

**UN/POP/MIG/2005/11**  
5 July 2005

**UNITED NATIONS EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON INTERNATIONAL  
MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

Population Division  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
United Nations Secretariat  
New York, 6-8 July 2005

**INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION\***

Leonid Rybakovsky & Sergey Ryazantsev\*\*



## A. THE FEATURES OF THE STATISTICAL ACCOUNT OF THE INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION IN RUSSIA

Russia occupies a central position between two economic poles of the world economy (the rich North and the poor South) - it is the country, actively involved in the international migration process. On the one hand, Russians actively move into various countries of the world for living and for earnings. On the other hand, the territory of Russia has become attractive enough for migrants from less developed countries of Asia and Africa, the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Besides, the part of migrants from "the third world" countries considers the territory of Russia as a staging point, an original transit zone for the further migration to the economically developed countries of the West.

In the system of modern global migration processes, Russia became, and will for sure remain in the future, a large host country for two reasons.

**The internal reason** – the territory of the country is not densely populated. There has been a reduction in the population of Russia since 1993, and in the nearest future the manpower resources will also reduce, but at the same time, the economic requirement for manpower will increase. During the last fourteen years, the number of deaths in Russia exceeds the number of births by 800-900 thousand people. During the period of 1992-2004, the natural loss has come to 10.4 million. Owing to a positive migration

**residence**, which is registered in the majority of official statistical editions, including the data given in the collections of the Federal Service of State Statistics (Rosstat). The legislative acts in the spheres of migration and citizenship and the internal instructions accepted by the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs have recently led to serious disorders in the migration statistics in the country. In particular, the forms of statistical account (primary the forms of migrants registration) which had been filed by passport registration offices, from 2002 ceased to be filed on foreigners (not Russian citizens), but some passport registration offices still continue to do it. It is possible to agree completely with the researchers, who say that the state migration statistics in Russia has lost one of its fundamental advantages – the unity of the gathering techniques of the primary information in the national scale (Chudinovskikh, 2004, p. 4).

It causes complexities with the full analysis of the migration situation and does not give an opportunity to realize the real situation in the migration sphere in the country without fundamental distortions. We have to use the data on migration, given in the publications of the state statistics because of the absence of any other adequate alternative sources of information.

The results of 2002 population census showed, that the population of the country is by 1.8 million larger than it is shown in the current account. Since the cases of birth and death in Russia are registered more or less precisely, the increase can be connected with the migration growth. Thus, the amendment of the population census was referred by Rosstat to the CIS countries and distributed equally over the

own specificity not only from the point of view of the statistical account, but also from the point of the role which it plays in the demographic, social and economic development of Russia.

## B. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION FOR PERMANENT RESIDENCE TO AND FROM RUSSIA

### *1. The Scales of the International Migration for Permanent Residence*

On the whole, the data on the international migration connected with moving for permanent residence to Russia and abroad during the 1990s had a tendency to reduce. The similar dynamics was characteristic of nearly all migration parameters - immigration, emigration, migration growth, and migration circulation at times reduced.

The migration growth in Russia in the first half of the 1990s had a steady tendency to growth, not taking into consideration the failure in 1991 which was caused by the reduction of the net migration due to the decrease of the number of immigrants as a result of the USSR disintegration. The migration growth in Russia reached its peak in 1994. It became possible due to the immigration growth, and the reduction of emigration. Thus, in 1994 in comparison with 1989 the number of immigrants in Russia increased by more than 300 thousand (approximately 50%), and the number of emigrants, on the contrary, reduced approximately by 400 thousand (almost twice) (Figure II).

Then the migration growth began to reduce sharply, with some small splashes which were marked in



In the migration exchange with the **Baltic States** during 1989-2003, Russia has a positive net migration in the volume of 243.2 thousand people. The largest migration comes from **Latvia** which is distinguished by a rigid mode of granting the citizenship to the Russian-speaking population. In total the net migration of Russia in the exchange with Latvia was 118.5 thousand people. **Estonia** provided Russia the migration growth in the volume of 70.7 thousand. Russia received 54.0 thousand people of a pure migration growth from **Lithuania**.

#### **The Transcaucasian countries**

the CIS countries and the Baltic States is also favorable for Russia and in terms of the educational structure.

### *3. Migration Potential for Russia in the CIS Countries and the Baltic States*

Russia can and must take new migrants primarily from the CIS countries from the number of the representatives of Russian people who live there. The transformation of the migration potential into a real migration flow strongly depends on the situation in these countries on the one hand. On the other hand, it depends on the openness of the migration policy of Russia itself, first of all in the questions of obtaining the citizenship. Let us provide an approximate estimation of the possible inflow of the Russians and the representatives of the ethnic groups of Russia from the CIS countries and the Baltic states.

