

MIGRATION PERSPECTIVES

EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA



IOM International Organization for Migration

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EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

Planning and managing labour migration

OCTOBER 2006

Edited by
Roger Rodríguez Rios

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IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental body, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to: assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues; encourage social and economic development through migration; and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

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Foreword

The publication you hold in your hand is meant to inspire and provoke. I hope it will be used by policy makers, practitioners, officials, grassroots, donors and scholars, who in their work are occupied with contributing to the development of Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

The publication does not intend to capture all trends in the region; neither does it pretend to be scientific and all-inclusive. The contributions from the authors are written in their personal capacities, drawing on their diverse professional experiences.

The material in this publication proves that many trends are common in the region, but it too illustrates that in some aspects the developments of migration issues are very specific for each sub-region or state in the region.

One such example, migration for labor purposes is a large-scale phenomena. For instance, the strong and growing economy of the Russian Federation is attracting a lot of labour migrants from other states. There are up to approximately 700,000 Tajik citizens working abroad, more than 90% of them are in the Russian Federation, legally or irregularly. With the dimension of this migration phenomenon, a number of questions need to be raised. How to address the issue of regulating these flows? What about “brain drain”? Or is it rather the so-called "brain circulation", migrants going abroad, acquiring skills and then eventually, at some point, returning to use these skill back home?

The role of remittances and their estimation is another important issue for the economies and societies in the region. States realize that employment abroad is beneficial for their citizens, and thereby also for the state, and have begun negotiating labor migration agreements to further develop practical labor migration schemes.

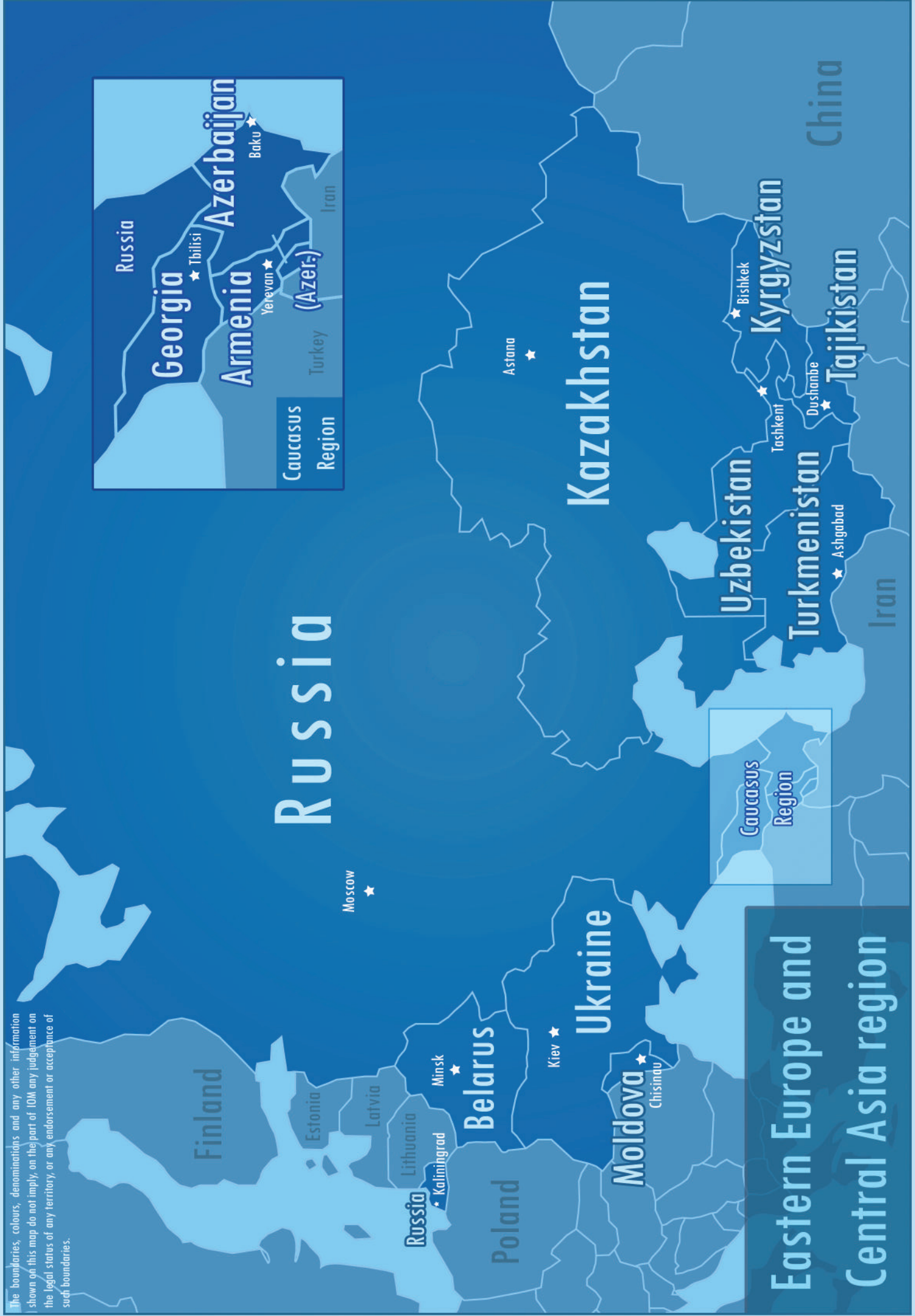
Migration has often been looked upon as a control issue in the region. Now it becomes more pragmatic and the line of thought goes, "we need migrants; we have to regulate their movements; it is good for the state that we have migrant workers here; they are helping our economy." The labour migration debate thereby increasingly becomes a discussion on supply and demand.

Migration issues are high on the agenda in most countries, for different reasons, and will stay high on the agenda for a long time. The negative impact of migration on societies is often emphasized, but as most of the contributions in this publication point out, it can have many very positive effects on all parties involved and the question remains on how to maximize these positive effects for the benefit of both citizens and the states.

Claus Folden

Coordinator IOM Technical Cooperation Centre for Europe and Central Asia

The boundaries, colours, denominations and any other information shown on this map do not imply, on the part of IOM any judgement on the legal status of any territory, or any endorsement or acceptance of such boundaries.



Russia

Kazakhstan

Eastern Europe and Central Asia region

CONTENTS

| | |
|------|--|
| v | Foreword |
| viii | Map of Eastern Europe and Central Asia |
| 1 | Introduction: Planning and managing labour migration <i>Roger Rodriguez Rios</i> |
| 5 | The Migration of Information Technology Professionals from the Post-Soviet Region <i>Elena Gapova</i> |
| 17 | The Migration Situation in Armenia: Challenges and Solutions <i>Gagik Yeganyan</i> |
| 27 | Migration to and from Azerbaijan <i>Alovsat Aliyev</i> |
| 37 | Every Migrant has the Right to [Il]legal Employment? <i>Murat Buldekbayev</i> |
| 45 | Trends and Development of Migration Processes in Kyrgyzstan <i>Uranbek Ergeshbayev</i> |
| 55 | Implications of International Labour Migration for the Population of the Republic of Moldova <i>Valeriu Moshneaga</i> |
| 71 | Outlook on Migration Policy Reform in Russia: Contemporary Challenges and Political Paradoxes <i>Natalia Voronina</i> |
| 85 | Annex 1: <i>Interviews</i> |
| 89 | Annex 2: <i>Labour migration in the Russian Federation</i> |
| 91 | External Labour Migration in Tajikistan: Root Causes, Consequences and Regulation <i>Khodjamakhmad Umarov</i> |
| 103 | Migration Situation in Turkmenistan <i>Olena Malynovska</i> |
| 117 | Contemporary Migration from Ukraine <i>Serge Cipko</i> |
| 133 | Feminization of Labour Migration in Uzbekistan <i>Lyudmila Maksakova</i> |

INTRODUCTION: Planning and managing labour migration

Roger Rodríguez Rios

The steady decrease of flows out of Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA)* in recent years has not affected the dynamism and complexity of migration processes within the region. Whereas in the 1990s migration was largely the result of crises, military conflicts, and the return of groups living outside their original place of origin, more recently these forms of migration have given way to the short and long-term movement people searching for better economic opportunities. Given this change, a predominant concern for the region is how to best plan and manage labour migration while taking into account increasingly diversified flows in terms of gender and origin, irregular migration, trafficking in persons, security, and the ongoing humanitarian needs of some displaced groups.

The region is characterized by large disparities in levels of economic development and by labour markets that vary greatly in terms of wage levels, unemployment rates, and the number of available jobs. There are also important disparities in demographic trends across the region: while the populations of Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine are shrinking due to ageing and low birth rates, Azerbaijan and the Central Asian states are still experiencing relatively high population growth. The major destination country in the region, Russia, is second only to the United States in terms of foreign-born residents, many of whom come from other EECA countries (UNHCR et al, 2004).

A number of other factors and emerging trends influence the complex migration picture in the EECA region: the lack of reliable statistics on migration in general and on labour migration in particular, the pull factor of diaspora networks, some populations' dependency on the remittances of migrant workers, the feminization of labour migration, brain drain from the region, trafficking in persons, and the role of globalization and regional economic organizations in fostering free flows of labour. Clearly, a more careful analysis is needed to understand how these elements affect migration flows and to identify appropriate policy responses.

Migration remains a key topic in public and political debates across the region. As many articles in this volume point out, the impact of migration range from positive to negative, offering opportunities or constraints to economic, social, and human development. The effects will vary depending on each country's context, its economic and social trends, the scale and characteristics of migration flows, and the behaviour of individual migrants (IOM, 2006).

*For the purposes of this report the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region comprises: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

Policy Challenges

Given the importance of labour migration and its potential benefits, the protection of migrant workers should be of interest to both sending and receiving countries; this would lead to sending countries realizing the potential of exporting labour as a vital part of their economic strategy, seeking the protection of their workers abroad and of their interests at home. Receiving countries could meet the workforce needs of their economies and reduce the scale of irregular migration and illegal employment. Since migrant workers, particularly those employed irregularly, constitute a highly vulnerable social group, labour migration policies need to be supported by measures to prevent abusive practices and to promote decent and productive work.

Labour migration should not be viewed as a completely separate phenomenon but as part of labour market issues in general. In Central Asia and the Caucasus, in fact, unemployment is a central challenge but also the main reason behind labour migration. In some countries other issues affect labour migration, including: the existence of a strong informal sector, a lack of good governance, and insufficient social dialogue. All of these issues are equally linked to the creation of regular, decently paid jobs. Particular attention should be paid to female workers and young people, for they are particularly vulnerable in the labour market and most easily can fall prey to trafficking scams.

In recent years, bilateral and regional agreements have become an increasingly common means of regulating labour migration. These agreements are meant to offer valuable frameworks for regulating flows and protecting migrants' rights, but, as some researchers have pointed out, they sometimes include drawbacks. In distinct ways, the articles in this volume analyse the effectiveness of the agreements, institutions, and procedures that have been established by a number of countries in the region to protect the basic rights of migrant workers, and offer recommendations for their improvement.

The Way Forward

As IOM Director-General Brunson McKinley has highlighted, a key issue in the current migration debate is the need to better match the global supply and demand of labour. Within the EECA region, the movement of labour is facilitated by geographic proximity, historical links, a largely visa-free regime, widespread knowledge of a common language, and a well developed transport infrastructure. Given these factors, one would expect that labour supply and demand throughout the region would adjust naturally in response to market conditions, but often the lack of official channels for migrating and obtaining work in EECA countries creates distortions that push many into irregular migration and/or human trafficking.

In a recent initiative, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), International Labour Organization (ILO), and IOM have launched a *Handbook on Establishing Effective Labour Migration Policies in Countries of Origin and Destination*, which aims to assist states, decision makers, and labour migration practitioners in developing new policy solutions and approaches for better managing labour migration.

In September 2006, IOM presented its proposal for an International Migration and Development Initiative (IMDI) at the United Nations High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. The IMDI is a collaborative effort to match labour supply with labour demand, in safe, legal, humane, and orderly ways that maximize the societal and human development potential of global labour mobility. The proposal brings together the expertise of interested governments, businesses, and organizations to contribute in concrete ways to the international community's efforts

to maximize the development benefits of international migration and minimize its negative impacts. If implemented, the IMDI would represent a significant breakthrough and allow for greater labour mobility on an equitable basis.

Opinions expressed in this section are entirely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of IOM.

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The Migration of Information Technology Professionals from the Post-Soviet Region

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1. INTRODUCTION

This paper focuses on the migration of Information Technology (IT) experts from selected countries of the post-Soviet region (Belarus, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan) to traditional receiving countries in North America (the United States and Canada) and, more recently, in Western Europe (Germany, the United Kingdom, and France). Although the migration of highly skilled professionals from the post-Soviet states has, until recently, attracted little attention from scholars, the size of the flow has grown enough to worry policymakers both in sending and receiving countries due to its economic implications.

1.1. Methodology

As many researchers have noted, there is a lack of data regarding trends, patterns, and directions in the migration of highly skilled professionals from the post-Soviet states to the West (Panescu, 2005: 119). This paper aims to help fill this gap by observing the movements of migrants who hold special categories of visas and who can, therefore, be distinguished from other types of migrants. Additionally, the research that informs the paper is based on several types of sources.

First, the paper uses information gained from 19 partially structured interviews with male and female IT specialists and their relatives living in the United States, Canada, and the Commonwealth of Independent States. Of those who were living in the United States, most were in the Detroit area, one in California and one in Illinois. The Canadian sample consisted of several specialists based in Toronto. Two interviews were also conducted with families in Great Britain and France. The subjects were chosen according to strict visa-based criteria and professional characteristics. The sample did not include university researchers, students, or any other migration category that might come under the broad definition of knowledge workers.

Second, the paper considers reports on offshore job losses and the migration of high-tech professionals from English-language professional IT newsletters and magazines (such as *Software Development*, *Photonics Spectra*, etc.), and general electronic and printed media (such as *The New York Times*, *Newsweek*, the Russian newspaper *Izvestia*, etc.) in both the recipient and sending communities.

Third, information is gathered from virtual forums where IT professionals from post-Soviet countries discuss their experiences and answer questions from colleagues at home who might be considering whether to migrate or not. An analysis of these sources helps to understand the societal anxieties linked to skilled labour migration.

Statistics are another source of information. It is important to note, however, that other than the issuance of specialized visas or work permits, there is no way of gaining accurate statistical data about the number and origin of migrants employed in certain jobs in the West.

2. The Rise of a Globally Mobile, Highly Skilled Workforce

Gary Becker, the 1992 Nobel laureate in economics, pointed out in the mid 1990s that Silicon Valley, the world's leading region for the development of new technologies, employed one million people, 40 percent of whom had at least a bachelor's degree and more than one third of whom were foreign-born. This observation highlights two issues of relevance to this paper: the increasing value ascribed to knowledge workers in information based economies and the increasing mobility of such workers that this increased value implies.

The second half of the twentieth century gave rise to an educated technological elite made up of so-called IT, high-tech, or information professionals. Today, these "priority workers" are distinguished from service workers and are seen as important national economic assets or sources of prosperity that more technologically developed and prosperous countries are willing to attract through special visa regimes (Khadria, 2001: 47). However, this "globalization of human capital" both originates from and accentuates the "relations of disjuncture" created by uneven economic processes in different parts of the globe (Appadurai, 2001: 5).

By the 1990s, many developed countries like the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and the United States had undergone a fall in natural population growth. Given that IT production is labour-intensive, these countries started feeling that their own work force was not sufficient to guarantee their competitiveness in the global technological market. In 2000, in fact, the Institute for Electric and Electronic Engineers (IEEE), a US national professional association, admitted that "[w]ith declining numbers from national engineering graduate programs, the United States has no option but to satisfy the growing need for engineering professionals from abroad" (IEEE, April 2000).

The global expansion of IT corporations has also required the movement of highly skilled professionals across national borders, a fact that has led many to view this kind of labour mobility as engineered by the demands of transnational capital (Williams and Balaz, 2005: 440). The redistribution of professionals to places where technological or managerial expertise is needed creates a global skills market where states and companies compete for professionals in an attempt to maximize economic benefits (Koser, 1997: 290; Khadria, 2001: 296). As this kind of competition intensifies, skilled migration becomes more visible.

2.1. The Receiving Countries: Immigration Policies for Skilled Professionals

During the last decade, many western nations have developed special immigration policies (through targeted laws and quota systems) and introduced or relaxed work permits for knowledge workers.

To attract highly skilled professionals, the United States (the world's largest IT employer) has introduced the H-1B visa programme for specialized occupations such as computer professionals, programmers, and engineers. In accordance with the rules of this programme, visas are approved for up to three years and may be extended to six years. During this period, the employee cannot change employer but can apply for a Green Card (i.e. a permanent residence permit). The yearly quota for the allocation of H-1B visas has increased and decreased several times since the programme was introduced in 1990, oscillating between 65,000 and 195,000 visas a year in response to demands from the private sector and legislation such as the American Competitiveness in the Twenty First Century Act (Immigration, 2003). As of 2004, it is estimated that there are 500,000 foreign-born IT professionals with H-1B visas in the United States (Green Card and US passport holders are not included in this number) (Assil, 2004).

Western European nations have also become more open to highly skilled migrants. The United Kingdom, for example, has introduced Employer Sponsored Work Permits for occupations listed on its Skills Shortage List and, in 2002, the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme was established. The latter measure allows certain highly skilled migrants to work in the United Kingdom without first having found an offer of employment and without an employer needing to sponsor the visa. Germany and France have also introduced laws to promote the immigration of highly qualified IT experts from abroad, and the European Union is considering a "job-seeker's permit" for highly skilled workers.

Australia has introduced a 457 Category Visa for skilled professionals that is valid for four years, and is planning recruitment fairs in India and Europe. Since 2001, Australia has allowed foreign students to move easily into the labour market instead of requiring them to return home.

2.2. The Sending Countries: Composition of the Migrating Work Force

According to multiple sources, India provides the largest share of information technology experts. In the United States, Indian nationals account for one third of high-tech professionals with H-1B visas. The next most important supplier of brains to the United States is China. Japan, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, Canada, and South Korea follow, each contributing 2-3 percent each. The Russian Federation accounts for 1.4 percent of the whole (INS, 2002), while many other nations of the former Soviet Union contribute a fraction of one percent.

Typically, IT professionals migrating from the post-Soviet region are male, in their late 20s or early 30s, married (or trying to get married as they leave), based in capitals or larger cities. They tend to be employed in the private rather than in the public sector, to have experience working for a western employer, and to possess good social and communication skills. Most of those who are awarded visas for temporary relocation eventually seek permanent residence permits. Post-Soviet migrants are often “invisible” to the majority population because they tend to be educated, self-sustained and westernized.

The overall number of highly skilled migrant workers is much smaller than that of people involved in other kinds of migration. Although the migration of IT experts may not be “demographically” salient, in the sense that it does not change the population structure in the countries of origin and/ or destination, it does deal with specific groups of migrants that affect the overall competitiveness of nations and their place in the world order.

2.3. Reactions in the United States to the Arrival of Foreign Professionals

When the IT community in the United States started noticing the arrival of significant numbers of foreign workers, many became anxious and feared that it would bring more losses than benefits to the host nation. In particular, they feared that such a trend would negatively impact the most vulnerable IT workers at home. The IEEE, for example responded to Senator Phil Gramm’s introduction of a bill that would raise the quota for temporary high-tech guest workers by publishing an article entitled “Stop the Insanity of H-1B!” (*The Institute*: 1999)

The reactions uncovered a social tension felt most acutely by mid-career and older US employees who felt systematically overlooked in favour of cheaper foreign engineers. As foreign professionals tend to be younger and to hold more advanced degrees than their US counterparts, and can, therefore, provide the same services for lower pay, the anxiety that hiring foreign professionals might depress wages was expressed by members of the high-tech community. This issue continues to remain a concern for policymakers and professionals. Although studies provide little evidence to support the claim that H-1B visas depress wages, they do indicate that wages do not rise as rapidly as in an H-1B visa-free environment. Other findings suggest a positive relationship between the number of visa applicants and the unemployment rate one year later (Zavodny, 2003).

In addition, the US Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) reports that employers admit to paying H-1B visa holders less than they pay their US counterparts (INS, 2002). This has been especially true since 2001, when the “new economy” declined causing IT professionals to lose their jobs and some companies to go bankrupt. Very few of the foreign professionals who lost their jobs, however, were forced to go back home: most found employment in other companies or countries. Professionals with degrees from technical universities in Kiev, Minsk, or Moscow and who have experience with employers based in the West remain globally marketable.

2.4 Reactions in the Countries of Origin to the Emigration of Professionals

An increasing awareness of the emigration of highly skilled workers from post-Soviet societies has also provoked considerable public anxiety in the countries of origin. Sergei Kapitsa, the son of Nobel laureate in physics Petr Kapitsa and a famous physicist in his own right, has expressed devastation at the decay of state-funded research institutions that has contributed to the brain drain. He claims that this situation is a form of direct investment by the Russian Federation into foreign science: "Training one student at the Moscow Physico-Technical Institute costs the equivalent of US\$1-2 million abroad. Thus, the cost of the 1,500-2,000 students—graduates—that the Moscow Physico-Technical Institute has sent to the United States amounts to several billion dollars" (BBC Monitoring, 2005).

3. The Roots of the Migration of IT Professionals from Post-Soviet States

In 1990, the Soviet Union had over one million researchers, more than any other nation except the United States (Gokhberg et al, 1997: 9). This pool of knowledge workers was largely formed during the Cold War, when the Soviet Union invested enormous amounts of resources into the applied sciences and into fundamental scientific research and development efforts that, while not directly related to warfare, became crucial to sustaining it. As a result, the military industrial complex financed up to 75 percent of all scientific research and development (Vishnevsky, 1998: 203) and became the main employer of high-tech professionals.

During perestroika, Mikhail Gorbachev attempted to demilitarize the economy. In 1988, he announced cuts in Soviet military spending and the beginning of a programme of conversion, which would apply military technologies to civilian uses and change the ratio of military to civilian production from 60:40 to 40:60 in five years (Cronberg, 1997). This led to the dismantlement of military and non-military research and development facilities throughout the Soviet Union and to their conversion into consumer-goods producing units.

As high-tech projects are initially costly, they cannot be sustained through small businesses and require big venture capital, which was not then available, and even when it later was, the emerging market was not interested in complex projects which were unlikely to bring quick returns. Thus, without the financial backing of the state, the kind of big venture capital needed for starting high-tech projects became unavailable.

The dissolution of the Soviet Union into 15 states in 1991 finalized the decay of the military/scientific/industrial complex and resulted in the mass release of high-tech specialists. The total number of researchers employed in Russia fell by 53 percent—from 1,227,000 in 1991 to 540,000 in 1994—just as bans on foreign travel, contacts, and migration were being lifted (Gokhberg et al, 1997: 3). This situation, coupled with the global demand for highly skilled workers, created unprecedented opportunities for mobility and eventually led to the inclusion of these knowledge workers in the international IT market (BBC Monitoring, 2005). Those individuals who chose to move away from their countries of origin clearly adopted "international migration [as] one strategy for effecting non-linear changes in employment" (Williams and Balaz, 2005: 442). Before taking the final step to emigrate, however, many became involved an outsourcing trend that swept through the post-Soviet region in the 1990s.

4. Shaping the Migration of IT Professionals from POST-Soviet States

Following the end of the Soviet Union, the countries of the region became an attractive destination for western companies looking to outsource production, mainly because of the low cost of highly skilled labour. Interviews conducted with IT professionals from post-Soviet states indicate that while the monthly wage of non-managerial IT workers in Minsk ranges between US\$400 and US\$800, the same kind of work earns employees twice as much in Moscow. In contrast, the weekly wage for similar categories in the United States is US\$1,306 in California, US\$1,205 in New Jersey, and US\$1,148 in New York (Zavodny, 2003).

Apart from being cheap, the post-Soviet region was singled out among other outsourcing destinations because of “the technical skills and education of its workforce”. As the American Chamber of Commerce in Russia pointed out, the country “has more personnel working in R&D [research and development] than any other country, and ranks third in the world for per capita number of scientists and engineers. Many of these engineers have solid experience and accomplishments in advanced nuclear, space, military, energy and communications projects” (ITTC/ACCR, 2001: 4).

Many young researchers and engineers jumped at the opportunities offered by western software companies seeking to outsource their production. Although formally trained for careers in physics, engineering, or mathematics, they switched to IT instead and quickly mastered new programming languages and skills. Because of this approach, “many Russian software programmers are self-taught, partially explaining their reputation as hackers who can think outside the box” (ITTC/ACCR, 2001: 11).

In addition to learning specific technical skills, these young professionals were almost always required to learn a range of communication and personal skills (such as English), and to develop self-confidence (Williams and Balaz, 2005: 446). Under the transition from a planned to a market economy there was a reconfiguration of all fundamental economic and social institutions. In this situation professionals with marketable skills were forced to adopt innovative approaches to the very structure of their work, for example through the development of project-oriented groups within which professionals could market their skills. Typically, these groups would operate from a rented apartment that served as an office or from someone’s home. The work it produced would be paid for in cash. Valery, a software engineer, describes how in the early 1990s

“Our guys in Moscow were already ‘coding’ [i.e. programming] for western companies in exchange for cash [while] sitting in rented apartments. We had all the software tools we needed, we were even better equipped than they were in the United States since there you have to buy programmes and here we can just copy them.”

Other project-based IT groups worked in research laboratories or departments and could, therefore, make use of the formal structures while operating outside of their confines. As these examples demonstrate, much of the subcontracting done in the region was relegated to the informal economy. Trust became a key factor at both ends of the chain. Employers wanted to be sure that the work would be done, that deadlines would be observed, and that money sent to buy equipment would not be wasted. The employees, on the other hand, wanted to be sure that the company was reliable and that they would be paid. With time, the process was formalized, some of the groups were registered and legalized (though they never became financially transparent), and subcontractors appeared to look for offshore groups that were capable and interested in carrying out projects for large corporations. As an IT manager in Belarus explains, “most of our customers are consulting companies, which then contract us out. We develop software for such brand names as — and I cannot even imagine that they would interact with us directly” (Vadim).

Outsourcing activities throughout the post-Soviet region continue to remain largely within the informal economy. According to the IT professionals interviewed, about 30 percent of salaries are paid officially (in a taxable form) and 70 percent is received in cash. This practice is sometimes viewed as a form of hijacking public resources since state universities in post-socialist societies continue to provide education for IT (and many other) specialists, as well as new commercial educational opportunities free of charge. Professionals employed by transnational IT corporations often remain invisible to the government and avoid paying into national social security funds but continue to benefit from national social resources such as free education, free or partially free healthcare, extensive networks of affordable public transportation, as well as affordable childcare, schooling, and housing.

When the region was hit again by a recession, economic decline and increased unemployment pushed people to seek opportunities elsewhere. Professionals that had benefited from the work outsourced to project-based groups became the main source of IT emigration. The project-based groups proved to be a launching pad for professional mobility since the experience of working for a foreign employee facilitated getting a job in the West, wherever that may be. As one Washington,

D.C.-based IT professional from Moscow admitted, *“I do not care where I work. It doesn’t matter whether it’s the United States, South Africa, or Germany, I will go wherever there is a job for me”* (Alexander).

5. The Decision to Migrate

Migrants’ reasons for deciding to relocate are both straightforward and complex. The decision is usually negotiated between three parties: first, there is the IT professional and potential migrant; second, there is the employer who makes the job offer and deals with applying for the appropriate visa(s); third, there is the migrant’s family and, in particular, the influence of the migrant’s spouse, whose support or objection is crucial in deciding whether to move or not. This paper looks at two of the three parties: the IT professional and his or her spouse.

5.1 The IT Professional

The professional’s main reason for relocating is to obtain a higher salary and, consequently, to improve living standards. As one US-based Belarusian programmer explained, he moved for the simple reason that *“they pay me more in the United States than I could possibly get in any other country”* (Igor). Of course, the increase in wages does not always translate into an equal improvement in living standards, as many migrants have found out after leaving their country. For many, the cost of living in the new country turned out to be much higher than expected and many of the services that had been free (or almost free) back home—such as childcare, basic healthcare, public transportation, children’s sports, etc.—now had to be paid for. Despite these setbacks, professionals have kept emigrating in search of a broader basket of goods, including a wider pool of services and opportunities, and a western “quality of life” (understood in terms of access to cultural events, sports, travel, etc.).

Some of the younger, more ambitious IT experts were motivated to emigrate by the lure of added opportunities for professional development. At home, these individuals were often confined to working on government or industry projects that required only a rather narrow set of skills: *“At some point, you feel that you can do more professionally, more than is expected of you in Belarus”* (Dmitry). Some of those who sought mobility as a way to acquire new job skills were later disappointed when their aspirations were not met and they found themselves working on standard projects. They found out that transnational corporations do not always facilitate the rise of non-first world nationals in highly technological and administrative posts, while research jobs in new technologies often require a security clearance that, as foreigners on specialty visas, they cannot get. Whatever their specific grievances, hardly any of the interviewees felt they had been working at the cutting edge of their profession and some complained that their human capital was not being realized to its full potential. Still, none seriously considered returning, mainly because they had achieved a degree of legal financial stability and because they viewed the opportunities (in terms of education, freedom to travel, etc) that their children now had as westerners as important assets. Although the welfare gains of individual migrants are difficult to assess, overall the highly skilled and the young opt for permanent emigration instead of short-term relocation.

5.2 The Family and the Problem of the “Trailing Spouse”

With regard to the family, it matters whether the professional considering migration has siblings or not: single children are less likely to emigrate because of responsibilities toward aging parents. The one factor that really matters in making the decision to emigrate, however, is the occupation and career prospects of the spouse, usually the wife (Panescu, 2005; Williams and Balaz, 2005; Khadria, 2001; Byakhov, 2006; Gapova, 2006).

There is no doubt that the role of women employed in science and technology has changed with time. While women used to account for 40 percent of all workers in this sector during Soviet times, their presence has been declining steadily with the advent of the project-based groups often started

through discriminatory male networks. More recently, women have become increasingly present in the global IT sector in the form of international “chains of care” that secure the reproduction and smooth running of the IT labour force. The H-1B visa issued by the United States and similar European programmes are based on a concept of family wherein labour is divided along gender lines. Consequently, spouses of relocating professionals are issued restricted visas for dependants (in the United States, these are called H4 visas) that do not grant holders the right to work in the host country. Since most programmers worldwide are male and since the professional mobility of men is more socially acceptable than that of women (men are not supposed to follow women as dependants), the system is not gender neutral.

The men who were interviewed for this paper emphasized how much they valued the intimacy and companionship that women provide while abroad, and many stressed that a loyal partner was important for their very ability to function successfully. As one interviewee stated, *“With us, talking to each other is very important. ... we are very good friends...and I mostly talk to my wife ... it was very difficult to be here before she came”* (A.K.). In fact, intimacy is so highly prized that the mere prospect of relocating might serve as a catalyser for a marriage that might not have taken place otherwise. Not only did the men who were interviewed not want to be alone, they were also uncertain about their marriage prospects in a foreign country.

Women consent to follow their husbands as dependants for a variety of reasons, including the opportunity to travel abroad, but two factors are the most important: the stage of the woman’s life cycle and her professional status. Wives without realistic professional opportunities tend to romanticize migration. Most of the dependant women interviewed, however, expressed concern about their professional futures but claimed they had reconciled themselves to their position because they had small children and reasoned that they would be homebound for some time anyway. Lena, an engineer, said that:

“Of course, Sergei would have a job there [in the United States], but what about me? Was I just going to be there with him? Because it’s difficult to stay at home and do nothing. But once Masha was born, it was easier, because here I am now [in the US] staying at home looking after her, and I would be doing the same thing there.”

Women who are career-bound and/or without children, do not give up their aspirations easily: they look for ways to organize their life differently (by seeking another kind of visa, for example), to commute between two continents (an extremely difficult and not always possible endeavour), or even to return back home.

Most of the dependant wives, however, are too young to have developed a full-fledged career by the time their husbands receive an offer to work abroad. When this is the case, the factor that decides whose professional life is to be sacrificed is the wage level. Since jobs in information technology are better paid than those in fields usually occupied by women (like education, culture, healthcare etc.), it is the man’s job that is normally considered more important. When asked about what happened to his wife’s career as a violin teacher when the couple relocated, first to Japan and then to the United States, a programmer explained: *“I found a decent job there so that Tanya would no longer need to work at all”* (Victor). Thus, the dual career couples that used to exist during the Soviet era have given way to single earner families under this visa system justified by a much larger male wage.

Women on dependant visas constitute a special group that does not fit into popular patterns of human mobility. They are neither the brains in the brain drain equation, nor the feminized third world labour force employed in the western service sector. Although they are, by definition, middle class, their social situation is more complicated. Having had a job and a professional identity, they take their stay-at-home status as a deprivation and feel marginalized:

“I do not think that women coming here on a H4 visa can aspire to the kinds of jobs they had back home. They come here with their husbands, with their kids, for the family to be together and not because they think there are some unbelievable millions waiting for them here... and I think that most women would be happy with any work,

part time or something... just to be able to distract themselves a bit from the family, to contribute some money... well, not to feel like a social cripple in this society” (Lilya).

With time, many try babysitting or helping in stores during the holiday seasons. In other words, they agree to do the kind of work that they would never do back home, at least not for money: “Obviously, here [in Belarus] I would never think of working as a babysitter... but there... any work would be interesting. I would have considered any offer” (L.K).

So, while men achieve a solid social position through their work (they are the professionals and the breadwinners) and their possibilities for upward social mobility is good, women’s social status is contradictory at best. Although they appear to belong to the US middle class, they actually experience a decline in their occupational and social status: despite having earned college degrees and work experience, as migrants they are legal dependants of the male wage.

Most dual career couples resist relocation precisely because the trailing spouse faces work permit restrictions, a lack of professional and educational opportunities, linguistic and cultural difficulties, lost promotion opportunities, an inability to transfer their skills, and financial complications (Koser, 1997: 295). Thus, the system of issuing two different types of visas to different members of the same family, a system that is peculiar to high-tech migration policy, shapes the diverging life courses for men and women.

6. CONCLUSION: Policy Solutions

The outflow of highly skilled professionals is largely due to the mismatch between the potential productivity of labourers trained in the post-Soviet higher education system and the inability of the economy to offer well-paid jobs capable of using the skills acquired. Proof of the fact that students from post-Soviet countries are well trained is that they regularly win international competitions in computer-related fields: since 2000, the Russian Federation has received 27 medals in world programming championships, 11 of which have been gold medals, and a quarter of all finalists have come from Russia (Byakhov, 2006). Currently, 20,000 IT professionals are prepared annually in the Russian Federation and 30,000 engineers in Ukraine, but this focus on educating and training highly skilled labourers contrasts with existing policies, programmes and business models that do not tap into the real potential of IT workers in the region. In fact, only 50,000-60,000 IT workers and 25,000 engineers actually find employment in Russia and Ukraine (Byakhov, 2006).

This mismatch between the potential created by such intensive training and the lack of sufficient job opportunities to make use of this potential is illustrated in the findings of *The Global Information Technology Report 2001-2002*, which measures countries’ preparedness for confronting the networked world through their capacity to exploit opportunities offered by information and communication technology. The *Report* ranks the Russian Federation sixty-first among 75 nations, a classification that places Russia behind all developed nations, as well as behind Egypt, Peru, and the Philippines (Kirkman, ed. et al, 2003: 10).

It is believed that the growth rate of the country of origin falls as a result of brain drain since IT professionals attract investment. Although the number of IT professionals leaving the post-Soviet countries has declined since the first few years of the millennium—mostly because the economic situation has stabilized and new opportunities have emerged in big cities like Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Kiev, Novosibirsk, and Almaty—according to an official from the Russian Ministry for Information Technologies, “local opportunities are rather limited” and most jobs continue to come from outsourcing. Microsoft, Intel, and other IT corporations have, in fact, opened offices in the Russian Federation and Ukraine, where they hire local personnel and provide opportunities for professional vertical mobility. EPAM, a joint venture started in Minsk by Belarusian expatriates, employs several thousand high-tech professionals and is currently the largest outsourcing venture in Eastern Europe. The Russian IT company Luxoft has opened its world marketing headquarters in Montvale, New Jersey, in an effort to attract US businesses to the growing Russian IT industry.

In an effort to counter the negative effects of brain drain, the Belarusian government has recently launched an initiative modelled on Silicon Valley: the establishment of a high-tech park with a

favourable taxation regime. The fact that the park would come under heavy government control is seen by some as problematic for the development of the IT sector. Another government-led project, which aims at getting Belarusian institutions to participate in Chinese space and defence projects, seems to follow the Soviet pattern of developing state military projects while remaining uninvolved in the market economy. The Russian Federation is also taking action through a programme of “technoparks” that was adopted in 2005, and the first draft of a new law on taxation policies regarding IT professionals has been approved. Ukraine has created an Association for IT Companies and recognized the growing importance of the field.

One unorthodox perspective is that the migration of highly skilled professionals brings gains as well as losses. According to this view, the possibility of migration creates an incentive in people to acquire skills, but since not everyone eventually emigrates, the nation benefits from additional highly skilled professionals (Panescu, 2005: 115). There remains the problem of how these individuals are to be used. Information technology has been glorified as the tool that might dramatically change the situation of mankind and bring prosperity to the nations and people who are engaged in it. But, as many studies have shown, it may actually (re)enforce existing inequalities and even build new ones if it is not curtailed by equally effective social welfare projects and adequate policies. IT might benefit those economic agents who participate in the modern technological systems of their respective countries to the detriment of those who are active in the traditional system of small businesses or state-funded sectors (James: 103). Thus, a valid question for the future of the post-Soviet region is: how can we ensure that educational opportunities lead to job prospects for individuals and to economic dynamism for the region as a whole?

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A R M E N I A

The Migration Situation in Armenia: Challenges and Solutions

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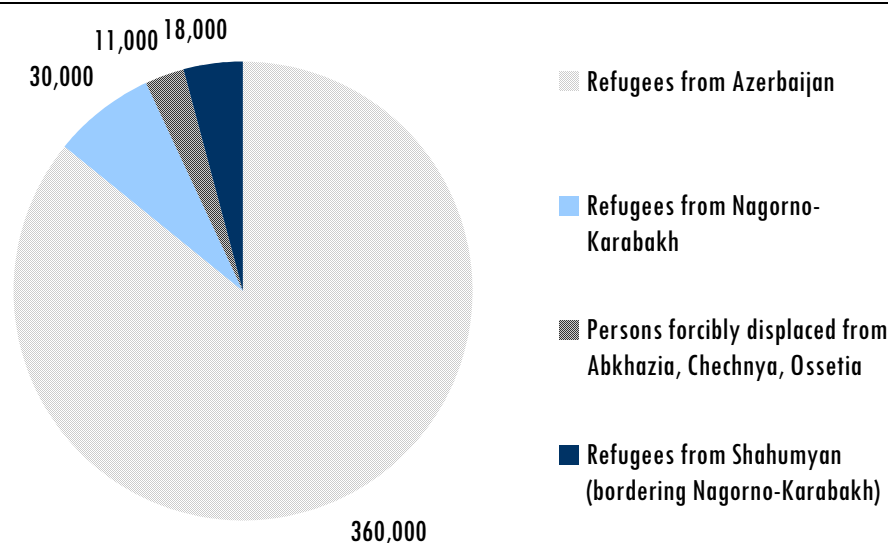
1. INTRODUCTION

After independence, Armenia had to face hardships due to population movements of unprecedented scale. Between 1988 and 1991, 420,000 refugees and forcibly displaced persons poured into the country as a result of natural and human disasters. This episode was followed by several years of mass emigration during which it is estimated that between 740,000 and 1,300,000 persons left Armenia permanently (Yeganyan and Davtyan, 2001: 34; Khojabekyan, 2001: 308). This situation had a negative impact on socio-economic progress, stability, demography, national security and morale.

2. THE MIGRATION SITUATION IN ARMENIA

Migration flows to, from, and through Armenia took on important proportions at the end of the 1980s as a result of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the Spitak earthquake of 1988, and, more generally, because of radical political, social, and economic transformations.

Figure 1: Refugees and displaced persons migrating to Armenia from the former Soviet Union



2.1 Size and Structure of Migration Flows to and from Armenia

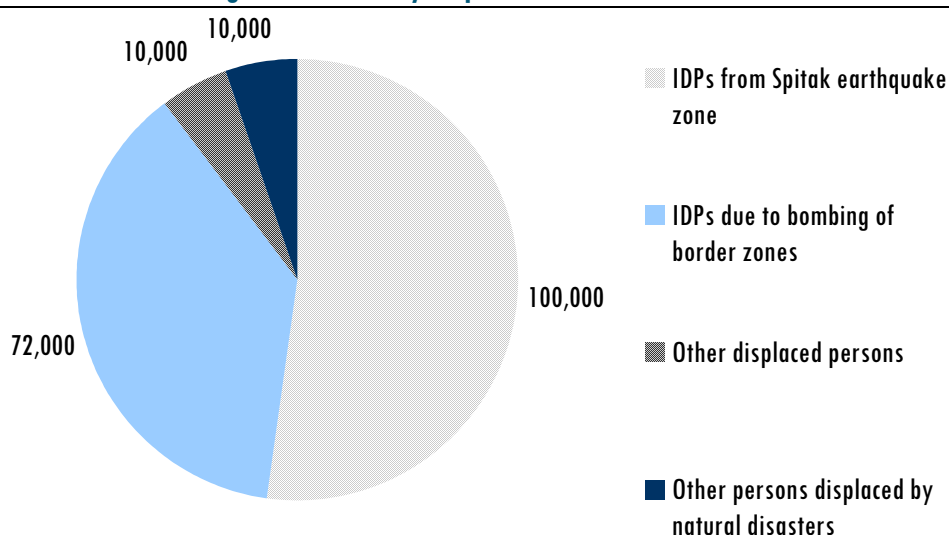
Although it is not possible to know exactly, research conducted for this paper estimates that 900,000–1,000,000 people left Armenia between 1988 and 2005.

2.1.1 Refugees and Forcibly Displaced Persons

Refugees and forcibly displaced persons started arriving in Armenia in spring 1988 and continued coming until late 1991. During this time, Armenia gave shelter to approximately 420,000 refugees and displaced persons, 360,000 of whom had fled Azerbaijan. The rest came from other regions of the former Soviet Union.

In this same period, 160,000 ethnic Azerbaijanis living in Armenia left the country. Moreover, the dire economic situation in Armenia during the 1990s prompted the emigration of another 125,000 refugees and displaced persons. Human and natural disasters also caused approximately 192,000 individuals to become internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Armenia (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Internally Displaced Persons in Armenia



2.1.2 Socio-Political Migration (1991–first half of 1992)

Once the Soviet Union collapsed, borders that were once only a formality assumed real significance. Nonetheless, increased political, inter-ethnic, and social tensions prompted more and more people to migrate between Armenia and its neighbouring countries. As a result, approximately 100,000 persons—or 3 per cent of the country's population—emigrated (Yeganyan and Davtyan, 2001: 32). Most of these emigrants were people who had tried to leave the country earlier but who had been unable to do so. They included highly qualified professionals seeking overseas employment, people intending to start businesses in neighbouring countries, representatives of the former administration who could not adapt to the new realities, and ethnic Russians.

2.1.3 Socio-Economic Migration (second half of 1992–the present)

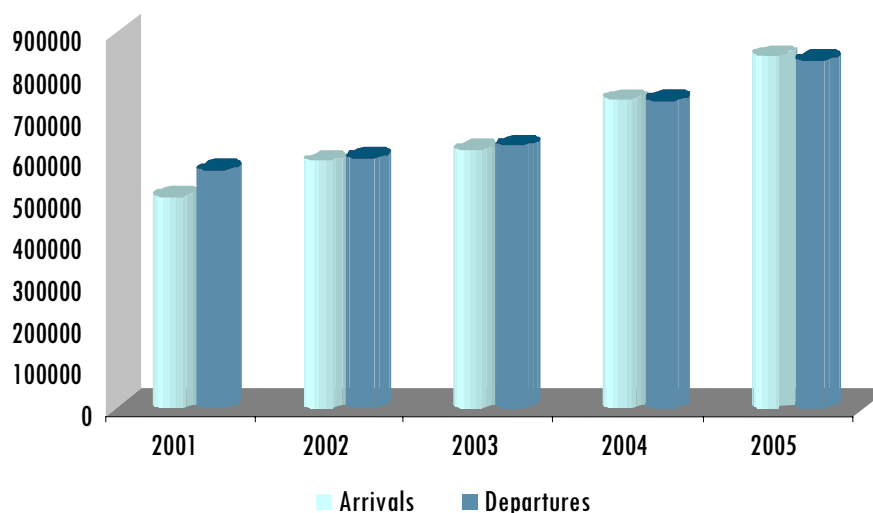
Migration flows during this period can be divided into three stages. The first stage, prior to 1995, was characterized by mass emigration due to stagnation in the economy, an abrupt drop in living standards, and a rapid deterioration in the delivery and quality of public utilities. It is estimated that over 800,000 people emigrated from Armenia during this period and that only 400,000 of them have returned since then.

During the second stage, from 1995 to 2001, emigration decreased, with most of those leaving being labour migrants in search of better economic and social opportunities. These emigrants tended to

resettle abroad permanently and were later joined by relatives through family reunification. Although some countries, notably the Russian Federation, started to implement stricter immigration regimes, approximately 180,000 people (6 per cent of the population) emigrated from Armenia during these six years.

The third stage, from 2002 to the present, is marked by a constant yearly increase in the number of persons travelling to and from Armenia.

Figure 3: Number of people arriving in and departing from Armenia, 2001-2005



This stage was also characterized by a shift to a positive migration balance (Figure 3). Given the persistent increase in departures from the country, this means that even more people arrived during these years. Such a transformation in the migration situation can largely be explained by the high economic growth that Armenia has experienced since 2001.

2.2 Composition and Consequences of Emigration

According to government records, over 55 per cent of all emigrants are unmarried and 60 per cent are males between the ages of 20 and 44 (very few are children and even fewer are elderly people). Most have an educational level far higher than the national average and have no intention of returning to Armenia. Although no hard data exists, emigrant families appear to be even less likely to return.

