium is considered an exemplary liberal democracy in an area increasingly determined by disunity. Belgium promotes the ideas of European unity and openness within the framework of the international system. One of the main factors that influenced Belgium's views on its role in international politics is its past political experience.

Having realized the main goal of the research and solving research objectives, it can be concluded that Belgium, being a federation with three different cultural regions: Flanders, Wallonia and the capital of Brussels, owes its central position to the presence on its territory of the headquarters of the Council of

Europe, the European Commission and the European Parliament, NATO and other international organizations, in the wake of their policies and acts.

Belgium's foreign policy is largely determined by its special position in the system of European integration. Belgium is the center of international contacts. About 1,000 state and private branches or headquarters of international organizations and communities such as the EU, NATO, etc. are located on the territory of the country. Brussels is considered the "European capital", where many EU executive bodies are located. Belgium occupies an important place in the United Nations and promotes international human rights policies through its seat in the United Nations Human Rights Council.

To elevate its "own voice" in world politics, the country seeks, relying on the principles of "humanity, democracy, protection of the weak, tolerance." As part of European integration, Belgium, together with its Benelux partners, put forward the concept of "advanced cooperation", justifying for small countries the right to form small groups to "promote" certain projects within the framework of EU reform.

In our view, the secessionist movement in Flanders and Wallonia is the greatest threat to the integrity of the Belgian state, affecting the policy of achieving unity and conflict-freeness in the EU. Various factors restrain the further development of the conflict, including a special "peacekeeping" role of Belgium in the EU, "monarchical federalism", "capitalism" of Brussels in the EU, the migration population. An ambiguous impact on Belgium's foreign policy was provided by the specifics of the federal structure of this country, the tendency to give the subjects of the federation - communities and regions - increasingly broad powers in the field of external relations.

As the political center of the European process and the location of the main part of the EU bureaucracy, Belgium periodically faced with the threat of terrorist attacks. The terrorist attacks in Belgium, as a rule, are not aimed against the Belgian State itself. As a rule, the attempts of terrorist acts are connected with the foreign policy role of the kingdom in the European space and, most likely, are aimed at "intimidating" the representations of other European states.

Having considered the key problems of Russian-Belgian relations, we came to the conclusion that the current mutual alienation of Europe and Russia under certain conditions can degrade into a kind of confrontation existing between Russia and the US that will become a modern analogue of the Cold War - with all qualitative differences from the situation of the second half of the twentieth century. However, despite the sanctions and US pressure, relations between Belgium and Russia are likely continue to develop, and in areas such as security and the economy.