The emigration of significant portions of the Armenian population has brought about important changes. For example, a decrease in the number of people of reproductive age in Armenia has led to a progressive drop in marriages and birth rates. There has also been a considerable change in the ethnic composition of the population in Armenia due to a higher rate of emigration among ethnic minorities. As a result, ethnic Armenians now make up 97 per cent of the total population.

In addition, there are now more Armenians living abroad than in Armenia; of these expatriates, fewer are living in the Southern Caucasus and Middle East (Lebanon, Iran, and Turkey) and more are settling in new destinations like Australia and the Scandinavian countries, thus expanding the size and reach of the Armenian diaspora.

2.3 Prospects

Armenia must sustain high rates of economic growth and continue attracting the return of significant numbers of Armenians residing abroad or the migration situation will only become more critical.

Some fear that the very presence of Armenian communities abroad could induce a new wave of emigration, potentially involving as many as 800,000 people (Yeganyan, 2004: 45).

It is expected that between 2006 and 2008 the number of young people seeking to enter the labour market will far exceed the number of those retiring and that the gap between labour demand and supply will widen further. The reallocation of land resources could increase unemployment rates in rural areas, push people to migrate to urban centres and, eventually, to leave the country.

3. THE CHALLENGES POSED BY MIGRATION

Armenia is facing several challenges due to the migration situation presented in the previous section. Over the past few years, some of these challenges have been addressed, at least partially, through efforts to integrate displaced people from Azerbaijan, establish a system for granting asylum, improve the border control system, and others. At the same time, however, new challenges have arisen. The following issues deserve particular attention: the emigration of Armenian labourers, the employment of foreigners in Armenia, irregular migration, and the return of Armenians.

3.1 The Emigration of Armenian Labourers

Two out of three people leaving Armenia mention unemployment as a reason for emigrating. In fact, according to a survey conducted in 2005, 13.9 per cent of families in Armenia are involved in labour migration (Minasyan and Hanchilova, 2005: 25). The situation of these people is made all the more difficult by the fact that most emigrants are forced to violate entry and exit rules when travelling abroad because labour migration is not regulated sufficiently in Armenia. As a consequence, they become irregular migrants in their host countries and unwittingly create problems for themselves and their relatives. For example, there are numerous documented cases of unauthorized individuals or organizations who promise to broker overseas employment with the sole intent of extorting money from credulous people. Once they have been paid, these mediators either disappear or abandon the migrants.

There is no doubt that labour migration has benefited Armenia by reducing unemployment, ensuring an inflow of remittances (according to expert assessments these amounted to US\$1 billion in 2005), and by increasing the population's savings and, consequently, boosting investment. In addition, labour migrants who return to Armenia bring with them new skills and know-how. Thus, it is necessary to regulate overseas employment so as to protect migrants from being deceived by fraudulent businesses.

Given that overseas employment is a major contributor to the survival of many Armenian families, the state should create favourable conditions for its labour migrants and provide legal guarantees for the protection of their rights and interests. To do so, it should support research on the demand for foreign labour in various countries and on the rules that regulate such employment. It should also appoint a state body to deal with overseas employment issues and to liaise with the relative diplomatic missions and consular offices in destination countries, and sign appropriate intergovernmental agreements.

With regards to the protection of the rights and interests of Armenian labour migrants, the following measures should be applied:

- Agencies involved in the recruitment of Armenian labourers for jobs abroad should be subject to licensing.
- Licensed agencies should be obliged to sign contracts with potential labour emigrants that include the migrant's preferred destination country, employment type, remuneration, and length of employment. The contract should then act as a legal document for the signing of an employment contract with foreign employers. Would-be labour migrants should only have to pay the agency for its services once a job that corresponds with the stated preferences has been secured.

- Licensed agencies should also sign contracts with foreign employers or authorized representatives willing to accept overseas employees from Armenia.
- Given that much of the responsibility for overseas employment is borne by the foreign employer, the latter should sign an employment contract covering all the basic and essential conditions.
- Would-be labour migrants who turn to a licensed agency to find work overseas should be provided with all the necessary information concerning the job, the employer, the general situation of the labour market in the destination country, the relevant immigration regime, and the political order, climate, and traditions of that country. The exact list of such information should be established by the Government of Armenia.
- Citizens should be able to have their contracts reviewed, free of charge, by entities authorized by the state to make sure that the document adequately protects their rights and interests.
- The advertisement of unlicensed agencies through mass media or other information dissemination channels should be prohibited.

If adopted, the proposed measures will enable people to make an informed, independent choice regarding overseas employment.

It should be noted that the State Department for Migration and Refugees (SDMR) has prepared a Draft Law on the Regulation of Overseas Employment that has been amended following expert assessments made by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and recommendations presented at a workshop on labour migration organized jointly by the SDMR and the Council of Europe. Following the incorporation of comments made by the relevant ministries, the Draft Law has been presented to the government for consideration.

3.2 The Employment of Foreigners in Armenia

The employment of foreign nationals in Armenia is largely unregulated. In practice, an “open doors” policy is applied. This situation requires immediate attention, especially since the entry of foreigners into the Armenian labour market is closely connected to irregular migration. The first step should be the creation of a relevant legislative framework. This implies both adopting new legislative acts and amending some existing laws and regulations.

Armenian employers wishing to employ foreign workers should be required to receive them, provide them with accommodation, and pay for their return journey after the contract has ended or in cases where workers are recruited illegally. An authorized entity should be charged with combating the dissemination of misleading information on this issue. In addition, the government should restrict the employment of foreigners in state and local self-government bodies (and some other spheres), ensure equal rights for both Armenians and foreigners, and promote a favourable attitude towards migrant workers legally residing in Armenia.

In particular, the state should ensure that foreign workers enjoy equal rights to citizens with regard to: wages, working hours, overtime, paid leave, minimum age, conditions applicable to women and minors, trade union membership, taxation, social security payments, and access to legal recourse.

Regulating the position of foreign workers in Armenia will help to prevent irregular migration, improve immigration control mechanisms, and protect the local labour market from uncontrolled flows of foreign workers. With this in mind, in September 2005 the SDMR presented a Concept Paper for the Employment of Foreigners in Armenia to the Government of Armenia.

3.3 Irregular Migration

Irregular migration is problematic for both countries of origin and destination. On the one hand, countries of origin are faced with the challenge of protecting the rights of their nationals abroad who are in an irregular status. On the other, dealing with irregular migrants creates a law enforcement problem and a social burden for receiving countries. Since irregular migration creates problems for all parties involved, the most effective way to combat it is through the concerted efforts of receiving and sending countries. Its effective prevention requires a comprehensive approach and specific measures.

3.3.1 In the countries of origin

In countries of origin, irregular migration typically starts in a legal manner but eventually develops into an irregular phenomenon. The main problem is that people lack the necessary information and are easily deceived, falling victim to dishonest individuals who take advantage of them.

In a survey conducted in Armenia by the Armenian Sociological Association (ASA) with support of IOM, 40 per cent of respondents believed that it is possible to enter Western European countries without a visa; 58.7 per cent were sure that they needed no special permit to work in foreign countries; 55 per cent were convinced that asylum seekers in countries of destination have the right to work; 49 per cent believed that people who irregularly leave for Western Europe eventually manage to settle there successfully; 61 per cent acknowledge that they have insufficient information about migration related issues and want to know more, specifically about overseas employment opportunities (IOM and ASA, 2002). Therefore, countries of origin should raise awareness about rules of entry, residence, and employment in the countries of destination as a preventive measure. The results achieved in Armenia have proved the effectiveness of this approach.

In April 2002, a Migrants Service Point (MSP) was established at SDMR as part of the IOM Cluster Initiative.¹ The MSP offers a hotline service eight hours per day and has held a series of seminars for journalists and employment agencies. Copies of popular brochures and posters on irregular migration have been disseminated among the population. Among other activities, the MSP has produced television and radio programmes, and published four issues of the *Overseas Labour Migration* quarterly. Owing to these efforts, the number of asylum applications lodged by Armenian nationals in 28 developed countries was reduced by 51 per cent in a single year (UNHCR, 2003 and 2004). Only if countries of origin and destination continue to cooperate and to apply appropriate measures will these achievements have a long-lasting effect.

3.3.2 In the destination countries

Once irregular migrants have been identified in the country of destination, they must be returned in line with the rules set out by a readmission agreement. Armenia has concluded such agreements with Denmark, Switzerland, and Lithuania. It has also concluded the negotiation phase on draft readmission agreements with Poland, the Czech Republic, Germany, Sweden, and the Benelux countries. Negotiations are underway with the Russian Federation, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, and Norway.

Once irregular migrants have been returned, however, the problem is not always solved: many migrants seek to emigrate again, to the same or to a different country (IOM, 2002). To prevent this phenomenon of “repeated irregular migration”, the process of return and readmission should be supplemented with reintegration programmes, since countries of origin lack the necessary means for specific social assistance programmes for returnees.

Since 2004, the Government of Armenia and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) have implemented a programme aimed at promoting the reintegration of returned Armenian nationals. This programme envisages various measures that include the provision of: educational support to school children, re-qualification courses for adults, job placement advice, support for establishing small businesses, and medical, social, and psychological assistance. A reintegration plan is developed for each person, who is informed before arrival in Armenia about the type and scale of the proposed assistance. None of the 30-odd beneficiaries of this programme have left Armenia.

Finally, legal labour migration should be explored as a successful alternative to irregular migration. The demographic changes affecting European countries (characterized by an aging population and reduced birth rates), coupled with the development of certain sectors of the economy (such as information technologies and software development) and the fact that some jobs are

¹ IOM is engaged in facilitating and supporting a Cluster Process among the countries of South Caucasus and Western Europe. The process consists of consultative meetings that bring together representatives of concerned Ministries of countries of origin, transit and destination to resolve common migration challenges such as irregular migration and enhance international cooperation through practical and concrete actions.

unattractive to local populations (nursing, agricultural work, etc.) should create opportunities for foreigners to enter their labour markets. Unfortunately, Armenia has no labour migration agreement with any European country. Given this context, negotiations should start between traditional labour-exporting and labour-importing countries. If the flow of labour migrants between these two regions is not regulated under some kind of agreement, labour migration will continue to take place as an irregular activity.

3.4 The Return of Armenians

3.4.1 Voluntary return

As discussed earlier, the Government of Armenia considers the promotion its nationals' return a priority. During the 1990s, around 1 million people left Armenia. Some of them settled and integrated into their host societies, while others could not adapt and returned once the situation in their home country had improved. Although the phenomenon has not been studied in sufficient depth and the official statistics do not reflect the reality of the situation, there is no doubt that more and more Armenians are returning to their homeland. Some indications of this trend could be: the positive immigration balance recorded over the last two years, the increase in the number of children attending schools, and the increase in prices of housing and real estate.

Those who do return, however, compose only a part of the potential pool of returnees. Many Armenians abroad are, in fact, worried about the problems or difficulties they may face upon return. They might wonder what will happen to those who have not fulfilled their military service, how the labour is market faring, whether living conditions have improved, and what kinds of education, health, and social services are available in Armenia. Providing Armenians abroad with the answers to these kinds of questions could prove decisive in promoting their return.

3.4.2 Forced return

There are also many irregular Armenian nationals in foreign countries being forced to return. Some of them are people who had their asylum applications rejected. The return of these people will be facilitated by the readmission agreements already signed by Armenia and those that are being negotiated with several European countries. At the moment, the only existing programme aimed at providing reintegration assistance to returnees in Armenia is being carried out with the support of the Swiss Federal Office for Refugees and the Government of France.

3.4.3 Recommendations for managing the return of Armenian migrants

It is clear that forced and voluntary returnees will face different problems once they are back in Armenia, and that their subsequent decision to either stay in their homeland or to leave again depends on the successful solution of these problems. At the moment, however, there is no government entity charged with dealing with the problems of returnees.

Thus, the creation of a structure promoting the return of Armenian nationals from abroad is urgent. This structure should be active both inside and outside Armenia. Efforts inside the country should be coordinated by the government's Agency for Migration and benefit from the input of one representative of all relevant ministries and authorities: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, the State Police, and the State Fund of Social Insurance (internal network). Outside Armenia, the structure should be able to rely on the efforts of representatives from Armenian consular offices in European countries (external network).

The proposed structure should:

- Prepare informative leaflets on different aspects of social and economic life in Armenia via the internal network and distribute them among Armenian nationals living abroad via the external network.

- Use alternative channels for disseminating the above information, for example the Armenian Church or different entities set up by the Armenian diaspora.
- Raise awareness of certain problems faced by emigrants interested in returning to Armenia among the competent government authorities and establish an online communication with these authorities with a view of finding solutions.

Moreover, once emigrants have returned to Armenia, the structure should assist with their reintegration by providing:

- Advice and, if possible, practical assistance concerning the issuance, change, and registration of identification documents.
- Information on employment opportunities, further training opportunities, organizations offering loans for the establishment of small businesses in Armenia, and similar issues.
- Advice and, if needed, practical assistance on obtaining pensions and similar issues.
- Information on how to get state-sponsored medical and/ or psychological assistance.
- Assistance in overcoming any language or education related problem faced by the children of emigrants raised abroad, including the recognition of foreign diplomas.
- Information on amnesty for persons who avoided their military service obligations and similar issues.

Such a structure would increase considerably the number of returnees to Armenia and simultaneously prevent repeated irregular migration.

The measures proposed above have already been implemented in the framework of a reintegration assistance programme for citizens returning from Switzerland that was started in April 2006 by the Agency for Migration with the support of the SDC. To further support the creation of a larger structure that includes internal and external networks, the Agency for Migration aims to have finished developing appropriate software by the end of 2006.

4. CONCLUSION

In the last decade of the twentieth century, Armenia experienced a difficult national state-building process that was accompanied by huge forced and voluntary population movements. This article presents an overview of the migration situation in Armenia since independence. It underscores the causes of the emerging migration flows, their characteristics, and their numerous consequences. In addition to highlighting the main problems currently faced by the Government of Armenia in its efforts to better manage migration trends, it emphasizes possible policy solutions, paying particular attention to the regulation of irregular migration originating in Armenia and the employment of foreigners in the country. Lastly, it tackles the issue of how to promote the return of Armenian nationals from foreign countries.

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A Z E R B A I J A N

Migration to and from Azerbaijan

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1. Introduction

As a result of the ethnic conflicts that began in 1988, 185,519¹ ethnic Azerbaijanis have been forced to leave Armenia and find refuge in Azerbaijan and 653,000 citizens have become internally displaced persons (IDPs). In addition, approximately 50,000 Meskhetian Turks have been deported from Uzbekistan and granted asylum in Azerbaijan. The flow of ethnic Azerbaijanis from Georgia has also increased. According to the State Statistics Committee (SSC) 947,586 refugees and IDPs found refuge in Azerbaijan in 1994 alone.

Push factors that led to these movements include: the confrontation between political groups within the country following independence; social, economic and political instability; the fact that the conflict has not been resolved; difficulties in guaranteeing the human and civil rights of all people involved.

According to official and other sources, Azerbaijan is a leading exporter of labour. In fact, approximately 2 million of the country's 8.4 million citizens—in other words, about 25 per cent of the population—have been identified as labour migrants. Their main destination country is the Russia. According to data from 2005, the number of ethnic Azerbaijanis residing in Moscow increased 4.6 times over the previous 16 years. According to the Russian State Registry Office, 1,150,000 Azerbaijani citizens were living in Moscow as of 31 May 2003, composing 8.1 per cent of the Russian capital's population (*Yeni Musavat*, 2006).

Between 1913 and 2006, the population of Azerbaijan increased from 1,806,700 to 8,388,000 (SSC oral statement, 6 July 2005). Of these more than 8 million, 49 per cent are men and 51 per cent are women. According to official statistics, 9.5 per cent of the population is made up of ethnic minorities, of which 178,000 are Lezgins, 141,000 are Russians, 76,800 are Talysh, 50,900 are Avars, 10,900 are Tats, and 4,100 are Udins.

According to the State Border Service of Azerbaijan (SBS), 4,000,412 travellers crossed state borders in 2002, 4,400,000 did so in 2003, 4,560,000 did so in 2004, and 4,700,000 did so in 2005. Despite this constant increase, the number of people exiting Azerbaijan continued to be 7-9 per cent higher than those entering.

Because it is located at a crossroad between Europe and Asia, as well as between north and south, Azerbaijan has always experienced migration in the region. In the first years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Azerbaijan was primarily a source country for migrants headed to richer countries in the West, but at present it is also considered a transit and destination country.

2. Migration to Azerbaijan

On 22 December 1998, Azerbaijan adopted a Law on Immigration that outlines rules for the establishment of immigration quotas, specimens of documents for immigrants, rules on entry by

¹ Letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) with ref.26019 dated 5 July 1999. Fifty-first session of the UN, 3rd committee, paragraph 100, 30 October 1996.

foreign migrants and stateless persons who have been granted immigrant status, and procedures for applying for such status. Despite this law, not a single person has been granted immigrant status and none of its provisions have been implemented to date; although the Migration Service (MS) was established in May 2006 by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) to implement the Law, no developments are expected in the immediate future.

At present, all foreign migrants entering Azerbaijan must be registered at a state border crossing (SSC oral statement, 6 July 2005). To register, they should show their visa, passport, and complete a registration form. Although the law requires foreign migrants to complete this form, in practice it rarely happens. Additionally, current laws exempt asylum seekers from any responsibility if they are unable to adhere to the abovementioned conditions.

2.1 Categories of Migrants

2.1.1 Refugees

Azerbaijani law states that persons who enter the country without the required documents and seek asylum should be fingerprinted (when necessary) and their identity should be established by the police. During the identification process, asylum seekers should stay in special detention centres and, as soon as they have crossed the border, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the State Committee on Refugees and IDPs should be notified about their presence. Unfortunately, the laws are not applied: detention centres have not been established, relations between the competent authorities are very poor, and officials of state agencies are not familiar with the responsibilities of their counterparts.

The last census carried out in Soviet times indicated that there were 600,000 ethnic Azerbaijanis residing in that country (CLAM, 2006). The last census that was carried out in independent Georgia, however, recorded the presence of only 284,761 ethnic Azerbaijanis (Cornell, 2003). This is because over the last 15 years more than 300,000 ethnic Azerbaijanis from Georgia have settled in Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan's Law on Citizenship, which was adopted on 30 September 1998, recognizes ethnic Azerbaijanis that have fled Georgia as citizens of Azerbaijan. However, the thousands of ethnic Azerbaijanis from Georgia who returned to Azerbaijan before this law was enacted are considered refugees and, because they do not want to be registered in Azerbaijan as foreigners, they now live in the country illegally. Only in recent months have some of them applied for refugee status following the advice of certain NGOs.

In addition to the IDPs and refugees, 8,000 ethnic Chechens with Russian citizenship, 7,500 citizens of Afghanistan, and 3,000 citizens of Iran are seeking asylum in Azerbaijan. There are also smaller numbers of nationals of Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan, Sudan, and Kyrgyzstan. These statistics from the UNHCR office in Baku do not reflect the real situation of refugees in Azerbaijan since migrants from countries like Russia, Iran, Turkey, and Afghanistan prefer not to apply for asylum for fear of being deported back to their country of origin. Finally, it should be noted that since citizens of Russia and Georgia cannot receive refugee status in Azerbaijan, asylum seekers from these two countries are automatically referred to UNHCR.

2.1.2 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

As a result of the conflict with Armenia, 653,000 citizens of Azerbaijan have become IDPs. During the conflict, 108,666 of them were children under 5, 357,562 were women, and 86,383 were elderly (retirement age). As Hashim Utkan, deputy director of the UNHCR Regional Office in Europe, has noted, every eighth person in Azerbaijan is either a refugee or an IDP (Long, 1995: 14-41). Despite the seriousness of the problem, laws regulating the status of IDPs in Azerbaijan have not been developed.

2.1.3 Stateless persons

Before the Law on Citizenship was enacted on 30 September 1998, there were 6,096 stateless persons in Azerbaijan. Within one year, all stateless persons who applied for Azerbaijani citizenship obtained

it. The problem has not been completely resolved, however, since some asylum seekers live in Azerbaijan with expired travel and identity documents from their country of origin. These individuals are given documents identifying them as stateless persons by the MIA, which states that, in 2005, 212 people received such documents. Although Azerbaijan has signed several international agreements aimed at reducing the number of stateless persons, it has not managed to stop this number from rising within its borders.

Compounding this problem is the fact that authorities cannot rely on well established rules and have insufficient experience in deporting rejected asylum seekers, labour migrants with expired or dissolved labour contracts, foreign students who have graduated from local schools, and migrants with false documents. Ten years ago, the president of Azerbaijan appointed the Cabinet of Ministers to draft such rules but this has not been done yet. To date, no decision has been taken by the MIA, the Ministry of National Security (MNS), or the courts with regards to the deportation of irregular migrants from Azerbaijan.

2.1.4 Labour migrants

Despite the fact that authorities have only recently started registering the number of labour migrants coming to Azerbaijan, it is clear that more people are arriving each year. In fact, it was calculated that as many as 19,568 labour migrants had been issued temporary registration cards by 2005. In addition, 1,884 foreign migrants were granted permanent residence permits, most of which were issued to labour migrants with legal ties to Azerbaijan, for example through marriage or real estate ownership.

In conformity with the Law on Labour Migration of 28 October 1999, labour migrants coming to Azerbaijan should be issued work visas, but this has not been done yet. Nonetheless, since 2001 the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population (MLSP) has been issuing individual permits for employment in Azerbaijan. According to the MLSP, 4,534 foreign migrants were issued such permits between 2001 and 2005.

In contrast to these relatively low figures, unofficial sources claim that there are about 60,000 labour migrants in Azerbaijan. This significant difference is largely due to the lack of a proper registration system in the country and to the non-enforcement of existing laws. For example, article 6 of the Law on Labour Migration requires labour migrants to register their place of residence and to obtain an individual work permit, but few actually do. As a result, many immigrants reside in Azerbaijan with nothing more than an entry visa.

2.1.5 Students

According to the Ministry of Education (MOE), 4,600 foreign students from 49 countries are studying in Azerbaijan. In order to study at one of Azerbaijan's secondary schools, foreign migrants must seek an invitation from the MOE, which is, in turn, obliged to inform the MFA's Consular Department and the MIA. As with other categories of migrants, however, the laws are not followed and hundreds of foreign students remain illegally in Afghanistan, even after they have been expelled from the schools they were attending.

2.2 Rights of Migrants in Azerbaijan

2.2.2 Citizenship

In 2005, 120 persons were granted citizenship in Azerbaijan, 38 persons had their citizenship removed, and 4 persons had their citizenship restored. Currently, 370 applications for citizenship are being considered. Applications submitted by citizens of Afghanistan, Iran, and Russia (ethnic Chechens) often face particular problems due to discrimination and may be left unprocessed. Moreover, children of applicants from these countries who are born in Azerbaijan are not issued relevant certificates.

2.2.1 Right to counsel

The government does not provide migrants with free legal advice since, in line with article 20 of the Law on Advocate and Advocacy Activity, only persons convicted of criminal offences who need legal assistance but come from low income families are entitled to such assistance. Some NGOs are attempting to fill this gap.

According to the Law on the Ombudsman, migrants may only request written advice from the Azerbaijani Ombudsman on how to protect their rights. Moreover, they may only do so by submitting a written or oral application addressed to the Ombudsman.

2.2.3 Integration

Some efforts have been made to establish international protective mechanisms that lay down responsibilities towards migrants while striving for their integration. Unfortunately, these attempts have not been very successful and the Azerbaijani government continues to exert complete discretion regarding policies and procedures affecting immigrants and their integration into society.

According to article 69 of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, foreign migrants, stateless persons, and Azerbaijani citizens are equal before the law irrespective of social status, ownership of property, race, nationality, sex, language, religion, type of business, or other circumstances. The Constitution ensures that foreign migrants and stateless persons in the country enjoy all the rights and freedoms granted to citizens of the Republic and that these rights and freedoms may only be restricted in line with international norms and the legislation of Azerbaijan (Constitution of Azerbaijan, article 69, paragraphs 1 and 2). Moreover, pursuant to national legislation and international treaties to which Azerbaijan is party, foreign migrants and stateless persons have the same rights as citizens with regard to social security (see, for example, the Law on the Legal Status of Foreigners and Stateless Persons).

Article 7 of the Law on the Status of Refugees and IDPs calls for the creation of conditions aimed at facilitating the assimilation and naturalization of refugees. Consequently, refugees are encouraged to learn the language and to familiarize themselves with their rights and obligations under the law.

As these examples show, Azerbaijan does have a basic legal framework for facilitating the integration of immigrants. Unfortunately, this legislation is not applied and in reality refugees and IDPs are given no assistance when it comes to resolving issues connected to employment and temporary or permanent accommodation.

The Cabinet of Ministers, the MLSPP, the MIA, the MFA, the Ministry of Health (MoH) and various NGOs have all participated in the immigrant integration process and helped immigrants adapt to local conditions in Azerbaijan. In this regard, the Cabinet of Ministers is responsible for interagency coordination and the preparation of normative acts; the MLSPP provides social security to labour migrants; the MIA registers immigrants and provides them with registration cards, identity documents, and deals with citizenship issues; the MFA deals with visa issues; and the MoH is responsible for medical examinations. Most of these services are not actually provided.

3. Transit Migration Through Azerbaijan

Only 10-15 per cent of irregular migrants in Azerbaijan apply for political asylum with the intention of staying in the country and approximately the same amount eventually return to their home countries. Increasingly, migrants are transiting through Azerbaijan on their way to Europe, Turkey, and countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). According to CLAM estimates, 80 per cent of irregular migrants are smuggled out of the country via Georgia or Turkey. Since the SBS manages to stop only 5-10 per cent of irregular migrants at the border, this means that thousands of irregular migrants travel with forged or insufficient documents through Azerbaijan every year.

3.1 Categories of Migrants

3.1.1 Smuggled Migrants

Despite the efforts of the SBS, migrants continue to be smuggled through Azerbaijan. Typically, smuggled migrants travel hidden in trucks and large vehicles. They come from Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, and other Central Asian countries, and are transported through Azerbaijan mainly to Turkey, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Greece.

According to the SBS, smuggled migrants are guided by criminal organizations that are based in several countries, have good communications systems, are well informed about weak border points, and attempt to corrupt border control officers to maintain a hold on their human smuggling business. One such criminal organization composed of citizens of Iraq, Iran, Azerbaijan, Russia, and Belarus was discovered, in 2002, to have smuggled over 100 migrants from Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan through Azerbaijan to several European countries, both by land and air. The lack of multilateral agreements between countries of origin, transit, and destination impedes the detection and prosecution of human traffickers and smugglers.

3.1.2 Irregular Migrants with Forged Documents

In 2003, 280 migrants were detained at the border with forged documents; in 2004, this number rose to 300, and 600 irregular migrants with forged documents were apprehended in 2005. Most were stopped on their way from the Russian Federation and Georgia with old Soviet passports. Although irregular migrants can obtain forged documents in many ways, one important source of forged travel documents is travel agencies. In Baku, tens of these businesses have been closed down for illegally providing documents and attempting to send clients to European countries.

Most irregular migrants detected with forged passports, whether entering or leaving Azerbaijan, are citizens of Central and Southeast Asia. In 2003, 61 persons from Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan were detained at state border crossings for trying to reach Europe via Azerbaijan with forged passports and/or visas. Smaller numbers of apprehended persons came from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Iraq. Given the current situation in the Middle East and tensions in Afghanistan and Pakistan, it is likely the number of citizens from these areas apprehended at Azerbaijani border crossing points has increased in 2005 (official figures are not available yet). The main destination areas are CIS member states and Europe, with Bulgaria, France, Sweden, Norway, and Germany topping the list of most sought-after countries.

4. Migration from Azerbaijan

Studies indicate that Azerbaijani citizens seek to emigrate for a host of reasons, most of which are connected to the scarcity of opportunities in their country. A 25 per cent unemployment rate that affects youth, women, and IDPs disproportionately, low salaries, poverty, social and economic difficulties, long-lasting instability due to armed conflict, political uncertainty, doubt that the situation will improve in the near future, and the lack of reliable news are all factors pushing people to look for opportunities elsewhere. Interviews with some returnees show that most of those who leave even prefer to stay in Western European refugee camps than to live in Azerbaijan.

It is not surprising, therefore, that more people leave the country than enter it: according to the SBS, 246,059 Azerbaijanis left and 219,757 entered the country between January and March 2000 alone. Of the 272,000 Azerbaijanis who left the country permanently between 1991 and 1997, most settled in the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Turkey, Germany, or the Netherlands. As for ethnic composition, 112,700 of them were Russians, 65,000 were Azerbaijanis, 35,000 were Armenians, 11,000 were Jews, and 9,800 were Ukrainians. More recently, official figures indicate that 10,500 citizens left Azerbaijan permanently to settle in other countries in 1998, 9,100 did so in 1999, and 9,900 did so in 2000.

Although these are official statistics, they should be read with caution since figures on people who leave the country are based on the requirement to leave one's identification document at the competent

police station prior to departure, a duty that only an estimated 25 per cent of emigrants carry out. Nonetheless, both official and unofficial figures indicate that more and more people are leaving Azerbaijan permanently. Most are skilled men between 21 and 45 years of age who are unemployed.

4.1 Categories of Migrants

4.1.1 Labour Migrants

Azerbaijan has only signed a bilateral labour agreement with Saudi Arabia. Since the agreement was signed in 1998, 230 Azerbaijani highly-qualified specialists have been sent for employment in Saudi Arabia. In addition to this agreement, nine private companies have been licensed to deal with the employment of Azerbaijani citizens abroad. As of May 2006, these companies have found jobs for 40 specialists in Saudi Arabia. No other cases of official employment of Azerbaijani citizens abroad have been recorded or reported.

These possibilities, however, do not meet Azerbaijanis' demand for work abroad, with the result that many people resort to irregular means of securing employment abroad. According to official statistics, approximately 1.5 million Azerbaijanis (2 million according to unofficial sources) live in Russia; 90 per cent of whom work in the informal sector. Nonetheless, their jobs allow them to send back home an average of US\$ 150 per month. These remittances play an important role in improving the well-being of recipients, attracting investment to Azerbaijan, and contributing indirectly to political and economic stability.

Given the desire of many Azerbaijanis to leave the country and the precarious situation of those who actually manage to emigrate (mostly irregularly), there is a clear need for the authorities to better regulate labour migration flows. Several ministries (including the MLSPP, the MIA, the MOE, and the MFA) have expressed an interest in participating in this process, but care should be taken not to involve too many entities since this could jeopardize the drafting of an effective and comprehensive document (Abella, 1997: 38).

4.1.2 Azerbaijani asylum seekers abroad

In their quest for finding employment and opportunities abroad, some Azerbaijanis have even applied for political asylum. In fact, UNHCR and government reports state that approximately 4,000 Azerbaijanis seek asylum in foreign countries every year, with Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands, and Belgium being their preferred destinations. The number of Azerbaijanis seeking asylum in France has recently increased (UNHCR, 2003).

While the main motive for leaving the country is economic, politics does have an impact. Citizens were persecuted before and during the presidential elections of 1998 and 2003 as well as during the parliamentary elections of 2000 and 2005. These and other human rights violations led some people to lose trust in Azerbaijani authorities and, consequently, pushed them to leave.

4.1.3 Azerbaijani women abroad

In Azerbaijan women are more vulnerable and less protected than men. Despite recent changes aimed at redressing social inequalities, men continue to have more rights and advantages. This is particularly true in certain regions of Azerbaijan, where adherence to Islamic traditions and to the Muslim code of religious law (shariah) is strong. Thus, Azerbaijani women might be emigrating to look for better social opportunities as well as economic ones. Certainly, more and more women are leaving, both legally and illegally.

One legal avenue has been family reunification: 30 per cent of Azerbaijani women living legally in Germany are either married to Germans or to permanent residents. Other women apply for visas through diplomatic representations. Interestingly, many women apply for visas for Turkey, the UAE, Pakistan, and Iran, presumably because these countries offer more favourable conditions to women workers than other countries. Officers working for the French, German, Russian, Italian, and UK embassies in Baku have also pointed out on increase of women visa applicants from Azerbaijan.

According to research carried out for this paper, however, Azerbaijani women prefer to leave the country irregularly. One of the great risks they face is falling victims of human trafficking, a practice that is illegal, violates human rights, constrains individual freedoms, and disrupts social and cultural relations.

It is critical that a legal framework and institutions be developed to counter this threat. Although laws have been adopted to punish coercion into prostitution and trafficking and to protect victims of trafficking, much still needs to be done. Perhaps most importantly, those instruments that do exist need to be implemented: to date, no one has been prosecuted or punished for financing trafficking or prostitution, maintaining brothels, abetting prostitution, or smuggling.

NGOs sponsored by the international community try to fill some of these gaps by raising awareness of the problem and protecting victims. Additional support should be given to these organizations so that they may provide medical, psychological, and legal assistance to victims of trafficking. With regards to this legal component, victims of trafficking should have access to legal representation and be allowed to provide evidence anonymously. At present, none of these provisions are implemented.

4.2 Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) Programmes

Azerbaijan has no AVR programmes for assisting foreign migrants and stateless persons residing in Azerbaijan to return to their country of origin. Only international organizations, such as IOM, help stranded migrants or victims of trafficking to return voluntarily.

4.3 Readmission

Readmission agreements are a pragmatic tool for accelerating the return of inadmissible persons in a humane way and provide a framework for solving situations of tension between countries over this particular aspect of irregular migration. As such, they offer countries of origin and of destination the possibility to cooperate.

Since IOM started facilitating a dialogue on migration between the three South Caucasus countries and Western European countries, the Benelux countries and Switzerland have been negotiating readmission agreements with Azerbaijan. Although several roundtables have been organized to discuss the benefits of an agreement, no such document has been signed yet.

4.4 Expulsion

The courts, the MIA, and the Ministry of National Security (MNS) are charged with deciding whether foreign migrants and stateless persons should be expelled/deported from Azerbaijan. Once an expulsion/deportation order has been issued, the persons concerned must leave Azerbaijan within the period indicated by the order. If the persons do not leave the territory within the required timeframe, they may be forcibly expelled from Azerbaijan by the MIA, the MNS, and the SBS.

Foreign migrants and stateless persons may be deported from Azerbaijan if:

- They have been unemployed for a long time
- They are involved in religious propaganda (article 300, Code on Administrative Offences, CAO)
- They are residing in Azerbaijan without registration, residence permit, or visa (article 300, CAO)
- They have violated the country's border crossing regime
- They have obtained or tried to obtain a residence permit on the basis of forged documents and/or false information
- They have breached the CAO
- They are a risk to national security and the public order

Foreign migrants and stateless persons who violate the border crossing regime are deported by the MNS (article 336, CAO). The MIA is responsible for the deportation of persons involved in religious propaganda (article 300, CAO) and for that of residents without registration, residence permit, or visa (article 330, CAO). The courts deal with deporting foreign migrants and stateless persons who have been unemployed for a long time (article 307, paragraph 1, CAO).

Given that persons to be deported are usually taken into custody, the courts should act to ensure that their human rights are protected. According to article 71, paragraph 7 of the Constitution of Azerbaijan, any issue related to the violation of human rights and liberties must be settled by the courts.

4.5 Re-entry possibilities

Foreign migrants expelled from Azerbaijan are not allowed to re-enter the country.

5. Recommendations

The following recommendations are presented with the intention of assisting the Government of Azerbaijan in its efforts to better protect state security and national interests, use migration processes for promoting the country's development, prevent irregular migration, and protect migrants' rights and freedoms.

5.1 On Migration Management

The State should:

5.1.1 Improve mechanisms for predicting migration trends. This will enable state institutions to formulate policies that take into consideration political and economic changes.

5.1.2 Develop a migration code that establishes the legal rights and responsibilities of the state and of migrants.

5.1.3 Establish a state agency responsible for coordinating the activities of all other state agencies dealing with migration management and thus improve their effectiveness.

5.1.4 Ensure that state authorities treat all foreign migrants and stateless persons equally, irrespective of their reasons for staying in Azerbaijan.

5.1.5 Provide regular training to state officials dealing with migrants so as to upgrade their skills and improve relations between agencies dealing with migration management in Azerbaijan.

5.1.6 Establish quotas for labour immigrants and other kinds of immigrants in line with current legislation.

5.1.7 Issue work visas to foreign migrants intending to work in Azerbaijan as provided by article 8 of the Law on Labour Migration.

5.1.8 Prepare lists of countries whose citizens do not require a visa to travel to Azerbaijan, those who can apply for a visa upon arrival at Baku's Heydar Aliyev International Airport, and those who must obtain a visa prior to arrival in Azerbaijan.

5.1.9 Develop clear regulations and rules on the issuance of visas to foreign migrants and stateless persons.

5.1.10 Adopt rules on the determination of IDP status and on the issuance of identity documents to IDPs.

5.2 On the Prevention of Irregular Migration

The State should:

5.2.1 Establish an effective migration control system as soon as possible.

5.2.2 Strengthen legal mechanisms on deportation while ensuring that the rights of migrants are respected.

5.2.3 Sign agreements with neighbouring countries clarifying rights and responsibilities for preventing irregular migration.

5.2.4 Establish a unified registration system or migration information centre on foreign migrants and stateless persons for collecting data on their number, their place of residence in the country, their employment, and other relevant information.

5.3 On International Cooperation

The State should:

5.3.1 Sign bilateral and multilateral agreements aimed at promoting the exchange of information and best practices that will improve Azerbaijan's capacity to manage migration in conformity with international standards.

5.3.2 Increase the level of cooperation with relevant international organizations, including IOM, in order to learn from the international community's experience on managing migration.

5.3.3 Sign international conventions affecting migration and relevant bilateral agreements.

5.4 On Non-Governmental Organizations

The State should:

5.4.1 Assist NGOs in carrying out awareness raising campaigns to inform the general population about the existence of legal entities interested in employing Azerbaijani citizens abroad.

5.4.2 Train representatives of NGOs, lawyers, and human rights activists so that they are better able to protect the rights of all foreign migrants in Azerbaijan, irrespective of their status.

5.4.3 Sign agreements with NGOs in different countries with a view of countering human trafficking and smuggling and to create a network for the identification and eventual return of victims of trafficking.

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KAZAKHSTAN

Every Migrant has the Right to [Il]legal Employment?

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Fish look for deeper waters; people look for better living conditions. Regardless of borders, gender, age, religion, or family values, people will overcome all obstacles in order to find a brighter future and better pay.

Only five to seven years ago hardly anyone in Kazakhstan would have imagined that others might want their jobs. Today this does not surprise anyone. Legal and illegal migrants can be seen in offices, industrial sites, construction sites and agricultural fields across Kazakhstan. Small entrepreneurs and large companies alike do not refuse cheap labour, whether it is local or imported.

Life in Motion

Since independence, many rural areas have been abandoned by the population. According to estimates of the Ministry of Agriculture, only in 2005 over 60,000 farmers moved to large cities in search of employment. The widely publicized governmental program “Auy” aimed to develop rural areas and which promised concrete assistance to agricultural workers and cattle breeders, has remained largely only on paper. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, the number of prosperous villages has grown. However, there is not a single technical college left in 40 rural regions of the country. There are fewer options for employment and fewer jobs.

Today in Kazakhstan these migrant “refugees,” both skilled and unskilled, push carts at markets, build houses, sell goods in commercial kiosks, wait to be picked up for temporary work on famous “labour” streets of large and small cities, and some, join the growing army of criminals. Nobody knows how many of them are around—neither the statistical agencies, nor the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, nor the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

According to international and local human rights organizations, every year about 1 million illegal labour migrants arrive to Kazakhstan from abroad for seasonal work. The Ministry of Internal Affairs conservatively estimated this figure to be a little over 300,000 in 2005. These migrants, as elsewhere, take jobs that local residents do not want.

According to workers at employment centres in Almaty, citizens of Kazakhstan do not take jobs that pay less than US\$ 350-400. In regional centres the minimal wage threshold is US\$ 250. Only a few local unemployed agree to work for less.

The Forum of Entrepreneurs of Kazakhstan and other business associations have repeatedly informed the Government that existing tax laws do not reflect today’s reality and provoke businessmen to work in the informal economy. Amendments already introduced into the legislation have not resolved this situation and continue to allow the use of legal loopholes to employ illegal labour force, including refugees who arrive to Kazakhstan from “hot spots” such as Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Migrant’s Work—a Mystery for the Authorities

Today there are two types of labour migration in Kazakhstan—seasonal and illegal. The first category includes migrants from various regions of the country and guest workers from other countries who come to the south of Kazakhstan for agricultural work or for construction work all over the country.

The second category includes all foreigners who arrive to Kazakhstan to work, although their official reasons may differ: tourism, to visit relatives, etc. It is noteworthy that aside from traditional guest workers from Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, there are sometimes nationals of Russia, China, Turkey, Afghanistan and even such exotic countries as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Nepal.

In the first quarter of 2006, 16,746 foreigners were subject to administrative responsibility for violating migration laws. During the same period in 2005 this figure equalled 9,678 individuals.

According to sources in the border control service of Russia, 80 per cent of illegal migrants prefer to use Kazakhstan as a transit country en route to Russia and Europe.

The number of foreigners entering Kazakhstan for temporary business has been on the rise. In 1997 the internal affairs agencies registered approximately 70,000 aliens, in 2004—968,363, and in 2005 this figure reached 1 million 120 thousand. During the current year 2006, 424,275 foreigners have been registered by authorities. In comparison, during the same period in 2005 only 161,982 foreigners had been registered.

Thanks to the measures undertaken by the migration police, 43 attempts of illegal transit migration were stopped in 2005. Overall, the authorities intercepted 234 individuals, most of whom were nationals of Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Two channels for illegal transit migration through Kazakhstan were shut down. However, it is widely recognized that the migration police is only able to intercept a small fraction of illegal migrants.

In 2005 it was reported that approximately 72,000 illegal migrants from 11 countries worked in various enterprises of Astana—a city with only 500,000 official residents. According to the current legislation, these illegal migrants should have been deported and denied entry into Kazakhstan for 5 years. However, the Ministry of Internal Affairs reports that over a third of the deportees return within six months having changed their identification papers in their home countries and in Kazakhstan.

In October of 2005 during a one-time operation, law enforcement authorities detected 12,279 illegal migrants. The same year 100,523 foreign nationals were subject to administrative measures for irregularities in their residence status. No government agency can estimate what share of all illegal migrants this figure represents. Some groups, such as Afghan and Pakistani Diasporas in various regions of Kazakhstan estimate that anywhere between 4,000 and 30,000 of their countrymen have settled down in the country.

No government institutions have reliable data on internal migration because the majority of internal migrants prefer jobs in the informal economy. Entrepreneurs, who hire them and other migrants from abroad, do not register these employees in order to evade taxes.

Expensive Cheese for a Cheap Mousetrap

The reasons behind the massive influx of illegal migrants are obvious—the dynamic economic development in Kazakhstan; higher wages in cities such as Almaty; proximity of the southern capital Almaty to the border with China, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, and the visa-free regime with the latter two countries.

The following numbers may describe the situation in the internal labour market. Unemployment decreased from 13.6 per cent in 2000 to 8.4 per cent in 2004. Almaty employment centres report that throughout the year they had 12,000-13,000 clients, only a third of whom found work. In the summer and the fall this figure reaches 70 per cent.

However, the problem is not the lack of jobs but unwillingness on the part of the unemployed to take low-paying jobs. On the other hand, nationals of neighbouring countries, where the standard of living is lower, are satisfied with low wages. An average salary in Kyrgyzstan in January-November of 2005 was US\$ 60. According to independent assessments, average wages in Uzbekistan are similar. This assessment takes into account Tashkent only, while in the rest of the country the wages are even lower. An average monthly salary in Kazakhstan was US\$ 260. This figure is conditional though because it varies by region.

Many “unemployed”, having arrived in large cities of Kazakhstan, engage in sex work. Young women become prostitutes. Often it is difficult to determine whether they are forced into prostitution

or engage in it voluntarily because even in latter cases forced labourers rarely contact law enforcement for help. They are afraid of being deported from the country, fear retaliation from their employers, and do not trust police because many of them are corrupt.

Illegal migrants are very “convenient” for Kazakhstan’s employers who do not strive to work legally. It is an opportunity for them to avoid obtaining a license for employing foreign workers, to pay less, not to sign official employment contracts and to evade taxes. All of this creates impunity. In the better scenario these employers often pay their workers less than they had promised. In the worst, workers might end up in slavery. There are several documented cases where migrants’ documents were confiscated and they were forced to work practically for free in Southern-Kazakhstan, Zhambyl, Almaty, Kyzylorda, Kostanai, and Northern-Kazakhstan regions. In remote regions of the country this brutal practice is wide-spread. In 2005 alone 899 employers (as compared to 619 in 2004) were held accountable for illegal use of foreign workers. In the first quarter of 2006 already 268 employers were punished. These measures however are unlikely to deter employers—the temptation to use the almost-free labour of illegal migrants is too high.

Rules of the Game

The internal labour market in Kazakhstan is characterized by the unwillingness of local specialists to work for low wages although few employers can offer them higher salaries. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, highly qualified specialists emigrated en masse from Kazakhstan. Some of them relocated to Russia, others went further abroad. Some of the émigrés eventually returned, but the lost human capital has not been replenished. At the same time, the number of graduates from higher educational establishments specializing in so called “non-prestigious” but needed practical spheres of economy has been declining. A shift towards professions considered promising and highly paid has resulted in personnel shortage in many sectors of economy. The number of educational establishments providing technical training at the secondary education level has significantly decreased. For example, in 1994-1995 there were 415 technical colleges in Kazakhstan. This number has dropped to 287 by 2002. The number of students in these colleges has decreased by 56 per cent.

Due to this situation, the Government of Kazakhstan had to establish an annual quota for hiring foreign workers, which allows to effectively regulate and allocate guest workers with varying skills and qualifications according to the situation on the labour market and the needs of the economy.

Today this quota equals 0.7 per cent (56,000 persons) of the economically active population of the country. The number of foreign specialists hired to work in Kazakhstan has been increasing: from 10,720 persons in 2001 to 24,760 individuals in 2005. Distribution of foreign specialists is as follows: 32.6 per cent are hired to work in Atyrau region, 15.4 per cent in Astana, and 14.7 per cent in Almaty region (8.4 per cent in Almaty city). Top three industries employing foreign workers include construction (58.4 per cent), mining (15 per cent) and agriculture (7.8 per cent).

Last year there were 8,895 officially registered foreign workers from Turkey, 3,238 from China, 1,994 from Kyrgyzstan, 1,287 from Great Britain, 899 from Hungary, 896 from Russia, and 871 from India. How successful these “hands and brains” will be in contributing to the economy of Kazakhstan will be obvious in the near future.

One of the main factors that has influenced migration processes in Kazakhstan over the last 10 years is the immigration of oralmans—ethnic Kazakhs living abroad. Last year alone 14,513 immigrant families (85,043 individuals) relocated to Kazakhstan, primarily from Uzbekistan. The quota was underachieved only by 3 per cent (some families arrived late). At the same time, 99.7 per cent of the budgeted allowance was allocated to provide housing for these immigrants. The higher percentage of funds allocated compared to the percentage of immigrants who arrived was due to a higher family coefficient (number of individuals in each family). Immigrants arriving from Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Mongolia had on average 5.9 persons per family as compared to the expected average of 5.49 individuals. This meant that more individuals were eligible for allowance to purchase housing than was planned in the budget.

Out of these, only 35,030 immigrants found work. The rest (not including, of course, children and women with many children) joined the army of the unemployed. It is not a secret that some of them became involved in criminal activities as occasionally reported in the mass media. From 1991 to 2005 the number of oralmans who relocated to Kazakhstan has exceeded the quota by 1.7 times (481,400 arrivals versus 280,400 as set by the quota).

And ... Laws of the Market

The Minister of Labour and Social Protection of Kazakhstan, Ms. Gulzhana Karagusova, stated in an interview to the newspaper *Express K* on November 2, 2005, “The main problem in the existing migration law is the lack of clarity, starting with the inclusion of oralmans in the quota. There is not even a clear distinction between oralmans in general and oralmans who are officially included in the quota. In 2000 we had 5,500 families arrive in Kazakhstan but only 500 of them were officially included in the quota. All the rest came on their own. Last year [in 2004] Kazakhstan received 15,000 families within the quota but there were three times as many families who arrived on their own. This year [2005] housing assistance to 15,000 families who arrived as part of the approved quota will cost the government more than 8 milliard tenge. This is a significant amount, thus we establish quotas.”

Unfortunately, there are cases when interests of oralmans and the local population are conflicting. The latter have complained that oralmans steal and squat land. The share of individuals with university degrees among the oralmans is not large. Many of them, especially arrivals from Mongolia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan, do not have any qualifications at all. Most immigrants settle down in regions with an oversupply of labour—Southern-Kazakhstan, Mangistau, Almaty, Atyrau, Northern Kazakhstan, and Eastern Kazakhstan, where the unemployment level is already high.

This shows that there are at least two labour problems in the context of the national repatriation programme. The first problem is the lack of understanding of oralmans’ needs; the second problem is the unwillingness and lack of knowledge on how to take their education and skills into account in integrating oralmans into their historic motherland.

Experts affirm that the repatriation programme should select individuals by their professional qualities, educational level (at least technical or secondary professional education), and age (the majority of the family should consist of individuals of working age and of potential workers). The family should be self-sufficient and know what family members will do for work. However, these factors are rarely taken into account, and they do not play any role in extending an invitation to return to the historical motherland. The publicly announced position of the government is that the state will help those who will come and work for its development.

As President Nursultan Nazarbayev noted during his speech at the congress of the Kazakhs, “Oralmans should think not of what the government can give them, but of what they can give Kazakhstan.” Nobody has informed them how oralmans would contribute to Kazakhstan and what rights they have. Moreover, nobody has informed these immigrants of the limiting legal provisions most of them have faced immediately upon arrival to Kazakhstan.

Price for a Second-Rate Product

Entrepreneurs and the leadership of migration police departments of Southern Kazakhstan and Zhambyl regions have raised the issue of increasing quotas for foreign labour force on four occasions. However, by the end of 2005 neither the government, nor the Parliament, have fully considered these issues, even when it concerned the oralmans.

Law enforcement agencies are able to control the situation but they do not always exercise their functions with due persistence, consistency and within the law. Most often “problems” with illegal workers are resolved through bribes. Numerous migration police operations resulting in the detection of illegal labour force are resolved “peacefully” with the employers.

Corruption impedes the resolution of many problems concerning the employment of legal and illegal migrants. In the last three years in the southern regions of the country over ten criminal cases were initiated against law enforcement officers who were involved in migrant smuggling into

Kazakhstan from abroad. There was also evidence of documents being issued to illegal and legal migrants for bribes.

Road to the World Trade Organization (WTO)

In 2005 in his address to the people of Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev set the goal for the country to become a member of the WTO and to develop into one of the 50 most competitive economies in the world. From the point of view of economic and social changes taking place in the country in the last several years this task does not appear unrealistic. However, this has forced the Government to revise many of its positions, including the one on migration.

It is obvious that the agriculture and construction industries are most in need of labour force. Most incidents concerning the use of illegal workers were recorded in these two sectors but also to a lesser extent in the mining and service industries. The Government of Kazakhstan has come to the right conclusion: in March of 2006 it adopted a decree that allows entry into the country to guest workers only based on work applications and a copy of the labour contract. According to some prominent lawyers this measure should bring positive results. However, there is no guarantee that employers will take advantage of the new legal provision. The reason is the unwillingness to pay taxes.

Within two months the Government has developed a draft law on Legalizing Illegal Labour Migrants. The lower legislative chamber has reviewed it in its first reading before the end of the session and parliamentary recess. The results are impressive. This draft law aims to:

- Replenish the budget through taxation of currently unregistered labour migrants;
- Ensure migrants' rights and social protection;
- Decrease illegal labour migration.

The Government hopes to effectively utilize the international mechanisms for regulation of external migration processes. One of the most effective mechanisms to protect migrants' rights is to conclude intergovernmental bilateral and multilateral agreements on labour migration. Kazakhstan, along with other CIS countries, has signed an Agreement on Cooperation in Labour Migration and Social Protection of Migrant-workers in April of 1994. In March of 1998 an Agreement on Cooperation of CIS countries in Combating Illegal Migration was signed. Governments of Kazakhstan and Tajikistan have concluded an Agreement on Labour Migration on May 4, 2006. Several agreements on labour migration in the context of the Eurasian Economic Community and the Common Economic Space, as well as with the People's Republic of China are being planned.

However, observers note that the "road to heaven laid out by laws and agreements" does not always bring the desired results. Various sources interpret current policy differently. Opposing views on this issue are due to the difference in socio-economic development of Central Asian states, porous borders between neighbouring countries in the region, and other problems, including political ambitions of leaders of Kazakhstan's neighbour-states.

Liberal immigration laws do not guarantee that invited and uninvited "guests" will be happy. Entry of Kazakhstan into WTO will open "the gates" to many migrants. It will be quite difficult to politely tell them that there isn't space for everyone. Nevertheless, it will take some time for Kazakhstan to enter the WTO and become one of the top 50 economies in the world. We should wait to see how hosts and guests get along. One would hope that hospitality laws will be favourable and that both parties will adequately understand them.

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K Y R G Y Z S T A N

Trends and Development of Migration Processes in Kyrgyzstan

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INTRODUCTION

In Kyrgyzstan, as in other Central Asian countries, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the disintegration of its unified economy, and the overall crisis which ensued, influenced migration processes and fundamentally changed their structure. After independence, entirely different factors have influenced migration processes. These include, tension between ethnic groups, the development of a market-oriented economy, freedom of movement and globalization.

Economic reforms after independence entailed a high social cost - the majority of the population fell below the poverty line. In recent years, the lack of jobs and the bleak economic prospects have pushed many to migrate. An oversupply of labour resources and an unstable political situation are powerful “push” factors for the population to seek employment outside their place of residence; labour migration has become widespread;

Worrying developments in the departure of ethnic minorities underscore the need for policies aimed at preserving national diasporas and protecting their cultures, languages, and traditions. In order to develop effective policies, it is necessary to identify the social and economic consequences of migration, assess its positive and negative effects, and consider the interests of Kyrgyzstan and those of its main migration partners.

MIGRATION PROCESSES IN KYRGYZSTAN AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES

Migration processes in the 1990s differed significantly from similar processes in the past in their dynamics and structure. Outward migration in the beginning of the 1990s was largely a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union and its consequences, although armed ethnic conflicts in Kyrgyzstan and neighbouring Tajikistan and Uzbekistan also influenced migration flows. In parallel, the outflow of the ethnic Russian population was fuelled by factors including, the rise in radical nationalism among the titular population, the decrease in the status of the Russian language, the ousting of the non-titular population from management positions, and uncertainty about the future.

Most emigrants in the 1990s were ethnic Russians. However, ethnic Germans, Ukrainians, and Tatars also left the country en masse during this period. After 1995 the departure of the ethnic Russian population has noticeably decreased, although it increased temporarily in 2005 as a result of the revolution in the country. Fast market transformations and government measures to improve the situation of the ethnic Russian minority have played a role in this decrease. Likewise, Russia’s lack of preparedness to receive a large influx of migrants, and the difficulties some have experienced in integrating into Russian society have influenced the decision of many potential migrants.

The main destination country for Kyrgyz migrants is the Russian Federation. Kyrgyzstan had a migration deficit with Russia starting already in 1970s, however the migration balance with the most populous country in the region—Uzbekistan—was positive as recently as 1989. This positive balance has recently turned into a migration deficit. The third destination country for emigrants from Kyrgyzstan, after Russia and Uzbekistan, is Kazakhstan.

Migration inflows from Tajikistan have been consistently higher than migration outflows due to the conflict and socio-political instability in the neighbouring country. The migration exchange with other CIS countries has not been significant.

In the last decade under the USSR, ethnic Kyrgyz actively moved to Russia. Between 1979 and 1988 the number of Kyrgyz in Russia increased by a factor of 2.9 compared to a 33 per cent increase in their own republic.¹ However, at the end of 1980s and beginning of the 1990s there was an outflow of Kyrgyz from Russia to Kyrgyzstan. Migration of the titular population to Russia re-started in significant numbers only in 1994.

According to the Migration Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan, between 1990 and 2002, 500,000 persons left Kyrgyzstan. For a country of 5.1 million residents, this number is considerable. The number of ethnic Russians in the country dropped from 918,000 to 520,000. Their share in the population has decreased from 21.2 per cent to 11.1 per cent. Ethnic Russians fell from the second to the third largest ethnic group in Kyrgyzstan, after ethnic Uzbeks.²

The outflow of ethnic Russians has had serious consequences for Kyrgyzstan. These include: the loss of highly qualified specialists; a decline in the number of economically active population and of the industrial potential of the country; a decrease in the quality of personnel in infrastructure, construction, transportation, and other industrial sectors previously dominated by ethnic Russians (who represented up to 50 per cent of the engineering personnel in Central Asia)³; and “brain drain”, a reduction of the intellectual potential in science and education. Moreover, in Kyrgyzstan, as in other Central Asian countries, the Russian population was a stabilizing force. The rapid outflow of this group has fostered political instability.⁴

Current migration processes critically impact the demographic situation in Kyrgyzstan. The increase in number and proportion of the titular population has boosted the birth rate and resulted in higher population growth. This development has increased pressure on the working-age population, resulted in higher unemployment, and created competition for land, water and other resources.

The educational structure of the population has also changed due to the migration of highly qualified professionals from minority groups. These migrants have not been replaced by similarly qualified specialists due to the lower educational level of the titular nation. Moreover, the quality of the education at technical schools and universities has suffered and the training of the local cadres is deteriorating. The resulting shortage of professional labour force will have serious consequences unless the country can successfully train and retain highly qualified workers.

Within the Kyrgyz government, many have acknowledged the negative consequences of the departure of ethnic Russians and sought to limit it through steps such as giving Russian official language status. The country has also increased economic and cultural ties with Russia. However, these measures have not brought tangible results. The future of the Russian diaspora depends on the socio-economic and political developments in Kyrgyzstan and in Russia. Economic factors will play a critical role on migration trends of the remaining Russian population. According to some experts, the labour market situation and overpopulation will eventually result in an outflow of almost all Russians from Kyrgyzstan.⁵ Other experts however consider that, although many Russians have left or are planning to leave, a large number will not leave due to relative tolerance in Kyrgyz society and the position of authorities, who are against their departure.⁶

¹ Zayonchkovskaya, Zh. Russia: Migration Throughout Time (Rossiya: migratsiya v masshtabe vremeni), Centre for the Study of Forced Migration, Independent Research Council on Migration in the CIS and Baltic States, Scientific reports, Issue 1, Moscow, 1999, p.37.

² Demographic Yearbook of the Kyrgyz Republic, Bishkek, 2002.

³ Zayonchkovskaya, Zh., Ed. *Migration of Specialists in Russia: Reasons, Consequences, Assessment (Migratsiya spetsialistov v Rossii: prichiny, posledstviya, otsenki)*, Moscow, 1994, p.28.

⁴ Lunev, S.I. “Challenges to the Security on the Southern Borders of Russia” (*Vyzovy bezopasnosti yuzhnyh granits Rossii*), Moscow, 1999.

⁵ Zayonchkovskaya, Zh., p.40.

⁶ Tishkov, V.A. *Ethnology and Politics (Etnologiya i politika)*, Scientific publication, Nauka, Moscow, 2001, p.66.

External labour migration of Kyrgyz nationals

External labour migration of the titular population has become very significant in scope. It is estimated that between 300,000 and 500,000 Kyrgyz nationals work in Russia and Kazakhstan.⁷ Labour migration is a predominantly “unregulated hidden phenomenon. It is mostly informal and illegal.”⁸ Therefore, it is difficult to accurately estimate the number of labour migrants. Consequently, government agencies do not have a clear picture of the scale of labour migration. Migrants face numerous difficulties in destination countries and upon return to home. Many are in need of information, social protection and legal counsel.

Nonetheless, there are positive aspects to labour migration: it balances inflation, compensates for the drop in income levels, and prevents extreme poverty in conditions of widespread unemployment.⁹ At present, there is an oversupply of the labour, high unemployment and underemployment in Kyrgyzstan. These factors can cause social unrest, positive proof of this are the mass protests of 2002 and the revolution of 2005.

Export of the labour force presents a real opportunity to improve the financial situation of hundreds of thousands of people, to increase the national budget, and to resolve many social problems. It also helps reduce unemployment and unemployment benefits the government would have to pay to train the unemployed, find employment for them and assist their families.

Working abroad, labour migrants can improve their qualifications, and acquire new skills. They earn starting capital to create small and medium-size businesses at home. Remittances from labour migrants make up a significant source of foreign currency for the country. They improve living standards of the population and strengthen Kyrgyzstan's balance of payments. According to the estimated, remittances reached US\$ 200,000 million home in 2004 alone through banks.

Other positive consequences of the prolonged stay of the Kyrgyz in Russia and other countries include establishment of business contacts, creation of joint ventures, and expansion of bilateral trade and economic relations.

STUDY ON THE MIGRATION BEHAVIOUR OF THE POPULATION OF KYRGYZSTAN

In Kyrgyzstan due to the lack of reliable migration statistics, sociological studies are the only source for information on the migratory behaviour and intentions of the population. In 2003, Osh State University conducted a study on the migratory behaviour of the population of Kyrgyzstan. The purpose of the study was to identify factors influencing migration of the Kyrgyz and ethnic Russian population and to identify focus areas for migration policy. The study paid special attention to new migration trends, to the comparative analysis of “push” factors for migration among different ethnic, age, professional groups, as well as among the rural and urban populations.

Migratory Behaviour of the Rural Population

As of 2004, rural residents made up over 65 per cent of the population of Kyrgyzstan, and over 66 per cent of them were ethnic Kyrgyz. The majority of the titular population lives in the South of the country. Therefore, the Osh region in the south of the country was chosen as the research site for this study.

The main variables identifying differentiation in models of migratory behaviour included educational level, gender, age of respondents, the number of children in the family, income level, and others.

⁷ *Demoskop-Weekly*, electronic version of the bulletin “Population and Society”, No. 207-208, July-August 2005. [www.demoscope.ru]

⁸ Kuznetsova, A. “Demographic Processes in the Kyrgyz Republic” (Demograficheskie protsessy v Kyrgyzskoi Respublike), *Society and Economics* (Obshchestvo i ekonomika), No. 2/4, 2000, p.261.

⁹ Topilin, A.V. “Demographic Potential of the Caucasus and Central Asia and the Common Labour Market of the CIS” (Demograficheskiy potentsial Zakavkazia i Tsentralnoi Azii i obschiy rynek truda), *Central Asia and Caucasus*, No. 3 (9), Lulea, 2000, p.184.

Findings of the study showed that 13.5 per cent of rural respondents intended to migrate in the near future. From this number, the majority of respondents, 84.2 per cent, were planning to move within the country, with 44 per cent intending to relocate to the capital. About 32 per cent of respondents said they planned to relocate to regional centres in the south of the country. Eight per cent of respondents were going to move to small towns. Approximately 12 per cent stated they planned to migrate abroad. A comparison of this data to findings of a similar study conducted in 1995 demonstrates a substantial increase in the intention of inhabitants of rural areas to move to the capital and its surrounding region.¹⁰

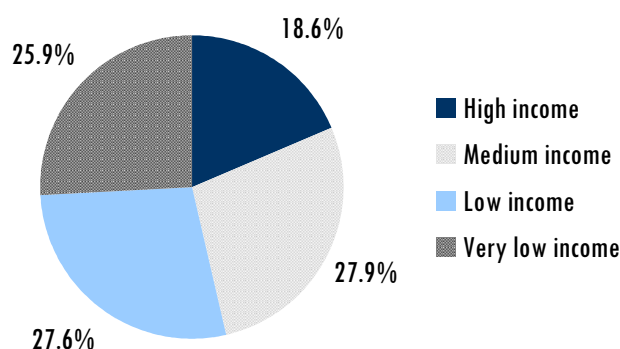
An overwhelming majority of potential external migrants—68.3 per cent - would like to go to Russia. A large share, 20.1 per cent, of potential migrants wanted to migrate to Kazakhstan. A study conducted in 1995 found that the second largest destination then was Uzbekistan. Men were more inclined to migrate than women.

Reasons for migration included lack of appropriate work (55.1 per cent of respondents), low salaries and limited opportunities for supplemental income (28.6 per cent). Another 21.6 per cent of respondents reported they intended to move in order to study.

For young people under the age of 20 the main motives for migration included the aspiration to study at an educational establishment and lack of work at their current place of residence. For respondents between 20 and 29 years of age finding work was the primary motive while improving their education was the second reason for migration. A significant share of respondents in this age group also cited limited opportunities for entrepreneurial activities as a reason for wanting to migrate.

The most important factors for migration are economic, more specifically, the income level of the population. (Figure 1). Respondents with high income were least likely to migrate with 16 per cent of respondents in this group reporting their intention to relocate. The motives for migration included lack of services, poor electricity supply, decreasing medical services, and limited opportunities for commerce, manufacturing and trade in rural areas. The majority of respondents in this group were made up of managing personnel in industrial enterprises and commercial structures, doctors, and accountants. About 60 per cent of them reported working in a village/town other than where they lived.

Figure 1: Potential migrants within various income groups, share of migrants per group (in per cent)



The largest share of potential migrants, 27.9 per cent, were in the medium-income group. The primary motive for this group was lack of appropriate work. Other important factors included poor service industry, inadequate electricity supply and bad public transportation services.

For individuals with low and very low incomes, accounting for 53.5 per cent of respondents, the main reasons for migration included lack of appropriate work and low salaries.

¹⁰ Ergeshbayev, U.Zh. *Migratory Behaviour of the Population of Kyrgyzstan* (Migratsionnoe povedenie naseleniya Kyrgyzstana), Osh, 1995, p.5.

The results of the survey indicate therefore that hope to improve living standards is the main reason for migration of the titular population in Kyrgyzstan.

Migratory Behaviour of the Urban Titular Population

Migratory behaviour largely depends on the characteristics of the population—its educational level and qualifications. About 14.2 per cent of the urban Kyrgyz population with higher and incomplete higher education planned to migrate in the near future, and so did 22.7 per cent of respondents with secondary education. Among individuals with specialized secondary education, a large share—27.1 per cent—intended to migrate. Only 6.6 per cent of respondents with incomplete secondary education stated that they intended to migrate. This study found that among rural residents better educated respondents were more likely to migrate, while among urban residents the level of education and migratory intentions of respondents were not correlated.

Like rural residents, urban Kyrgyz respondents intending to migrate cited lack of work as the most common reason for migration (45.6 per cent). The second significant factor for migration was low wages (30.8 per cent) followed by a high cost of living in the city (26.4 per cent). Every fourth potential migrant also cited the rising crime level as a reason for wanting to migrate.

The study found that the urban population is potentially more likely to migrate compared to the rural population. About 21 per cent of urban residents intended to migrate in the near future.

Bishkek stands out in the context of internal migration, having the highest migration inflow from all regions of Kyrgyzstan. The main motives for relocating to the capital include work opportunities and higher wages.

Respondents, who expressed a desire to live and work in another CIS country, mostly chose Russia (74.5 per cent) and Kazakhstan (15.6 per cent). The study suggests that 79.2 per cent of potential migrants are fairly familiar with the situation in the destination, 17.1 per cent are somewhat familiar, and 3.7 per cent of respondents do not have any information about their potential destination. Most respondents who would move outside of Kyrgyzstan were men (59.7 per cent). About 80 per cent of them cited Russia as their destination country.

Women mostly cited lack of work as a reason for intending to migrate, while men cited low wages as the “push factor” more often. Every third male and every fifth female respondents complained about the high cost of living in the city. Both men and women were concerned with the increase in crime. Poor housing conditions were a more important factor for women as compared to men.

Migratory intentions of the ethnic Russian population and Russian speaking minorities

The majority of the ethnic Russian population lives in the north of Kyrgyzstan. Therefore, the survey was conducted in Bishkek and the surrounding Chui region. The ethnic origin of the respondents was divided as follows: 85.8 per cent Russians, 10.5 per cent Ukrainians, 1.7 per cent Germans, and 1.6 per cent Belarusians.

Among urban residents, 23.5 per cent expressed an intention to migrate in the near future. The largest share of potential migrants was recorded among respondents with secondary and specialized secondary education (31 per cent and 24.6 per cent accordingly). Consequently, there was no correlation between the level of education and potential mobility.

Over one fifth of the rural Russian-speaking minorities (21.4 per cent) were potential migrants. The largest share of respondents (26.1 per cent) wishing to migrate were among individuals with higher education.

The main reason cited for wanting to migrate was low pay. Approximately 60 per cent of potential migrants from rural areas, and over half of urban potential migrants reported low wages to be the main “push” factor. The second most reported reason for wanting to migrate was discrimination against the Russian-speaking minorities in job promotion and lack of opportunities for professional growth. Every fifth respondent pointed out the difficulty in adapting to local customs and traditions.

There were differences in the structure of motives for migration depending on the educational level of respondents. Lack of prospects for professional growth was a more important factor for

respondents with higher education, while low wages were reported as a primary “push” factor for individuals with specialized secondary education.

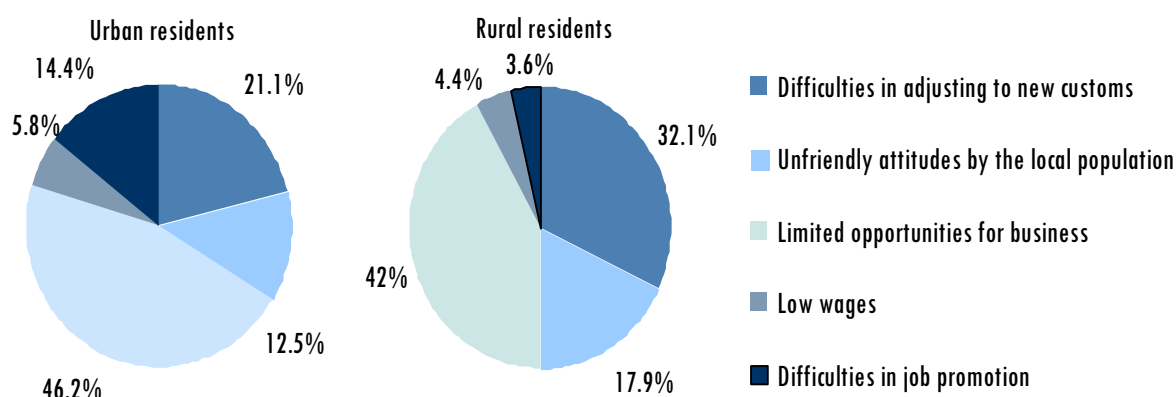
To form a more balanced and objective picture about the motives of the Russian-speaking minorities to migrate, third parties were surveyed. The Russian-speaking minority residents of Kyrgyzstan who do not intend to migrate and ethnic Kyrgyz were asked to speculate about the motives for migration of the non-titular population (Table 1 and Figure 2).

Table 1: Reasons for migration of minorities as speculated by minority members not intending to migrate

| | cited by per cent of respondents |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Difficulties in adjusting to local customs and traditions | 18.1 |
| Negative attitudes towards ethnic Russians and other minorities by the local population | 15.6 |
| Limited opportunities for business | 11.7 |
| Low wages | 62.0 |
| Difficulties in job promotion | 56.2 |
| Other reasons | 1.3 |

Responses of the ethnic Russian potential migrants and other Russian-speaking minorities about the reasons for migration were similar. Both groups considered low wages and discrimination against the Russian-speaking minorities at work to be the main reasons driving emigration. However, respondents not planning to relocate cited limited opportunities for business as a motive more often than potential migrants. Ethnic Kyrgyz respondents considered that low wages and difficulty in adjusting to local traditions were the main factors driving emigration of Russian-speaking minorities.

Figure 2: Reasons for migration of minorities as speculated by Kyrgyz urban and rural residents



The majority (74.4 per cent) of minority urban respondents, who expressed an intention to migrate, were planning to move to Russia. Most of them (80.8 per cent) were planning to move to cities, 17.1 per cent were planning to move to small towns, and a very small number intended to migrate to rural villages.

Only one fifth of respondents were quite familiar with their destination. More than two thirds of respondents planning to leave Kyrgyzstan in the near future did not know or were somewhat familiar with their destination.

The majority (76.7 per cent) of minority rural potential migrants were also planning to move to Russia. Kazakhstan was a destination country for 6.9 per cent of these respondents, while 16.4 per cent intended to migrate to other countries. The majority (58.1 per cent) of the respondents in this group wanted to move to cities, 22.7 per cent wanted to relocate to rural areas, with the rest intending to settle down in small towns of their destination countries. Approximately 80 per cent of rural respondents planning to leave Kyrgyzstan did not know much about or were completely unfamiliar with their destination.

Analysis of this data controlling for gender rendered similar results: the share of potential migrants among men was 2-3 per cent higher than among women.

Both men and women cited the low standard of living, expressed by low wages, and discrimination against Russian-speaking minorities, as well as the lack of prospects for professional development, as primary reasons for migration. Women noted the difficulty of adapting to local traditions more often, while men were more concerned with the negative attitudes of local residents.

Respondents in the age group of 20-29 demonstrated the highest potential for mobility. In 1995 individuals between the ages of 30 and 39 were more likely to migrate.¹¹ Consequently, ethnic Russian youths, who do not see the future for themselves in Kyrgyzstan, are migrating more actively.

Factors motivating young people to migrate differed from the rest of potential migrants. Respondents under 20 frequently cited negative attitudes of the local population and lack of prospects for professional growth. They were concerned with difficulty of obtaining education and limited opportunities for business. Respondents in the age group of 20-49 cited reasons such as low wages and lack of prospects for job promotion more often. Older respondents were more concerned with low wages and difficulties of adjusting to local traditions and language.

As opposed to the survey of the Kyrgyz population, there was no correlation between the level of mobility of Russian-speaking minorities and income levels; respondents rarely mentioned this factor.

Respondents with medium incomes among the minority rural residents were more likely to migrate than respondents in other income groups. Their main reasons for migration were low wages and limited opportunities for supplemental income, followed by lack of prospects for professional growth and promotion. Limited opportunities for business development were also mentioned frequently.

Among urban respondents intending to migrate, 63.8 per cent had low and extremely low income.

This study paid special attention to interethnic relations. An assessment of these relations varied significantly depending on whether or not respondents intended to migrate. Potential migrants were very concerned by this issue: over 50 per cent stated that there was some or strong interethnic tension in the country. A large share of them also thought that interethnic tensions could result in conflict. Respondents not intending to migrate were much more optimistic.

The study also found that respondents not intending to migrate from Kyrgyzstan were more likely to be in close contact with the titular population as compared to potential migrants.

Main Findings of the Study

This study demonstrated a significant increase in the migration potential of the titular population. It also showed that the emigration potential of the ethnic Russian population is not yet depleted. There are critical differences in migration intentions of ethnic Russians and the titular citizens. The majority of the latter plans to migrate internally within Kyrgyzstan, while the former intend to move abroad, mostly to Russia.

For both titular and the ethnic Russian population the main “push” factors were lack of work and low wages. However, ethnic Russian respondents cited discrimination in the workplace impeding their

¹¹ Ergeshbayev, U.Zh. *Migratory Behaviour of the Population of Kyrgyzstan* (Migratsionnoe povedenie naseleniya Kyrgyzstana), Osh, 1995, p.9.

professional growth as the second most important motive for migration. A large share of them also emphasized difficulties in adjusting to the Muslim customs and traditions revived in recent years.

Income levels influenced migration tendencies of titular and non-titular populations differently. Kyrgyz potential migrants had worse living conditions than the minority respondents. Kyrgyz respondents with highest and the lowest income levels were least likely to migrate. Medium-income respondents showed higher potential for mobility.

Among minority respondents medium- and high-income individuals were more likely to migrate as they would be able to cover the cost of relocation. It is noteworthy that this group has a relatively higher employment status, while those not planning to migrate were more likely to be unemployed.

Educational level and qualifications of the Russian-speaking minorities intending to migrate were much higher than among those who did not plan to relocate. The largest share of potential migrants consisted of specialists and government employees. Unskilled workers were least likely to migrate. Thus, the most educated, skilled and economically better off individuals had migration intentions.

Most potential migrants were not sufficiently familiar with their destination, and only a quarter of them could afford to buy housing immediately upon relocation.

CONCLUSION

Current migration processes have significant implications for Kyrgyzstan's future. Some of these processes, primarily the en masse departure of ethnic Russians and other minorities, have had negative effects on the country. The ethnic composition of Kyrgyz society has changed, the country has lost a large part of its cultural diversity, and its industrial and scientific potential has declined. With an increasingly ethnically homogeneous population, interethnic interaction has become more rare, leading, in some cases, to racial intolerance. This situation compromises the development potential of the country and poses a security risk for the region due to ethnic, interregional and clan tensions.

The development of an effective migration policy, aimed at preserving ethnic diasporas and the redistribution of labour resources in the country, is of crucial importance. Special attention should be paid to the following issues: the protection of human rights; the institution of workplace policies that do not discriminate based on ethnicity; the retaining of educational programmes in Russian and Kyrgyz languages; and the support of the Russian language in all societal spheres. It is necessary to create favourable conditions for intergovernmental and joint investment funds and enterprises with Russia; retaining Russian and other ethnic diasporas is in the interest of Kyrgyzstan.

Labour migration of Kyrgyz citizens can become a motor for economic development; it solves problems related to oversupply of labour and brings remittances to the country. Labour migration also strengthens the trade, economic, and cultural relations of Kyrgyzstan with other countries. To maximize the potential benefits of labour migration, the government must strengthen its cooperation efforts with Russia and other destination countries and develop a strategy to ensure that migrants can find legal employment in those countries, are able to transfer remittances back home through cost-efficient channels, and are less at risk of becoming victims of trafficking for exploitation.

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M O L D O V A

Implications of International Labour Migration for the Population of the Republic of Moldova

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1. The scope and main trends in international labour migration of the Moldovan population

The economic recession and industrial decline, inflation, increase in structural unemployment, decrease in social spending and systemic delays in salary payments have significantly influenced the development of the migration situation in Moldova. Since the mid-1990s the economic migration of the Moldovan population has been on the rise.

Even though labour migration has been a pressing issue in the eyes of Moldovan society for quite some time, there is no adequate and complete information on the numbers of Moldovan labour migrants abroad. Figures reported in the mass media range from 340,000 to one million people.

According to findings of sociological surveys conducted using representative samples of the population,¹ every third Moldovan national of working age is engaged in labour migration. The population census (November 2004) shows that approximately 600,000 individuals participate in labour migration.²

A German researcher M. Lucke has prepared a mid-term forecast (until 2010) of the demographic trends, the GDP and migrant remittances to Moldova in the context of labour migration. According to his prognosis labour migration will increase regardless of the socio-economic situation. The optimistic and the pessimistic forecasts offered by Lucke differ only in the share of the population of working age involved in this process: the optimistic scenario estimates this number to range from 36.42 per cent to 43.77 per cent,³ while the pessimistic scenario calculates the figure to be between 43.7 per cent and 52.59 per cent.⁴

Recent labour migration trends in Moldova reveal that the actual migration processes exceed even the pessimistic scenario. The Moldovan National Bureau for Statistics and Sociology reports that

¹ A sociological study was conducted by the Microfinance Alliance of Moldova between January and September 2003. It surveyed 4,500 households, including 750 labour migrants, and demonstrated that there are 340,000 labour migrants in Moldova, which amounts to 22 per cent of the population of working age. Another sociological study carried out by a firm CBS AXA surveyed 3,714 households including 1,006 labour migrants. Thus study estimates the number of labour migrants to be 571,000, or 39 per cent of the population of working age. The number of individuals planning to go abroad for work in the near future was 690,000, or 48 per cent of the economically active population. (See Ghencea B., Gudumac I. *Migrația de muncă și remitențele în Republica Moldova*, Organizația Internațională a Muncii, Alianța de Microfinanțare din Moldova, Chișinău: AMF-SOROS, 2004; Transferuri de bani de la cetățenii Republicii Moldova, aflați peste hotare la muncă, Organizația Internațională pentru Migrație, Chișinău: CBS AXA, A TNS CSOP Branch in Moldova, 2004). Hereafter the sociological study conducted by the Microfinance Alliance of Moldova will be referred to as "AMF-2003" (Ghencea B., Gudumac I. *Migrația de muncă și remitențele în Republica Moldova*, Organizația Internațională a Muncii, Alianța de Microfinanțare din Moldova, Chișinău: AMF-SOROS, 2004). The sociological study carried out by CBS AXA. A TNS SCOP Branch in Moldova will be referred to as "IOM-2004" (*Transferuri de bani de la cetățenii Republicii Moldova, aflați peste hotare la muncă*, Organizația Internațională pentru Migrație, Chișinău: CBS AXA, A TNS CSOP Branch in Moldova, 2004).

² See *Komsomolskaya Pravda in Moldova*, 30 October 2004.

³ The first figure shows the number of Moldovan nationals working abroad at the time of the household survey carried out every trimester by the Sociological Service of the National Bureau for Statistics and Sociology. The second figure, similarly identified during sociological surveys, shows the number of Moldovan nationals working abroad during a calendar year.

⁴ Lucke M. "Remittances and Social Protection in Moldova", *Remitențele lucrătorilor migranți: oportunități de optimizare (atelier de lucru)*, Organizația Internațională a Muncii, Ministerul Economiei și Comerțului al Republicii Moldova, Uniunea Europeană, Chișinău, 15 noiembrie 2005, p.12-13.

420,000 labour migrants left Moldova in the 3rd quarter of 2005 in search of work abroad.⁵ This figure exceeds the timeline forecasted in the pessimistic scenario by a year and the optimistic scenario by two years.

The presence of large numbers of Moldovan labour migrants is particularly noticeable in Russia and in EU countries. Russia is the main destination country for Moldovan labour migrants receiving 58.2 per cent of the total migration flow out of Moldova. Other destination countries include Italy (19 per cent), Portugal (5 per cent), Spain, Turkey, Greece, Czech Republic, Israel, France, Germany, Ireland, Cyprus, Romania and Ukraine.⁶

Table 1. Main destination countries for labour migrants (in per cent by each country)

| Country | AMF-2003 ⁷ | IOM-2004 ⁸ |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Spain | ... | 1.5 |
| Italy | 18.0 | 18.9 |
| Russia | 54.7 | 58.2 |
| Turkey | 3.9 | 1.3 |
| Romania | ... | 1.9 |
| Portugal | 4.3 | 5.0 |
| Cyprus | ... | 0.5 |
| Germany | ... | 1.0 |
| Greece | 4.4 | 2.7 |
| Czech Republic | ... | 0.8 |
| Belgium | ... | 0.5 |
| Israel | 2.1 | 1.4 |
| Ukraine | 2.8 | 2.2 |
| France | ... | 0.9 |
| Other countries | 9.8 | 3.0 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| European Union | | 31.8 |
| CIS | | 60.4 |
| Other countries | | 7.8 |

In the past the predominant flow of labour migration went to the East—to CIS countries, and primarily to Russia. Lately, migrants are increasingly going to the West and the Southwest. The Mediterranean states, with large informal sectors of economy are among the most attractive destination countries for Moldovan migrants.

Factors leading to the increase in migration flows to the Southwest included: equal distance from Moldova to the Mediterranean countries and to Moscow; proximity of the Romanian group of languages for Moldovans, of the Turkic group of languages for the Gagauz, and the Slavic group of languages for the Russian speaking population; and social networks established through Jewish Moldovan immigrants in Israel, Germany and other countries. It is noteworthy that the wages in the West are higher than in Russia. Amnesties and other migration regulation mechanisms in the European

⁵ *Business of Moldova*, 29 November, 2005.

⁶ According to the population census of 2004, 56.2 per cent of labour migrants work in Russia, 19.4 per cent in Italy, 3.9 per cent in Romania, 3.5 per cent in Portugal, 3.1 per cent in Ukraine, and 3.0 per cent in Turkey.

⁷ Ghencea B., Gudumac I. *Migrația de muncă și remitențele în Republica Moldova*, Organizația Internațională a Muncii, Alianța de Microfinanțare din Moldova, Chișinău: AMF-SOROS, 2004.

⁸ *Transferuri de bani de la cetățenii Republicii Moldova, aflați peste hotare la muncă*, Organizația Internațională pentru Migrație, Chișinău: CBS AXA, A TNS CSOP Branch in Moldova, 2004.

Union make it possible for some illegal migrants to legalize their immigration status. Such legalization is much more difficult in Russia.⁹

This large army of Moldovan labour migrants does not live and work abroad all at the same time. There are seasonal peaks when the majority of migrants are abroad working or when a large share of them return to Moldova for holidays, vacation, medical treatment, etc.

Contemporary labour migration processes involve the entire Moldovan society. Initially, ethnic minorities participated in labour migration more actively than ethnic Moldovans. Today all ethnic groups, including the titular nation, migrate abroad for labour.

Individuals of various age, gender, education and profession take part in labour migration: highly skilled and unskilled labour force, teachers, engineers and doctors, as well as the representatives of manufacturing, transportation, construction and agricultural sectors. Younger individuals are more likely to migrate—over 70 per cent of migrants are under 40 years old and almost 40 per cent are under 30.¹⁰ The average age of the Moldovan migrant is 35 to 36 years.

People migrate from all regions of the country. However, labour migrants in Russia are rarely from the capital, Chisinau, but are mostly rural residents¹¹ or residents of small towns representing the less dynamic part of the Moldovan labour force.¹² Labour migrants from the capital work primarily in the countries of the European Union.

Even though the majority of migrants are men, women make up a significant share of migrants representing between a quarter and a third of all Moldovan labour migrants. Male labour migrants are primarily employed in construction, transportation, as well as in industrial and agricultural sectors. According to a study conducted by the IOM in 2004,¹³ the majority of Moldovans—51 per cent—work in construction. Female migrants are employed in the service and retail industries, in domestic service, provide care to the elderly, the sick and the children, and also work in the sex industry. The majority of migrants are employed outside of their profession. However, unlike in Western European countries, where most labour migrants work outside of their profession (with the exception of construction work), in Russia there are more opportunities for migrants to work within their area of training (construction, agricultural work, transportation, manufacturing, service industry and sales).

According to the IOM study cited above, 75 per cent of migrants earn between US\$ 100 and US\$ 1,000, and only 20 per cent make more than US\$ 1,000 per month. The AMF-2003 study reports that, on average, a migrant working abroad makes US\$ 543 per month: in the CIS countries an average migrant wage is US\$ 368 per month, while in western countries migrants make US\$ 600-1,000 monthly. Migrants working in Germany earn US\$ 1,300 per month. Moldovan labour migrants working in the construction sector in Russia make from US\$ 450 to US\$ 750 per month, while in EU countries migrant wages in the same sector are between US\$ 900 and US\$ 1,500.¹⁴ For comparison, in Moldova construction workers, considered to be well-paid as compared to their fellow citizens, make US\$ 133 per month according to official statistics.¹⁵ In general, monthly wages are equal for men and women. It has been noted that monthly wages increase in direct correlation to the length of migrants' stay in the destination country.

⁹ See Moshnyaga V. and G. Rusnak. *We Are Building Europe and Not Only... (My stroim Evropu i ne tolko...)*, Chisinau, Moldova State University, 2005. It is noteworthy there has been some progress in Russia: it is planning to offer a migration amnesty in 2006.

¹⁰ *Republica Moldova: Politici de creștere economică, creare a locurilor de muncă și reducere a sărăciei*, Chișinău, 2005, p.116. These figures are correlated to the population census data (October 2004). According to the census data, 38 per cent of labour migrants are individuals between the ages of 20 and 29, 23.1 per cent are individuals between 30 and 39 years of age.

¹¹ A Russian researcher G. Vitkovskaya states, based on survey results, that 34 per cent of all labour migrants come from rural areas ((see Vitkovskaya G. "Main Findings of the Study of Illegal Migration in Russia in 2001-2002" (Osnovnye rezultaty issledovaniya nezakonnoi migratsii v Rossii v 2001-2002 gg.), Report at the international seminar "Labour Migration Policy and Data Management", Chisinau, Republic of Moldova, 27-28 September, 2004).

¹² See Moshnyaga V., Rusnak G. and Tsurkan V. "Moldovan Labour Migrants in Russia" (*Moldavskie trudovye migranty v Rossii*), *MOLDOSCOPIE (Probleme de analiză politică)*, Partea XX, Chișinău, USM, 2002, p.74-99.

¹³ *ibid.*

¹⁴ Moshnyaga V. and G. Rusnak. *We Are Building Europe and Not Only... (My stroim Evropu i ne tolko...)*, Chisinau, Moldova State University, 2005, p.30-31. In April-December of 2004 Moldovan labour migrants working in construction were surveyed. Over 100 construction workers working in the CIS and EU countries were interviewed. We also had similar findings from a study of irregular migration of Moldovan men conducted in December 2005 – May 2006.

¹⁵ See *Anuarul statistic al Republicii Moldova*. 2005, Chișinău, Statistica, 2005, p.108.

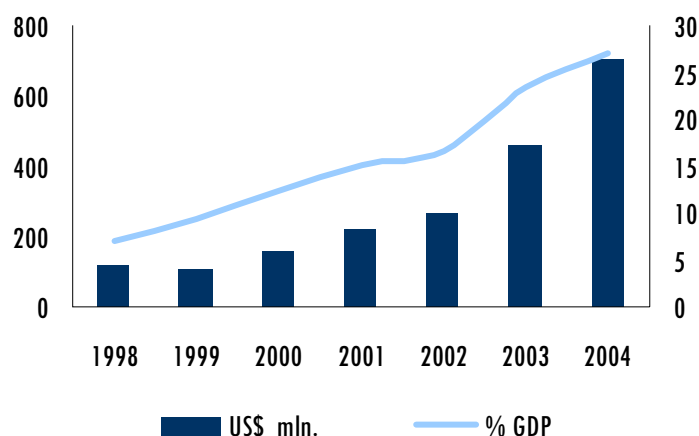
The majority of labour migrants integrate in the labour market of the destination country without the assistance of the government. According to the data on individual labour contracts concluded with the help or participation of the Moldovan government, during the period 1993-2004 only 6,678 labour contracts were registered by the Moldovan authorities.¹⁶

2. Positive implications of labour migration

Positive implications of labour migration encompass social, cultural, economic and political spheres of the society, and can be traced at the level of individual migrants and their families, as well as in the context of the entire country.¹⁷ Because of labour migration people can survive, solve their financial problems, and support their families. While abroad, migrants discover and adopt cultural traits of other nations, establish new personal contacts, learn foreign languages, adopt new industrial technology and enhance their professional skills. The main positive impact of labour migration is the flow of remittances into the country of origin. These remittances have positive economic effects on individuals, households and the recipient country.

Migrant remittances are transferred into the country of origin both via official and unofficial channels. The volume of migrant remittances arriving to Moldova via official channels is recorded and increases annually. Table 2 below shows the dynamics of migrant remittance flows during the period of 1998-2004 and shows the share of remittances in the national GDP.

Figure 1. The dynamics of migrant remittances into the Republic of Moldova, 1998-2004.¹⁸



As of 2005 Moldova's volume of remittance flows into the country as a share of GDP was second only to that of the island nation of Tonga (the Pacific Ocean). The third top remittance recipient was the African state of Lesotho.¹⁹

According to mass media sources, migrant remittances into Moldova reached US\$ 1 billion in 2005, substantially surpassing the national budget.²⁰ The Ministry of Economy and Trade of Moldova

¹⁶ *Anuar statistic privind fluxurile migraționale în Republica Moldova 2003*, Chișinău, DSM, 2004, p.9; *Anuarul statistic al Republicii Moldova. 2005*, Chișinău, Statistica, 2005, p.67.

¹⁷ See Cuc M., Lundback E., Ruggiero E. *Migration and Remittances in Moldova*, International Monetary Fund, Washington, DC, 2005, p.2. Geneva, International Labour Organization, pp.17-43. Applicable to Moldova: Moșneaga V., Țurcan V., Rusnac Gh. Migrațiunea forței de muncă în Republica Moldova: cauze, tendințe, efecte, *MOLDOSCOPIE* (Probleme de analiza politica). №1 (XXV), Chișinău, USM, 2004, c.63-78.

¹⁸ See Cuc M., Lundback E., Ruggiero E. *Migration and Remittances in Moldova*, International Monetary Fund, Washington, DC, 2005, p.2.

¹⁹ *Global Economic Prospects. Economic Implications of Remittances and Migration*, The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The World Bank, Washington, 2006, p.90.

²⁰ See Lorchenkov V. "Moldova lives off the money from illegals" (Moldova zlivet na dengi nelegalov). *Komsomolskaya Pravda in Moldova*, 13 January, 2006.

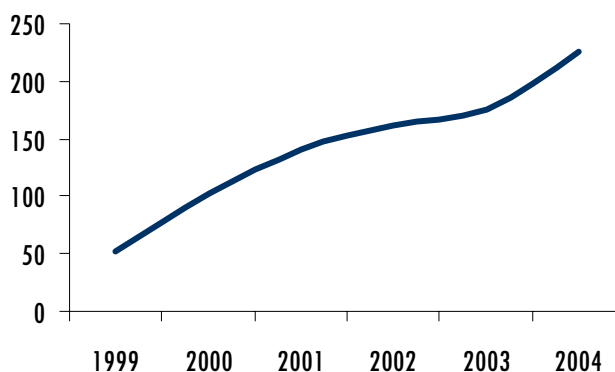
provided a more modest estimate of migrant remittances in 2005 putting them at US\$ 890 million.²¹ As the IMF reports, 59 per cent of remittances transferred via official channels come to Moldova from EU countries, 26 per cent from CIS countries, and 15 per cent from other countries.²²

It is significantly harder to estimate the volume of migrant remittances transferred to Moldova via unofficial channels. Recent studies show that migrants use unofficial money transfer channels more often than the official channels: over 45 per cent of remittances were transferred through banks; consequently, 55 per cent are remitted through friends, colleagues, or brought into the country personally upon return (AMF-2003).²³ According to the estimates of the World Bank, 53 per cent of all migrant remittances are transferred via formal channels, while 47 per cent are transferred through informal channels.²⁴ Based on the preceding discussion, we estimate that the total volume of migrant remittances transferred into Moldova in 2005 through both official and unofficial channels was somewhere between US\$ 1.5 billion and US\$ 1.7 billion.

Remittances from abroad are usually transferred in hard currency (US dollars or Euros). An increase in hard currency transfers into the national market helps protect the local currency. For Moldova migrant remittances represent a significant and a stable source of foreign currency.²⁵ Moldova receives greater financial inflows through remittances via official and unofficial channels from its nationals abroad than from foreign direct investments. In 2005 alone the country received more funds from Moldovan citizens working abroad than from foreign governments and private investors combined during the period of October 1994 to October 2005 (US\$ 1 billion 151 mln). Obviously, remittances do not increase the budget of the government but make a significant contribution to the savings and foreign currency reserves. This helps strengthen Moldova's national security.²⁶

Growing remittance flows positively impact the development of the banking system in the country and facilitate its consolidation. A table below provides data on remittance transfers to Moldova through commercial banks.

Figure 2. Worker remittances to Moldova through commercial banks, annual dynamics (in US\$ millions).²⁷



²¹ See Kalak T. "Remittances from guest workers became a problem" (Postupleniya ot gasterbaiterov stali problemoi) // "Komsomolskaya Pravda in Moldova", 2 June 2006.

²² International Monetary Fund: *Republic of Moldova: selected issues*. Report. January 2005. - Washington, DC, 2005, p.10.

²³ Ghencea B., Gudumac I. *Migrația de muncă și remitențele în Republica Moldova*, Organizația Internațională a Muncii, Alianța de Microfinanțare din Moldova, Chișinău: AMF-SOROS, 2004.

²⁴ *Global Economic Prospects. Economic Implications of Remittances and Migration*, The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The World Bank, Washington, 2006, p.91.

²⁵ However, this can also result in negative consequences. As the Director of the National Bank of Moldova L. Talmach notes, "A substantial growth in remittances from abroad and an increase in revenues from import taxes in 2005 could have caused an unjustified strengthening of Moldovan lei towards hard currencies" (Kalak T. "Remittances from Guest Workers Became a Problem" (Postupleniya ot gasterbaiterov stali problemoi), *Komsomolskaya Pravda in Moldova*, 2 June 2006).

²⁶ See Kapur D. and D. McHeil. "Profitable Migration" (Pribylnaya Migratsiya), *Pro et Contra*, July-August 2005, p. 82.

²⁷ Teosa V., Moșneaga V., Țurcan V., Iurcu S., Slobodeniuc G. "Remitențele lucrătorilor migrații: oportunități de optimizare a investițiilor sociale". *Raport. Remitențele lucrătorilor migrații: oportunități de optimizare (atelier de lucru)*, Organizația Internațională a Muncii, Ministerul Economiei și Comerțului al Republicii Moldova, Uniunea Europeană, Chișinău, 15 noiembrie 2005.

Researchers argue that an outflow of labour force unused in the country helps alleviate unemployment, support social stability and take the edge off social conflicts. Since the beginning of the 1990s, despite a significant drop in the economic potential and in the standard of living in Moldova, there has been no manifestation of social conflict. In 2000 the economic potential of the population was at 34 per cent of the 1990 level, while the standard of living dropped to 19 per cent as compared to 1990. Labour migration and migrant remittances played a significant role in preventing/easing social conflicts in Moldova.

Labour migration and remittances positively influence social structures in Moldova expanding the middle class and, consequently, decreasing the number of the poor and very poor.²⁸ The financial situation of migrant households is more favourable compared to non-migrant households. The former have the opportunity to avoid the risks of the transition period and social transformation as demonstrated by comparative household analyses.

Table 2. Financial situation of households in the context of labour migration, IOM-2004,²⁹ per cent of households.

| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----------------------|------------------|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Nutrition | Before migration | 1.6 | 57.1 | 34.3 | 5.6 | 1.4 |
| | After migration | 7.4 | 71.6 | 18.5 | 1.0 | 1.5 |
| Housing | Before migration | 1.6 | 52.1 | 38.2 | 6.3 | 1.9 |
| | After migration | 4.7 | 70.4 | 21.5 | 1.6 | 1.8 |
| Clothing | Before migration | 1.1 | 46.9 | 45.0 | 5.3 | 1.7 |
| | After migration | 4.5 | 68.1 | 24.3 | 1.4 | 1.7 |
| Healthcare | Before migration | 1.6 | 50.7 | 38.3 | 7.6 | 1.8 |
| | After migration | 2.8 | 57.6 | 33.2 | 4.7 | 1.7 |
| Education | Before migration | 1.9 | 47.4 | 35.5 | 4.6 | 10.6 |
| | After migration | 3.3 | 60.1 | 20.8 | 1.8 | 14.0 |
| Entertainment | Before migration | 1.0 | 31.8 | 46.7 | 12.9 | 7.5 |
| | After migration | 2.3 | 47.3 | 35.6 | 7.1 | 7.7 |

Notes: 1 – very good, 2 – good, 3 – poor, 4 – very poor, 5 – no answer.

Studies illustrate that two thirds of all migrant households depend on remittances. The household budget of these families consists mostly (65 per cent and more) of migrant remittances. Moreover, in one third of migrant households remittances make up over 85 per cent of its budget.

An analysis of expenditures by migrant households shows that a large share of remittances received from labour migrants goes to buy food. A portion of the resources is spent on “personal development needs”: education, healthcare, tourism, and purchase of goods that facilitate access to information, knowledge and potential opportunities (computers, communication devices). Migrant households also use the remittances to open or develop their own businesses. Business enterprises include not only opening cafes, shops or manufacturing firms. Lending money for other people’s migration (with an interest rate) is also considered a business, an investment. This type of business is in demand and is informal as there is no relationship with the government and the authorities.

Judging by the experience of other countries, Moldova is not “discovering America” in this sense and is following global trends. Spending most of the remittances on food is quite a typical occurrence in poor countries such as Moldova. An attempt to provide decent living conditions and to support one’s family is a natural response to dire living conditions. Thanks to labour migration and remittances

²⁸ See *Population of Moldova and Labour Migration: the Situation and Contemporary Forms* (Naselenie Moldovy i trudovaya migratsiya: sostoyanie i sovremennye formy), Chisinau, CAPTES 2000; *Labour Migration in the CIS: Social and Economic Consequences* (Trudovaya migratsiya v SNG: sotsialnye i ekonomicheskie efekty), Centre for the Study of Forced Migration in the CIS, Moscow, 2003.

²⁹ *Transferuri de bani de la cetătenii Republicii Moldova, aflați peste hotare la muncă*, Organizația Internațională pentru Migrație, Chișinău: CBS AXA, A TNS CSOP Branch in Moldova, 2004.

migrants and their households are able to meet their basic needs. This statement is supported by data presented in tables 6 and 7.

Figure 3. Migrant's share in the financial well-being of the household , per cent of households (AMF-2003)³⁰

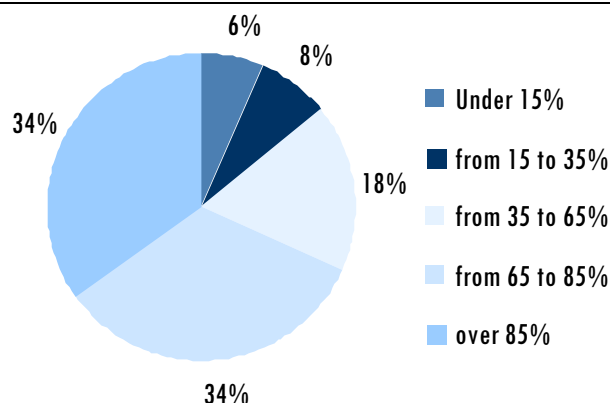


Table 3. Use of remittances by migrant households, (in per cent) IOM-2004.³¹

| | |
|---|------|
| Food and clothes | 43.1 |
| Utilities | 18.2 |
| Appliances for home | 17.2 |
| Renovation of house/apartment | 15.3 |
| Education | 12.8 |
| Healthcare | 12.5 |
| Pay off debts | 11.7 |
| Pay off migration-related debts | 10.4 |
| Purchase of necessities for agricultural work | 10.5 |
| Savings | 8.5 |
| Bank accounts | 1.6 |

Table 4. Spending of remittances planned for the following 12 months.

| | AMF-2003 ³² | IOM-2004 ³³ | |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| | % | First priority % | Second priority % |
| Paying off debt | 8.3 | 11.8 | 5.1 |
| Routine expenses (food, clothes, utility bills, etc) | 21.7 | 45.4 | 21.7 |
| Special expenses (education, healthcare, purchase of expensive goods/appliances, lending money, etc.) | 20.0 | 10.6 | 24.6 |
| Household investments (purchase of a car, property, house/apartment renovation, wedding, funeral, bank deposits) | 22.0 | 15.5 | 22.8 |
| Business investment (purchase of land, cargo trucks and | 6.5 | 1.5 | 4.8 |

³⁰ Ghencea B., Gudumac I. *Migrația de muncă și remitențele în Republica Moldova*, Organizația Internațională a Muncii, Alianța de Microfinanțare din Moldova, Chișinău: AMF-SOROS, 2004.

³¹ *Transferuri de bani de la cetățenii Republicii Moldova, aflați peste hotare la muncă*, Organizația Internațională pentru Migrație. Chișinău: CBS AXA, A TNS CSOP Branch in Moldova, 2004

³² Ghencea B., Gudumac I. *Migrația de muncă și remitențele în Republica Moldova*, Organizația Internațională a Muncii, Alianța de Microfinanțare din Moldova, Chișinău: AMF-SOROS, 2004.

³³ *Transferuri de bani de la cetățenii Republicii Moldova, aflați peste hotare la muncă*, Organizația Internațională pentru Migrație, Chișinău: CBS AXA, A TNS CSOP Branch in Moldova, 2004.

| agricultural equipment, cattle and poultry) | | | |
|---|-------------|-----|-----|
| Other | | 0.7 | 0.2 |
| Savings (bank deposits) | 20.7 (11.4) | - | - |
| No answer | | 9.8 | 2.4 |

According to sociological surveys (IOM 2004),³⁴ only 16.8 per cent of respondents were planning on saving remittances to start their own business. The most attractive sectors to invest are the following (in the order of priority): agriculture, entrepreneurship, transport, bar (kiosk), purchase of equipment, entertainment, and purchase of property.

Some of the remittances are spent on the development of the communities where migrants were born, lived and from where they left for work abroad. As sociological studies demonstrated (IOM 2004),³⁵ every ninth migrant (11.7 per cent) provides some financial assistance to the church, sports clubs, and community projects.³⁶ However, expert interviews with local administrations in Moldova show that these processes do not take place everywhere and in many communities the role of labour migrants in the development of local communities is insignificant.³⁷

3. Negative consequences of labour migration.

The outflow of Moldovans in search of work abroad remains a pressing problem and is often the only survival alternative for people. For the majority of the Moldovan population employment is the only way out of poverty. Unfortunately, a substantial growth in manufacturing during the last 5-6 years (the annual GDP growth equalled about 5 per cent) did not create more jobs. On the contrary, employment rates have gone down on average by 2.4 per cent annually. Moreover, most of the poor in Moldova are “working poor”: according to the World Bank, three quarters of all the working population are poor. This means that in many cases employment does not guarantee the way out of poverty³⁸.

The Moldovan labour force is becoming more selective comparing the wages “here,” in Moldova, and “there,” abroad, often choosing to work abroad. Low wages in Moldova and higher wages abroad serve as a powerful incentive for highly qualified professionals to leave the country. This category of workers is also more likely to take long-term or permanent jobs abroad. This phenomenon is destructive for Moldova, causing the reduction of skilled workers among its human capital,³⁹ thereby impeding the country’s economic development. It also makes training of human resources a priority draining the national budget.

Mass labour migration results in chronic shortage of specialists. There are cases when, due to the lack of qualified personnel, manufacturing projects fail and foreign investors lose interest in investing in Moldova. There is no multiplication effect—there are no foreign direct investments in the industry, and migrant remittances are not used constructively in the economy. This problem is also caused by disparity in the training of the working age population. The country needs not only qualified personnel but personnel of certain professions, possessing certain qualifications and certain skills. There are 114,600 students studying in higher educational establishments⁴⁰ of Moldova, 23,600 students in

³⁴ *ibid.*

³⁵ *ibid.*

³⁶ Sigvardsson E. “Migrația și dezvoltarea Republicii Moldova – apariția rețelelor sociale ale migranților (în baza cercetărilor sociologice)”. Moșneaga V., Corbu-Drumea L. (Coord.) *Populația Republicii Moldova în contextul migrațiilor internaționale*, Materialele conferinței științifice internaționale, Chișinău, 9-10 noiembrie 2005, UNESCO, USM, “Dialog Intercultural”, “CAPTES”. Vol. II. – Iași, 2006, p.153-164.

³⁷ Țurcan V. “Administrația Publică Locală din Republica Moldova referitor la procesele migraționale ale populației țării (în baza cercetărilor sociologice calitative)”. Moșneaga V., Corbu-Drumea L. (Coord.) *Populația Republicii Moldova în contextul migrațiilor internaționale*. Materialele conferinței științifice internaționale, Chișinău, 9-10 noiembrie 2005, UNESCO, USM, “Dialog Intercultural”, “CAPTES”. Vol. II. – Iași, 2006, p.248-269.

³⁸ See Gudym A. Shelar G. “Two Points of View on the Problems of Economic Development and Poverty Alleviation” (Dve točki zreniya na problemu ekonomicheskogo rosta i snijeniya bednosti), *Puterea și opoziția în contextul managementului politic*, Iași, Pan-Europe, 2005, p.58-59.

³⁹ This is consistent with global trends. See *Towards a fair deal for migrant workers in the global economy*. Report VI. International Labour Conference, 92nd session. Geneva, International Labour Organization, 2004.

⁴⁰ *Anuarul statistic al Republicii Moldova. 2005*, Chișinău, Statistica, 2005, p.167.

colleges⁴¹, and 22,700 students in technical colleges⁴². In Moldova chronic unemployment is accompanied by a shortage of qualified personnel within the labour force. This situation particularly affects young people. It is not surprising, therefore, that (according to several sociological surveys) 85-90 per cent of current students think about migrating in order to find employment with high wages.

One of the main consequences of remittances is price increases for goods and services. According to real estate brokerages in Chisinau in the last five years property prices in the capital have increased threefold. This means that families that do not have remittance transfers from overseas have less chances of purchasing or building housing. Similar changes occurred in prices for other commodities resulting in lower purchasing power among non-migrant households. Poverty of non-migrant households has become more pronounced, thereby increasing the incentives for migration.⁴³ The saying is: "If you want to have housing, go abroad following the tracks of labour migrants."

One can also observe a misbalance in the demographic make up of the Moldovan society because the most active part of the population—young people—are leaving the country. This situation can cause serious impediments for the further development and demographic security of the country. Demographic forecasts for Moldova do not incite optimism: since 2003 there has been no growth in the population of working age. From now on, the number of people capable of working will only decrease. In 2010 growth in labour resources will be only 9,000 persons, and by 2015 there will be a negative growth of at least 20,000 individuals.⁴⁴

It was mentioned above that approximately 40 per cent of labour migrants are individuals under 30 years of age. While working abroad many of them legalize their immigration status, become permanent residents of the receiving country and take their children with them. According to unofficial statistics, only during the period of 2003-2004, about 100,000 children received passports for travel abroad. There were 2.5 times as many passports issued in 2004 as compared to 2003. Obviously, a large share of the children who received passports are those going abroad to study or as tourists. However, it is also obvious that many children going overseas do so to reunite with migrant parents permanently living in destination countries; the departure of children further exacerbates the demographic problems in Moldova.

Labour migration changes the demographic situation in the country, especially in rural areas. Villages in which, like during the war, there are no men of working age, are becoming a mass phenomenon. In other villages, especially in the south of the country, there are no women of working age remaining as they are all working abroad.

Labour migration changes the patriarchal model of leadership within the family. Family members become estranged; a growing number of children are brought up without one or both parents, who are migrants abroad, by grandparents but sometimes by neighbours and "the street". This category of children is at risk of becoming street children, of becoming victims of family and external violence and of falling under the influence of criminal groups. We estimate that presently between 70,000 and 150,000 children in Moldova live without one or both parents who are international labour migrants.

Labour migrants working abroad often economize on their healthcare, nutrition, living conditions and work safety techniques in an attempt to earn as much as possible to send remittances to their families in Moldova. Thus, there are occupational injuries, uncured diseases and even deaths among labour migrants overseas. Overall, the health of Moldovan labour migrants is deteriorating.

Trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation of women and children and for organ trafficking is also a negative consequence of labour migration. Unfortunately, Moldova, together with Albania and Romania, is among the most unsafe European countries in the context of human trafficking. It should be noted that forced or voluntary sex labour migration leads to lower moral

⁴¹ *ibid.*, p.162.

⁴² *ibid.*, p.160.

⁴³ See: Moşneaga V., Rusnac Gh., Ţurcan V. "Migraţiunea forţei de muncă în Republica Moldova: cauze, tendinţe, efecte", *MOLDOSCOPIE* (Probleme de analiză politică), Chişinău: USM, №1 (XXV), 2004, p.70.

⁴⁴ See Gudym A. Shelar G. "Two Points of View on the Problems of Economic Development and Poverty Alleviation" (Dve tochki zreniya na problemu ekonomicheskogo rosta i snijeniya bednosti), *Puterea şi opoziţia în contextul managementului politic*, Iaşi, Pan-Europe, 2005, p.59.

standards among the population; in the eyes of the society, such work is increasingly viewed as “normal.”

The level of entrepreneurship among individuals who returned from abroad still remains low. Moreover, not only does migration not incite personal initiative, as was expected, but on the contrary, it discourages entrepreneurship (the number of entrepreneurs has not increased) and creates new waves of migration. This is due to the following factors: unfavourable conditions for doing business and absence of jobs with wages that keep up with the rising cost of living, which is becoming comparable to that of countries in Western Europe.

In order to understand the state of labour migration and its perspectives, it is important to look at future plans of labour migrants. It is noteworthy that every fifth respondent working in EU countries does not intend to return home and plans to permanently reside in the destination country. In comparison, this is only true for every fifteenth labour migrant working in Russia. This could be explained by several factors discussed earlier, which minimize the opportunity and the desire of migrants to integrate into the Russian society.⁴⁵

This trend can result in depopulation, outflow of young and highly qualified human capital, and in a threat to national security. Furthermore, an outflow of young citizens jeopardizes perspectives for democratic development of Moldova: political roles played by older voters become more important, and their voices increasingly define political and civic movement in the country.

Irregular mass labour migration negatively influences the relationship between the Moldovan government and governments of receiving countries. Moldovan migrants usually enter and remain in destination countries illegally. They sometimes engage in crime and violate the norms of social behaviour and accepted moral standards in the receiving countries. These incidents negatively affect the image of Moldova as a democratic state. Such attitudes to Moldova are often exacerbated by the problem of trafficking in women from Moldova for sexual exploitation. Lately, the problematic relationship between Moldova and receiving countries in the context of labour migration has taken a new turn. Labour migrants have become a tool used by the Russian political and governmental structures to apply political pressure on Moldova as demonstrated by the events of 2005-2006.

4. Migration policy in the context of concrete social policies

The trends in labour migration in Moldova require the development and implementation of effective and adequate migration policies capable of minimizing the forecasted dangers and risks. There is an understanding of the situation in the context of growing labour migration flows. However, there is no agreement on the priorities that would form the basis of the migration policy. There are currently three approaches to migration policy.

The first approach emphasizes fighting poverty and creating employment, thereby influencing migration intentions of Moldovan citizens in an attempt to minimize them. Analysis of election platforms used by opponents during parliamentary elections of 2005 demonstrated that the Communist Party and various other opposition parties support this approach. The only difference is in the number of jobs they promise to create.⁴⁶

What they do not take into account is that the problem is not the existence or lack of jobs in Moldova. Moldovan workers are leaving the country because they have discovered (by comparing not only theoretically but also empirically) that doing the same jobs as in Moldova they can get paid more in Russia, in EU countries or elsewhere. The labour force realizes its real value on the international labour market and thus becomes more “demanding” in the Moldovan labour market.

Therefore, the solution of the problem is not preventing Moldovan workers from making international wage comparisons by closing the borders, but rather making employment at home

⁴⁵ See Moshnyaga V. and G. Rusnak. *We Are Building Europe and Not Only... (My stroim Evropu i ne tolko...)*, Chisinau, Moldova State University, 2005, p.40.

⁴⁶ See Opponents campaign programmes (Predvybornie programmy komponentov), Parliamentary elections of 6 March 2005. Chisinau, Adept, 2005; Frunțașu Iu. *Programele electorale ale partidelor din Republica Moldova: context și substanța*. Alegeri 2005, Coord. S. Bușcaneanu, Chișinău, Gunivas, 2005, p.137-140.

attractive and relatively lucrative. Labour migrants should trust in their government in their ability to be better off working at home. As migration expert J. Tapinos points out, when “an individual decides to emigrate—it is his personal decision, when he decides to stay, it is a demonstration of his trust to the government and the market.”

The second approach is less obvious but quite popular, however, not with the Moldovan government authorities.⁴⁷ The core of this approach is the promotion of the Philippine model of the labour force export. However, this approach does not take into account that the experience of Turkey, the former Yugoslavia, the Philippines and other countries that export its labour force is hardly applicable to Moldova. These countries were characterized by political regimes that exercised strict control over the travel of its citizens abroad. Leaving the Philippines was also difficult because it is an island nation and sea served as a natural barrier for mass immigration. This allowed the government to be the dominant force in managing labour migration out of the country and to dictate its “rules of the game.”

In Moldova’s case the situation was different. Post-communist transformation in Central and Eastern Europe, in the late 1980s and beginning of the 1990s fundamentally changed the political regime in these countries and brought along liberalization of entry/exit procedures to/from these countries. During the economic crises labour migration has become a mass phenomenon, which the government has been unable to regulate. Most labour migrants from this region left on their own, not expecting any assistance or support from government authorities. The government did not participate in this process. As a result, in mid-1990s, when labour migration out of Moldova had become a mass phenomenon, population movements and integration of governmental structures into the global migration space were essentially separate, unrelated processes. Under these circumstances, for the government to be able to regulate migration processes in a democratic political regime, it has to earn the trust of its citizens through concrete actions.⁴⁸

The third approach, currently dominant within the state authorities does not have sufficient press coverage. Thus, sociological surveys show that representatives of governmental structures, workers’ unions and business circles think that there is no adequate migration policy in Moldova⁴⁹.

This approach has been introduced in the beginning of 2004 and has developed from an earlier approach to regulating migration processes. Under this approach the government tries to help Moldovan labour migrants by establishing contacts with migration authorities of other countries in an attempt to find ways and mechanisms to protect legal and illegal Moldovan migrants in those countries. The Migration Department of Moldova has already achieved some positive results in this area.⁵⁰

The core of the new approach is a more comprehensive migration management process, consideration of migration policies in the context of concrete social policies, unity of migration policies with national priorities, and integration of these policies into Moldova’s development strategy. This approach stems from the statement that Moldova is a “small country with an open economy.” Thus, labour migration out of the country is a natural and an unavoidable phenomenon. The most important method to stem an outflow of labour force leaving abroad in search of better wages is to revive the national economy. Such revival should be based on the growth of direct investments into manufacturing (see the program “Revival of the Economy – Revival of the Country”).

⁴⁷ In late 1990s these views circulated among the Moldovan government establishment, including the top leadership. There was an idea of controlling international migration of the Moldovan labour force and of receiving certain financial dividends from departing labour migrants.

⁴⁸ See Moshnyaga V., Tsurkan V., and G. Rusnak. “Specifics of Labour Migration and Its Regulation in the European Countries of the CIS (from the experience of Moldova)” (Spetsifika trudovoi migratsii i osobennosti ee regulirovaniya v evropeiskih gosudarstvakh SNG (iz opyta Respubliki Moldova), *MOLDOSCOPIE* (Probleme de analiză politică), Chişinău, USM, №2 (XXV), 2004, p.108-109.

⁴⁹ See Teosa V. “Mechanisms of Social Partnership in Optimizing the Remittances: Realities and Opportunities” (Mekhanizm sotsialnogo partnerstva v politike optimizatsii remitansov: realnost i vozmozhnosti). Moşneaga V., Corbu-Drumea L. (Coord.) *Populația Republicii Moldova în contextul migrațiilor internaționale*, UNESCO, USM, “Dialog Intercultural”, “CAPTES”. Vol.II. – Iași, Pan-Europe, 2006, p.228-248.

⁵⁰ See Moshnyaga V. “Regulation Of Labour Migration In Moldova: The Situation And The Main Stages”, *labour migration in the cis: social and economic consequences* (trudovaya migratsiya v sng: sotsialnye i ekonomicheskie efekty). Centre for the Study of Forced Migration in the CIS, Moscow, 2003, P. 159-168; *Politici Migrationalne*. Raport Din 30 Octombrie 2004. // www.ipp.org

Currently the Moldovan economy is growing. However, this growth is not sustainable as it is based on higher consumption due to migrant remittances and on growing revenues into the national budget from the customs levy on imports into the country (over 50 per cent). There has been no increase in direct foreign investment into the economy.⁵¹ Accordingly, economic growth is observed due solely to migrant remittances and the taxation of imports into Moldova.

There is little hope for an increase in direct foreign investment due to several factors. First, the investment climate in the country is not favourable. Investment related legislation meets European standards on paper. However, the “rules of the game”—how the government meets its responsibilities under this legislation—are subject to change and are risky. Furthermore, labour migration depletes the country of highly qualified labour force. This means that foreign investments become unprofitable for entrepreneurs because there is no personnel to manufacture quality goods. In addition, the fiscal system of the country needs substantial reforms. Currently it limits the opportunities for personal initiative and entrepreneurship.

Therefore, the main source of direct investment into the country should be migrant remittances from Moldovans working abroad. According to modest estimates, 20-30 per cent of all remittances can be invested in the economy (6 per cent of remittances is already invested in business development, 15-20 per cent is kept as bank deposits, and 4-10 per cent could come from the resources currently lent out to finance other individuals’ migration). The revival of this process would also require concrete actions from the government as discussed above.

Investments by labour migrants into the service industry (cafes, bars and shops) is a natural and normal phenomenon because the profits and capital growth are immediate. However, it is inevitable that at some point there will be an oversupply of bars and shops in the country to the extent that investing in this sphere will become low-profit or even unprofitable. In this context, then, the government should identify other priority spheres for investment. Obviously, governmental priorities and interests do not always coincide with private interests. Therefore, a compromise between public and private interests would be preconditioned upon financial/fiscal incentives for a private initiative in the necessary spheres of economy. It is necessary to provide incentives for migrants and their households to invest remittances in local projects to develop communities where migrants were born and where they live. The government envisions this method in implementing its program “The Moldovan Village.”

Without a doubt, it is necessary to alleviate poverty in the country, improve the macroeconomic situation, and increase and stabilize state funding, including funding for creation of new jobs.⁵² However, one should remember that in the open market economy the labour force realizes both its national and international value. Under these circumstances the government should help its labour force to become competitive in the international labour market by developing and reforming education and healthcare systems in the country. It is inevitable that part of the trained labour force will leave the country and might not come back. However, the government will earn the trust of labour migrants and the population in general, which will ultimately bring positive results.

The Moldovan government is searching for concrete opportunities for labour migrants to temporarily migrate to EU countries and to Russia, and to ensure the availability of legal and social assistance to labour migrants through international and bilateral protection mechanisms.⁵³ For example, Moldova has entered into several multilateral and bilateral agreements in the framework of the CIS, signed readmission agreements with 10 European countries and an intergovernmental agreement with Italy, ratified international conventions protecting the rights of migrant workers, and cooperates with the International Organization for Migration, the International Labour Organization

⁵¹ Gorelova E. “Investment Deficit and Labour Migration out of Moldova.” (Defisit investitsiy i trudovaya migratsiya iz Moldovy), *Labour Migration and the Protection of Guests Workers’ Rights: the Experience of Post-Communist Countries* (Trudovaya migratsiya i zaschita prav gastarbaiterov: praktika postkommunisticheskikh stran), Chisinau, Moldova State University, 2003, p. 39-44.

⁵² See *Republica Moldova: politici de crestere economica, creare a locurilor de muncă și reducere a sărăciei*, Chișinău, UNDP, 2005.

⁵³ See Moshnyaga V. “Regulation of Labour Migration in Moldova: the Situation and the Main Stages”, *Labour Migration in the CIS: Social and Economic Consequences (Trudovaya migratsiya v SNG: sotsialnye i ekonomicheskie efekty)*, Centre for the Study of Forced Migration in the CIS, Moscow, 2003, p.159-168; *Politici migrationale. Raport din 30 octombrie 2004.* // www.ipp.org

and others.⁵⁴ The Parliament has recently ratified the European Convention on the legal status of migrant workers.

Summing up the discussion on labour migration and the role of migrant remittances for the development of Moldova, it is important to note that labour migration and migrant remittances indeed stabilize the economy in the country, abate social conflicts in the society, consolidate the banking system, improve the financial situation of the population, reduce poverty and help form the middle class in Moldova. However, the Moldovan society and the government do not fully utilize the opportunities created by labour migration and migrant remittances. Moreover, as labour migration of Moldovan nationals expands, one can clearly see its negative consequences, which the society and the government are not yet ready to minimize and overcome.

⁵⁴ Acorduri bilaterale ale Republicii Moldova în domeniul migrației. // www.migratie.md

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RUSSIA

Outlook on Migration Policy Reform in Russia: Contemporary Challenges and Political Paradoxes

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Introduction

Migration processes taking place across the former Soviet Union, many of which Russia is at the centre of, pose a range of challenges for the country. How can Russia find the necessary policy approach to face these challenges?

Analysis of the migration situation in the Russian Federation reveals that trends emerging in recent years have become even more pronounced; the inflow of migrants from the CIS and the Baltic states has significantly dropped and there is an increasing negative migration balance with non-former Soviet Union countries. Moreover, the emphasis on administrative migration management methods and restrictive immigration policies has resulted in a drastic reduction of permanent immigration and fostered ethnic tension in some parts of the country.

The imbalance in the geographic distribution of migration flows and the demographic composition of the population has increased. Many young people in rural areas have migrated to cities in search of employment. The migration outflow to central and southern parts of the country has resulted in the depopulation of the economically and geopolitically important territories of Siberia and the Far East. In the context of an overall decrease in internal population movements in Russia, migration out of necessity (from depressed regions, from cities losing its infrastructure, from crisis zones, etc.) has been on the rise. Ethno-political migration processes are taking place in the Southern federal district, where the non-titular population is being pushed out from the Northern Caucasus.

Irregular migration to Russia is a serious problem. According to expert estimates, the number of irregular migrants in Russia ranges from 5 to 10 million people. Their numbers are especially high in the Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Krasnodar and Stavropol regions. Regions with a high concentration of migrants are experiencing social tension and racial intolerance. Many problems concerning external labour migration have not been solved.

Russian demographers have unanimously forecasted a dramatic population decline. In their view, Russia has already missed the opportunity to prepare for the impending demographic and labour market crisis. The year 2006 will likely be the last year of absolute labour force growth. According to forecasts by ethno-demographer Zh.Zayonchkovskaya, the population decline will be dramatic. Over the period 2006-2015 the population of working age will decrease by 10 million people. This translates into a decline of working age population by more than 1 per cent per year.¹ Such a dramatic and rapid decline in the labour force will result in manpower becoming the most sought after resource in Russia. The only way to replenish the labour force in the next several years is through immigration. Under these circumstances the wisdom of recent measures to restrict migration is questionable. The danger of depopulation in some regions and a shortage of labour force limit the opportunities for the development of the country and endanger its security.

¹ Zayonchkovskaya, Zhanna. "Labour Migration into Russia" (Trudovaya migratsiya v Rossiyu), Almanac "Immigration Policy: Diverging Views", Issue 4 [www.immigration.archipelag.ru]

The need to develop and implement a contemporary migration policy is one of the most important tasks facing Russia today. What is policy? First of all, it is an expression of the government's political will in response to emerging challenges. The purpose of migration policy is to change or support the number and composition of the population of the country and specific regions by influencing the destination and composition of migrants. Migration policy aims to ensure rational distribution of the population in the context of economic and human development, to improve the quality of the population, to balance the development of specific regions and to equalize the socio-economic differentiation in the living standards of the population.²

Migration policy consists of four components: legislation, which is both the method of governmental regulation and a tool expressing its policy; institutional set up; mechanisms for policy implementation; and financial backing of the policy. These four components are interrelated as the lack or imbalance of any one jeopardizes the effectiveness of the others.³ Policy involves the identification of strategic goals and tasks and the setting of priorities and tactics for their realization. The main objectives and tasks of migration policy are determined based on the socio-economic situation of the country and the existing migration situation.

Migration-related issues tend to be comprehensive in nature and have a complex internal structure because they touch upon economic, social, public, and political aspects of people's lives. To resolve these issues it is often necessary to involve not only government structures directly responsible for managing migration processes, but also agencies working to alleviate economic and unemployment problems, as well as institutions responsible for social protection, border and customs services, and organizations providing psychological and legal assistance.

It is difficult to accurately analyze the contemporary migration policy of the country, identify its weak and strong points, and understand the roots of contemporary trends without an analysis of migration regulations in Russia. Any policy should aim to be consistent, successive, utilize the positive experiences of previous years, and discard practices that have not been successful. After an analysis of the various stages of migration to date, conclusions and recommendations on possible policies will be presented.

Analysis of Migration Policy

The early development of migration legislation and migration policy took place at a time when Russia experienced an influx of migrants from the former Soviet republics and other countries and the security of national borders was inadequate. In the context of fundamental political, economic and social transformation, the country found itself in need of developing and adopting legislation and policy that addressed emerging migration processes.

Under these circumstances the reception of and assistance to involuntary migrants from former Soviet republics became a priority. In June of 1992, the Federal Migration Service (FMS), an independent body of the executive branch, was created to address migration problems. The FMS was responsible for developing and implementing the migration policy of the Russian Federation and for the coordination of migration-related activities.

From the outset, the development and implementation of targeted programmes, was an important instrument of implementation of the national migration policy of Russia. On May 18, 1992 a special decree of the Council of Ministers of the Russian Federation approved the first National Long-Term Migration Programme. The main goal of the Programme was to provide assistance to refugees and involuntary migrants. To achieve these tasks, the Programme provided for comprehensive practical measures to assist refugees and involuntary migrants with resettlement, housing, employment, and healthcare. The programme also contained the requirements for legal, organizational, informational and financial provisions. Two stages of resettlement were planned: temporary—for cases when there

² Vorobieva, O.D., Ed. 2001, "Population Migration" (Migratsiya Naseleniya), Issue 6: Migration Policy. Attachment to the journal *Migration in Russia*, Moscow, p.8.

³ See Mukomel, V.I. *Migration Policy of Russia: Post-Soviet Context* (Migratsionnaya politika Rossii: postsovetkie konteksty), Institute of Sociology, Russian Academy of Science, Dipol-T, 2005, p.114.

was a large influx of refugees and migrants as a result of an emergency; and permanent—based on the choice of a new location by refugees and involuntary migrants (taking into account recommendations of the appropriate government agency).

Paradoxically, the Programme was adopted earlier than the migration concept and migration legislation. Practically none of the activities planned under the Programme could have been implemented on the basis of the legislation in force at the time -- these measures were either not included in the legislation or directly contradicted it. Therefore, one of the most important tasks was to create a legislative base –new migration legislation—that would address all aspects of regulating migration flows and all categories of migrants.

Another instrument of migration policy was Russia's participation in the international legal regulation of migration, the signing of multilateral and bilateral agreements and their implementation. Russia subscribed to numerous international conventions on human rights and became a member of international and regional organizations. The country also began to develop a legal basis to deal with migration issues within the framework of the CIS. To jointly resolve problems of involuntary migration, leaders of CIS countries signed an International Agreement on Assistance to Refugees and Involuntary Migrants in September of 1993. However, this agreement has not yet been fully implemented.

In Russia, between 1992 and 1993 the governmental migration programme was implemented. The FMS opened branches in locations with the highest influx of involuntary migrants, and eventually, across the country. Liaison offices of the FMS were also opened at Russian embassies in CIS countries. Refugees and involuntary migrants who arrived from emergency situations in Pridnestrovia, South Ossetiya, zones of Osetiya-Ingush conflict, Abkhazia and Tajikistan were received and resettled in temporary resettlement centres. Centres for temporary resettlement of foreign nationals, as well as for medical and psychological rehabilitation, were created.

On February 19, 1993 the Law on Refugees and the Law on Involuntary Migrants were adopted. These laws formed the basis for migration legislation. The fact that migration laws were developed at a time when tens of thousands of refugees and involuntary migrants were received and resettled, with a significant shortage of migration specialists, affected their content. These laws did not reflect the capacity of the country to receive and resettle these migrants, and thus were declarative in nature. Subsequently, both migration laws were changed to restrict the reception of migrants and the granting of the status of refugee or involuntary migrant.

On June 25, 1993 a Law on the Rights of the Russian Nationals for Freedom of Movement and for Choice of a Residence within the Russian Federation was adopted. This law abolished the *propiska* (residency registration) system and established regulations for a new registration system of informational nature. However, legislative acts accompanying the law, in particular the decree of 7 August, 1995, No. 713 "On Registration Regulations," practically restored the old system. As experts point out, the *propiska* system remains a major obstacle to the legalization of migrants.⁵

The modern migration policy of Russia and the system to manage migration processes were formed in 1994 when the first migration laws went into force, when responsibilities of the FMS were determined, and when funding for the migration programme from the federal budget began to flow. However, in this and consequent stages, migration policy was essentially limited to the resettling refugees and involuntary migrants.⁶

Local governments in all regions of the Russian Federation faced the need to resettle flows of migrants in the beginning of 1990s. They started to formulate their own approaches to migration policy. Regions with demographic decline in general had fairly liberal policies toward migrants. Regions with high numbers of migrants started to restrict migration, for example, in the Southern

⁵ Gradirovskiy, S.N., Ed. 2005, Immigration and Naturalization Policy in Russia: Current State and Trends in Development (Politika immigratsii i naturalizatsii v Rossii: sostoyanie del i napravleniya razvitiya), Analytic Report. Foundation "Heritage of Eurasia", Centre for Strategic Studies of the Privolzhie Federal District. Moscow, p.70.

⁶ *ibid*, p.72.

federal district and Moscow. Such regions adopted legislative acts on registration of individuals at their places of residence. Moreover, under this system, granting of the refugee or involuntary migrant status was dependant on registration and not on the reasons that forced these individuals to flee their home countries.

The Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation has repeatedly pointed out the illegality of actions by local and regional authorities in restricting freedom of movement within the country. Despite the decisions of the Constitutional Court, authorities continue to enforce these measures. In an attempt to prevent migration, local authorities refuse registration, purchase of housing, land, etc. Such restrictions have also been introduced at the federal level.

By the mid 1990s the migration situation in the country was characterized by an increase in all categories of migrants, by a fundamental change in the causes of migration, in the composition of migrants and their resettlement in Russia.⁷ The deterioration of the military conflict in Chechnya complicated the migration situation as hundreds of thousands of people were forced to flee their homes. Unsecured borders with neighbouring countries, lack of regulation of entry to Russia and global instability resulted in an uncontrolled influx of migrants from countries of South-East Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. At the same time, it became obvious that Russia could not fulfil its responsibilities under the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees.

There were many difficulties in implementing the policy of resettlement of involuntary migrants. There was disparity between the qualifications of migrants and available job vacancies, and divergence in the interests of the government, regions and involuntary migrants as the latter wanted to settle down in regions more attractive to them. Moreover, there were no conditions for economically active migrants to resettle on their own. The FMS did not manage to solve many of the housing and employment problems involuntary migrants faced. For tens of thousands of migrants and migrant communities this resulted in personal tragedies: unfinished houses in open fields with no appropriate infrastructure, unemployment, poverty, long-standing court cases on loans for housing construction, and broken lives resulting from this situation.

As pointed out by researchers, by early 1994 it was apparent that several pressing migration problems had not been properly assessed or addressed.⁴ For example, the ability of migrants to resolve the housing issue without help from the government was overestimated. The scope of involuntary migration and, accordingly, the resources necessary to accommodate migrants, were inaccurately forecasted. It was not taken into account that resources for initial resettlement of migrants are comparable to expenses to support them. The programme did not receive sufficient funding from the national budget, which reflected on its results.

These shortcomings required the correction of the migration policy and migration legislation. In March 1993 the decree "On adoption of the Provision on the Federal Migration Service" instructed the FMS to implement immigration controls and to develop and implement measures related to external labour migration. In order to take urgent measures to prevent irregular immigration and to implement the Presidential decree of 16 December, 1993, No.2415 "On Introduction of the Immigration Control," two decrees were adopted on 8 September, 1994: No.1020, "On Adoption of the Immigration Control Provision" and No.1021, "On Preventing and Reducing Uncontrolled External Migration." In addition, a provision on foreign nationals and stateless individuals was adopted. The system of immigrant control was created on the basis of these legislative acts.

During this period, the regulation of external labour migration became an important component of Russian migration policy. It started with the presidential decree number 2146 of 16 December, 1993 "On Recruitment and Employment of Foreign Labour Force in the Russian Federation," further

⁷ Galetskaya, Raisa. "Socio-economic Aspects of Migration in Contemporary Russia" (Sotsialno-ekonomicheskie aspekty migratsii v sovremennoi Rossii), *Problemy Prognozirovaniya*, No.5, Moscow, 1997, p.168.

⁴ See Mukomel, V.I. *Migration Policy of Russia: Post-Soviet Context* (Migratsionnaya politika Rossii: postsovetские konteksty), Institute of Sociology, Russian Academy of Science, Dipol-T, 2005, p.125.

supplemented by the presidential decree of 1994 “On Additional Measures to Regulate Recruitment and Employment of the Foreign Labour Force in Russia.”

To comprehensively solve migration problems in the Russian Federation and in accordance with the new functions of the FMS, a federal migration programme was adopted by the presidential decree of 9 August, 1994. According to the Federal Migration Programme, the main priority of the state migration policy was the regulation of migration processes, alleviation of negative consequences of unregulated migration, creation of conditions for migrants’ rights, and ensuring a humane attitude to individuals seeking asylum in the Russian Federation.

To develop favourable conditions for families with children and orphan children among refugees and involuntary migrants, the government created a targeted programme “Children of Refugees and Involuntary Migrants” (1998-2000), adopted by decree No.1207 of 19 September, 1997. During the implementation of this programme, financial assistance was provided to more than 60,000 children of refugees and involuntary migrants in 77 subjects of the Russian Federation.

Beginning in February 1999, when T.M.Regent, the director of the FMS, was removed from his post, the agency plunged into a long period of reorganization. In May 2000 the FMS was dissolved, and its functions were transferred to the Ministry of Federative Affairs, National and Migration Policy. In October 2001 this ministry was dissolved and for the next half a year migration policy issues were largely ignored. During this time leadership at the migration agency changed frequently. Multiple reorganizations accompanying each change in leadership lead to the departure of many qualified personnel from the agency and a general deterioration in the quality of its work.

In February 2002 the FMS was restored, but this time it was within a law enforcement agency—the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The negative consequences of transferring migration policy to a law enforcement agency were manifested immediately.⁹ Personnel of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, lacking experience working with migrants and NGOs, focused exclusively on combating irregular migration. Institutional memory of the migration service was lost. Its activities ceased to be transparent and became strictly law enforcement oriented.

As leadership of the migration service has admitted, “Within the Ministry of Internal Affairs it is difficult to simultaneously solve the problems of illegal entry of migrants into Russia, provision of accommodation to migrants, improving their professional skills, employment, and provision of healthcare to refugees and migrants.”¹⁰ Closure of the Federal Migration Programme in June 2001, which had a detailed description of its budget and planned legislative activities, also resulted in reduced transparency of migration policy in the Russian Federation.

In December 2002 the government stopped issuing loans to involuntary migrants because the new budget lacked the term “loan” (there was the term “subsidy”), meaning that the 1993 Law on Involuntary Migrants became inoperative. The draft law “On Amendments to the Law on Involuntary Migrants” that passed in its first reading on January 16, 2002, was rejected by the State Duma in its second reading on March 9, 2005. In any case, the draft law did not suggest any improvements for involuntary migrants.

In 2002 and 2003 laws on Citizenship, “On Introducing Amendments to the Law on ‘Entry and Exit to the Russian Federation’”, and the law “On Legal Status of Foreign Nationals in the Russian Federation” were adopted. Paradoxically, the law “On Legal Status of Foreign Nationals in the USSR,” which reflected fundamentally different conceptual approaches, has been in force in Russia for 11 years. Adoption of the law “On Legal Status of Foreign Nationals in the Russian Federation” allowed to somewhat reduce an inflow of irregular migrant-workers, increased the number of registered foreign workers, and increased control over the entry and stay of foreign nationals in the country.

⁹ See Mukomel, V.I. *Migration Policy of Russia: Post-Soviet Context* (Migratsionnaya politika Rossii: postsovetskie konteksty), Institute of Sociology, Russian Academy of Science, Dipol-T, 2005, p.133-134.

¹⁰ Tiurkin, M.L. *Migration System in Russia* (Migratsionnaya sistema Rossii), monograph, Strategy publishing house, Moscow, 2005, p.70.

The law “On Legal Status of Foreign Nationals in the Russian Federation” was strongly opposed by international human rights organizations, which criticized its anti-immigrant character. The President of the International Human Rights Assembly M.Arutiunov shared a typical example received on the migrant hotline during those years: “An 82-year-old Russian single woman migrated from Uzbekistan, having sold her house there. She bought a house in a Siberian village, where she had planned to spend the remaining years of her life. However, the authorities refused to register her, demanding that she return to Uzbekistan, register out of the house that she no longer owned, receive an Uzbek passport, denounce her Uzbek citizenship, become a stateless person, and then come back to Russia and apply for a residency permit. Neither her age, nor her financial situation were taken into account.”⁵

Naturalization and citizenship policies are closely linked to immigration policy. The law of May 31, 2002 “On Citizenship in the Russian Federation” significantly restricted granting Russian citizenship and put nationals of CIS and non-CIS countries in an equal position. Prior to this law, the Law on Citizenship of November 1991 was in force, which enabled former USSR citizens to apply for citizenship through a simplified process until the end of 2000.

Restrictions were accompanied by introduction of a new five-year waiting period until an application for a Russian citizenship could be submitted. A concept of “temporary residence permits” was introduced and provided for a one-year waiting period until an application for a permanent residency permit could be submitted. Only a small group of people could apply for citizenship through a simplified process, i.e. without having to first apply for a temporary and then permanent residence permits.

Amendments to the law did not change the process for obtaining citizenship but enlarged the group of individuals who qualified for the simplified citizenship process. Amendments to articles 13 and 14 allowed former country-fellows to use a simplified process if they had been legally residing in Russia for a prolonged period of time. These amendments also cancelled a confusing requirement for individuals who had arrived to Russia before July 1, 2002 to apply for a residence permit again even if they already had it.

In 2002 changes to article 14 of the law were introduced. These changes extended the time frame for the former country-fellows to receive Russian citizenship in a simplified way until January 1, 2008. According to L.Grafova, the Chairwoman of the Forum of Resettlement Organizations, migrants are still having problems because they cannot get past the first phase of obtaining citizenship—getting a temporary residence permit. About 1.5 million migrants living in Russia find it impossible to prove their residence. Interestingly, court proceedings confirming their place of residence are not recognized as acceptable proof of residence by passport and visa services.⁶

Russia has signed agreements on the legal status of Russian citizens with most CIS countries, including bilateral agreements with Armenia (1997), Kazakhstan (1995), and Belarus (1998); and multilateral agreements with Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan (1998). Russia had entered into an Agreement (Bishkek, 1992) on visa-free movement of CIS citizens in the territories of Parties signatories to this Agreement, but exited it on December 5, 2000. The country then signed bilateral agreements with all CIS countries on mutual visa-free regime for its citizens. Mutual limitations on travel of their citizens are introduced for Georgia and Turkmenistan.

In summary, we will try to identify the main stages of Russia’s migration policy:

- 1992-1994 – formation;
- 1995-1999 – expanding spheres under regulation and development of migration legislation;
- 1999-2002 – period considered by many as negative progress;
- 2002-2004 – focus on combating irregular migration and restrictive policies;
- 2005 – reform of migration policy.

⁵ Mikhail Arutiunov. “Punitive Migration Policy” (Karatelnaya migratsionnaya politika), *Human Rights in Russia* website, June 23, 2006. [http://www.hro.org/editions/pg/07_03/18-2_07_03.htm]

⁶ Strana.ru, 2005.

Such categorization into periods is imperfect because the Russian migration policy is full of contradictions and inconsistencies. Within the same time period one can see approaches and actions that directly contradict each other. It is likely that steps backward and questionable policies were not necessarily manifestations of the government's position on migration. These setbacks are more likely the result of the incompetence of certain officials, a narrow-minded approach to the problem, the inability to think state-wide from civic and humanitarian points of view, or a simple lack of systemic knowledge.

Contemporary Migration Policy

The Russian migration policy until recently was entirely focused on combating irregular migration. Social issues and integration of non-Russian migrants were not adequately addressed. "Immigration complex" that developed in the country showed that existing laws were extremely inadequate in legalizing migration. The problem was "solved" through deportation and restriction of procedures such as registration, obtaining work permit and obtaining citizenship. These measures actually had the opposite effect resulting in an increase of irregular migration into Russia.

Irregular migration remains an acute problem in Russia and is acquiring new aspects. For example, it is necessary to fix the deformation of the internal labour market, where entire sectors of economy, such as auto repair business and some spheres of trade, are dominated by specific diasporas.

As A.Chekalin, deputy minister of internal affairs noted in his report on the main priorities of Russia's migration policy, "analyses of threats to national security from migration shows that migrants are linked to formation of various criminal groups and mono-ethnic businesses. In regions with high concentration of migrants they are trying to insert themselves into management structures, to control financial and business subjects, and to force the corrupt system of relationships upon the society... Ethnic diasporas sometimes play a negative role. Thus, migration should be managed in a way that would preserve cultural and territorial unity of the country."⁷ Irregular migrants, experiencing significant social, psychological and legal difficulties, "form groups of criminal risk" and ethnic communities that do not assimilate.⁸

Legislation on labour migration needs to be improved. For example, an existing mechanism of setting quotas for invitations to enter the Russian Federation with employment purposes is hardly effective in regulating the labour market because it does not apply to the largest group of migrants— CIS citizens who can enter Russia without a visa.

According to experts from the Ministry of Health and Social Development, if instead of the current permit-based system for employment of foreign nationals, the government were to switch to a notification system, whereby employers would inform the government that they have employed foreign nationals without having to receive a permit first, the number of irregular migrants would significantly decrease. Budget revenues would increase if legalization was simplified. Revenues from legalizing 1 million migrants with an average salary of 4,500 rubles (US\$ 150) would exceed the current revenues from fees for employment permits by a factor of 40.⁹

In the last 12-18 months the government has been paying more attention to migration issues and is developing new approaches to migration policy. These issues were discussed at the meetings of the Security Council, Parliamentary hearings, and at the address of the President to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. For example, at the plenary meeting of the State Duma on March 15, 2006, A.Chekalin, deputy minister of internal affairs, and K.Romodanovskiy, director of the FMS, presented a report "On Priorities in Migration Policy and on Measures to Improve Existing Legislation on Migration." The report emphasized the need to attract highly qualified personnel to work in Russia, to reduce migration out of Russia, to create favourable work conditions for the local population and migrants, and to combat crime and terrorism.

⁷ Novye izvestiya, 16.03.2006.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Izvestiya.ru, 18.03.2005.

A new migration policy of Russia was essentially announced at the meeting of the Security Council on March 17, 2005, where the President of the Russian Federation called to promptly correct the migration policy, which in his view, was implemented ineffectively. He formulated the main principle of migration policy as follows: "People should be sent where there is a demand for them. We need specialists and workers with certain specialties in places where there is truly a demand for them, and not only where migrants would prefer to live."

Russia will have to compete with other developed countries for highly qualified labour migrants. According to UN estimates, overall annual immigration resource will reach approximately 2.2 million people by 2050. The United States will want half of them, Germany and Canada would like to hire 10 per cent (about 200,000 persons a year), and Great Britain will want 130,000 persons per year. Some European countries are already developing programmes to attract Russian citizens.¹⁰

On the subject of irregular migrants, the President acknowledged that some of them are in the "shadow" unfairly due to excessive red tape, lack of affordable housing, and excessive regulations for hiring migrants. "We push them into a criminal environment" said Vladimir Putin assessing the effects of this system.¹¹

This was the beginning of the liberalization of the national migration policy. One of its manifestations was an experiment conducted in autumn of 2005 by the FMS in cooperation with the Federal Taxation Service and the Federal Agency for Labour and Employment. The essence of this experiment was legalization of foreign nationals and stateless persons residing in Russia. In ten regions of the country over 7,000 labour migrants working in 403 enterprises were legalized.

A. Konovalov, representative of the President in Privolzhie federal district, on June 9, 2006, in his speech at the Council meeting of the Plenipotentiary representative in Orenburg has emphasized that "...the centre of gravity of migration policy should be in the regions, because the management of migration processes will depend on them."¹² A. Alexandrov, Chairman of the Committee for Inter-regional Affairs and National Policy of Moscow, also emphasized these problems noting that migration policy is the strongest element influencing interethnic tensions. In his view, existing tensions in the society are a result of the federal migration policy that is not thoroughly thought out as subjects of the Russian Federation are presently excluded from managing migration flows.¹³

In March of 2006 the State Duma passed in the first reading a new draft law "On Migration Registration of Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons in the Russian Federation" and an amendment to the law "On Legal Status of Foreign Nationals in the Russia Federation," both of which reflect the new conceptual approaches.

The draft law on migration registration aims to form new administrative-legal mechanisms to register foreign nationals and should be the first step in creating a more effective immigration control system. This would help solve the task of attracting skilled labour force, primarily from the CIS countries, to work in Russia. This mechanism covers all areas of immigration control: upon crossing the Russian state border, upon changing a place of residence and at the place of stay. The draft law suggests to change the registration procedure of foreign nationals from permit-based to a notification-based system, i.e. instead of first obtaining permission to work, the new requirement would be to notify the authorities after the fact.

There are flexible models of migration registration envisioned for various categories of foreign nationals depending on their immigration status: registration at the official residence or registration at their *de facto* residence. Administrative procedures for registering in and out of the place of stay should be simplified offering an option of notifying the authorities by mail.

The draft law identifies new legal categories, and sets up principles and mechanisms for collection, analysis, use and storage of information on migration processes in the country. It lists personal

¹⁰ Izvestiya.ru, 18.03.2005.

¹¹ Izvestiya.ru, 18.03.2005.

¹² Press Service of the Plenipotentiary Representative of the President of the Russian Federation. Privolzhie Federal District, 09.06.2006. [<http://www.pfp.main/press.phtml?id=9236>]

¹³ *Moskovskaya sreda*, No.20 (175), 14-20 June, 2006.

information that will be gathered upon registration of foreign nationals, and allows individuals to inspect their own data files collected during migration registration.

According to developers of the draft law, with the introduction of notification-based migration registration, the use of intermediaries providing illegal registration services for foreigners in Russia will stop.

Draft law "On Amendments to the law 'On Legal Status of Foreign Nationals in the Russian Federation'" contains provisions that significantly improve the legal status of foreign nationals from CIS countries, who make up a majority of both regular and irregular migrants in Russia. The draft law suggests allowing these migrants to receive temporary residence permits without quota restrictions on the basis of an application with subsequent presenting of documents. Foreign nationals, who arrived in Russia through a visa-free regime, would also be eligible to receive a work permit within 10 days of submitting an appropriate application. Foreign nationals, who live in Russia temporarily and permanently, would no longer need to re-register with authorities every year.

Amendments proposed by the draft law to the mechanism of labour immigration quotas will consider not only quantitative but also qualitative characteristics of labour migrants (profession, level of qualifications), which would allow to regulate labour migration more rationally from the economic point of view. Adoption of this law and the law on migration registration would bring thousands of irregular migrants out of the informal economy.

However, there are several issues not included in the draft law. For example, the government fears that any migrant could buy a letter stating that he/she has worked at some firm for a week, or having really worked there, and would apply for unemployment benefits. There would be no legal justification to deny him/her these benefits.¹⁴ At present draft laws are being fine tuned in order to submit them for the second reading in the Parliament.

A draft law "On Amendments to the Administrative Code of the Russian Federation" was considered at the Parliamentary meeting on June 7, 2006. One of its provisions is aimed at increasing administrative responsibility for illegally hiring foreign nationals and stateless persons.

Russia still does not have the blueprints for a national migration policy. Conceptual issues of migration policy were partially reflected in the mid-term Programme for Socio-Economic Development of Russia (2006-2008). The Programme is based on the need to reform the Russian immigration policy. The main goals of the migration policy, according to this Programme, include facilitation of sustainable economic growth and balanced social development in the country, protection of national security interests, and prevention of international terrorism through regulating migration processes.¹⁵

The government has suggested switching to the policy of replacement immigration to replenish the human capital. The labour migration policy, coupled with effective regulation of temporary migration and combating irregular immigration, should facilitate development of permanent immigration and should aim to attract highly qualified specialists into the country.

The Programme proposes the following measures to develop permanent immigration:

- Development of immigration law defining procedures for resettlement and integration of immigrants into the Russian society;
- Development of the programme to facilitate permanent immigration and resettlement of immigrants
- Identification of criteria to attract economic immigrants from the CIS and other countries on the basis of their professional characteristics.

Among priority measures to increase the effectiveness of temporary migration, the Programme notes the need to:

- Simplify the process for hiring foreign labour force;

¹⁴ *Moskovskaya sreda*, No.20 (175), 14-20 June, 2006.

¹⁵ Programme of Socio-Economic Development of the Russian Federation for 2005-2008, p. 33.

- Replace the existing quota system for issuing invitations to foreign citizens for entry to Russia with the purpose of employment with a more effective mechanism;
- Develop measures to ensure social protection of temporary migrants and members of their families.

The following measures to prevent and combat irregular migration are included in the Programme:

- Develop and implement programmes to legalize irregular immigrants;
- Introduce strict punishment for smuggling and trafficking in persons;
- Increase sanctions against employers who hire irregular immigrants;
- Modernize the immigration control system;
- Develop international cooperation, including cooperation within the framework of agreements on combating organized crime and agreements on readmission.

The Action Plan of the Russian government on implementation of the Programme on Socio-economic Development of the Russian Federation for 2006-2008 includes only one measure on migration policy—development of the draft Concept for national migration policy. Deadlines to submit the draft to the Parliament (February 2006) and adoption by the State Duma have been postponed for unknown reasons.

Important problems of internal migration, such as the depopulation of economically and geopolitically strategic territories of Siberia and the Far East, have been left out of the governmental regulation. Unlike western countries, where the government manages the immigration policy, and the internal migration is regulated solely by economic factors, Russia cannot afford to and should not give up regulation of the internal migration.

In the context of an enormous size of irregular unskilled labour force, Russia is already experiencing a shortage of highly qualified personnel: engineers, IT specialists, industrial specialists, and managers capable of running innovative projects, without which further economic growth would be impossible. Therefore, a State programme to facilitate immigration of former country-fellows to Russia becomes very important. This programme would match the potential of highly qualified workers with the demand in the Russian regions.

At present there are more than ten federal acts, over 100 Presidential Decrees, Parliamentary resolutions, ministerial acts and dozens of international and intergovernmental agreements, all of which make up migration legislation of the Russian Federation. A large number of laws and other legislative acts were adopted by subjects of the Russian Federation as well.

In recent years there has been an increase in law-making at the regional level due to numerous changes to the federal legislation. This required bringing regional laws in line with federal legislation. It should be noted that the quality of regional legislation has improved significantly. It sometimes serves as a guide to law-makers on the directions and sequence of adopting legislative acts. Subjects of the Russian Federation started to introduce a practice of forecasting possible political and socio-economic outcomes of regional laws.¹⁶

The Russian Federation made significant efforts to form the legislative foundation in the framework of the CIS countries based on multilateral and bilateral agreements. Over 100 bilateral agreements on cooperation in social and labour relations, as well as on issues such as culture, science, education, and migration, were signed with other CIS countries. However, this large legal basis in the framework of the Commonwealth remains declarative in nature. A positive example of cooperation within the CIS is the fight against irregular migration.

Drawing conclusions from laws that are currently in force and laws that have not yet been adopted, one can state that existing Russian migration legislation does not fully reflect socio-economic, political and legal problems facing the country. Legislative loopholes have not been fully addressed; regional

¹⁶ See Dobrynin, N.M. The New Russian Federalism and Regional Rights: Situation, Practice and Needs (Novyi rossiiskiy federalizm i regionalnoe pravo: sostoyanie, praktika, neobhodimost), *Legal Policy and Legal Life*, No.1 (14), Saratov-Moscow, 2004, p.38-39.

migration legislation is not in full accordance with the Constitution and laws in this sphere. Some laws also have inadequacies. Legislation adopted in previous years clearly indicates the domination of restrictive measures: licensing, quotas, registration, deportation, and others.

Social and humanitarian aspects of existing migration legislation should be strengthened to protect the rights of all migrants. Much work needs to be done to make universal international legal norms and principles a reality, considering that mechanisms to protect human rights are not fully developed. At present, there is practically no liability for violating human rights, and indifference and bureaucracy of officials, which alienate citizens from their government, have not been overcome yet.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Russian migration policy needs further rethinking and strengthening of new approaches. Analysis above demonstrates that migration policy of previous years did not facilitate the development of market relations and its integration onto the international labour market. Rather, it impeded demographic growth, building of a democratic society, protection of human rights, and strengthening of the national security in the country.

Migration policy should be based on a long-term strategy of economic and social development, should consider national security goals and demographic policies.

A strategic issue in migration policy should be immigration policy focusing on integrating migrants into Russia.

Internal migration problems should not be forgotten. Citizens of the Russian Federation should actively participate in the development of national migration policy.

Priorities of migration policy relating to labour migration should be reflected in the legislation.

As far as the refugee status is concerned, we think it would be useful to introduce amendments, based on the past experience, to the law "On Refugees."

In order to increase effectiveness of the fight against irregular migration, it would be helpful to create immigration inspection within the FMS and in its regional branches. This inspection would be responsible for identification and interception of violators of the regulations on the stay of foreign nationals in Russia.

An enormous number of laws and other legislative acts on migration at the federal and regional levels call for their systematization and classification, as well as structural unity. It would also help to monitor federal and regional legislation for loopholes and contradictions with the universally accepted principles and norms of international law.

Russia should study and adopt, where appropriate, the experience of countries with a significant practice of managing migration.

In the current era of globalization of all processes, including migration, where visa-free regimes are created, international labour exchange is on the rise, and irregular migration is widespread, migration policies of various countries should be able to respond to contemporary challenges through constructive international cooperation.

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Annex 1 – Interviews

Interview with professor Roschin, Yu.V., Director of the Migration Management Institute¹⁷

In your opinion, what should be Russia's migration policy? What should be the primary focus of reforms to actual policy?

This question touches on a range of issues. In my view, the main problem is that work on the development of a migration policy for Russia was begun but never completed. Isolated problems were resolved, but they mostly just related to some sort of emergency, such as the threat of illegal migration to national security.

Issues were decided on without first identifying goals on what we wanted. This leads to the conclusion that without a clearly formulated plan on migration, supported by legislation, there cannot be an effective policy. Obviously, the government should develop the migration policy.

What should be included in the plan for migration management? It should be comprehensive and should not focus exclusively on demographic problems. What is the objective of such a concept? It should answer the question of whether we are a country of emigration or immigration. The answer is probably that we are both. In my opinion, the goal is to ensure that both emigration and immigration help achieve the government's objectives and are manageable. The admission of immigrants should be selective—based on the quality of migrants, their numbers and resettlement locales.

What are the objectives of migration policy? These objectives could be divided into several categories:

- Creation of conditions for admission of migrants;
- Legal infrastructure;
- Institutional problems;
- Financial issues. The state budget should not be the only resource. It is time to learn how to involve the private sector.
- Information.

To successfully achieve these objectives, each of these categories should be approached concretely. For instance, when it comes to institutional problems, it is puzzling that the government has not sought the partnership of NGOs in solving migration issues. It is necessary to establish partnerships with NGOs, sign agreements with them for implementation of specific tasks, delegate responsibility and require reporting.

If we look at the information problem, there are specific tasks to be done, including:

- Conducting surveys of migrants;
- Agency registration, etc.

Information supply means not only registration of migrants but also providing information to Russian citizens at home and abroad. Embassies and consulates of Russia should provide potential migrants with the necessary information.

While noting the importance of economic measures (for example, issuing loans), one should not neglect the administrative regulation of migration processes. There should be a reasonable combination of both. For example, if those resettling in Siberia are issued loans, without administrative safeguards they could abandon their residence and not return the loans.

¹⁷ Yuriy Vasilievich Roschin was the first deputy head of the Federal Migration Service of Russia between 1992 and 2000. Prior to that, he was a deputy minister of labour of the Russian Federation. As of 2000 he is the Head of the Institute for Management of Migration Processes which he helped found. He is actively engaged in research and teaching.

It is important to prioritize tasks:

- Migration policy should facilitate the socio-economic development of Russia and its security.
- Internal migration should take priority. Migrants should be resettled in all parts of the country.
- A topic that is not talked much about—tolerance—is important. Resolving the problem of tolerance will prevent social explosion. Migrants and their children should feel that they have equal rights in the destination country. Without tolerance xenophobia will prevail.
- The adoption of a plan for migration policy should be followed by a federal migration programme with clear tasks, implementers, and timeframe. The programme should be financed separately. In areas, problematic from the point of view of migration, there should be programmes reflecting the specifics of the regions concerned.
- The government should build partnerships with the private sector and NGOs in directions defined by the government.

What is preventing the implementation of an effective state migration policy in Russia?

The first problem is a lack of understanding at all levels of the role of migration in Russia. Only problems related to security had been addressed, while socio-economic problems have been neglected. Misunderstanding also arises from the fact that there are no sound studies on the implications of migration for the economy. Only when there is a realization, that without migration economic development will stagnate, will we work out an adequate migration policy. The second impediment is a lack of political will, which will appear only when there is an understanding of the problem. The third problem is that existing laws are not implemented.

What consequences could migration reforms in Russia have for other countries of the former Soviet Union?

This will largely depend on what types of reforms will be instituted. If they are correct and wise, then the consequences will be mutually beneficial. We will receive additional labour resources, and will help these countries reduce unemployment. Legal and manageable labour migration will result in monetary inflow into these countries in the form of remittances.

Employment in Russia will also help these countries solve educational problems—through student migration and training of personnel in educational establishments and in manufacturing. However, Russia should practice a thoughtful and balanced approach to avoid depleting their human resources. This process should be regulated by bilateral agreements.

If the reforms are not well thought out, we will have illegal migration and an outflow of specialists from Russia, as well as a strained relationship with our neighbours.

Interview with General-Major Tiurkin M.L., Deputy Director of the Federal Migration Service¹⁸

In your view, what is preventing the implementation of an effective state migration policy in Russia?

Everything in life is relative. If we compare two time periods—2000-2002 and 2002-2006 in the context of migration policy, we see how much progress has been achieved in the latter period. Amendments to Article 14 of the law “On Citizenship in the Russian Federation” have been adopted; amendments to the law “On Legal Status of Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons in the Russian Federation” have been prepared; and draft law “On Migration Registration of Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons in the Russian Federation” has been developed. The two latter documents already passed the first reading at the State Duma. A Concept of Migration Management was adopted in 2003. A relevant article was introduced into the Criminal Code. Measures are being taken to introduce passports of the new format—biometric passports. Administrative practice on working with migrants has improved.

A state programme to assist voluntary relocation of Russian citizens abroad was developed within only 6 months. A Presidential decree to adopt this programme is being prepared. All relevant ministries and agencies participated in the development of this programme, and regions have also introduced their suggestions. This programme is very important for the country, and significant resources will be devoted to it.

Thus, as of 2002, a lot of work has been done in developing migration legislation and reforming the policy. One could say that all policies in migration are directed towards liberalization, concretization, and optimization. For example, the latest amendments introduced to the law “On Legal Status of Foreign Nationals in the Russian Federation” clarify its provisions, facilitate simplified employment procedures and residence permit application process for foreign nationals, and reduce bureaucracy in receiving citizenship.

How do you envision international cooperation on migration in the contemporary world? Are there problems in this field?

The Federal Migration Service is actively involved in international cooperation with other countries through international organizations, on a bilateral basis, and regionally—in the framework on the CIS. I am the Head of the Commission on Combating Illegal Migration in the CIS countries. Work done in this sphere so far has been productive, and we have signed agreements that work quite effectively.

A good example of such interaction is the TACIS programme on biometrics being implemented in the Russian Federation. This programme has provided tangible assistance to us.

However, there is a double standard in the work of international organizations when it comes to Russia and the CIS. Issues, which are ignored in other countries, are heavily criticized in Russia.

It should also be noted that assistance provided by international organizations does not always correspond to Russia’s needs. We would like to engage in a more constructive dialog with them. Today, when it comes to migration, Russia is a progressive country; our experience could be useful to others.

We have numerous proposals to international organizations to organize round-table discussions and conferences in Russia on various topics. It would be useful to actively involve officials not only from the migration service but also from other ministries in this work.

¹⁸ Michail Leonidovich Tiurkin, Doctor of Jurisprudence, professor, is a deputy director of the Federal Migration Service. He authored numerous scholarly publications.

Interview with Kurdiumov N.V., Chairman of the International Association “Labour Migration”¹⁹

In your opinion, what is preventing the implementation of an effective state migration policy in Russia?

The main problem is a lack of a state concept *per se*. There is only a concept regulating migration processes. (The adopted concept could coordinate actions of the government, businesses, the community, and state and social structures). As a result, there is no appropriate infrastructure for governmental and social structures to work together. By infrastructure I mean a set of management structures that would regulate migration processes.

What kinds of reforms should be implemented in labour migration management?

As far as the state policy is concerned, it is necessary to switch from a restrictive approach to regulating labour migration in a way that would allow attracting qualified specialists in high demand into the regions of Russia and facilitate their permanent immigration.

- Maximal legalization of labour migration, most of which consists of unskilled workers in irregular status.
- Promoting tolerance toward labour migrants to facilitate their adaptation and integration in receiving communities.

What consequences could migration reforms in Russia have for the CIS countries?

There will be an outflow of labour resources from these countries, but it is a natural process. Russia also went through this phase with the labour force outflow peaking in the beginning of 1990s. Due to the departure of specialists, the CIS countries will see negative consequences for industrial and economic development. But even now, working in close contact with state and social structures, I can state that these countries are already experiencing a positive impact as a result of labour migration to Russia.

What is this positive impact?

1. Migrant remittances to their home countries. Remittances from labour migrants working in Russia to Georgia, Moldova, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan are comparable to the GDP of these countries and reach up to 30-100 per cent of the GDP.
2. According to these countries, it is important to preserve qualifications of specialists who cannot find work in their homeland. Work in Russia can provide an opportunity to maintain their skills.
3. It is important to keep in contact with Russia (through temporary residence) as all social connections in the post-Soviet space are strengthened through labour migration. Using examples of Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine we can say that an attitude to, for example, Georgian labour migrants in Russia has not become negative, even though the relationship between two countries on the political and economic level has deteriorated. Thus, labour migration helps stabilize intergovernmental relations in the post-Soviet space.

How do you envision international cooperation on migration in the contemporary world?

Such cooperation should include harmonizing legislation in all post-Soviet countries. International organizations should share their expertise in this sphere. There should be a working relationship between countries. This is the only way to effectively manage external labour migration.

¹⁹ Nikolay Viktorovich Kurdiumov founded the first private employment agency in Russia – a firm “OST” (education, internships, work abroad). He is the organizer of the international association “Labour Migration” that has over 40 members - private non-governmental employment agencies from Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and Tajikistan.

Annex 2 – Labour Migration to the Russian Federation

The Russian Federation has become a significant destination country for migrants. Labour migration to Russia, mainly from CIS countries and East Asia, is by far the most substantial and dynamic migration inflow in the region. According to data from the Russian Federal Migration Service, employment of regular foreign workers in the national economy has increased over the last 15 years. The number of work permits issued to foreign citizens rose from 129,000 in 1994 to 460,000 in 2004, and to 670,000 in 2005. Regardless of this growth, however, regular labour migration constitutes only 0.5 per cent of the country's economically active population. The majority of migrant workers entering the country avoid official channels and the total number of irregular migrants is estimated at approximately 3 to 5.5 million persons, which comprises 5 to 7 per cent of the active workforce in Russia. This figure is comparable with the percentage of lawfully employed migrant workers in Ireland (5.6%), France (6.2%) and Sweden (4.6%).

The development of labour migration to the Russian Federation today is determined by numerous factors, relating to both the migration pressure on Russia from the poorer neighbouring countries and those with a surplus of labour (CIS countries in the first instance) and Russia's demand for foreign labour. The principal reason for the increase of labour migration in the region is the unfavourable economic situation that has affected nearly all of the CIS countries and resulted in a considerable deterioration in living standards for the majority of the population, poverty, unemployment, and a reduction in economic opportunities and perspectives in countries of origin.

The second reason for the growth in labour migration is the increased differentiation in the level of economic development and standard of living between countries and between particular regions. Despite its own domestic social and economic problems, Russia today has a far higher level of economic development, remuneration of labour, and opportunities for effective employment than almost all the CIS countries. Average salaries in Russia are 10 or more times higher than those in many CIS countries. These factors collectively, together with the cultural and historical similarities between Russia and the CIS countries still in place to this day, explain the *inevitability* of large scale labour migration to Russia.

In addition to demographic factors, several economic factors also determine the Russian economy's need for migrant workers. Firstly, the national economic growth, planned by the government for the near and intermediate future, lacks the necessary labour. Though, in late 2005, there were 5.7 million persons unemployed (or 7.7 per cent of the economically active population) in Russia, this level of unemployment is structural in nature and varies unequally from region to region. Labour shortages exist in several regions and are expected to deepen. For example, in Moscow, where the inflow of migrants is significant, there were 32,000 registered unemployed persons against 160,000 announced vacancies at the end of 2005. A considerable number of these vacancies require skilled or qualified professionals (e.g. vehicle drivers) as well as unskilled workers in the area of services, municipal services, etc., yet Muscovites do not want to take these jobs. Consequently, either visitors from other regions, or migrants from other countries, the CIS in the first instance, are required to take these jobs.

The Russian labour market is structured in the same way as those of many host countries. The economic sectors, where foreign workers are mostly in demand, are construction, retail, catering, transport, municipal services, industry, seasonal agricultural employment, domestic work, leisure, and the entertainment industry. The segmentation of the labour market is growing and gradually becoming a structural element of the Russian economy and its regions. The economies of many Russian regions today would not function without the inflow of foreign workers.

In Russia, there is practically no research evaluating migrants' contribution to the Russian economy. However, it is indisputable that:

- foreign workers produce a certain share of GDP;
- they enable many Russian companies, especially small and mid-size enterprises, to compete because of the low cost of foreign labour;
- they improve access to goods and services for a relatively poor section of the Russian population.

The stability of “the migrant element” in the Russian economy is confirmed by the fact that a certain segment of the labour market, focusing wholly on foreign workers, has been formed. These employment sectors are likely to reproduce and maintain the demand for new migrants and, therefore in the near future, the Russian economy will depend more strongly on the inflow of foreign labour.

The lack of skilled labour represents a serious problem for Russia. To date, Russia has not yet developed any mechanism to attract highly qualified workers, either professionals for production processes or intellectuals. This remains a serious challenge to migration policy for the near future. One such mechanism might be the creation of favourable migration conditions for the admission of students of higher and vocational educational centres with a view to their future employment in Russia. Russia is the largest centre of admission in the Euro-Asian migration system, including the CIS countries. Every third household in Tajikistan and Moldova has a migrant working in the Russian Federation. Migrants with dependents in their motherland send home an average amount of US\$100 per month. This money is spent on food, medical treatment and education (i.e. for the purpose of country development). For approximately one quarter of families, this money is the unique source of subsistence. Thus, migration is a powerful factor maintaining social stability in the region.

Source: IOM Moscow (March 2006).

T A J I K I S T A N

**External Labour Migration in Tajikistan:
Root Causes, Consequences and Regulation****Khodjamahmad Umarov****Head of the Department of Macroeconomic Research
Institute for Economic Research, Ministry of Economy and Trade
Republic of Tajikistan****Introduction**

Stable economic growth and the predominant traditional way of life under the Tajik Socialist Soviet Republic made migration processes somewhat passive. Tajik family structures were more stable compared to other Soviet republics, and increasing incomes facilitated the strengthening of these structures.¹

External migration consisted primarily of students enrolling in educational establishments in other Soviet republics. Labour migration was *ad hoc* in nature: the youth were sent to collect harvests in Kazakhstan and the south of Russia or to work in large-scale governmental construction projects (for example, the Baikal-Amur railway).

Labour immigration was widespread—the industrialization of Tajikistan and the construction of large hydro-electric stations and irrigation systems were made possible through the work of specialists and highly qualified workers from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, the Baltic republics and others. Urban areas were populated mostly by non-titular ethnic groups who dominated large industrial enterprises, as well as the construction, communications, and transport sectors.

Preconditions for the development of external labour migration out of Tajikistan first emerged during the Soviet era and included rapid population growth and increased density of the population (Figure 1).

For comparison, the birth rates (per 1,000 persons) in other former Soviet countries in 2000 were as follows: Azerbaijan – 14.8, Armenia – 9.0, Belarus – 9.4, Kazakhstan – 14.7, Kyrgyzstan – 19.7, Russian Federation – 8.7, and Ukraine – 7.8. Natural population growth coefficient among the same countries was as follows: Azerbaijan – 8.9, Armenia – 2.7, Belarus – 4.1, Kazakhstan – 4.6, Kyrgyzstan – 12.8, Russian Federation – 6.7, and Ukraine – 7.5. Therefore, Tajikistan was leading in these two indicators among the former Soviet countries.

Rapid population growth led to an increase in population density. The number of inhabitants per square kilometre grew from 38.5 in 1991 to 43.8 in 2000 and reached 47.4 in 2004.² Moreover, it

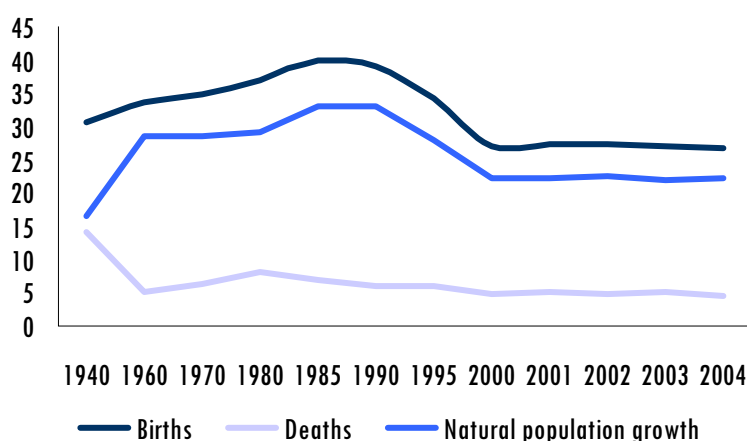
¹ During the period 1970-1985 real population income grew by 47 per cent. Due to an increase in purchasing power, commodity circulation per capita increased by 1.6 times. In 1980-1985 the share of monthly income spent on food decreased from 42.4 per cent to 39.3 per cent, while the share of income spent for non-food items increased from 30.8 per cent to 33.1 per cent. The share of savings grew from 3.6 per cent to 6.1 per cent.

Housing indicators improved reaching 10.9 square metres for person in urban areas and 7.7 square metres for each rural resident (see *Economy of the Tajik SSR in 1987* (Narodnoe khozyaistvo Tadjikskoi SSR v 1987 g.), Irfon, Dushanbe, 1988, p.158-159, 161-164.

² *Statistical Year-Book of the Republic of Tajikistan* (Statisticheskii ezhegodnik Respubliki Tadjhikistan), Dushanbe, 2001, p.43; *Statistical Year-Book of the Republic of Tajikistan* (Statisticheskii ezhegodnik Respubliki Tadjhikistan), Dushanbe, 2005, p.20.

should be taken into account that 93 per cent of Tajikistan's territory is mountainous. More than 90 per cent of the population lives in valleys, which make up only 7 per cent of the country's territory. Higher population density resulted in less space for sustenance. In 1960 there was 0.34 hectares of cultivatable land for each person. In 1990 this figure decreased to 0.15 hectares per person, further dropping to 0.13 hectares per person in 2004.³ The situation was exacerbated by the fact that after independence the crop yield went down, land improvement decreased and the overall quality of agricultural land deteriorated.

Figure 1: Births, deaths and natural population growth in Tajikistan (for every 1,000 persons)



Sources: *Economy of the Tajik SSR in 1987* (Narodnoe khozyaistvo Tadjikskoi SSR v 1987 g.), Irfon, Dushanbe, 1988, p.143; *Statistical Year-Book of the Republic of Tajikistan* (Statisticheskiy ezhegodnik Respubliki Tadjikistan), Dushanbe, 2001, p.43; *Statistical Year-Book of the Republic of Tajikistan* (Statisticheskiy ezhegodnik Respubliki Tadjikistan), Dushanbe, 2005, p.20.

Higher population density resulted in a rapid price increase in housing and land prices, which was not matched by a similar increase in the income of the population. This created a powerful “push” factor for people to look abroad for an opportunity to earn more income.

Currently, while external migration makes up 75.6 per cent of all population movements, internal migration composes less than a quarter of these movements. This tendency is mainly due to the continuous decrease of manufacturing and social capacity of Tajik cities and the decline in number of jobs as a result of the protracted economic crisis. Aside from agriculture, which is experiencing agricultural overpopulation, the number of employees in all sectors of economy is dropping (Table 1).

Poverty is the main “push” factor for migration. According to the official data, 83.4 per cent of the Tajik population in 1998 was poor (i.e. they lived on less than US\$ 2.15 per day). The latest assessment available estimated that 64 per cent of the population in Tajikistan lived in poverty.⁴ Tajikistan is the poorest country in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. For comparison, the poverty level in Armenia in 2001 was 37 per cent, in Azerbaijan – 22 per cent, in Kyrgyzstan – 54 per cent, in Moldova – 45 per cent, and in Georgia in 2002 – 23 per cent of the population.

³ *Economy of the Tajik SSR in 1987* (Narodnoe khozyaistvo Tadjikskoi SSR v 1987 g.), Dushanbe, 1988, p.93, 140; *Statistical Year-Book of the Republic of Tajikistan* (Statisticheskiy ezhegodnik Respubliki Tadjikistan), Dushanbe, 1985, p.20, 212.

⁴ Republic of Tajikistan: Revised Poverty Assessment (Respublika Tadjikistan. Obnovlennaya Otsenka bednosti), World Bank Document, 2002, p.6.

Table 1: Distribution of the employed population (by sectors, in thousands of persons)

| Sector | 1991 | 1995 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 |
|--|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Manufacturing | 256 | 217 | 121 | 123 | 122 | 115 | 118 |
| Construction | 148 | 47 | 37 | 33 | 31 | 31 | ... |
| Agriculture and forestry | 881 | 1,095 | 1,133 | 1,218 | 1,255 | 1,275 | 1,380 |
| Transport and communications | 93 | 58 | 42 | 45 | 43 | 45 | 64 |
| Trade, food and restaurant industry, and procurement | 108 | 87 | 72 | 68 | 65 | 78 | 99 |
| Other industrial sectors | 43 | 17 | 11 | 15 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| Housing and property maintenance | 51 | 24 | 27 | 29 | 32 | 31 | 28 |
| Healthcare | 106 | 88 | 82 | 79 | 76 | 78 | 80 |
| Education | 197 | 168 | 167 | 169 | 173 | 172 | 170 |
| Culture, arts and sciences | 40 | 22 | 19 | 16 | 16 | 15 | 17 |

Source: *Statistical Year-Book of the Republic of Tajikistan* (Statisticheskii ezhegodnik Respubliki Tadjikistan), Dushanbe, 2005, p.73.

Legal Aspects of External Labour Migration

Labour migration in Tajikistan is regulated by a range of legislative and policy documents including the State Migration Policy Concept (1998), the Migration Law of the Republic of Tajikistan (1999), the Statute on the State Migration Service under the Ministry of Labour and Employment (2000), the External Labour Migration Concept (2001), the governmental decree on the Registration of Labour Migration of Tajik Nationals (2003), and the governmental decree on Regulation of External Labour Migration (2005).⁵

Population movements abroad for work became a mass phenomenon already in 1994. However, four years after the beginning of massive external migration there still had been no serious steps to regulate it. Officials were more concerned with immigration issues and focused on the return of Tajik refugees, as well as on abating the consequences of the civil war. There was no understanding of the importance of external labour migration as a tool to alleviate poverty - the most solemn legacy of the war, and to improve the living standards of the population.

An underestimation of positive aspects of employment abroad was manifested in the Migration Law adopted in 1999. Out of 27 articles, only one (Article 8) discusses labour migration. It stipulates that procedures for labour migration of foreign nationals into Tajikistan and of Tajik nationals abroad are determined by the Government.

The adoption of the External Labour Migration Concept of the Republic of Tajikistan (2001) could be considered a step forward. This document emphasizes the importance of legal and regulated labour migration, and identifies important national interests to expand it. For the first time, the Concept recognized the need to establish Private Employment Agencies (PEAs) that would facilitate employment of migrants abroad.

This document notes that an expansion of external labour migration could increase the level of savings, which in turn would expand credit and investment resources in the country. It argues for the need to regulate labour migration, as it is a complex phenomenon influencing important aspects socio-economic development. Unfortunately, the document was initially applied narrowly through measures aimed at the elimination of illegal migration. In the last two years the situation has begun to change, and authorities are starting to adequately understand the complexity of the issue.

The Concept describes the economic goals of external labour migration including reduction of unemployment, minimizing the negative consequences of the economic decline during the transition period, higher housing ownership, and use of remittances to develop small and medium businesses in

⁵ Compilation of Legislative Documents on the Republic of Tajikistan on Migration of Population (Sbornik normativno-pravovykh dokumentov Respubliki Tadjikistan v sfere migratsii naseleniya), Dushanbe, 2006, p.175-250.

Tajikistan. The document raises the issue of social protection of labour migrants working abroad: Migrants from Tajikistan are largely uninsured and lack protection in receiving countries.

Unfortunately, the Concept does not cover legal issues associated with the protection of external labour migrants. There is no provision in it on the legal briefing of migrants prior to their departure abroad. Migrant protection is limited to controlling their exit from the country by the State Migration Service. This agency makes sure that there are agreements and contracts between PEAs and employers.

There is a section in the Concept on the promotion of external labour migration. This is surprising given that there is a shortage of labour force in rural areas. Many cotton and grape growing enterprises are now resorting to the use of child labour because of the lack of working age individuals in the labour force. Under these circumstances, the expansion of external labour migration can have negative effects on the agricultural sector and undermine the government's efforts to protect children's rights.

Closer examination of the situation reveals that the migration stimuli mentioned in the Concept in reality refer to conditions that need to be created in migration destination countries and in Tajikistan to ensure free movement of people and of their work. These conditions include the opportunity for migrants to transfer their remittances through banks, exemption of valuables brought by migrants for their families from customs dues, increasing interest rates for migrant deposits, and reduction of bank fees. However, these measures were not included in legislation.

The External Labour Migration Concept identifies important tools for governmental regulation of this sphere including the Law on External Labour Migration and the Provision on Issuing Licenses for Activities Related to External Labour Migration. This law has not been adopted yet.⁶ Only five years later, the Government has issued a decree approving the Provision on Licensing Some Types of Business Activities. The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection has approved the Provision on Licensing PEAs.

Instead of the planned law on External Labour Migration, the acting legislation is the decree of the Government of Tajikistan (6 September, 2005) on Regulating External Labour Migration.⁷ This serves as further evidence that legislators and authorities do not fully understand the issue of external labour migration. The Provision refers to the Migration Law of 1999, which is largely outdated and does not reflect today's reality. Moreover, Article 1 of the decree leads to the conclusion that branches of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Tajikistan, currently present in federal districts of the Russian Federation, will be closed. The decree further stipulates the need to create the social insurance system in Tajikistan for labour migrants. This provision appears to be dictated not out of concern for migrants but rather as an attempt to increase the revenues of state insurance companies.

The Decree also instructs transportation authorities to supply external labour migrants with air-, train- and other tickets, and to add routes to destinations in high demand. These instructions cannot be put into practice since migrants already take care of their own tickets through private companies. The same decree points out the need to combat trafficking of labour migrants to other countries.

Another document regulating external labour migration is the governmental decree on the Registration of Labour Migration of the Tajik Nationals of 6 June, 2003. As dictated by this decree, the External Migration Registration Card was introduced on January 1, 2004 for Tajik nationals. The State Migration Service under the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection is responsible for computerized processing of information received via these cards.⁸

⁶ Compilation of Legislative Documents on the Republic of Tajikistan on Migration of Population (Sbornik normativno-pravovyh dokumentov Respubliki Tadjikistan v sfere migratsii naseleniya), Dushanbe, 2006, p.222-230.

⁷ Compilation of Legislative Documents on the Republic of Tajikistan on Migration of Population (Sbornik normativno-pravovyh dokumentov Respubliki Tadjikistan v sfere migratsii naseleniya), Dushanbe, 2006, p.205-206.

⁸ Compilation of Legislative Documents on the Republic of Tajikistan on Migration of Population (Sbornik normativno-pravovyh dokumentov Respubliki Tadjikistan v sfere migratsii naseleniya), Dushanbe, 2006, p.231-233.

There have been attempts to regulate labour migration on a bilateral basis: the Governments of the Russian Federation and Tajikistan have signed an agreement on employment and protection of rights of Tajik nationals in Russia and of Russian nationals in Tajikistan (2004). A similar agreement was signed between Tajikistan and Kazakhstan (2006). As a follow up to these agreements, intergovernmental working groups on regulation of external labour migration were created. Article 3 of the Agreement with Kazakhstan suggests information exchange on changes to the national legislation concerning employment of foreign workers; labour, employment, emigration, and immigration issues; living conditions of workers, labour market situation; on employers who received permission to hire foreign work force, and on organizations that received a license to facilitate employment abroad. Parties also agreed to develop regional cooperation on external labour migration issues.⁹

The Agreement with Kazakhstan stipulates that workers have a right for social protection according to the legislation of the receiving country. Parties have also agreed to recognize work experience obtained by individuals in either country. In addition, Parties have agreed to facilitate labour migration, to prevent illegal activities of agencies recruiting migrants for work abroad, and to prevent the distribution of deceptive information on employment abroad and work conditions appearing in mass media.

Provision 6 of Article 8 is very important, as it notes that the employer is responsible for provision of healthcare to migrant employees at the level equal to that of local citizens according to the legislation of the receiving country. However, this Agreement does not address social security for labour migrants, and there is not a separate agreement on this issue.

Article 9 of the Agreement discusses labour conditions and wages that should be regulated by employment contracts between migrants and employers. It has an important provision that the two countries agree to recognize diplomas, certificates verifying education, documents confirming qualifications and other papers necessary for employment. The Agreement, in accordance with international law, covers issues relating to death of a labour migrant including information exchange and transportation costs.

These agreements highlight the need to bring labour migration legislation in Tajikistan in line with internationally recognized standards such as those developed by the United Nations (UN) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). Unfortunately, some of the principles included in ILO Conventions, such as freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, were not included in the Agreement between Tajikistan and the Russian Federation.

Tajik workers “are more at risk of being lured into situations of forced labour, including trafficking, and the illegal exaction of forced labour.”¹⁰ Employers pressure Tajik labour migrants in an irregular situation, delay payment of wages or sometimes completely refuse to pay wages. Occasionally, employers unilaterally change employment contracts, do not return passports to migrants, force them to work for 16-18 hours a day, and physically abuse them.

Social protection is a very important issue for labour migrants; social security benefits should include medical care and sickness, unemployment, old-age, employment injury, family, maternity, invalidity, and survivor’s benefits.¹¹

Unfortunately, all of these issues, aside from medical care, were not adequately reflected in either the Agreement between Tajikistan and Russia, or the Agreement between Tajikistan and Kazakhstan. Thus, it would be sensible to subject national legislative acts and bilateral agreements to international assessment and introduce changes if necessary.

⁹ Materials from the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Republic of Tajikistan.

¹⁰ *Towards a fair deal for migrant workers in the global economy*. Report VI. International Labour Conference, 92nd session, 2004. Geneva, International Labour Organization, p.77.

¹¹ Humblet M. and Silra R. *Standards for the XXIst Century - Social Security*, Geneva, ILO, 2002, p.41-45.

Positive and Negative Aspects of External Labour Migration

Assessments of the scope of external labour migration vary and range from 600,000 persons to 1.5 million people. Some experts believe that Tajikistan has 1.5-2 million external labour migrants.

External labour migration has positive political, social and economic consequences. It serves as a factor in political stability. Considering that migrants provide up to 80 per cent of the country's financial resources, if there were no remittances transferred to support Tajik families, poverty could have resulted in social conflict.

Labour migration prevents long-term unemployment, helps provide thousands of families with food and other resources, and averts hunger, poverty and physical degradation. Migration creates stimuli to improve the educational and cultural level of the population, and helps people earn enough resources to buy and build housing and land. Migration also brings about an increased urbanization of the society and a change in society's attitude toward the environment.

External labour migration has both macro- and microeconomic consequences. Remittance transfers in hard currency help stabilize the national currency. These remittances also stimulate imports, as goods are purchased abroad for foreign currency and sold in Tajikistan for national currency. Remittances also help maintain the purchasing power of the population.

Migrant remittances can help strengthen national hard currency reserves, increase banks' assets, and expand loan practices. This is very important for modernizing manufacturing, for purchasing machinery and equipment, for the creation of technologically advanced manufacturing, and for introducing fundamental changes in structuring investments and primary capital.

It would be reasonable to assume that a share of incoming migrant remittances is kept for savings. However, due to a lack of trust in banks, people tend to keep their savings in cash. Although large amounts of money are remitted through bank services, the receiving parties cash the entire amount and purportedly keep their money at home. If people trusted the banking system and remittances were deposited in banks within the next 5-10 years between US\$ 400 million to 1-1.2 milliard would be accumulated: enough to invest in major projects (such as the Rogun hydro-electric station) started in the Soviet era, and to revive the industrial, construction, manufacturing and social infrastructures.

External migration also carries negative consequences. It reduces the productive potential of the country as most migrants leaving for abroad are in their prime working age. Migrants also have better skills and qualifications as compared to many workers remaining in Tajikistan. Migration causes the degradation of human capital in Tajikistan. Over 90 per cent of migrants change their main specialty when working abroad. Teachers, doctors, engineers, and agronomists, not having practiced their professions for 3-7 years, lose their skills.

Since most migrants leaving for abroad are men, the gender balance in the industrial sector has been disrupted. Women now engage in activities requiring hard physical labour including agricultural work. This development has negative implications such as the increase in health problems among female workers.

Weakening of the family institution is also linked to migration. Up to 30 per cent of single migrants officially get married in destination countries. About 50 per cent of migrants, who have families at home, enter in unofficial marital relationships in receiving countries. Many of them lose contact with their official families.

The number of HIV-positive and AIDS patients is on the rise. The main carriers of the virus are external labour migrants. The number of migrants who died violent deaths or of severe illnesses caused by harsh labour and living conditions abroad has been on the rise.

Remittances from Tajik Labour Migrants

The issue of migrant remittances needs to be studied in depth to accurately estimate the volume and structure of remittances. It is important to know the share of remittances in monetary circulation, its currency structure, how foreign currencies affect the local currency, what the consequences of hard currency influx onto the local market are, and what is the rate and scope of "dollarization" of the economy. Unfortunately, the National Bank of Tajikistan has not adequately studied these issues.

According to empirical research, on average each migrant sends home US\$ 130 monthly.¹² Only 30 per cent of remittances are transferred via banks, the rest being sent via couriers or by migrants themselves. Nevertheless, the volume of remittances transferred through banks is significant (Table 2).

Table 2: Official Estimate of Remittances from External Labour Migrants Transferred through Banks

| Remittances | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Remittances from external labour migrants through the banking system, in US\$ mln. | 78.4 | 253.7 | 433.5 | 600.0 |
| % of the previous year | 100.0 | 323.6 | 170.9 | 138.4 |
| % of 2002 | 100.0 | 323.6 | 553.2 | 765.3 |
| % of imports | 10.9 | 28.8 | 46.4 | 45.1 |
| % of the national budget expenditures | 40.4 | 95.3 | 119.2 | 136.5 |
| % of budget expenditures for education, healthcare, and social protection | 119.1 | 278.2 | 341.6 | ... |

Source: National Bank of Tajikistan

This data, even if incomplete, is impressive. First of all, the volume of remittances has been growing in absolute value and in relation to imports (during 2002-2005 this figure grew by 4.1 times). Remittances exceed governmental budgetary expenditures by a third. This correlation has increased by 3.4 times during 2002-2004.

It should be noted that figures in Table 2 reflect not only the growth of migrant remittances but also an increase in the share of remittances transferred through banks. For example, migrant remittances transferred through banks in 2002 amounted to an estimated US\$ 78.4 million. The fees for such transfers were substantial—the state tax alone was 30 per cent of the transferred amount. The situation began to improve when the state tax on transfers was cancelled in October of 2002. Banks in Tajikistan, Russia, Kazakhstan and other destination countries started to compete for Tajik migrant clients. Tajik banks opened branches in almost all regions of Russia. Currently, there are six money transfer systems in Tajikistan: one international—Western Union and five Russian systems. Western Union is the most popular system as it proved to be efficient and reliable.

Table 3 presents an assessment of the volume of migrant remittances inclusive of informal money transfers as estimated by the National Bank of Tajikistan. These figures reflect the official version, according to which only 40 per cent of remittances are transferred via informal channels. The estimated volume of remittances made up 75.2 per cent of imports in 2005 compared to 18.2 per cent in 2002. They exceeded governmental budgetary expenditures by 2.3 times.

Table 3: Official Estimate of Migrant Remittances Including Unofficial Transfers

| Remittances | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---|-------|-------|-------|---------|
| Total amount of remittances, US\$ mln. | 131.0 | 422.0 | 722.0 | 1,000.0 |
| % of the previous year | 100.0 | 323.6 | 170.9 | 138.4 |
| % of 2002. | 100.0 | 323.0 | 553.2 | 765.3 |
| % of imports | 18.2 | 47.9 | 60.6 | 75.2 |
| % of national budget expenditures | 67.6 | 158.5 | 198.6 | 227.6 |
| % of budget expenditures for education, healthcare, and social protection | 199.0 | 462.7 | 568.9 | ... |

Source: National Bank of Tajikistan

¹² Kh. Umarov "Tadzhikistan vazhnieishie problemi sotsial'no demograficheskogo razvitiya" in "Narodnoya Gazeta", 16 May 2003.

As mentioned above, according to the 2003 study and contrary to official estimates, only 30 per cent of remittances from external labour migrants are transferred via banks. Even if we assume that the share of bank transfers is higher—for example, 40 per cent - while the rest of remittances are transferred through couriers and other means, the real scope of migrant remittances is even more substantial (Table 4).

Table 4: Author's Estimate of Migrant Remittances

| Remittances | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---|-------|-------|---------|---------|
| Total amount of remittances, US\$ mln. | 195.0 | 635.0 | 1,083.0 | 1,500.0 |
| % of the previous year | 100 | 325.6 | 170.9 | 138.4 |
| % of imports | 27.1 | 72.1 | 90.9 | 112.8 |
| % of national budget expenditures | 100.6 | 238.4 | 297.9 | 341.4 |
| % of budget expenditures for education, healthcare, and social protection | 296.3 | 696.2 | 853.4 | ... |

This data lead to important conclusions. First, the volume of migrant remittances is comparable to the GDP of Tajikistan. In 2002 migrant remittances made up 16.2 per cent of the GDP, in 2003 – 38.7 per cent, in 2004 – 54.5 per cent, and in 2005 – 73.2 per cent. It is likely that in the future this trend will increase. Second, migrant remittances exceed the government expenditures by a factor of 3.4. Consequently, they can play a much bigger role in solving social problems than they do at present.

In this context, it is necessary for the government to regulate external labour migration considering the socio-economic interests of the country. The government should take measures to maximize the effectiveness of external labour migration, i.e. increase the average monthly remittance transfers into Tajikistan. The potential of migrant remittances into Tajikistan is enormous and is presently underutilized.

Regulating External Labour Migration

An analysis of the positive and negative consequences of external labour migration suggests the need for greater regulation of migration processes. The government has been considering a range of suggestions in this regard. The main proposal is to undertake measures to legalize external labour migration. At present, 95 per cent of Tajik migrants going to Russia do not state the real reason for their visit in the migration card because that would require them to have a letter confirming a job offer.

To reduce the uncertainties that migrants experience when going abroad for work, several measures need to be taken. First, it is necessary to improve migrants' awareness of legal issues concerning migration. They should be provided with information on legislative acts of the destination countries regulating the employment and stay of foreign nationals. In addition, it is important to ensure that migrants know prior to departure from Tajikistan where and under what conditions they will work. It is also important to create a situation allowing most migrants to go to other countries based on employment invitations. Creation of an employment market in the framework of the Eurasian Economic Community would help legalize external labour migration.¹³ It is also important to foster communication with the governments of Russia, Kazakhstan and other destination countries, to respect each other's interests, and develop adequate mechanisms for interaction.

There is a need to create a computerized informational-recruitment system providing reliable information on available vacancies; their location; skills and qualifications requirements; salary level; cost of housing, food, and clothing; and on insurance and medical care.

It would be useful to provide micro credits for migrants to cover transportation costs to destination countries, and to provide loans to their families until migrants are able to send remittances.

¹³ *Fakty i kommentarii*, 25 May 2006.

It might be helpful to form the infrastructure for labour migration (following examples of India, Pakistan, Nepal and Indonesia) to maximize the effectiveness of labour force export. This infrastructure would include a campaign to systematically recruit labour force to work abroad, training of migrants on employment-related legal issues, centres for professional/technical education, mechanisms facilitating timely money transfers from migrants, and medical centres to examine migrants before departure and upon their return.

Efforts should be made to place migrants in jobs corresponding their skills and qualifications. It would be desirable to organize the professional training of migrants who had not received any special training in Tajikistan.

Tajik banks should open branches across Russia and other destination countries to ensure rapid transfer of remittances to Tajikistan.

Cooperation with other former Soviet Union countries can help resolve these issues. In 1994 members of the Commonwealth of Independent States signed an Agreement on labour migration and social protection of migrant workers. According to this agreement, labour migrants have access to social insurance and social benefits (except for retirement benefits), in accordance with the existing labour legislation in the country. These benefits also apply to medical care.

Coordination of activities is necessary to manage migration processes. In particular, migration policy has to be closely coordinated with agrarian and social policies of the receiving country because most participants in labour migration are rural residents and individuals working in the social sector. For example, during the period from 1991-2005 the number of Tajik language and literature teachers decreased from 10,529 to 7,499 persons, the number of physics teachers—from 4,714 to 3,186, and the number of mathematics teachers—from 10,049 to 7,378. The overall number of teachers with higher education has decreased from 72,789 persons to 61,319, and their share among teachers decreased from 76.6 per cent to 61.9 per cent. At the same time, the number of teachers with secondary education increased by a factor of 4.3¹⁴ even though during this period 83,219 teachers have graduated from higher educational establishments of Tajikistan. Consequently, almost 100,000 teachers have left education as a consequence of external labour migration. The situation in the healthcare sector is similar.

In transitional societies such as Tajikistan only the governmental system of external labour migration regulation can maximize such migration to improve the living standards of the population and to positively resolve investment and other long-term problems. Some progress in creating a migration management system has been achieved: On January 31, 2006 the government approved the Programme for External Labour Migration of Tajik citizens for 2006-2010. It stipulates the measures that need to be taken to manage migration processes taking into account interests of the country and the migrants themselves.

More specifically, the Programme instructs to:

- Conduct a comprehensive study on the effects of labour migration on the socio-economic development of the country;
- Expand cooperation with countries interested in employing labour migrants from Tajikistan, especially with non-former Soviet Union countries;
- Establish cooperation with countries in the region to protect Tajik migrants' rights;
- Exchange information with the Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation on permits issued to employers allowing employment of foreign labour force;
- Monitor activities of PEAs that have a license to export labour force from Tajikistan abroad.

Unfortunately, the Programme does not contain measures aimed to eventually decrease external labour migration by creating more decent jobs in Tajikistan.

¹⁴ Statistical Year Book of the Republic of Tajikistan (Statisticheskiyy ezhegodnik Respubliki Tasjikistan), Dushanbe, 2005, p.42-43, 51.

Conclusion

External labour migration from Tajikistan is rapidly growing. Most experts agree that there are between 1.5 million and 2 million Tajik migrant workers abroad. As a result of migration the number of teachers with higher education in Tajik schools is decreasing, as is the number of doctors in hospitals and clinics and the number of agronomists and agricultural machine operators. Migration has created a demographic imbalance resulted in an increase in child labour. Prostitution, drug addiction and the spread of HIV/AIDS have increased dangerously.

At the same time, labour migration can play an important role in poverty reduction and in the resolution of numerous social and economic problems. Consequently, there is a bona fide need to regulate external labour migration and increase its effectiveness. It is necessary to develop and implement a programme to regulate external labour migration. This programme should be comprehensive in nature addressing economic, social, national, political, and moral and ethical aspects.

In order for this document to be a real instrument regulating migration processes, all pros and cons of migration should be considered through various prisms (economic, political, ethnic, educational, and the one concerning physical and moral well-being of individuals). Realistic measures to implement this programme should be identified and a concrete time schedule for their implementation should be developed. For example, plans to return teachers and doctors should be substantiated by an increase in their salary. It is essential to create stimuli so that individuals, who enhanced their qualifications working as construction workers and hydro-technicians in Russia, Kazakhstan, and other countries, would return to their homeland to participate in the construction of large hydro-electric stations, metallurgical plants, and in revival of the infrastructure.

Regulation of external labour migration should be aimed to ensure that Tajik migrants work abroad legally, are not trafficked, and are not degradingly exploited by employers, criminal elements and law enforcement. It is essential to ensure that each migrant can work within his/her profession, have access to fair wages, and be able to use social services in accordance with the legislation of the destination country. Such results may be achieved through international cooperation and through the signing of appropriate bilateral agreements.

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TURKMENISTAN

Migration Situation in Turkmenistan

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Introduction

Migration processes have significant implications for the socio-economic development of Turkmenistan and its population dynamics—the number of residents, their ethnic, gender, age and educational composition and territorial settlement. Migration dynamics in Central Asian states have many commonalities due to the particularities of the region and the shared history of being part of the Soviet Union. However, these dynamics also reflect the realities of each country, its political regime and its domestic and foreign policy.

The main migration trend after the independence of Turkmenistan was the outflow of the ethnic Russian population and other minorities mainly caused by political factors resulting from the collapse of the Soviet Union. As of the mid-1990s economic factors have played an increasingly important role in migration leading to a growing migratory potential of the titular population. Forms of migration such as temporary seasonal migration and labour migration have begun to develop.

Analysis of the contemporary migration situation in Turkmenistan is complicated because the country has become a “closed state.” Moreover, according to experts the official statistics on population movements do not present a true picture of migration in Turkmenistan; migration statistics only report changes in permanent residency and not temporary movements. Due to these reasons, the article is based not only on official statistics from the National Institute for Statistics and Information of Turkmenistan but also on data from international organizations, NGOs and expert assessments.

External Migration

In the past, external migration played a significant role in the socio-economic and cultural life of Turkmenistan. The development of cities, construction of the Karakum Canal, development of the mineral and energy resources were all inextricably linked to the labour force from other republics of the former Soviet Union. A steady inflow of migrants has noticeably influenced the socio-demographic composition of Turkmen society and has defined the life style in many, predominantly large, cities.

From the mid-1970s Turkmenistan started experiencing a migration outflow. This was due in part to some increase in social and territorial mobility of the local population. On the other hand, push factors in migrants' regions of origin had diminished (lesser growth in working age population, implementation of large-scale projects to develop the Russian Nechernozem'ye regions, etc.). Out-migration continued in the 1980s peaking in the first half of 1990s.

During 1992-1995, out-migration exceeded migration into Turkmenistan by almost twofold (94,500 persons versus 55,900 persons). Among emigrants 62.2 per cent went to the Russian Federation, 11 per cent to Kazakhstan, 9.2 per cent to Uzbekistan, 7.2 per cent to Ukraine and 2.6 per cent to Belarus.¹ Almost half of emigrants were ethnic Russians. If we add Ukrainians and Belarus to

¹ CIS Migration Report 1996, Technical Cooperation Centre for Europe and Central Asia, IOM, 1997, p.119.

this group, a number of Slavs leaving Turkmenistan exceeded 50,000 persons, or almost 60 per cent of all emigrants.

The main reasons leading to an increase in out-migration were economic. The collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in the halt, and sometimes in complete destruction, of established industrial links. Large industrial enterprises suffered most from the damage to the unity of the industrial and economic systems. This situation resulted in emigration of the personnel of these enterprises who were mostly immigrants from other Soviet republics.

Political factors also played a significant role in the intensification of emigration. Ethnic Russians, Germans, Ukrainians and others left the country after its independence for fear of their political future under the new regime, which was now dominated by representatives of the titular nation. In addition, psychological factors influenced the decision to migrate. As the Soviet Union collapsed, the realization by non-Turkmen migrants that a connection to their historical motherland is no longer present has motivated people to leave; they wanted to preserve their ethnic identity and pass it on to their children.

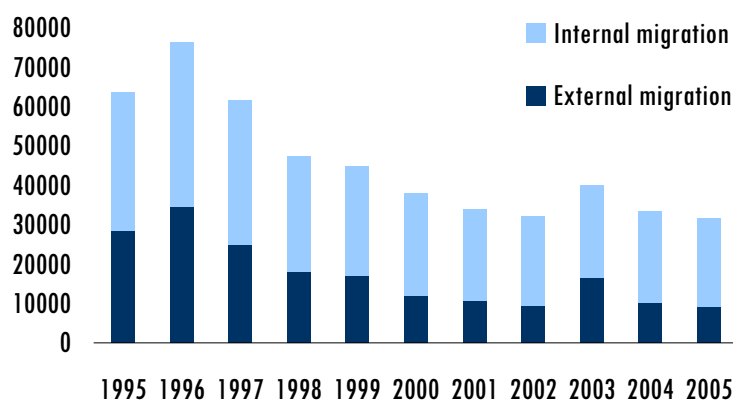
As Russian-speaking residents made up the majority of highly qualified workers, their departure has negatively influenced the national economy. Because of this, the authorities tried to slow down their migration by declaring Russian as an official language and by signing a dual-citizenship agreement with Russia in 1993. Some administrative measures were also designed to decelerate emigration. For example, in 1992 the sale, exchange and gifting of the privatized property was prohibited for 10 years unless sold to the government authorities. Simultaneously, privatization of apartments was halted.²

Immigrants to Turkmenistan in the beginning of the 1990s included migrants from the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan (38.8 per cent and 29.4 per cent accordingly). A new large inflow of migrants came from Tajikistan due to the civil war there: 7,400 persons came in 1992-1995, which was seven times as many compared to the preceding three-year period.

Most of the immigrants were ethnic Turkmen who came from all post-Soviet countries, especially from Tajikistan. During 1992-1995 over 20,000 Turkmen arrived in the country, which resulted in an increase in the proportion of ethnic Turkmen among the general population. According to the population census of 1995, this share increased from 72 per cent in 1989 to 77 per cent.

As of mid-1990s there has been a steady decrease in both in- and out-migration. External migration in 2005 was three times less than in 1995 (Figure 1). Its share in population movements of the population has decreased from 42.9 per cent in 1995 to 28.9 per cent in 2005.³

Figure 1: Territorial Population Movements in Turkmenistan, 1995-2005, persons



² "Abating Emigration" (Sderzhivanie emigratsii), international human rights and charitable society *Memorial*, <http://www.memo.ru/hr/politpr/turk/ethnic.htm>

³ Data of the National Institute for Statistics and Information of Turkmenistan on permanent residency registration.

A decrease in external migration is mainly due to the depletion of its potential. According to the population census of 1995, the number of potential migrants (i.e. most mobile individuals) among general population has dropped from 790,000 persons in 1989 to 433,000 persons in 1995. More than 90 per cent of the latter consisted of individuals who had never previously changed residence.⁴ The base for ethnic migration has been depleted: between the two censuses the share of ethnic Russians dropped from 9 per cent to 7 per cent.⁵ By 2000 their share was no more than 5 per cent.

The largest population movements took place between Russia and Turkmenistan – 67.7 per cent of all movements between Turkmenistan and other post-Soviet countries (Table 1). Other countries actively engaged in migration processes with Turkmenistan included Kazakhstan (15.9 per cent), Uzbekistan (8.8 per cent) and Tajikistan (1.4 per cent).

The migration balance has been consistently negative. During the period 1995-2005 this deficit amounted to 130,822 persons. Most of the formerly Turkmen residents were “lost” to the Russian Federation, as well as to Kazakhstan and Ukraine. During the same ten-year period positive migration balance was established with Tajikistan. However, as of 2001 more people are entering Tajikistan than leaving it.

Table 1: Migration with CIS and Baltic countries, 1995-2005

| Country | Total (persons) | Arrived | Left | Migration growth (+), deficit (-) |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------|---------|-----------------------------------|
| CIS and Baltic States | 185,324 | 27,251 | 158,073 | -130,822 |
| <i>Including:</i> | | | | |
| Russian Federation | 125,565 | 12,113 | 113,452 | -101,339 |
| Uzbekistan | 16,383 | 8,155 | 8,228 | -73 |
| Kazakhstan | 29,474 | 2,219 | 27,255 | -25,036 |
| Tajikistan | 2,570 | 2,084 | 486 | 1,598 |
| Ukraine | 5,031 | 893 | 4,138 | -3,245 |
| Other countries | 6,301 | 1,787 | 4,514 | -2,727 |

The ethnic composition of emigrants corresponded with their distribution by countries. Russians were leaving Turkmenistan en masse (47.7 per cent) as were Kazakhs (17.7 per cent). Other ethnicities who left the country were Tatars (5.9 per cent), Ukrainians (4.6 per cent) and Uzbeks (3.9 per cent). In addition, ethnic Armenians, whose ancestors had moved to Turkmenistan fleeing the genocide of 1915, also started to emigrate. Overall, a migration deficit was recorded among all ethnic groups with the largest population outflows being among Russians and Kazakhs during the period of 1995-2005 (Table 2).

Departure of the Slavic population intensified in 2003 when the President issued a decree cancelling the 1993 Agreement with Russia on dual citizenship. Individuals who had both the Russian and Turkmen citizenship (approximately 100,000 persons) had to choose one or the other within a two-month period.⁶ If an individual gave up his/her Turkmen citizenship, he/she would no longer be

⁴ *Migration in the CIS 1997-98: 1999 Edition*. Technical Cooperation Centre for Europe and Central Asia, IOM, 1999.

⁵ *CIS Migration Report 1996*, Technical Cooperation Centre for Europe and Central Asia, IOM, 1997, p.144.

⁶ “Migration situation in Turkmenistan”. – <http://www.gundogar.org/?0223031330000000000000011000000>

able to hold certain jobs, own property, or live in a high-density border area.⁷ Giving up the Russian citizenship meant that these individuals would need to apply for visas and obtain an official permission to visit Russia. According to the Russian Embassy, after the cancellation of the dual citizenship agreement, the Embassy received up to 30,000 applications a month for immigration to Russia. In 2003 alone 70,000 individuals received permission to relocate to Russia. During January - March 2004 about 27,000 permissions of this type were issued.⁸

The Government of Kazakhstan has instituted a repatriation policy, which served as an incentive for ethnic Kazakhs to leave Turkmenistan. This policy allocates quotas to each *velayat* (administrative region) of Turkmenistan. In 1999, 1,356 Kazakhs relocated to Kazakhstan from Turkmenistan, while in 2004 this number has reached 3,266 persons.⁹

Table 2: Ethnic composition of migration, 1995-2005

| Ethnicity | Total | Arrived | Departed | Migration growth (+), deficit (-) |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| CIS and Baltic countries | 184,725 | 26,877 | 157,848 | -130,971 |
| <i>Including:</i> | | | | |
| Armenians | 5,397 | 649 | 4,748 | -4,099 |
| Azerbaijanis | 4,219 | 1,022 | 3,197 | -2,175 |
| Kazakhs | 30,280 | 2,335 | 27,945 | -25,610 |
| Russians | 81,679 | 6,454 | 75,225 | -68,771 |
| Tatars | 10,482 | 1,180 | 9,302 | -8,122 |
| Turkmens | 17,775 | 7,715 | 10,060 | -2,345 |
| Ukrainians | 8,073 | 762 | 7,311 | -6,549 |
| Uzbeks | 11,010 | 4,797 | 6,213 | -1,416 |
| Other ethnicities | 15,810 | 1,963 | 13,847 | -11,884 |

Significant “push” factors for emigration included: strict limitations on the use of the Russian and other minority languages, closure of non-Turkmen language schools, limitation of radio- and TV-broadcasts, and elimination of ethno-cultural associations.¹⁰ Another “push” factor was the decision not to recognize diplomas of higher education that were granted after 1993 by universities outside of Turkmenistan. Moreover, government officials possessing such diplomas were fired from their jobs starting in June of 2004.

As of 1995 Turkmenistan lost not only ethnic minorities but also representatives of the titular nation resulting in migration deficit of 2,345 individuals in this latter group. Turkmens primarily relocated to Russia. The main reasons for emigration included the low standard of living, unemployment, and degradation of the education and healthcare systems. Aside from economic

⁷ “Suitcase – Train Station – Russia?” (Chemodan – vokzal – Rossiya?) – <http://www.gundogar.org/?012031090000000000000011000000>

⁸ *Labour Migration in Central Asia, Russian Federation, Afghanistan and Pakistan* (in Russian), Almaty, the European Commission, IOM, 2005, p. 51.

⁹ *Annual Demographics of Kazakhstan*. 2005. (Demograficheskiy ezhegodnik Kazakhstana. 2005.) Statistical data, Almaty, 2005, p. 66-67.

¹⁰ Biliori D. Turkmenistan: An Overview. – UNHCR, Written Paper N 4/2002.

“push” factors, some migrants left for political reasons. At the same time, Turkmens made up the largest immigrant group accounting for 28.7 per cent of immigrants.

Most immigrants were individuals of working age – 76.3 per cent in 1996-2005 (Figure 2). Children under the age of 15 made up 18 percent of immigrants, while the share of the elderly came to 5.7 per cent. The age composition of emigrants was somewhat different: 68.5 per cent were persons of working age, 18.3 per cent were children under 14, and 14.4 per cent were persons over 60 years of age. This suggests that most emigrants left with their entire families.

Figure 2: Age Distribution of Immigrants and Emigrants, 1996-2005 (in per cent).

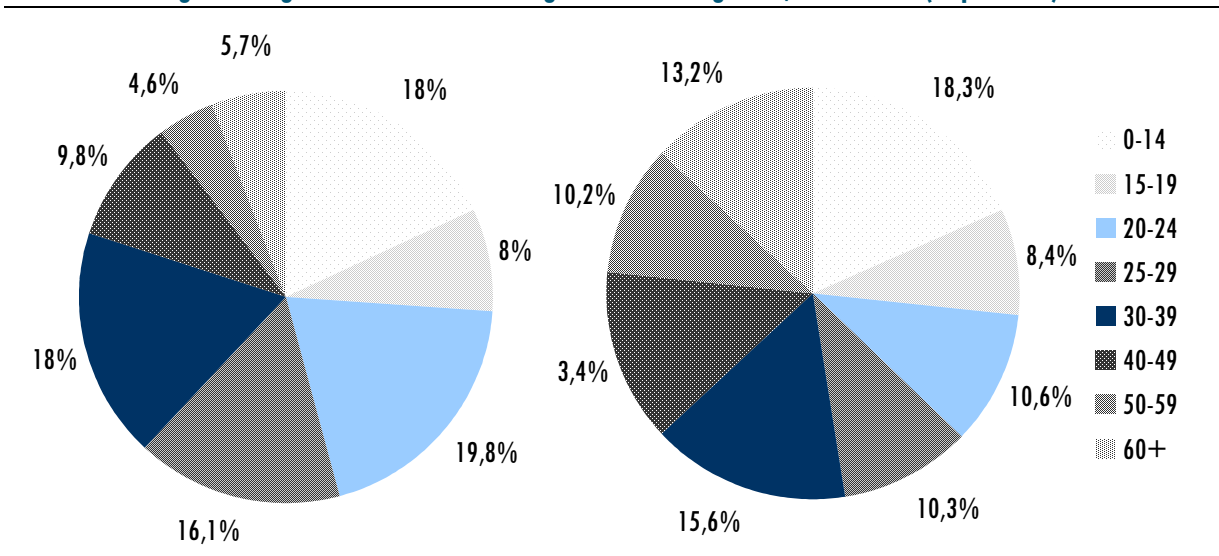
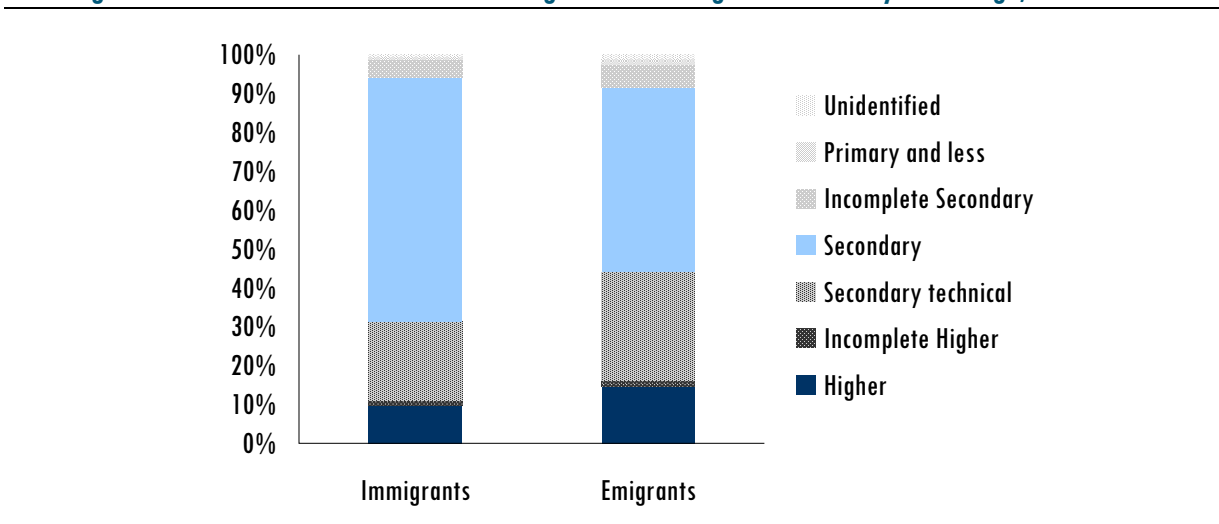


Figure 3: Educational Distribution of Immigrants and Emigrants over 16 years of age, 1996-2005



During the period of 1996-2005 the majority of immigrants over 16 years of age had secondary education (63 per cent). Fewer immigrants (20 per cent) had technical secondary education or higher education (10 per cent). Among emigrants the share of individuals with secondary education was lower (47 per cent), while more emigrants had special secondary education (28 per cent) and higher education (14 per cent) (Figure 3).

Migration losses of highly qualified specialists, i.e. individuals with higher, incomplete higher and technical secondary education, came to a negative 43,419 persons. Many members of the cultural and

scientific intelligentsia were forced to leave the country because the authorities closed down the academy of sciences, the philharmonic orchestra, prohibited ballet, opera, and even the circus.

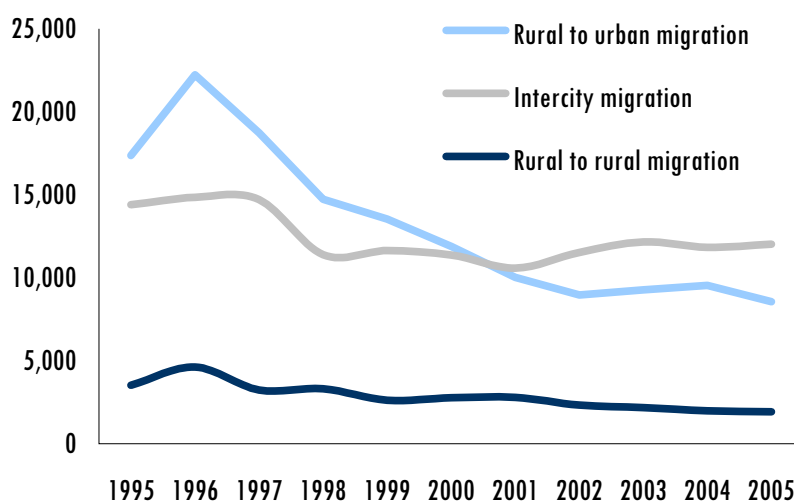
Migration from Turkmenistan to non-CIS countries is limited and consists of only a few hundred emigrants. The main destination countries include the United States, Germany, and Israel.

Internal Migration

While external migration has been decreasing, internal migration in Turkmenistan has been on the rise: from 53.4 per cent in 1995 to 70.9 per cent in 2005 (Figure 1). The titular population has usually been characterized by low social and territorial mobility. However, the departure of Russians and other ethnic minorities served as an impetus for increased mobility among the titular population. Availability of housing and jobs in cities, resulting from the outflow of the Slavic population, has created an opportunity to relocate from rural to urban areas.¹¹

At the same time, the overall internal and external migration has been decreasing. The correlation between some migration flows has changed. It is noteworthy that migration between rural and urban areas has dropped significantly (Figure 4) largely due to the transformation of the agricultural sector. Elimination of the kolkhoz and sovkhoz (collective farms) and the introduction of land leasing and private ownership of land has resulted in more efficient usage of the agricultural labour force. As land and farm leasing became more common, the majority of the rural population could find jobs in their villages. This minimized the need to move to the city.

Figure 4: Select Internal Migration Flows in Turkmenistan, 1995-2005, persons.



Population movements from rural to urban areas were largely due to the characteristics of cities. Soviet urban development policies emphasized the development of the capital and large regional centres, while smaller towns did not receive as much attention. The majority of small towns are not developed, and many of them were established as a result of administrative restructuring of large villages. Reduction of the agricultural industry in these newly established towns was not counterbalanced by the development of urban industries, which resulted in fewer jobs. High demographic growth of the working age population meant that urban residents received priority in employment. Living conditions in small towns are far from adequate. Overall, most small towns do not meet the architectural and infrastructure-related urban development standards.

¹¹ Panarin S. "Why One Should Expect Increasing Labour Migration from Central Asia to Russia." (Pochemu sleduet ozhidat narastaniya trudovoi migratsii iz Srednei Azii v Rossiyu), *Migratsiya v SNG i Baltii: cherez razlichiya problem k obshemu informatsionnomu prostranstvu*, Moscow, 2001, p.67.

Changes in the passport regime also influenced permanent migration statistics. During the Soviet era students leaving to other cities to study had to officially register with local authorities to report their change of permanent residency. In the early 1990s this rule was cancelled. Nowadays students from out of town are still registered at their old address, so student migration is no longer reported in migration statistics. It should be noted that relocation for employment search purposes is often problematic because *propiska* (residency registration) quotas are limited in cities, where jobs are generally available.

Another factor influencing internal migration statistics is an increase in temporary migration. This type of migration is logistically easier and cheaper as temporary migrants do not face the same problems as permanent migrants do. These forms of migration developed partly due to the geographical location of most mining operations. A climate with high temperatures, desert landscape and limited access to drinking water make it difficult to sustain permanent population in mining regions. Thus, most employees in the mining industry reside in neighbouring towns and villages and very few come from other regions of the country.

Decrease in permanent migration and an increase in temporary migration is also due to the change in the quality of potential migrants, their professional and social mobility, family traditions, general knowledge and the ability to adapt to new places. Today's potential migrant, in contrast to the recent past, is a more traditional (rural) individual, who has no intentions and fewer opportunities to relocate.

Labour Migration Abroad

"Push" factors for labour migration abroad include: high fertility rates, fast growth in the supply of labour force, unfavourable labour market conditions, especially in rural areas, and a low standard of living. Labour migrants from Turkmenistan work in Russia, Turkey and Kazakhstan. However, the number of labour migrants is not significant. Despite the fact that the potential for labour migration is high, it is prevented by government policy of limiting exit from the country and by the poverty of potential migrants, who cannot afford the transportation and other costs associated with migration.¹²

Migrant destination countries and employment sectors are defined by migrants' qualifications and financial situation. Qualified oil and gas miners can find work in Kazakhstan or in the Tumen region of Russia. Some Turkmens work in the construction, service and agricultural industries in Russia. Border migration is typical for regions bordering Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

It is estimated that up to 50,000 Turkmen nationals are engaged in various types of labour migration.¹³ The vast majority of migrants leave on tourist or visitor visas that do not allow employment. As a result, these individuals work abroad illegally, which often makes them completely dependent on their employers.

Many individuals work in commercial, so called "shuttle", trade. Taking modest quantities of goods through borders, these migrants primarily travel to Iran where Turkmen nationals enjoy a simplified visa regime. Up to 70 per cent of border crossing in Turkmenistan took place on the border with Iran.¹⁴ Turkmen migrants also travel to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Turkey for shuttle trade.

Aside from labour migration out of Turkmenistan, some expatriates come to work into the country. Foreign investment and creation of joint-stock companies facilitate growing migration of foreigners into Turkmenistan. For example, nationals of Turkey, France, Ukraine, and Iran work in construction, textile industry, in oil and gas sectors, as well as in the energy sector. In 1999 there were approximately 3,000 highly qualified foreign workers in Turkmenistan. This number is estimated to have grown threefold since then.¹⁵

¹² Mitrohin G. "Labour Migration from Central Asian Countries" (Trudovaya migratsiya iz gosudarstv Tsentralni Azii), *Otechestvennye zapiski*, No. 12, 2003.

¹³ *Labour Migration in Central Asia, Russian Federation, Afghanistan and Pakistan* (in Russian), Almaty, the European Commission, IOM, 2005, p. 54.

¹⁴ Kelly L. *Trafficking in Persons in Central Asia*, International Organization for Migration, 2005, p. 58.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 58.

Refugees

In 1995 Turkmenistan had 23,300 refugees. Since then, their number has been steadily decreasing (excluding 1999) and dropped to 13,300 in 2004.¹⁶ There are 12,100 Tajik refugees and 1,200 Afghan refugees. The majority of refugees are men – 53 per cent. Over half of the refugees – 52 per cent – are individuals of working age, and 43 per cent are children under 18.¹⁷

Most refugees in Turkmenistan came fleeing the civil war in Tajikistan. There are also 90 political refugees from Iran who received political asylum during the Soviet era in 1980s. In 1994, 1,200 ethnic Turkmens relocated from Iran (where they had earlier moved from Afghanistan) to Turkmenistan upon the invitation of the Turkmen President. Most of them received permanent residency permits in 1999.¹⁸

Since 1992 Afghan nationals have crossed the Turkmen border in large groups on several occasions. Usually, they are intercepted by border guards. UNHCR has ensured that they are provided with food and sleeping tents. Eventually, they have returned to Afghanistan as the Turkmen government has not allowed them to remain in the country.

About 500 refugees—Afghans, Iraqis, Armenians, Azerbaijanis, and Chechens—live in urban areas, mostly in the capital.¹⁹

As there was no special governmental department to handle refugee issues, UNHCR office in Ashgabat (opened in 1995) considered asylum applications and issued appropriate documents to refugees. Refugees were issued a renewable identification valid for three months. It had to be registered with the local passport agency. UNHCR still supports some refugees in need. If they cannot be integrated in Turkmenistan, and cannot return home, UNHCR resettles them in third countries. Over 500 individuals were resettled by UNHCR, mostly Afghans relocating to the US and Canada.²⁰

The number of refugees in Turkmenistan has been steadily declining mainly because the Tajik refugees started returning to their home country when hostilities there ended. Since 1998, the UNHCR, in collaboration with IOM, the Red Crescent Society and local authorities, has facilitated an organized the repatriation of about 6,000 refugees.

At the same time, a significant number of refugees from Tajikistan, mainly ethnic Turkmens, remain in the country and do not intend to leave. Therefore, their settlement and integration in the country have become an increasingly important issue. Most Tajik refugees in Turkmenistan live in rural communities and are engaged in agricultural work as well as in cattle breeding. When refugees first arrived in the country, the Government paid lump sum assistance in the amount of US\$35 per family, and provided them with land or work in collective farms. As the majority of refugees are employed in the agricultural sector, UNHCR helped them purchase agricultural tools, equipment, tractors, transformers, and irrigation pumps. UNHCR also facilitated the renovation and provisioning of rural medical centres, helped build schools in villages and organized professional training for refugees. Refugees also had access to small loans.²¹

There were attempts to provide housing. The Government provided houses to refugees, but they were often unfinished or unsuitable to live in. Only 6 per cent of refugees had housing above the minimum standards, 15 per cent had housing that met these standards, and the rest lived in substandard housing.²² Over time, many refugees managed to build or buy housing.

¹⁶ The State of the World's Refugees 2006, p. 216.

¹⁷ 2003 UNHCR Statistical Yearbook, p.348.

¹⁸ <http://www.newscentralasia.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=158>

¹⁹ *Migration Trends in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: 2001-2002 Review*, IOM, 2002, p. 153.

²⁰ Country Operations Plan: Turkmenistan, www.unhcr.org

²¹ UNHCR Global Appeal 2006, p.261

²² Chupik V. "Involuntary Migrants in Central Asia: Legal Aspect" (Vynuzhdennie migranty v stranah Tsentralnoi Azii: pravovoi aspekt), *Migratsiya I rynek truda v stranakh Srednei Azii*, Tashkent, 2002, p. 77, 81.

Refugee children go to Turkmen schools. However, obtaining college education is problematic for these children as most families cannot afford the tuition. Moreover, foreigners and stateless persons are not allowed to enrol in Turkmen universities. Aside from limited access to education, lack of a legal status for refugees limited their freedom of movement and made it difficult to register marriages, births and to obtain employment.

In 2004-2005 UNHCR together with the Government registered all refugees. It was found that 80 per cent, mostly ethnic Turkmen, wished to stay in the country for permanent residency. Moreover, having lived in Turkmenistan for more than 7 years, they satisfied all the requirements for citizenship. This served as an additional argument in lobbying for their legalization. By the Presidential decree of August 2005, 12,000 refugees of Turkmen ethnicity were granted citizenship, while refugees of other ethnicities received permanent residency.²³

The number of Turkmen nationals requesting asylum abroad is not significant but has been on the rise: 59 individuals in 1998, 91 in 2001, and 173 in 2003. Overall, in 2003, there were 840 refugees and asylum seekers from Turkmenistan in developed countries: 551 in Germany; the rest were in the U.S., Sweden and Russia.²⁴

Illegal migration

Illegal migration in Turkmenistan is very limited due to strict control at the borders and inside the country. However, Turkmenistan was used as a transit point for Afghan citizens going to Russia and then further to the West. Experts think that there is trafficking in drugs and human beings. There have been reports of Turkmen women detected in Iranian and Turkish brothels. It is likely that routes for trafficking Turkmen women go through Russia, Kazakhstan, the United Arab Emirates and some other countries. These routes are closely linked to drug trafficking routes: sometimes women were used as mules for trafficking drugs, and were then sexually exploited. Turkmenistan has become a major transit point for trafficking drugs from Afghanistan to Russia and Europe.²⁵

Migration Policy

Both internal and external migration are strictly controlled in Turkmenistan. It is the only post-Soviet country that introduced visa regimes with all other CIS countries. In 1999 Turkmenistan exited the Bishkek agreement on visa-free regime for nationals of post-Soviet republics. These measures were supposedly driven by the need to fight illegal migration and manage population movements.

Trans-border contacts were limited in other ways as well. In 1994 the railway connection with Russia was cancelled, in 1997 the bus connection with Uzbekistan was halted. Air connection with foreign countries has been minimized.²⁶ Foreign citizens can enter Turkmenistan only upon obtaining a visa, which is issued through Turkmen diplomatic and consular representations abroad and at the border point on the basis of a letter of invitation from a Turkmen organization or an individual. Aliens must register with local authorities within three days after arrival.

The Government had established a permit system for crossing borders even for its own citizens. For example, migrants relocating to Russia within the framework of the Turkmen-Russian agreement on repatriation and on returnees' rights (1993) had to apply to the local office of the Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation. There an application package was compiled for would-be migrants, which was then sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan for permission to migrate. Only upon receiving this permission was the migrant allowed to relocate to Russia.²⁷

²³ UNHCR Global Report 2004, p.358.

²⁴ 2003 UNHCR Statistical Yearbook, p.348.

²⁵ Kelly L. Trafficking in Persons in Central Asia, International Organization for Migration. - 2005. - P.58.

²⁶ Ponomarev V. "Turkmenistan: Authorities are Building an "Iron Curtain" using Stalin's Recipe" (Turkmenistan: vlasti stroyat "zheleznyi zanaves" po retseptam stalinskoi diktatury), <http://www.erkin.net/english.html>.

²⁷ Suitcase – Train Station – Russia? (Chemodan – vokzal – Rossiya?) – <http://www.gundogor.org/?0120310900000000000011000000>

Special permission is also necessary for temporary travel abroad. There were exit visas, which were cancelled in 2001. In March of 2003 exit visas were re-introduced again, supposedly to prevent criminals, particularly those who participated in an attempt to assassinate the President in November 2002, from leaving the country. In response to sharp criticism from international organizations and to a threat from the United States to renew the provisions of the Jackson-Vanick Act (against a country preventing free emigration of its citizens), the Government cancelled exit visas again as of February 2004. When an individual presents an entry visa for the destination country, the authorities attach special stamps into his/her passport.

Some individuals were not allowed to leave the country, without any explanation, even with a valid visa for the destination country.²⁸ There are “black lists” for individuals whose movements are to be limited. Members of some religious groups, regime opponents, relatives of those accused of an assassination attempt on the President in November of 2002, and individuals who had access to state secrets are entered into these lists.²⁹ Authorities also prevented some students from going abroad to study.³⁰ According to several accounts, in order to prevent labour migration, individuals travelling abroad were asked to present substantial sums of money to prove they are going for a vacation or for a visit but not to work abroad. If this sum could not be presented, departure from the country was not allowed.

Migration due to marriage was also limited. In 2001 there was a new decree stating that a foreigner, wishing to marry a Turkmen national, had to pay US\$50,000 to the Government. This decree was later cancelled.

On the basis of bilateral agreements some flexibility in crossing the border was allowed only to residents of border areas. For example, in 2004 an agreement was concluded with Uzbekistan which allows a visit to the neighbouring country for 3 days each month. There is also a simplified visa regime with Iran.

At the same time, Human Rights Watch reports that the Government charges Turkmen nationals wishing to cross the border into Uzbekistan and Iran US\$6 each time, which is a large sum by local standards.³¹ UNDP Human Development report also discusses economic and social obstacles to migration. Expenses to obtain travel documents, visas, and payment of bribes become an insurmountable obstacle for the poorest, who need the opportunity to earn money abroad the most.³²

Governmental regulations also restrict internal migration. In particular, the Government restricts movement in border areas, most of which are considered closed zones.³³

On the other hand, authorities initiate and implement relocation of people from one region to another. In August 2005 during the report of Turkmenistan on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the United Nations Committee has harshly criticized the Turkmen government for forced population displacement in the country, among other things.³⁴

Human rights organizations have repeatedly reported that implementing its ambitious urban development plans, the Government displaces people at will, not giving them a choice. Despite the fact that the Government must compensate people for lost housing, this does not always happen. In

²⁸ Human Rights Watch/Defending Human Rights Worldwide/Пресс-релизы. – <http://www.hrw.org/russian/press/2005/140305-61un.html>

²⁹ Turkmenistan Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – 2005. - <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61681.htm>

³⁰ Turkmenistan Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – 2004. - <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2004/41714.htm>

³¹ Human Rights Watch .World Report 2003. - <http://www.hrw.org/wr2k3/europe14.html>

³² *Central Asia Human Development Report (in Russian), UNDP, 2005, p. 159-188.*
http://europeandcis.undp.org/index.cfm?wspc=CAHDR2005_ru

³³ Turkmenistan Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, 2005, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61681.htm>

³⁴ Human Rights Watch World Report (in Russian), 2006, <http://www.hrw.org/russian/reports/2006/world/turkmen.html>

2002-2003 the authorities decided to relocate the population from so called “unproductive” regions to “productive” ones; that is, from high-density border areas near Uzbekistan to the centre of the country. Observers think that the scale of such displacements is not large but that they do take place.³⁵ Sometimes the displaced individuals agree to relocate and receive some assistance for resettlement. However, in other cases relocation is used as punishment. Individuals who engage in “anti-social” or “immoral behaviour” or do not comply with their civic duties can be forcibly relocated.³⁶ The President also insisted on the need to relocate smugglers from border regions.³⁷ In addition, relatives of political prisoners as well as ethnic minorities were also forcibly relocated, the latter from the regions with minority concentration.³⁸

Legal Basis and Institutions

The main basis of the Turkmen migration legislation was laid out in the Constitution of 1992. It specifically states that a citizen cannot be forced out of the country or not allowed to return. However, it does not say anything about the right to freely travel abroad. As far as foreigners are concerned, they have the same rights as Turkmen nationals do, unless otherwise specified by law. The Constitution has a provision on granting asylum to foreign nationals who are persecuted in their countries for political, ethnic or religious views. The main law also contains a provision on the freedom of movement and choice of residence within Turkmenistan. This freedom can only be limited according to the law. In November of 2005 some amendments were introduced into the Constitution, including a provision that Turkmenistan does not recognize any other citizenship held by its nationals.

In 1992 a Law on the Legal Status of Foreign Nationals in Turkmenistan was adopted.³⁹ The President issued several decrees regulating entry and exit of local nationals (1995) and foreigners (2003). Regulations for employing foreign nationals in Turkmenistan were introduced in 2003.⁴⁰ They include provisions that Turkmen nationals should have a priority in filling vacant jobs and stipulates that no more than 30 per cent of workers in a company could be foreign nationals.

The Law on Refugees was adopted in 1997,⁴¹ and in 1998 Turkmenistan ratified the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. The Refugee Law contains the conventional definition of a refugee, confirms the non-refoulement principle and the right of refugees for family unity. The Law states that a refugee is not held responsible for illegal entry or stay in Turkmenistan if he/she contacts the authorities immediately upon arrival. The Law stipulates the procedures for obtaining and losing the refugee status, as well as the rights and duties of refugees and asylum seekers.

Finally, a Law on Migration was adopted in December of 2005.⁴² It regulates the entry, stay and exit of foreign nationals, stateless persons and Turkmen citizens, defines legal relationships in

³⁵ Internal displacement in Central Asia Underlying Reasons and Response Strategies/ Final Report /IOM Technical Cooperation Centre for Europe and Central Asia, Vienna, Austria, May 2005, p.60.

³⁶ [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpCountries\)/4530970E01C22FF4802570A7004C2984?OpenDocument](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpCountries)/4530970E01C22FF4802570A7004C2984?OpenDocument)

³⁷ <http://www.newscentralasia.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=1732>

³⁸ “Government Uses Forced Displacement as Tool of Repression”, Global IDP Project. Norwegian Refugee Council, <http://www.idpproject.org>

³⁹ Law of Turkmenistan on Legal Status of Foreign Nationals in Turkmenistan of 8 October 1993 (with amendments of 24 November, 1995, 19 December 2000), (in Russian), *Osnovnye normativno-pravovye akty I ponyatiya v sfere migratsii stran Tsentralnoi Azii, Rossiyskoi Federatsii I Respubliki Belarus*, Bishkek, 2003, p. 137-140

⁴⁰ Provision on Temporary Employment of Foreign Nationals in Turkmenistan, (adopted by the Decree of the President of Turkmenistan of 21 February, 2003, # 6135, *Osnovnye normativno-pravovye akty I ponyatiya v sfere migratsii stran Tsentralnoi Azii, Rossiyskoi Federatsii I Respubliki Belarus*, Bishkek, 2003, p. 153-158.

⁴¹ *Osnovnye normativno-pravovye akty I ponyatiya v sfere migratsii stran Tsentralnoi Azii, Rossiyskoi Federatsii I Respubliki Belarus*, Bishkek, 2003, p. 145-148.

⁴² Law of Turkmenistan on Migration, http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page_id=9&lang_id=ru&elem_id=7644&type=event&sort=date_desc

migration, and determines the responsibilities of various state agencies in the regulation of migration processes.

The Law identifies the State Service on Registration of Foreign Nationals, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of National Security, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the State Border Service as designated agencies concerned with migration.

The State Service of Turkmenistan on Registration of Foreign Nationals was created in 2003 by the Presidential decree and reports directly to the Cabinet of Ministers. It has branches in various cities and regions and has migration control points at the borders. This Service is responsible for all migration related tasks including the determination of the refugee status. It issues visas and residency permits to foreigners and stateless persons, registers them and issues work permits. The Service can also revoke any of these documents.

According to the law, a foreign national can be expelled from the country if he/she poses a threat to the society or leads an amoral life style. The definition of amorality is not provided.

As far as the entry and exit of Turkmen nationals are concerned, the law declares that they cannot be prevented from exercising these rights. At the same time, travel abroad is only possible upon presenting documents allowing it, which are issued by the State Service of Turkmenistan on Registration of Foreign Nationals. The Government can refuse to issue these documents for national security reasons, if there is deemed to be a risk that a Turkmen national could get trafficked or forced into slavery while abroad, or if during his/her previous stay abroad a person violated the laws of the destination country. The law also states that if an individual is going abroad for work but cannot produce a work permit issued by the destination country, he/she can be prevented from leaving Turkmenistan to ensure their security.

The law declares that citizens are free to move and choose their place of residence within the country and have a right for protection from forcible relocation. At the same time, it provides for circumstances under which such relocation and limitation of freedom of movement are possible. The law retains the *propiska* system, but absence of a *propiska* in a specific town/village is no longer an obstacle for employment.

Turkmen nationals leaving their permanent residency for more than 45 days should register in the destination region. The law also provides for the establishment of the population database to compile personal data of individuals. This database will become the main information source about the population and will be used for taxation and social protection.

Conclusion

Contemporary migration situation in Turkmenistan is characterized by a decline in the population movements. This is due to an absolute and relative reduction in the number of non-titular population and the low mobility of the titular population.

High growth rates among the titular population, resulting in oversupply of labour force and unfavourable labour market, creates incentives for migration in the future. It is likely that migration processes in the future will be dominated by temporary labour migration and not permanent emigration.

It is also likely that an outflow of population abroad will keep exceeding the inflow of immigrants. However, the ethnic composition of migrants is likely to change. The share of migrants of titular origin will increase due to economic reasons. Besides, migration is the only alternative to a life in a restricted society isolated from the rest of the world.

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UKRAINE

Contemporary Migration from Ukraine

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When Ukraine declared its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, it became Europe's newest and one of its largest sovereign nations. The nascent state faced many challenges, among them, the conversion from a command to a market economy and democratization. At the same time, migration emerged as a dynamic force and as yet another challenge, as millions of people flowed in and out of Ukraine.

The collapse of the Soviet Union left many Ukrainians outside of their homeland, many of whom returned to Ukraine from other former Soviet republics. Groups who were deported during the Stalinist era such as the Tatars were given permission to return to their former homes, and a large-scale migration movement from Central Asia to Ukraine ensued. Conflict in the Trans-Caucasus and in other places produced refugees, some of whom were admitted to Ukraine.

As the 1990s progressed, outward migration assumed greater importance as the economy failed to live up to expectations. Unemployment, low salaries, a weak currency, and delays in wage payments were some factors that motivated people to search for work opportunities abroad. In the period 1945–1991, most migration from Ukraine was directed to other republics of the Soviet Union. But after 1991, emigrants from Ukraine also sought new centres of settlement such as Portugal and the Czech Republic. By the turn of the millennium, hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians, mainly from the country's western regions entered European Union countries on tourist visas and overstayed as unauthorized migrants. Some of these migrants paid fees to smugglers who spirited them into countries where they found jobs; although the wages were often low, savings could still be accumulated and remitted to Ukraine.

Ukrainian Migration at the Turn of the 1990s

The pre-1991 Ukrainian diaspora in the West was largely made up of migrants or the descendants of migrants who left Austria-Hungary before World War I and the Ukrainian territories (Poland, Romania, and Czechoslovakia) in the interwar period. The diaspora was later enlarged by post-World War II refugees and their offspring. After the political unification of the western and eastern regions of Ukraine in a reconstituted Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) in 1945, Ukrainian emigration to the West was reduced to a trickle. It is conservatively estimated that, prior to 1989, there were about 3 million Ukrainians and their descendants living in countries outside of the USSR and Eastern Europe, the most important communities being those in the United States, Canada, Brazil, Argentina, Australia, France and the United Kingdom, with smaller groups elsewhere in Western Europe and South America.

Within the Soviet Union, according to the last census of 1989, 6.8 million people of Ukrainian origin were living in Soviet republics other than the Ukrainian SSR, mostly in Russia. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent independence of its constituent members, the new government in Kyiv turned its attention to the repatriation of Ukrainians in the former Soviet republics and to lifting restrictions on migration to the West.

Between 1991 and 2004, over 2 million people came to Ukraine, mostly from other former Soviet republics. Many were Ukrainians who had been working in Russia, but by the middle of the 1990s this trend had reversed: between 1994 and 1998, 636,000 people left Ukraine for Russia but only 270,000 individuals came to Ukraine from its northern neighbour.¹

Prior to 1991, emigration to places outside the Soviet Union was limited. According to Olena Malynovska of the National Institute for International Security Problems in Kyiv, “[p]ermission to exit the USSR was issued only for the purpose of family reunification and was primarily available to Jews migrating to Israel or to Germans moving back to Germany.” Restrictions were relaxed during the Glasnost period, so that the number of Ukrainian residents given permission to leave increased from 5,400 in 1987 to over 90,000 in 1990. “Most of these migrants planned to move to Israel,” notes Malynovska, but “in reality, only 76,500 actually left due to the 1990 Gulf War and international tensions in the Middle East.”²

Although with the end of communism and, concomitantly, the Cold War, freedom of travel in eastern Europe became possible, albeit not easy, a challenge was posed to the West when this right began to be exercised. By 1992 it became clear that western European countries were having difficulty in absorbing an exodus from the east.

Aware of this difficulty, the Argentine government under Carlos Saúl Menem announced that it was prepared to admit several hundred thousand immigrants from eastern Europe to ease the pressure on the European Union. In “a bid to forge stronger ties with the European Community, which is having difficulty in absorbing migrants from the collapsing economies of the former Soviet bloc,” reported Canada’s *Globe and Mail* newspaper in April 1992, “Mr. Menem has offered to accept as many as 300,000 refugees from such countries as Russia, Yugoslavia, and Ukraine.” The plan was to settle the immigrants in the sparsely populated region of Patagonia in the southern part of Argentina. However, as part of the plan, the European Union was expected to “not only supply the bodies” but also “to supply Argentina with up to US \$20,000 for each immigrant.” The response of the European Union to the idea was described as “lukewarm” and the scheme never materialized.³

Post-1991 Emigration to the Americas

However, news about the proposed scheme did generate interest in Ukraine and Argentina did become a destination that was considered by many would-be emigrants. During the course of the 1990s approximately 10,000 immigrants from Ukraine came to Argentina. According to the Argentine National Direction of Migrations, in 1990–2000 a total of 9,879 permits for temporary residence and another 587 for permanent residence were granted to Ukrainian nationals.⁴ On 29 April 1999, Argentina and Ukraine signed a bilateral agreement on migration. That agreement gave Ukrainian immigrants the same rights as Argentine citizens in terms of education, remunerated work, and the obtainment of social security, legal aid, and judicial protection. Article 15 of Chapter 4 of the accord also alludes to the subject of recognition of foreign titles, a matter of importance to the Ukrainian side as a disproportionate number of the immigrants from Ukraine are holders of university degrees but

¹ Olena Malynovska, *Mihranty, mihratsiia ta ukrainska derzhava: analiz upravlinnia zovnishnimy mihratsiiamy* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo NADU, 2004), 78.

² Olena Malynovska, “Caught between East and West, Ukraine Struggles with Its Migration Policy,” at <<http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=365>> (accessed on 11 May 2006). Emigration to Israel, quite considerable at the beginning of the 1990s, levelled off as the decade progressed, falling from 48,528 people in 1991 to 18,158 in 1998. See Malynovska, *Mihranty, mihratsiia ta ukrainska derzhava*, 86. The share of the national population of Jews dropped from 0.9 percent to 0.2 percent between 1989 (the year of the last Soviet census) and 2001 (from 487,300 individuals to 103,600). See “All-Ukrainian Population Census ’2001,” at <<http://www.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/results/general/nationality/>>.

³ “Refugees Offered a Home in Patagonia,” *The Globe and Mail*, 17 April 1992, A1.

⁴ See Ezequiel Texidó, “El acuerdo bilateral celebrado entre Argentina y Ucrania,” in *Acuerdos bilaterales de migración de mano de obra: Estudios de casos*, edited by Eduardo Geronimi, Lorenzo Cachón, and Ezequiel Texidó (Geneva: Sector de la Protección Social, Programa de Migraciones Internacionales, Oficina Internacional del Trabajo, 2004), 135.

work in unskilled jobs. The two parties have agreed to promote the recognition of titles and certificates and to study the possibility of drafting a separate convention on that subject.⁵ However, there has been little progress on the revaluation of degrees⁶ and the likelihood that there would be significant Ukrainian immigration to Argentina in the future was diminished with the subsequent downturn in the economy.

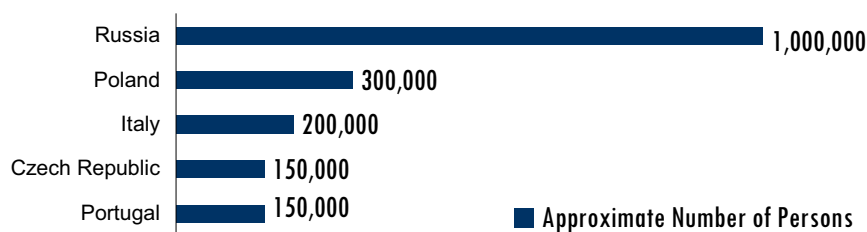
In other countries of the Americas, the United States and Canada have accepted immigrants from Ukraine, but not on the scale of previous eras. In the United States, 135,000 legal immigrants from Ukraine were admitted into the country in the period 1991-2001 and many others had come on temporary visas and stayed.⁷ Between 1991 and 2003, around 30,000 people had come to Canada from Ukraine as permanent, and, to a much lesser extent, temporary residents.⁸

The United States, Canada, and Argentina have been traditional centres of Ukrainian settlement, and the combined number of people of ethnic Ukrainian origin in the three countries is approximately 2.3 million (1,071,060 in Canada [2001 Canadian census], 892,922 in the United States [2000 U.S. census], and over 300,000 in Argentina). However, the immigration from Ukraine to these and other countries has in the past also embraced ethnic groups other than Ukrainians (e.g., Jews, Germans, Poles, Romanians, etc.), and this has been the case with the more recent emigration from Ukraine of the last decade and a half.⁹

Emigration to European Union Countries and Russia

Recent estimates of the number of Ukrainians residing abroad have run as high as 7 million.¹⁰ Although that estimate is too high—the true figure may be closer to 2 million—there is no doubt that emigration has been taking place on a grand scale. Migration specialists in Ukraine have cited economic factors as among the chief reasons for emigration.¹¹ However, one should consider also the “pull” factors for emigration, for so long as there is a demand for Ukrainian labour elsewhere and few incentives for it to remain at home, then one would expect an outflow to ensue. Since the turn of the century, emigration from Ukraine has mainly been directed to countries of the European Union and has encompassed places where the Ukrainian presence prior to 1991 was negligible.

Figure 1: Top five destination countries for Ukrainian migrants



Source: GCIM, 2005

⁵ Ibid., 129–31, and 148n.60.

⁶ Ibid., 138–39 and 148.

⁷ “First Petro Jacyk Memorial Symposium Discusses Diaspora-Ukraine Relationship” at <http://www.huri.harvard.edu/na/na_jacyk_symp_03.html> (accessed on 7 May 2006).

⁸ Ihor Stebelsky, “Chetverta khvyliia iak skladova chastyna ukrainskoi diaspori v Kanadi: demografichna perspektyva,” *Ukrainskyi vymir* (Nizhyn: Nizhyns'kyi Derzhavnyi Universytet imeni M. Hoholia, 2005), Issue 4, Volume 2, 4–19.

⁹ Jews, for example, have constituted a large component of the immigration stream from Ukraine to the United States. See “First Petro Jacyk Memorial Symposium Discusses Diaspora-Ukraine Relationship.”

¹⁰ See, for example, “Ukrainians Increasingly Vulnerable to Human Trafficking,” *Associated Press Newswires*, 2 August 2005, which quotes Ukrainian Youth and Sport Minister Iurii Pavlenko as saying that there are about seven million Ukrainians living abroad.

¹¹ S. Pirozhkov, E. Malinovskaya [Olena Malynovska], and A. Homra, *Foreign Labor Migration in Ukraine: Socio-economic Aspect* (Kyiv: National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine, National Institute of International Security Challenges, 2003), 5.

Portugal is a case in point. Never a centre of Ukrainian settlement, in 1999, there were only 127 individuals from Ukraine recorded there as legal immigrants. Three years later, in 2002—by which time a programme to regularize undocumented foreigners was in operation—the number of legal immigrants jumped to 65,000.¹² Current estimates of the number of both legal and illegal Ukrainian immigrants in Portugal suggest that it exceeds 200,000¹³—the group thereby forming a large share of that country’s foreign-born population and two percent of all its inhabitants. Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians also reside in neighbouring Spain, and in Italy and Greece.

The opportunity to earn wages in unskilled jobs, a portion of which can be remitted home, draws the migrants from Ukraine and other eastern Europeans to these countries. A Ukrainian immigrant in Portugal, described as a trained engineer, who, like many of his compatriots, works in construction in that country, told a reporter that he was earning about US \$400.00 a month. It was not very large sum, he said, but at least he was paid on time and could remit US \$150.00 home to his family.¹⁴ In June 2005 *Agence France Presse* presented the case of Zenoviy Klymco [Zenovii Klymko], who “had worked for over a decade as a journalist and graphic designer in his hometown Ivano-Frankivsk[e], a city of 240,000 people in western Ukraine that is a centre of mechanical engineering, wood-processing and light industry.” After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the *Agence France Presse* report said, the Communist Party ceased its funding to the regional newspaper for which he worked, *Prykarpatska Pravda*. He tried his hand at business, setting up with a friend what turned out to be a short-lived venture in the sale of leather goods. Klymco related that as economic conditions deteriorated in Ukraine, he “applied at the German embassy in Kiev for an entry visa into Europe’s passport-free Schengen zone, which he used to get into Portugal.” The future “may look brighter today with the election of a progressive president [Viktor Yushchenko in December 2004],” he remarked, but that was “not the case before.” After his arrival in Portugal, he worked as a bricklayer in the Algarve region in the southern part of the country. “Since at the time Portuguese law was one of the least restrictive regarding immigration,” Klymco explained, “I chose to come to Portugal.”¹⁵

In Spain, according to the Ukrainian Embassy in Madrid, Ukrainian migrants have been engaged in the following sectors (in order of importance): agriculture (harvesting fruits and vegetables, as well as employed in food processing); construction; care giving (caring for seniors, children, and the sick); and service (working in hotels, cafeterias, restaurants, nightclubs, as well as performing repairs and other tasks).¹⁶

In Greece, “as a rule, Ukrainian citizens are engaged as nurses, domestic workers, and dancers in restaurants and cafes.”¹⁷ And in Italy, where the majority of Ukrainian migrants are women, these “mainly care for the elderly and children, work as office cleaners, domestics, in bars and the like.” As for the men, “[q]uite a few of [them] are engaged on construction sites and in agriculture.”¹⁸

Ukrainians also have been working in substantial numbers in other European countries. In the Czech Republic, where young men predominate and generally have a relatively high education,

¹² Malynovska, *Mihranty, mihratsiia ta ukrainska derzhava*, 105.

¹³ “UGCC in Portugal” [press release, 23 April 2006] at <<http://www.ugcc.org.ua/eng/press-releases/article;3402/>> (accessed on 8 May 2006).

¹⁴ “Welcome to Portugal—Especially if You Are Ukrainian,” in *EuroViews* at <<http://manila.djh.dk/portugal/>> (accessed on 6 May 2006).

¹⁵ “Europe Rendezvous: From Ukraine to Portugal, a Journey across Europe,” *Agence France Presse*, 7 June 2005.

¹⁶ “Ukrainska diaspora v Ispanii,” at <<http://www.embucrania.org.es/esp/diaspora.php>> (accessed on 8 May 2006).

¹⁷ “Status of Observance of Ukrainian Migrant Workers’ Rights in the Receiving Countries,” at <http://www.ombudsman.kiev.ua/S_Report1/g12_5.htm> (accessed on 8 May 2006).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

typically, “they are employed mostly in unskilled occupations, predominantly in construction.”¹⁹ *Agence France Presse* reported in late 2005 that “[a]ccording to some estimates, more than 100,000 Ukrainians work in the Czech Republic, including some illegally, making them the biggest group of foreigners in the country.”²⁰

In Poland there were an estimated 100,000 Ukrainian citizens working in the country at the turn of 2006.²¹ That number may rise in the coming years. Reports in 2005 anticipated that once a new agreement between the Polish and Ukrainian governments would come into effect as many as 200,000 Ukrainians could be going to Poland during the course of the following year. “Ukrainians who in the past worked illegally in Poland between April and October as fruit and vegetables pickers will now be able to take up all sorts of jobs in the agri-sector legally,” a report declared in July 2005. “Legal jobs would also be offered to Ukrainian women working as cleaners, house workers and baby-minders” in whose case the Polish government wanted “to set a tax-free income level,” the report continued. The accord moreover would allow “Polish businessmen to employ highly qualified Ukrainian experts” who “could be employed in Poland for 1.5 years.”²²

While Ukrainian migration has in recent times been directed more to European Union countries, immigration to Russia nonetheless continues to be significant among Ukrainians in central and eastern Ukraine. In May 2005, Deputy Foreign Minister Valentyn Nalyvaichenko asserted that from 1 million to 1.2 million Ukrainians work in Russia “at the time the work force is in high demand there.”²³

Visa Regimes and the Regularization Process

The constitution of Ukraine promulgated in 1996 guarantees citizens freedom of movement, but once migrants leave the borders of Ukraine they often stay in the countries they visit beyond the expiry dates of the temporary visas and thus become illegal immigrants. In the 1990s Ukraine signed temporary employment agreements with several former Soviet republics and neighbouring states. In the 2000s it began to enter into bilateral agreements with other countries to which Ukrainians were migrating.

On 27 March 2005, for example, an agreement between Portugal and Ukraine on temporary Ukrainian labour migration came into effect. According to that agreement, Ukrainian citizens will travel to Portugal after employment contracts have been signed and work visas obtained. The agreement also specifies that Ukrainians will be able to officially work in their professions in Portugal and be entitled to health and labour benefits.²⁴

In Spain, an amnesty was granted in February 2005 for an estimated half million illegal immigrants working in the country. The amnesty program was to apply to immigrants who have work contracts and have been in the country for at least six months.²⁵ Negotiations between Ukraine and

¹⁹ Dusan Drbohlav and Eva Janská, “Current Ukrainian and Russian Migration to the Czech Republic: Mutual Similarities and Differences,” in *Migration in the New Europe: East-West Revisited*, edited by Agata Górny and Paolo Ruspini (Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 54.

²⁰ “Czech Government Considers Foreign Offices to Curb Illegal Immigration,” *Agence France Presse*, 13 December 2005.

²¹ *Polish News Bulletin*, 1 February 2006. In addition to these recent migrants, Poland has a Ukrainian minority with deeper roots in the country. Unofficial estimates of that minority of 250,000-300,000 (see, for example *Holos Ukrainy*, 25 February 2003) have not been confirmed by the Polish census of 2002, which reports 27,172 citizens of Ukrainian origin in Poland. See “Characteristics of Ethnic and National Minorities in Poland,” at <http://www.mswia.gov.pl/index_eng_wai.php?dzial=10&id=56#GERMANS>. See also “Ethnic Constitution May Suppress Some Problems and Raise Others,” *Polish News Bulletin*, 2 May 2005.

²² “Up to 200,000 Ukrainians Could Find Legal Work in Poland in 2006,” *BBC Monitoring European*, 1 July 2005.

²³ “Five Million Ukrainians Worked Abroad in Year 2004,” *Ukrainian News Agency*, May 24, 2005.

²⁴ “Ukrainian-Portuguese Agreement on Temporary Labor Migration of Ukrainians to Portugal,” *Ukrainian News*, 29 March 2005.

²⁵ “Spain Moves to Legalise Half Million Clandestine Immigrants,” *Agence France Presse*, 7 February 2005.

Spain later that year centred on simplifying employment procedures and drafting an agreement along the lines of the one Ukraine has with Portugal.²⁶

There also have been attempts to strike similar accords with Greece and Italy.²⁷ As a result of a new migration law in Italy, 100,000 Ukrainian workers were granted legal status in that country; in June 2005 it was announced that an agreement between Kyiv and Rome would be signed to set quotas for Ukrainian guest workers in Italy.²⁸ In some cases, employers seem themselves to be taking the initiative in facilitating the regularization of migrant employees. In Italy, for example, where, as noted, many Ukrainian women are engaged in domestic work, “the owners of homes managed by a Ukrainian woman are interested in keeping her at work and [have] offered [for] her husband to arrive, arranged children’s learning in schools, etc.”²⁹

Another way that the government in Kyiv has been attempting to ease matters for Ukrainians going abroad has been to urge the European Union to simplify visa requirements for Ukrainian citizens. In 2005 President Yushchenko issued a decree that waives Ukrainian entry visas from 1 May to September for citizens of the European Union and Switzerland, and called on the leaders of European states to “facilitate free movement of all Europeans without distinction.” It was pointed out that Ukraine already had an arrangement with Poland in which free visas were issued to Ukrainians in exchange for no visa requirements for Poles and that Slovakia had earlier cancelled fees for short-term and transit visas for Ukrainians from May 1 to September.³⁰

While Ukraine was unilaterally cancelling short-term visas for nationals of European Union members, and for citizens of such countries as the United States, Canada, Switzerland, Norway, and Iceland,³¹ in June 2005 the European Union announced that it would ease the visa regime for Ukrainians in September that year and that they would obtain “visas for their trips to Europe under a relaxed procedure.”³² In June 2005, too, Switzerland agreed to increase to three years the validity period of visas for Ukrainian citizens, to simplify visa procedures, and “to prolong the action of the non-visa regime for owners of diplomatic and service passports of Ukraine.” This was seen as a step toward the scrapping of visas altogether for Ukrainian citizens.³³

Human Trafficking

In the summer of 2005, the Ukrainian government announced that it planned to create a national bureau to combat human trafficking,³⁴ and that year, too, signed an agreement with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to collaborate in combating illegal migration and human trafficking.³⁵

In February 2006, Daniil Kliuchnykov, the head of the department for fighting crimes connected with human trafficking, announced that the number of crimes registered by the police that involved human trafficking increased in 2005 compared with 2004 by 54.3 percent to 415. He attributed this increase not to more crimes of that nature, but to more active police efforts to fight human trafficking.

²⁶ “Ucrania y España planean un acuerdo sobre procedimientos laborales de ucranios en ese país [26 May 2005],” at <www.ucrania.com> (accessed on 11 May 2006).

²⁷ “Europe’s Higher Wages, Lax Borders Attract Millions of Ukrainian Migrants,” *Agence France-Presse*, 9 March 2003.

²⁸ “Ukraine, Italy about to Sign Agreement on Quotas for Ukrainian Guest Workers,” *Interfax Ukrainian News* (Russia), 11 June 2005.

²⁹ Pirozhkov, *Foreign Labor Migration in Ukraine*, 123.

³⁰ “Yushchenko Calls on Council of Europe to Ease Visa Requirements for Ukrainians,” *Ukrainian News*, 16 May 2005.

³¹ Malynovska, “Caught Between East and West.”

³² “EU to Ease Visa Mode for Ukrainians in September, But Won’t Yet Grant Market Economy Status,” *Interfax Ukrainian News* (Russia), 14 June 2005.

³³ “Switzerland to Facilitate Visa Regime for Ukrainian Citizens,” *Unian*, 17 June 2005.

³⁴ “Ukrainians Increasingly Vulnerable to Human Trafficking,” *Associated Press Newswires*, 2 August 2005.

³⁵ “Ukraine, International Organization for Migration Sign Cooperation Agreement,” *BBC Monitoring Ukraine and Baltics*, 25 October 2005.

In 2005, he said, the police ended the operations of thirty-seven organized criminal gangs involved in human trafficking. Also in that year, 446 victims of human trafficking (including 39 minors) were repatriated to Ukraine—74.9 percent more than in 2004. According to Ukrainian police sources, the “victims of human trafficking are sold mainly to Turkey, Poland, Russia, Israel, Germany, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, and Italy” and “groups trafficking people to Great Britain and Syria” also were uncovered in 2005. However, not all cases involved the sexual exploitation of the victims. According to the IOM’s office in Kyiv, 60 percent of human trafficking cases were sex-related while the remainder involved non-sexual exploitation.³⁶

The police in other countries also have been playing their part in efforts to crack down on human trafficking as well as the smuggling of migrants. In June 2005 the Austrian police, in cooperation with police in Eastern Europe, were able to dismantle a multinational network that illegally smuggled people from that part of the continent to European Union countries. Within the past year smugglers had managed to bring to Austria some 5,000 people “from [the] Republic of Moldova and Ukraine notably,” most of whom “wanted to get to Western Europe to work on the black market, paying between 2,500 and 4,000 euros to reach their destination.”³⁷ And in the United Kingdom, a British court in February 2005 sentenced to seven years behind bars a Ukrainian gang master who made £5 million in three years smuggling eastern European workers to fish factories in Scotland and other places.³⁸

Measures to curb human trafficking include the Czech pilot project “Selection of Qualified Foreign Workforce.” In cooperation with the Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, IOM Prague and IOM Kyiv, the five Centres of Migrant Advice are implementing an information campaign about that pilot project. The Czech pilot project is open to qualified experts who would like to explore opportunities for working and settling permanently in the Czech Republic. Ukrainian citizens participating in the project are eligible to apply for permanent residence in the Czech Republic after 2.5 years (while those not taking part in the project can apply for residence only after 5 years). Successful candidates under the project are allowed to settle in the Czech Republic together with their family members.³⁹

In June 2006 the U.S. Department of State released its latest report on the trafficking in persons, which placed Ukraine on a Tier 2 watch list. Ukraine was described as primarily a source country for “men, women, and children trafficked internationally for the purposes of sexual exploitation and forced labour.” It noted that reports of internal trafficking continued while the number of destination countries used by traffickers had actually increased in 2005. Poland, Russia, and Turkey were singled out as primary destination countries, while other major destinations included the Czech Republic, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal, Serbia and Montenegro, and the United Kingdom. A conclusion reached by the report was similar to one it had made in 2005: that the Government of Ukraine does not fully comply with minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, but that it was making significant efforts to do so. While the government had strengthened its anti-trafficking criminal code, two-thirds of the traffickers convicted received probation instead of prison sentences. The report recommended measures by which the Ukrainian government would strengthen the ability of the Office of the General Prosecutor to effectively prosecute trafficking cases, and urged that more steps be taken to provide protection for government witnesses and to ensure that the rights of victims are safeguarded in court. The report also alluded to the fact that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had

³⁶ “Number Of Human-Trafficking Crimes Registered by Police Increased 54% To 415 In 2005,” *Ukrainian News*, 16 February 2006, and (for the information on the proportions on sex-related versus non-sex related cases of human trafficking) the IOM office in Kyiv, summer 2006.

³⁷ “SECI Cooperation Instrumental in Annihilating Human Trafficking Ring,” *Rompres*, 15 June 2005.

³⁸ “Gangmaster Sentenced to Seven Years,” *Press Association*, 11 February 2005.

³⁹ IOM office in Kyiv, summer 2006. See also “Pilot project ‘Selection of Qualified Foreign Workers,’” at <<http://www.imigrace.mpsv.cz/?lang=en&article=project>>.

through its consulates abroad repatriated 498 Ukrainian victims and was encouraging “Ukrainian diplomats to refer all trafficking victims to the IOM.”⁴⁰

Currency Remittances

It has been estimated that currency remittances from Ukrainians abroad amount to between US \$4 billion and US \$6 billion a year.⁴¹ Much of the funds, however, have been brought to Ukraine by the migrants themselves in the absence of adequate banking provisions. In 2003 Ombudsman Karpachova said in a report (on “The State of Observance and Protection of Human Rights of Ukrainian Citizens Abroad”) to Ukraine’s parliament that Ukrainians earned over Hr. 2 billion Ukrainian a month and recommended that the system of money transfers from abroad be simplified and that the payment for such services rendered by banks be reduced.⁴²

Some measures to simplify money transfers were taken in 2004. For example, the Western Union company agreed to reduce by 40 percent its commission on remittances of up to 200 Euros from Spain, Italy, and Portugal, starting on 1 April 2004. Moreover, in December 2004, Pryvatbank, one of the ten largest banks in Ukraine, reached an agreement with the Portuguese bank Caixa Central de Credito Agricola Mutuo to cooperate in the area of money transfers.⁴³

The many citizens of Ukraine who live abroad thus perform from afar a not insignificant role in that country’s economy. In 2003, the director of the job centre in the western Ukrainian city of Ternopil, Borys Dovzhuk, estimated that around US \$100 million annually flows into the Ternopil region from Ukrainians abroad. In 2002, total foreign investment in Ukraine as a whole was reportedly US \$700 million.⁴⁴

The Ukrainian Diaspora

The government under President Yushchenko appears to be more assertive in fostering ties with the multi-million Ukrainian diaspora than its predecessor. In April 2006, President Yushchenko noted in a visit to Latvia that a special department had been created within Ukraine’s foreign ministry for matters pertaining to Ukrainians abroad,⁴⁵ and in the same month it was announced in Kyiv that the Cabinet of Ministers had “endorsed procedures for using budgetary funds” to promote relations with the Ukrainian diaspora.⁴⁶

In a 2003 study of labour migration from Ukraine, the authors alluded to the lack of organization among Ukrainian migrants in countries such as Portugal and Spain.⁴⁷ But this situation has been changing as the process of regularizing the status of illegal immigrants progresses. In Spain, for example, the Embassy of Ukraine in Madrid currently lists fourteen Ukrainian associations in the country.⁴⁸ When the Slovak news agency *SITA Slovenska Tlacova Agentura* announced in 2005 that the umbrella organization Association of Ruthenians-Ukrainians in the Slovak Republic would be joining the Toronto-based Ukrainian World Congress, it noted that by doing so it would become its

⁴⁰ See “Ukraine” in U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report* (June 5, 2006) at <<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/65990.htm>> (accessed on 8 June 2006).

⁴¹ Malynovska, “Caught Between East and West.”

⁴² “Ukrainians Abroad Earn Hr. 2 bn per month,” *Eastern Economist Daily*, 3 April 2003.

⁴³ “Ukrainian-Portuguese Agreement on Temporary Labor Migration of Ukrainians to Portugal Comes Into Effect,” *Ukrainian News*, 29 March 2005.

⁴⁴ “Emigration from Ukraine.” American dollars is said to account for one-third of Ukraine’s money in circulation. See “Ukrainian Bankers Worried Over U.S. Dollars Accounting for a Third of Nation’s Money in Circulation,” *Ukrainian National News Agency*, 1 June 2006.

⁴⁵ “President Visits Ukrainian School in Riga,” *Unian*, 28 April 2006.

⁴⁶ “Govt. Endorses Procedures for Using Budgetary Funds, Earmarked for Developing Relations with Ethnic Ukrainians Abroad,” *Ukrainian National News Agency*, 11 April 2006.

⁴⁷ Pirozhkov, *Foreign Labor Migration in Ukraine*, 94 and 98.

⁴⁸ See “Ukrainski asotsiatsii v Ispanii,” at <<http://www.embucrania.org.es/ukr/asosiasii.php>> (accessed on 7 May 2006).

thirtieth member.⁴⁹ The Ukrainian World Congress, founded in 1967 in New York as the World Congress of Free Ukrainians, now counts among its adherents umbrella organizations that represent Ukrainians in Spain, Portugal, Greece, in western Europe, and others in Russia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Moldova, and elsewhere in the zone of the former Soviet Union, in addition to its traditional members.

It has been noted that Ukrainians already account for two percent of Portugal's population. They also form significant minorities in a number of other states. Although they are not as numerous in several former Soviet regions as they once were, they nonetheless remain sizable minorities in a number of places. In Russia, which throughout the post-Soviet period has persisted as an important recipient of Ukrainian migration, the Ukrainian share of the local population dropped to the 2,943,471 that were counted in the All-Russian census of 2002 from the 4,362,872 recorded in the Soviet census of 1989, a number that nonetheless still makes them the second largest national minority after the Tatars.⁵⁰

In Kazakhstan, 896,240 Ukrainians were counted in 1989, but ten years later in 1999, 547,052. Forming 3.65 percent of the total population, Ukrainians are the second largest national minority in that Central Asian republic after the Russians.⁵¹

The republic of Moldova splintered in 1990 after the breakaway Transdnistrian Moldovan Republic was formed. In the republic of Moldova, minus the Transdnistrian region, Ukrainians in 2004 comprised 283,400 of the republic's 3,389,000 inhabitants—or 8.4 percent of the total population⁵² (compared with 13.84 percent in 1989), a percentage that makes it the country's largest national minority. In the still universally unrecognized Transdnistrian Moldovan Republic, Ukrainians constituted 28.8 percent of the 555,500 inhabitants, according to a census conducted there in November 2004⁵³—a proportion of a national population second only to Ukraine in the world.

In European Union countries, Ukrainians already are beginning to form a significant element in the foreign-born population. In the Czech Republic, for example, Ukrainians constituted the largest group of foreigners who stayed in the Czech Republic permanently or as holders of long-term residence permits (more than 78,000, followed by Slovaks [47,000], and Vietnamese [34,000]) in 2004⁵⁴ and also were the largest group of foreigners residing in the country without a proper permit—almost 70 per cent of the overall figure—thus also figuring most prominently among the deported foreigners (more than 6,000 in 2005).⁵⁵

Bilateral agreements and the protection of Ukrainians abroad

Ukraine emerged at the beginning of the 1990s as a nascent state with no recent history of mass emigration beyond the boundaries of the former USSR. After a decade of large-scale migration, it became apparent that legislation allowing freedom of movement was not matched with sufficient protection afforded to migrants. This led to wider public discussion of the problems associated with emigration and a recognition of the economic factors that were among its causes.

In recent years, Ukraine has signed a number of bilateral labour agreements aimed at protecting the rights of its citizens abroad. Bilateral agreements can, for instance, help guarantee the application of the residence country's Labour Code and medical insurance to labour migrants. Apart from that, they can ensure that employers provide compensation for work related injuries and accidents.

⁴⁹ *SITA Slovenska Tlacova Agentura*, 12 August 2005.

⁵⁰ See "Natsionalnyi sostav naseleniia," at <<http://www.perepis2002.ru/index.html?id=17>> (accessed on 6 June 2006).

⁵¹ "Ethnodemographic Situation in Kazakhstan" at <www.ide.go.jp/English/Publish/Mes/pdf/51_cap1_2.pdf> (accessed on 8 May 2006).

⁵² "Ethnic Moldovans Make Up 76.1% of Moldovan Population," *ITAR-TASS World Service*, 17 May 2005.

⁵³ "Moldovan Dniester Region Publishes Census Data," *BBC Monitoring Ukraine and the Baltics*, 7 September 2005.

⁵⁴ "Czech Cabinet Adopts Plan to Help Settled Foreigners to Integrate," *BBC Monitoring European*, 4 January 2006.

⁵⁵ "Illegal Migration Poses Threat Despite Decline - Czech Aliens Police," *BBC Monitoring European*, 2 February 2006.

According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP), bilateral labour agreements have been concluded with Belarus, Armenia, Vietnam, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Portugal, the Russian Federation, and Slovakia. Agreements with Azerbaijan, Argentina, Belgium, Greece, Georgia, Iran, Spain, Kazakhstan, Cyprus, Congo, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Switzerland are prepared.

Apart from employment agreements, treaties on social protection also help protect Ukrainians abroad. Ukraine has concluded bilateral agreements of this type with the governments of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Georgia, Spain, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Romania, Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic. Conclusion of such agreements with other countries is planned as well. Ukraine has also signed multilateral agreements on social protection in the framework of the CIS.

In this connection, it is worth mentioning the Centres for Protection of Human Rights of Ukrainians Abroad the government has opened at embassies mainly in Russia and Western Europe. These Centres complement Ukrainian Consulates or Embassies in providing protection to Ukrainians abroad and assisting them in such areas as legal aid, mediation in relations with employers, transport, insurance, and the like. In practice however, many of the functions of the Centres seem to be overlapping with the current workload of Ukrainian Embassies.

According to a recent opinion poll, Ukrainians regard the matter of emigration to be a serious one and are concerned about the protection of Ukrainians abroad. In reply to a question on migration in a survey conducted by the Kyiv International Sociological Institute in late 2005, 25.6 percent of the 2,021 people polled answered that they considered the problem of emigration from Ukraine to be critical, and another 43.0 percent of the respondents said they regarded it as being serious.⁵⁶ Considering the existing problems linked to migration, more discussion on migration involving the authorities and the social partners would not be an unhealthy process.

Migration: Pros and Cons

There has been apprehension about the impact that large-scale migration of young, skilled citizens of Ukraine in the post-Soviet period is having on the country's population. In 1989 the population of Ukraine stood at 51,700,000, but by 1 August 2005 it had declined to 47,056,163.⁵⁷ The republic's population, therefore, has dropped by more than 4.6 million people over a period of sixteen years, in part because of a falling birth rate but also due to emigration.

In discussing the challenge of population loss in the 2000s, Olena Malynovska has noted that while the influx of people into Ukraine from other former Soviet republics had exceeded 2 million over a period of ten years, mostly due to repatriation, it fell significantly to around 50 thousand in 2001.⁵⁸ The Ukrainian state, she maintains, had not been able to effectively reinforce laws on Ukrainian citizenship with assistance to Ukrainians who wished to leave other former Soviet republics. This inability has led to "tangible human losses since many ethnic Ukrainians and other nationalities and one-time emigrants from Ukraine, who left their places of previous residence in Transcaucasia and Central Asia wanting to return to their motherland, immigrated to Russia instead of Ukraine because in the former, despite numerous difficulties, they received support and help in resolving settlement and employment problems, etc." Thus, "most ethnic Ukrainians formerly residing in Kazakhstan and other CIS republics...immigrated to the Russian Federation."⁵⁹ Russia, like Ukraine, she observes, has been facing a low natural growth rate, and recognizes that to preserve its population of 145 million (2002) it would need to admit close to fifty million immigrants in the next fifty years. Not only does this signify that Ukraine has a rival in Russia in the competition for immigrants, notes Malynovska, but moreover, "[t]he possibility that some of the Ukrainian population will emigrate to Russia, especially if social

⁵⁶ "Poll: USA Recorded Language Split in Ukraine," *REGNUM News Agency*, 3 April 2006.

⁵⁷ *Interfax Ukrainian News*, 13 October 2005.

⁵⁸ Malynovska, "The Main Principles of Ukrainian Migration Policy," 81.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 81–82.

and economic conditions domestically do not improve, constitutes a serious threat to Ukrainian society.”⁶⁰

In late 2005, Vasily Zubkov, a RIA Novosti economic commentator, noted that there are between 12 million and 15 million immigrants in Russia, most of whom are illegal. While public opinion generally favours a limitation on immigration, “Russia’s working age population is shrinking every year,” he observes, and according to a World Bank report on Russia, “the rate of natural increase in Russia is the world’s second lowest: -0.6% after -0.8% in Ukraine.”⁶¹ The United Nations, he said, believed that Russia’s population would decline to 112 million by 2050. And the World Bank, noted Zubkov, concluded that “sustainable economic growth is impossible in Russia without an influx of immigrant labour.” Zubkov cited Vyacheslav Postavnin, head of the foreign labour migration department of the Federal Migration Service, as advising journalists that up to 1 million “working age immigrants should be legally ‘imported’ to Russia every year to partially compensate for the natural drop in the population.” Zubkov stated that while the possibility of providing an amnesty for illegal immigrants already in the country existed, in the meantime “skilled labour recruitment agencies abroad, in the countries that supply the majority of guest workers - eastern Ukraine, the Crimea, Moldova and Central Asia,” should be opened and “established on the basis of interstate and interregional agreements, and partnership and cooperation of the bodies of state authority, local governments and private enterprise.”⁶² Thus, the idea of opening skilled labour recruitment agencies in such places as Ukraine is being proposed at a time when the loss of people to its northern neighbour is being viewed with unease in that republic.

In the meantime, there has been a growth in “non-traditional” immigration from countries in Africa and Asia, as Ukraine was “becoming a country that was increasingly attractive to foreigners and persons without citizenship.”⁶³ Over the first half of 2004, the Ukrainian police had issued 12,142 immigration permits.⁶⁴ Forecasts on migration patterns in the western parts of the former Soviet Union suggest that countries such as Ukraine will shift from becoming one of emigration and transit migration to that of a recipient of immigrants. The reason for this is partly demographic, but also because with European enlargement “the factor of ‘benefit of good neighbours’ that benefited the newest EU Members States both in political and economic terms, could also benefit the new neighbouring WNIS [Western Newly Independent States] region as Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova seek to better align their national reforms with EU standards,” thereby in the future making these countries “more alluring to migrants from countries that have traditionally supplied the CIS region with immigrants, such as China, Afghanistan, India and Vietnam.”⁶⁵

Emigration has had a negative impact on the national birth rate, not only because young citizens are drawn away from the country, but also because long periods of separation between couples have sometimes led to divorce.⁶⁶ That many Ukrainians are separated from family members was confirmed in a survey of migrants in Italy. The survey’s findings showed that 75 percent of Ukrainian women migrants had left one to two children at home and nearly 8 percent had left behind three children or more.⁶⁷ The issue of return migration is one that can be expected to grow in importance. Malynovska has noted that the Ukrainian state has not “created enough incentives for its migrants to return home and invest their savings” and that it needs to pay greater attention to the matter of facilitating their movement back home.⁶⁸ Should the opportunities be sufficiently auspicious, the ranks of returnees

⁶⁰ Ibid., 85.

⁶¹ “Immigration to Russia: A Boon or a Curse?” *RIA Novosti*, 16 November 2005.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Olena Braichevska, Halyna Volosiuk, Olena Malynovska, Yaroslav Pylynskyi, Nancy Popson, and Blair A. Ruble, *Nontraditional Immigrants in Kyiv* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2004), 1.

⁶⁴ “Ukraine Attracts More Migrants, Official Says,” *BBC Monitoring Ukraine & Baltics*, 11 August 2004.

⁶⁵ *Labour Migration Assessment for the WNIS Region*, 4.

⁶⁶ “Emigration from Ukraine,” *The Economist*, 25 October 2003.

⁶⁷ *Labour Migration Assessment for the WNIS Region*, 18.

⁶⁸ Malynovska, “Caught Between East and West.”

moving back to Ukraine would likely expand. Governments can, of course, influence and expedite such movements by the provision of legislation and an information campaign. Apart from savings, return migrants can bring other assets back to their home communities. Presumably now conversant in more than their native language, the bilingual or multilingual returnees can serve to bind their original countries closer to those to which they have emigrated. There would be greater potential for joint ventures, for example, in business and other fields. Moreover, because of these ties, and the movement back and forth of people—of repeat migrants, for example—more demands may be placed on such sectors as transport. In short, there is a potential for Ukrainian communities abroad, while contributing to the economies of the countries in which they live, to assume a larger role as investors in their original homeland in more ways than one.

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UZBEKISTAN

Feminization of Labour Migration in Uzbekistan

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Introduction

Uzbekistan has the largest population among Central Asian countries. As of 2006, 26.4 million people, or 45 per cent of the region's population, lived here, which presupposes that socio-economic and demographic processes taking place in the country have a significant influence on the region.

In the last few years labour migration has become wide spread, linking Uzbekistan with many other countries. Uzbekistan is primarily a sending country. There are no statistics on the employment of Uzbek nationals abroad and estimates can be made only based on sociological studies. According to our estimates, at least 7 per cent of the economically active population of Uzbekistan is involved in internal and external labour migration.

Research shows that most labour migrants are men. However, in the last few years the share of women migrants has been on the rise both internally and externally. This indicates a trend toward feminization of migration processes in the country. Based on several sociological studies, this article attempts to demonstrate how and why the composition of labour migrants has changed.

Migration Situation in Uzbekistan

In the era of globalization, Uzbeks have actively engaged in labour migration abroad. The market economy has facilitated economic growth, emergence of entrepreneurship and increased the migration potential of the population. Both internal and external migration flows have increased.

Uzbekistan has a negative migration balance; according to estimates, present migration outflows reduce the population of the country by three per cent each year.¹ Uzbekistan's main migration partners are the Russian Federation (about 70 per cent of external migration) and Kazakhstan (12-13 per cent of migration flows until mid-1990s and 25-30 per cent in recent years).

Because of external migration Uzbekistan is losing some of its labour force. When it comes to educational and professional background, immigrants are not as skilled as emigrants resulting in the loss of qualified personnel. This situation is especially noticeable in regions where the majority of population outflow occurs, such as Tashkent city, Tashkent, Navoi, Samarkand and Syrdaria regions.

In recent years labour migration has become large-scale. The majority of citizens do not wish to migrate abroad permanently—they prefer to live in Uzbekistan but travel abroad for seasonal work from time to time. An increase in labour migration has become a salient trend of migration processes in the country. Population demand for employment abroad is high and exceeds the supply and opportunities for such work.

General Characteristics of Labour Migration

Export of the labour force is a component of the Government's employment policy. However, the sending of workers abroad for employment is a complicated and time-consuming process in which

¹ *Yearly Demographic Publication of Uzbekistan. 2003.* (Demograficheskiy ezhegodnik Uzbekistana. 2003), Tashkent, p. 272-273.

Uzbekistan has little experience. Finding a niche is a difficult task for Uzbekistan and other factors limit the development of these processes—lack of experience among the Uzbek population in accessing international labour markets, low competitiveness of the labour force, and difficult access to the labour markets in developed countries (such as the existence of immigration restrictions).

The Government agency responsible for sending workers abroad is the National Agency for External Labour Migration created in 1994 under the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. Initially, the scale of labour force export was quite modest, while the demand for employment abroad was very high and kept increasing every year. The Government has a monopoly over the export of labour force; private agents are not allowed to act as intermediaries for employment abroad. However, there are tourist agencies illegally engaged in this activity. These firms provide intermediation services on a fee basis but provide no guarantee of social protection to workers. As a result, many Uzbek nationals illegally go abroad for work and often find themselves the victims of dishonest employers and employment agents.

According to sociological studies, no less than 15 to 20 per cent of labour migrants work in countries such as the United States, Israel, Greece, European countries, United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Iran and Korea. However, the majority of labour migrants work in former Soviet Union countries due to a more liberal visa regime (Uzbek citizens do not require visas to enter the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan), a common language and established business, family and other connections. The main destination country is Russia, receiving more than half of all labour migrants from Uzbekistan. The main factor behind such large-scale labour migration to Russia is its enormous labour market and the opportunity to earn relatively high wages. In recent years labour migration to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan has increased, with most migrants working in border areas.

Two thirds of labour migrants have professions and specialties but their qualifications were not sufficiently utilized in Uzbekistan. Many of them, especially illegal migrants, are forced to accept the least wanted and lowest paying jobs. Migrants are mainly employed in construction, agriculture, sales and small business sectors. In non-former Soviet Union countries they mostly work in the service industry.

Despite the government's attempts to send more workers abroad through legal channels, more than half of labour migration is illegal and lacks any form of social protection. Studies demonstrate that anywhere between 52 per cent and 65 per cent of migration is illegal. This situation requires a thorough migration policy, search for effective ways to export the labour force and cooperation with destination countries on labour migration.

Main factors influencing labour migration among the Uzbek Population

Labour migration from Uzbekistan is caused by a range of socio-economic factors resulting from the difficulties of the transition period. A major "push" factor is unemployment. After independence the transformation from a planned to a market economy was accompanied by industrial decline.² As Uzbekistan was searching for its own way to build a market economy, the government took effective measures to ensure the creation of more than two million job places. These measures helped the country avoid mass unemployment during the difficult period of transition.

Fast growth of labour supply strains the employment situation in the country. Despite a significant increase in jobs in urban and rural areas, some regions of the country experience unemployment problems. According to the World Bank, about 19 per cent of Uzbekistan's population works in temporary, seasonal or occasional jobs.³

In the last seven to eight years the economic situation in Uzbekistan has significantly improved resulting in an increase in income levels and a decrease in inflation. At present however there is a

² Koshanov A. and Khuzainov B. 2001. "Integration of the Central Asian States," *Tsentrlnaya Aziya i Kavkaz*, No 1 (13), p. 79-80.

³ Edmundo Murragara and William M. Tracy. 2002. *Labour Market and Poverty Level in Uzbekistan* (Rynek truda i uroven bednosti v Uzbekistane), World Bank document, p. 24.

strong demographic pressure on the labour market as an entire generation born during the highest birth rate period in the country has reached working age. In addition, the scale of labour efficiency and redistribution, especially in rural areas, puts additional strain on the labour market. Combined, these factors adversely affect unemployment and make it difficult to effectively utilize the labour force. Under these circumstances one of the ways for the population to cope is through internal and external labour migration.

An important factor influencing labour migration is low labour costs. A survey of female labour migrants demonstrated the predominantly economic nature of migration: 68.8 per cent (57.1 per cent of them rural residents) said they migrated due to low salaries in their place of origin, 54.5 per cent (including 38.1 per cent rural residents) cited a difficult financial situation, and 32.5 per cent (42.9 per cent of them rural residents) said they migrated because they could not find a suitable job.

Entrepreneurship is a factor influencing the growth of labour migration. Individuals wishing to gather starting capital for business often engage in labour migration. The majority of respondents (58.3 per cent) said they migrated because of an opportunity to earn money being an entrepreneur. The opportunity of entrepreneurship was the main reason for migration for 56.9 per cent of migrants (61.9 per cent of this group were women and 38.1 per cent were men). Also 58.8 per cent of women and 41.2 per cent of men hoped to achieve higher earnings in the future engaging in business in the Russian Federation.

Women on the Labour Market

Women's employment in Uzbekistan has developed in a context of positive progress in the social and labour spheres. Liberalization of labour agreements, diversity of work regimes and employment types create favourable conditions for female employment. During the period of 2000-2004 employment of women in Uzbekistan increased by 401,200 thousand persons.⁴

In Uzbekistan as in many other countries, women face obstacles in the world of work. Women compose 49.4 per cent of the working age population but only 44 per cent of the economically active population. The numbers of employed women grow slower as compared to men: between 2000 and 2004 the number of employed men grew by 526,400 persons (10.5 per cent), while the number of employed women grew by 401,200 persons (10.1 per cent), or 125,200 fewer than men. Employment among women is also lower than employment among men: in 2002, 65.7 per cent of women were employed as compared to 81.5 per cent of men. In 2004 this figure dropped to 63.2 per cent as compared to 78.5 per cent for men.

Employment of women in the public sector has been on the decrease. At present 61-62 per cent of women of working age are employed in it as compared to 69.8 per cent in 1990. Despite higher levels of education, women are falling behind men in career growth. As mentioned above, women compose 44 per cent of the economically active population but only 28.8 per cent of managers. At higher levels of management fewer women are employed. Yet, working women are better educated than men: 18 per cent have higher education versus 17.3 per cent of men; 24.2 per cent of women have specialized secondary degree as compared to 19.4 per cent of men in this category; and fewer women have incomplete education or only secondary education (57.8 per cent of women versus 63.3 per cent of men).⁵

Having lost their job, women actively look for another job and register at employment agencies. Often however, it is harder for them to find a suitable job than it is for male workers. Employers, especially in the dynamically developing non-governmental sector, prefer to hire men. According to surveys, the share of women in private companies and even in family businesses is significantly lower compared to public enterprises engaged in a comparable activity.

⁴ Gender Equality in Uzbekistan. Figures and Facts. 2000-2004 (Gendernoe ravenstvo v Uzbekistane. Tsifry i fakty. 2000-2004.), Tashkent, 2005, p. 71.

⁵ Women and Men of Uzbekistan. (Zhenshiny i muzhchiny Uzbekistana) Statistical Data, Tashkent, 2002, p. 86-87.

As the numbers show, women are not competitive on the labour market and are more at risk of losing their jobs than men are. Women also compose 58-60 per cent of the officially registered unemployed in the country, which indicates that women's labour is not in sufficient demand under conditions of increasing competition and shortage of jobs. The current problems in the labour market affect women the most severely. As a result, many women become unemployed and are socially vulnerable.

The situation of women in the labour market is determined by socio-economic and demographic factors. Despite a significant drop in the birth rate, the average family size in Uzbekistan is still relatively large. According to several studies, in rural areas 31 per cent of families consist of 6-7 persons and 11 per cent of families have nine and more members. On average, for every 100 women there are 136 children and young persons below working age. In rural areas the latter figure reaches 152 children.

Women are the main caretakers of children and this responsibility often makes them less competitive in the labour market. Women with children sometimes have to leave their jobs to be homemakers. The difficulty in finding suitable work in the formal sector forces many women to seek employment in the informal sector and/or migrate abroad for employment.

Many women engage in entrepreneurship and we can outline two phases in the development of entrepreneurship in Uzbekistan. Until the mid-1990s (first phase) the dominant form of entrepreneurship was trade. During this period women entrepreneurs were dominant as more than half of the traders in stores and markets were female. Trade was often linked with labour migration and women bought goods in neighbouring countries and resold them in Uzbekistan.

During the second phase since the mid-1990s, the main entrepreneurial activity has been manufacturing. Women have been less successful in this field and women's participation in business has dropped. According to surveys conducted by the author in cooperation with other experts, in 2001 women composed only 19 per cent of entrepreneurs who owned their own business. Experience shows that women have less access to loans than men: in 2001 alone 85 per cent of micro credits were given to men and only 15 per cent to women.⁶ This demonstrates that women are disadvantaged in the business sector.

The data presented above suggest that in many sectors of the economy men are given preference over women in hiring. Women have to spend more time looking for a job. When there are job cuts, women are the first to be fired. They have fewer opportunities for career development. Thus, women in the national labour market are not sufficiently utilized, which pushes them to look for work abroad.

Engagement of Women in Labour Migration

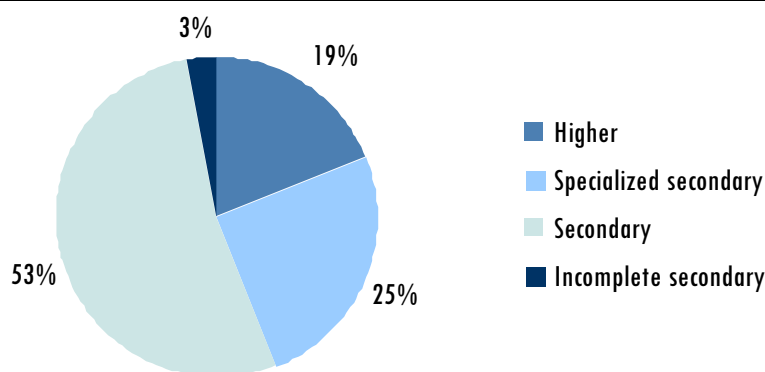
From the outset of economic transition, women in Uzbekistan became actively involved in external labour migration processes. The first form of such migration was shuttle trade, which was very popular in the beginning of the 1990s. Women not only participated in shuttle trade but often also organized it bearing full responsibility for possible risks and losses. Among shuttle traders surveyed, more than half (54.7 per cent) were women, from these 40 per cent of them were unemployed, 15 per cent were employed in retail business, and the rest were government employees. According to the 1995 survey, shuttle traders would travel on average four to five times a year to destinations such as Turkey (29.8 per cent), the United Arab Emirates (23.4 per cent), Iran (13.7 per cent), and China (11.9 per cent). Uzbekistan actively developed business cooperation with these countries in the first years after independence, which facilitated trade contacts.

Shuttle trade was widespread in Uzbekistan until the mid-1990s, at which point it started declining. Many shuttle traders, having raised initial capital, invested it in other businesses. Despite its decline, shuttle trade migration still subsists and women still engage in it in large numbers.

⁶ *Making Transition Work for Everyone: Poverty and Inequality in Europe and Central Asia*, World Bank, Washington, D.C., p.98.

Women also actively engage in other types of migration related to temporary employment abroad. In general, the majority of migrants going abroad for temporary work are men (70-80 per cent) and come mainly from the titular nation (70-75 per cent). However, more and more women are becoming temporary labour migrants overseas.

Figure 1 Educational Level of Uzbek Female Labour Migrants in the Russian Federation



According to the survey carried out in 2000 among migrants who had worked outside of the former Soviet Union, the majority of respondents were women (52.5 per cent). Among young and middle-aged migrants, women made up between 30 to 50 per cent, while among migrants over the age of 50, 89.5 per cent were women. The survey found that 62.5 per cent of respondents worked in the United States, 10 per cent in South Korea, and 5 per cent each in Canada, Italy and the UAE. Female migrants worked mainly doing unskilled jobs, in the service industry (66 per cent): as domestic help; caretakers of children, elderly, and sick persons; and in restaurants, bars and casinos. A small number of women were in sales and helped families who ran their own business.

Within the former Soviet Union, even more Uzbek women are involved in labour migration. Since independence the main destination country for Uzbek labour migrants is the Russian Federation. According to some estimates, no fewer than 200,000-250,000 Uzbek women travel for work in the Russian Federation every year, most of them illegally. In 2002 we surveyed labour migrants from Uzbekistan in Saratov, Russia. Women composed 43.4 per cent of this group. Many of them had a profession in Uzbekistan: doctors, kindergarten teachers, school teachers, sales personnel, accountants, nurses, and some of them had their own business. However, one in five women (21.8 per cent) was unemployed in Uzbekistan.

The following is a typical profile of an Uzbek labour migrant: a 42-year-old woman with a secondary specialized education worked in Uzbekistan teaching at a specialized secondary college. She reported that the main reason for migration was to provide a decent life for herself through temporary work in the Russia.

The survey demonstrated that women tend to be more law abiding compared to men: only 40 per cent of women were in the Russian Federation illegally compared to 60 per cent of the men. Twenty five percent reported having their own or family business, 3.2 per cent worked for other private firms, and the rest (71.8 per cent) worked in markets or engaged in shuttle trade. In the market of Saratov city, 66 per cent of migrants were women from Uzbekistan. They were also employed in other sectors of economy. Most women-migrants worked outside of their profession even if they had higher education or specialized secondary education. Women who worked in the country legally were satisfied with work conditions but only half of them were satisfied with their wages. All women working illegally were satisfied with their earnings. Many women worked in sales or in the restaurant industry.

Labour migration of women to Kazakhstan has significantly increased in recent years, especially in border areas. This type of migration is primarily illegal and facilitated by employers in Kazakhstan with the help of intermediaries in Uzbekistan. Uzbek border migrants work in construction,

agriculture, and other types of physical labour. The share of women in these types of jobs is not high but has been on the rise. According to surveys of labour migration from Uzbekistan to Kazakhstan, the share of women migrants has increased from 14.1 per cent in 2002 to 23.7 per cent in 2004, or by a factor of 1.7. A similar trend has been observed in labour migration to other Central Asian countries—Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, although the numbers are not as high. In these countries, women from Uzbekistan work in agriculture and in trade.

The rights of female migrants are often violated. In Saratov city, 7 per cent of women from Uzbekistan working illegally in the markets reported having difficulties with registration. Women also complained of migration related issues such as: poor living conditions (16.7 per cent), isolation from their families (26.3 per cent), foreign culture (26.3 per cent), poor working conditions (26.3 per cent), high cost of living in the Russian Federation (15.6 per cent), and persecution by the Russian administrative and law enforcement bodies (10.5 per cent).

Labour migrants from Uzbekistan are often exploited and find themselves in forced labour without any rights (especially in cases of border migration). There have been numerous reports in the press of exploitation of women working in Kazakhstan.⁷ Migrants who went abroad illegally and were cheated are especially vulnerable. They also experience harassment from officials while crossing borders. This situation is often caused by inadequate legislation and inappropriate law enforcement.⁸

Socio-Demographic Composition of Women Engaged in External Labour Migration

The age of migrants varies significantly depending on the type of migration. Younger migrants are involved in the organized export of labour. According to the Agency for External Labour Migration most migrants sent to work in South Korea are men, only 28.1 per cent of these migrants are women.⁹ The age distribution of Uzbek women migrants in Korea is as follows: 57.8 per cent are between the ages of 20-29, and the remaining 42.2 per cent are between the ages of 30 and 40.

In shuttle trade, the share of young migrants is not large because this type of trade involves significant physical and psychological stress as well as certain risks. Young people usually participated in shuttle trade only as helping family members. According to the study conducted in mid-1990s among shuttle traders, 33.5 per cent were women between the ages of 30-39, and 28.1 per cent were between the ages of 40-49, i.e. these two age groups composed two thirds of all migrants.

Women working outside of the former Soviet Union are also older. A study of 2001 demonstrated that only 14.3 per cent of women in this group were under 29 years of age, 23.8 per cent were between the ages of 30-39, and more than half (61.9 per cent) were older than 40.

Migrants to the Russian Federation are also mostly mature individuals. The process of labour migration is difficult, involves many organizational, financial and bureaucratic hurdles, and requires migrants to be experienced. The young people in this group make up less than 20 per cent of all migrants. Ethnic Uzbeks were the youngest group of migrants in the Russian Federation with an average age of 37. Tatars and Ukrainians from Uzbekistan working in the Russian Federation were on average 43 years old, while ethnic Russian and Tajiks were 44 years old on average. The age distribution of men and women was similar.

Among women-entrepreneurs who had worked abroad, the share of women under 30 was not high – 21.1 per cent. There were more older women – 36.8 per cent between the ages of 30 and 40, and 42.1 per cent were women over 40 years of age.

Among internal migrants the age distribution was even. However, the share of young women among internal migrants was not large.

⁷ Polozova A. “Uzbek Izaura on Kazakh Plantations” (Uzbekskaya Izaura na kazakhskikh plantatsiyah) Informational Brochure of the Women’s Resource Centre, No. 8, 2003.

⁸ *Labour Migration: Social and Legal Aspects* (Trudovaya migratsiya: sotsialnye i pravovye aspekty), Seminar Materials (Ferghana, 2004), Tashkent, 2005, p. 23-25.

⁹ Materials of the survey of organizers of labour force export in 2001.

Many labour migrants are highly educated, especially those working abroad. According to studies conducted in 2001, 90 per cent of migrants, who had worked abroad and opened their own business in Uzbekistan, had higher or specialized secondary education, including 7.5 per cent with advanced graduate degrees. A share of women in this group of migrants was not high, only 16.6 per cent, but their educational level was similar to that of men in this group.

Educational level of migrants who worked in former Soviet Union countries was somewhat lower. For example, 30 per cent of migrant traders had secondary education. The majority of women working in the Russian Federation (53.1 per cent) had secondary (high school) education, and only 18.8 per cent had university degrees (see appendix).

Female shuttle traders with trade connections abroad are in general better educated. About 45 per cent of them have higher or incomplete higher education, and 50.5 per cent have secondary education. Overall, shuttle trade migration involved two groups of people—those highly educated and those with medium-level education.

Entrepreneurs are the most educated group of female migrants. Women with university degrees made up 78.9 per cent of migrants in this group. More than a third of them (36.8 per cent) were engaged in business for more than five years, including 15.8 per cent who had been entrepreneurs for 10 years. Entrepreneurship is the most dynamically growing sector of economy and it creates a significant number of jobs. That is why a large share of women (one third) reported recently engaging in entrepreneurship and working in this sphere for less than three years.

This study demonstrated the high activity levels of women-entrepreneurs. On average each entrepreneur had created 13 jobs. Women-entrepreneurs are often more successful than men, are very active in business and are mobile. Those who worked in Russia among this group are well educated, with higher or specialized secondary education. The majority are representatives of the titular nation (75-80 per cent) with Russians and Tatars also being actively involved in entrepreneurship.

The majority of respondents were married, but 35-40 per cent were young people who went to the Russian Federation with other relatives. Many of the women are divorced or widowed.

Internal Labour Migration

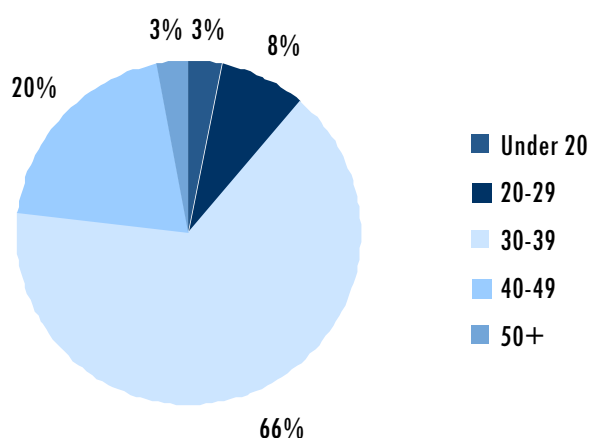
Internal migration in Uzbekistan is sizeable and is on the rise. For a long time only men migrated internally. Usually these were residents of rural areas or small towns temporarily working in larger cities. Most migrants move to Tashkent, which absorbs labour force from all over the country. There are also *ad hoc* unorganized labour markets in the regional centres, although they are much smaller than in Tashkent. Such markets are created in regular bazaars and on the streets leading to markets. In order to manage these processes, the Government has created special centres for temporary and one-time jobs where migrants and employers are matched, registered, and can receive some social protection.

In the last three-four years women also started to migrate internally. Initially, female residents of Tashkent went to informal labour markets (“mardikor-bazaar”) but there were very few of them. There was only one informal labour market located in the Kuiliuk market - one of the largest in the capital. Women offered services such as laundry, ironing, cleaning houses and washing windows. Shortly, the market grew and included women who had come from other regions of the country to find work.

Lately, internal labour migration of women has become a large-scale phenomenon. These new trends attest to the feminization of labour migration.

To study this issue we surveyed 100 female labour migrants in one of the markets of Tashkent (Staragorodskiy market). The survey included questions on the profile and skills of respondents. Results of the survey (see appendix) provide the following information about this migrant group.

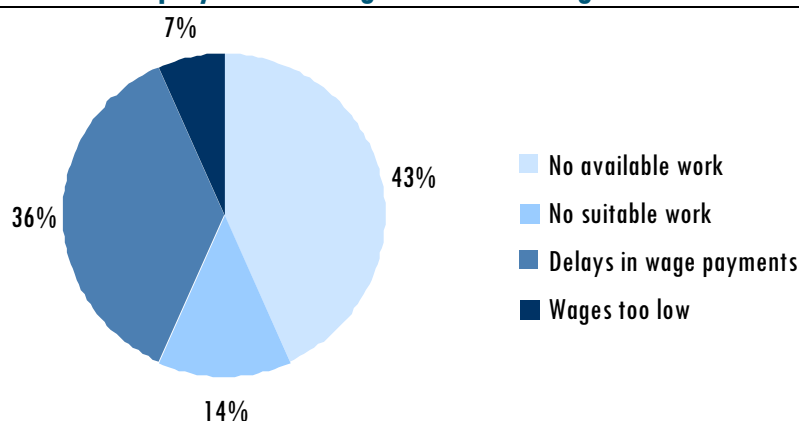
Figure 2 Age distribution of women working in informal labour markets



1. Participation of women in informal labour markets has become a mass phenomenon. Women are trying to find work outside of their place of origin in all markets of Tashkent and in other regional markets. According to the respondents, about 250-300 women look for work on weekdays at the labour market in the Old city. During the weekend this number rises to 400. They are all labour migrants. None of the respondents was from Tashkent. They pointed out several other labour markets in the country but claimed that Tashkent provides more opportunities for work with higher wages. Some women, having obtained some experience migrating for labour within Uzbekistan, then went to the Russian Federation for work.

2. The majority of women (78 per cent) arriving to Tashkent's informal labour markets are rural residents. The largest group of respondents (40 per cent) were from Kashkadariya region (15 per cent came from towns and 85 per cent from rural areas), which is quite remote from the capital. Ferghana valley (28 per cent) stood out as a region of origin for labour migrants. It is the most densely populated region in the country and unemployment has been a problem for a long time there. Approximately 12 per cent of respondents came from the Khorezm region, most migrants (83.3 per cent) were rural residents.

Figure 3 Reasons for unemployment among women working in informal labour markets

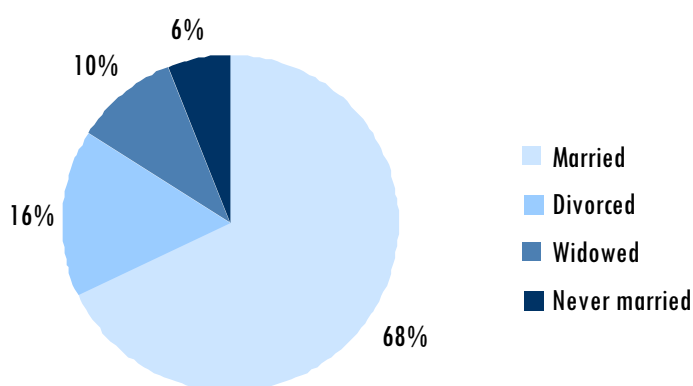


3. Most of the respondents were women who could not find work elsewhere. All of them were unemployed for many years surviving on occasional work. Among respondents, 45.2 per cent had been unemployed for 3-6 years, 48.4 per cent were unemployed for 7-10 years, and 6.4 per cent have been unemployed for over 10 years. The majority of these women (64 per cent) went to formal employment centres, many of them 3-4 times, but concluded that it was useless as these centres offered no suitable jobs with decent wages.

4. The profile of respondents varied by age, level of education, profession and work. The majority (66 per cent) were women between the ages of 30-39; 20 per cent were between 40-49 years of age, while 8 per cent were very young. There were two respondents over the age of 60. On average, their level of education was not high: 52.3 per cent had only high school education and 4.5 per cent had incomplete secondary education. Every third woman had specialized secondary education, which means that they had specialties and professions in agriculture, manufacturing or service industries. They used to work in collective farms, sewing factories, nursery schools, primary schools and colleges. Some women worked out of their homes.

5. The main reasons for their unemployment included: lack of jobs (43.2 per cent), lack of suitable work that paid enough to support a family (13.6 per cent), delays in salary payments (36.4 per cent) and small wages (6.8 per cent).

Figure 4 Marital status of women working in informal labour markets



6. The majority of female labour migrants (68 per cent) were married. A significant share of respondents was divorced (16 per cent) and widowed (10 per cent). Two per cent were never married. Most women had children (88 per cent), including 59.1 per cent with two children and 25 per cent with three children. Most of their children were between the ages of 11 and 19 (94.6 per cent). Only 1.8 per cent of respondents had very young children.

Married women said their husbands, in their opinion, were not successful enough as only 34.2 per cent of husbands had permanent work, 23.7 per cent found temporary work at informal labour markets, 31.6 per cent worked in the Russian Federation (labour migrants) and 10.5 per cent were unemployed. In some families (10.7 per cent) children also worked but most children were dependants.

7. As a rule, women go to informal labour markets individually (76.9 per cent). In some families looking for work in informal labour market has become a family affair as 15.4 per cent of women said their husbands and children were also at the labour market. Many women (24 per cent) kept their work at informal labour markets secret from family and friends, thinking that such low prestige work would negatively affect the image of their families in the eyes of society.

8. The unskilled jobs women find in informal markets often pay higher wages than those in the formal sector. On average these women make 4,000-5,000 sum (US\$ 4-4.5) per day, 30,000-35,000 sum (US\$ 25-30) per week, and 120,000-130,000 sum (US\$ 100-110) per month. For comparison, an average salary in the country is 80,000-90,000 sum (US\$ 65-75).

9. Despite the existence of centres for temporary and one-time work set up by the Government in all major markets of Tashkent, none of the respondents used their services, did not register there, and most of them did not even know of their existence. It is possible that people do not trust any type of registration, especially since most of them had to register with authorities upon arrival to Tashkent and faced problems doing it.

Perhaps these centres were not sufficiently effective, but the fact that the Government is trying to protect labour migrants is significant. It reflects the Government policy on internal labour migrants. Such interaction between the Government and labour migrants should be expanded and improved.

Labour Migration as an Alternative to Poverty and Unemployment

Labour migration has significant socio-economic implications for Uzbekistan. It helps decrease the demographic pressure on the labour market, and develops entrepreneurship and competitiveness among individuals. During periods when local labour markets are strained, external labour migration also alleviates unemployment. Official unemployment in Uzbekistan is low (0.4-0.5 per cent of the economically active population), but the real unemployment figures are substantially higher – 4-6 per cent of the economically active population.¹⁰ On a global scale this indicator is not particularly high. In Uzbekistan this unemployment rate should be considered in the context of high growth of labour resources, consisting mainly of the youth and families with many children and low incomes.

Labour migration ameliorates the unemployment situation in the country. Every seventh-eighth migrant was unemployed before going abroad. On one hand labour migrants find jobs abroad, on the other they also create jobs in the country. According to the survey of 2001, on average each entrepreneur, who earned initial capital by working abroad, upon return to Uzbekistan created 32 jobs.¹¹

Migration also plays a significant role in alleviating poverty. Presently labour costs in Uzbekistan are low, resulting in a situation where, on average, more than half (60 per cent) of the household income is spent on food. Expenses for food have grown by a factor of 1.5 compared to 1991, while the share of household expenditures on non-food items has decreased significantly.¹²

Given these circumstances, many individuals attempt to go abroad for work in order to find better work and provide for their families. A survey of labour migrants from Uzbekistan working in the Russian Federation (Saratov city, 2002) demonstrated that lack of a good job (32.5 per cent of respondents), unemployment (16.7 per cent), difficult financial situation (54.5 per cent) and low wages (68.8 per cent) were the main reasons for migration. Economic factors were more significant for women than for men because on average each woman had 5.4 dependants compared to 5 dependants for men.

Although there is no official data on remittances from labour migrants abroad, the economic implications of temporary labour migrants can be estimated based on secondary data obtained through surveys. According to the expert estimate of the Agency for External Labour Migration, Uzbek nationals working in Korea on average transfer US\$ 300 per month to their bank accounts in Uzbekistan. Uzbek migrants in the Russian Federation remit home US\$ 52 per month.¹³ Foreign financial mechanisms such as the Western Union and Anelik Bank are actively involved in the remittance transfer process. International experience shows that informal money transfers make up no less than a quarter of the total volume of remittances transferred via official channels.¹⁴

¹⁰ *Uzbekistan: Assessment of Population Living Standards* (Uzbekistan: Otsenka urovnya zhizni naseleniya), World Bank document, May 2003, p.33.

¹¹ Maksakova L.P. (Ed.), *Migration and Labour Market in Central Asian States* (Migratsiya i rynek truda v stranah Srednei Azii), Moscow, Tashkent, 2002, p. 21.

¹² *CIS in 2003* (SNG v 2003 godu). Statistical Reference Book, Intergovernmental Statistics Committee of the CIS. 2004. Moscow, p.132-133.

¹³ Tiuriukanova E. "Labour Migration from the CIS and New Practices of Exploitation of Labour" (Trudovaya migratsiya iz stran SNG i novye praktiki ekspluatatsii truda), *International Migration: Cairo + 10* (Mezhdunarodnaya migratsiya: Kair + 10), Moscow, Maks-Press, 2004, p. 89.

¹⁴ Arkhipov V.Ya. *International Migration of Labour Force in Asia (1970-1980s)* (Mezhdunarodnaya migratsiya rabochei sily v Azii (70-80-e gg), Institute for Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, 1997, p. 50, (Cited in Labour Migration from Tajikistan, IOM in cooperation with the Research Centre "Sharq", Dushanbe, 2003, p. 86)

In Uzbekistan, where as in other Central Asian countries¹⁵, the population does not trust the banking system, remittance transfers via unofficial channels could make up half or more of the official transfers. Moreover, labour migrants purchase and bring expensive home appliances, medication, clothes, shoes and other goods for their families in Uzbekistan. Many migrants pay for their children's education in the Russian Federation. According to our estimates, economic effects of labour migration come to no less than US\$ 500 million. Consequently, labour migration makes a significant contribution to the economy. Labour migrants assess their economic contribution as follows: 99.5 per cent bring home hard currency, 58.4 per cent relieve the government from having to pay social security to their families, and 26.9 per cent have left their jobs thereby diminishing the unemployment rate.

The economic effects of labour migration can also be assessed through migrants' own evaluation. All migrants surveyed in Saratov city noted that they now can provide for their families (each migrant on average had five dependants). More than half (52.6 per cent) stated that as a result of their work their families' financial situation has improved, including 11.4 per cent whose financial situation has improved significantly. Some migrants (6.5 per cent) opened their own business, bought property (9.1 per cent), purchased expensive items (18.2 per cent) and paid for their children's education (2.6 per cent).

Besides the economic implications, migrants often enhance their professional skills in the process of migration or obtain another specialty in high demand on the labour market, including the labour market of Uzbekistan.

However, some migrants are disillusioned about their earnings abroad. For example, a 52-year-old Uzbek female migrant working in the labour market of Saratov has stated that she has not purchased anything working in the Russian Federation.

Labour migration also has negative implications due to a high number of illegal migrants who do not have any social protection. Women, who are more attuned to working and living conditions, tend to suffer more from the lack of social protection. Migrants, even those who left via official channels, often work outside of their profession abroad. This causes the loss of the professional potential of labour migrants resulting in a negative outcome for Uzbekistan's economy.

There are also negative socio-demographic consequences of labour migration, especially for family relationships. Our survey demonstrated that 35-40 per cent of migrants rarely communicate with their families in Uzbekistan, 10-15 per cent does not communicate at all, and every fourth migrants noted that a long separation from their families hurts the family relationship and negatively affects the upbringing of their children. Another consequence of mass labour migration is a sharp decrease in the birth rate (during the transition period the birth rate fell by 1.8 times) and the reversal of traditional roles between men and women.

There is a risk of losing part of the labour force to receiving countries. However, our surveys show that this risk is not too high for Uzbekistan. Only 12-15 per cent of migrants said they intend to leave the country permanently. Most migrants want to make enough money to provide for their families or open their own businesses in Uzbekistan.

An outflow of highly qualified labour force has negative implications for the national labour market creating a shortage of specialists. Growing labour migration coincides with emigration out of the country creating serious problems in the supply of qualified labour force.

Conclusion

Studies demonstrate that there has been a feminization of labour migration in Uzbekistan. Feminization has developed in various ways in the context of external migration. In non-former Soviet Union countries the share of Uzbek female migrants was high during the peak of shuttle trade. Eventually, shuttle trade has become less popular. Outside of the trade sector, migrants working in

¹⁵ IOM. *Labour Migration from Tajikistan*, IOM together with the Research Centre "Sharq", Dushanbe, 2003, p.94-95.

non-former Soviet Union countries are still predominantly men. However, the number of female labour migrants working in the service industry in non-former Soviet Union countries has been on the rise. In former Soviet Union countries the share of women among labour migrants from Uzbekistan is quite high – 35-45 per cent.

The number of women among labour migrants to neighbouring countries, especially to Kazakhstan, is on the rise. This trend influences the composition of labour migrants from Uzbekistan. The share of women among internal labour migrants is also increasing. Women migrate primarily for economic reasons looking for better paying work.

Some achievements have been made in Uzbekistan in achieving gender equality at the workplace and in increasing the participation of women in the labour market. However, changing gender roles in society could have serious consequences not only for women but for families and society in general.

As this article argues, the feminization of labour migration in Uzbekistan is caused by:

- gender inequality in the local labour markets
- a lower competitive advantage of women
- a high demand for labour force in neighbouring countries, especially Kazakhstan
- accessibility of labour markets in neighbouring countries as compared to the Russian Federation and non-former Soviet Union countries; opportunity to work in neighbouring states for short periods of time

These factors play an important role in the growth of labour migration of women, especially in regions neighbouring Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

Possible prospects

In the near future the factors listed above can influence migration flows into the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and other regions. They could also impact the demographic distribution (gender and age) of labour migrants. It is likely that the share of migrants under 30 years of age will increase. At present the number of migrants in this group is not high due to numerous organizational, financial and bureaucratic hurdles to migration.

Youth unemployment will further feed labour migration. However, the share of women in youth migration should decrease due to demographic and economic factors. Economic growth in the country will be accompanied by better living standards for the population, which, in turn, would decrease female labour migration.

A relative decline in the number of women-migrants is possible if the demand for female labour in the internal labour market increases. The Programme for Territorial Development of Uzbekistan envisages creating jobs in the service and manufacturing industries primarily using female labour; taking measures to decrease hidden unemployment, especially in rural areas; achieving gender equality at the labour market; and resolving other problems to achieve full employment of the population, including women.

Suggestions and Recommendations

Labour migration is a multifaceted complex socio-economic phenomenon. Trends in labour migration are closely linked to unemployment, poverty, human rights, and the social protection of migrant workers. Perspectives for labour force export from Uzbekistan depend on a variety of factors including economic development, job creation, population income dynamics and investment in human capital.

The outlook for the future indicates that temporary labour migration will remain prevalent. Therefore, it is important to create mechanisms for the legal migration of Uzbek workers and for the social protection of migrants. Measures taken in this direction will abate negative consequences of labour migration, ensure qualitative growth of the labour force and increase its competitiveness in international labour markets.

More international cooperation is needed. The experience of many countries shows that it is possible to protect the rights of migrant-workers through bilateral agreements between sending and receiving countries. Hungary, for example, has signed bilateral agreements with countries receiving its labour force (Greece, Spain, and the Russian Federation).¹⁶ In Moldova there is an Association of Labour Migrants that has branches in many countries receiving Moldovan labour migrants.¹⁷ Similar actions and resolutions exist in other Eastern European countries. The cooperation of Uzbek authorities with countries receiving its migrants will facilitate a decrease in illegal migration and abate its consequences.

¹⁶ Molodikova I. "Hungary in the Context of European Economic Migration". Report at the international seminar "Central and Eastern Europe in the Global Migration System", UNESCO-MOST, 2001.

¹⁷ Moshnyaga V. 2003. "Protection of Moldovan Labour Migrants in Light of the 1949 Convention of the International Labour Organisation: Results of Expert Survey", *Labour Migration and the Protection of Guests Workers' Rights: the Experience of Post-Communist Countries* (Trudovaya migratsiya i zaschita prav gastarbaiterov: praktika postkommunisticheskikh stran), Chisinau, Moldova State University, p. 113.

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ТОҶИКИСТО

Migration Perspectives Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Planning and managing labour migration

A decade and a half after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, its successor States continue to share social, cultural and economic commonalities reflected in sizeable migration flows. Recent changes in the structure of population movements have brought international labour migration to the forefront of national agendas across the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region. This volume seeks to add to the actual policy debate through a multidisciplinary perspective on migration-related priorities and challenges. It provides an analysis of migration behaviour in various countries, focusing on current trends and policy responses.

The articles contained in this volume are written by scholars, journalists, government officials and other experts on migration-related issues from across the region and were commissioned by the IOM Technical Cooperation Centre (TCC) for Europe and Central Asia.

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