Today the **number of the Russians in the CIS countries is 20 million at the lowest rate**. The part of this number forms a migration potential which Russia may get in the medium-term prospect up to 2010. Rather a large Russian diaspora lives in the neighboring Kazakhstan. The research carried out there shows that 1 million people or 20% of the Russians can get over to Russia from that c.2.6 (we m) 18.8 (eres o) ht thflseafia (h) 1.8 (e m)







into account by the Russian statistics on the migration for permanent residence because they stay as temporary labour or educational migrants.

The main problems in the migration exchange with the countries of “the old abroad” lie in the qualitative structure of the flow of migrants and the migration growth. The results of the analysis of the age structure of emigrants reveal the increased share of able-bodied emigrants, children and teenagers.

The share of pensioners in these migration flows is naturally lower as the Western countries taking the Russian emigrants carry out a definite immigration policy in their interests – they accept the migrants necessary for their demographic development. That is why the able-bodied population and the youth are among their top priorities.

The share of children and teenagers is extremely high in the emigration flow to the economically developed countries. We can rely on the data issued by the state statistics which show that 40% of the emigration flow from Russia to the USA were children and teenagers. It reveals two tendencies. The first is that the departure for permanent residence has a family character – parents leave with children, and the second - Russia became an "export" country of children for adoption. There exists a special term concerning this phenomenon – "baby-business". The data about the export of the adopted children abroad are not issued widely; they have a scrappy character because of the controversial reactions in the Russian society. Every year approximately 4 - 5 thousand Russian children are legally adopted by foreigners and are taken out from Russia (Ryazantsev, 2002, p.321). In 2004, this figure was 6.5 thousand children. In total during the last ten years, 60 thousand children were adopted and taken out of Russia by foreigners, including 40 thousand taken out by the USA citizens (the Information of television Channel "Russia", 2005). The data of the USA population census of 2000 show that the basic suppliers of white children from Europe for adoption by American citizens are Russia and Romania. In 2000 about 82% of adopted children at the age 6 -11 years were pupils of the Russian and Romanian children's homes (Nekipelova, 2004, p.33).

Marriage emigration from Russia became a separate mass flow. A huge market of intermediary marriage agencies assisting women in choosing a foreign husband formed in Russia. According to the latest data, there are about 1 thousand marriage agencies which offer the intermediary services for Russian brides. The fact that the marriage emigration tendency in Russia has become widely spread is confirmed by an increased share of women in the emigration flow to the countries of “the old abroad” – 54.6% (the data of 2003). According to approximate estimations, 10 - 15 thousand Russian women annually go abroad on fiancée visas (Makhovskaya, 2004, p. 10). According to the Ministry of Justice of the USA, during the last ten years about 80 thousand Russian women came to this country on fiancée visas (Ryklina, 2004, p. 58).

Russia, the Ukraine and Moldova now became the countries providing the delivery of women to the marriage market of the Western Europe and the USA. The facts of involving Russian women in prostitution and infringement of their rights abroad surely cause anxiety. It is possible to assume that no less than 1 million girls from the CIS countries work in the sector of sex-services and entertainments in the countries of Europe, including 300-400 thousand Russians. The majority surely gets to these countries as tourists, but part of them comes through the marriage channel of migration.

As a result of the emigration to the countries of “the old abroad” from the point of view of sex-age structure of migrants, Russia has negative consequences, namely the losses of able-bodied population, children and teenagers. It is important that the selection of women by the intermediaries working "on the edge of foul" (first of all, providing deliveries of girls abroad under cover of marriage in the sector of sex-services and entertainments) is in some cases performed on the basis of their anthropometrical and

aesthetic parameters. As a rule, not only young, but also beautiful girls are selected. Not only the demographic, but also the genetic potential of the country is under the danger of loss.

The emigration from Russia to the countries of “the old abroad” is characterized by the "brain drain". In 1993 every fifth emigrant had a higher education that almost by one and a half times outnumbered the share of people with the same educational level in Russia. Now the "brain drain" proceeds (about 19% of people leaving Russia in 2003 had a higher education, including 7 doctors and 31 candidates of sciences). The emigration to the USA was characterized by a high educational level of the emigrants (35% - migrants with a higher education) and Israel (32%). From the beginning of the 1990s more than 32 thousand Russians having a higher education have left for the USA.

The highly-qualified specialists in the spheres of space technologies, applied and theoretical physics, computer and high chemical technologies, biochemistry and microbiology, genetics and mathematics have been actively emigrating abroad during the recent years. The Russian programmers have also been actively involved in the emigration flow lately. By many western countries Russia is considered as a source of updating their highly-qualified personnel. For example, Germany in 2004 started the realization of a large-scale program aimed at the recruitment of about 100 thousand of computer experts from Russia. The ideas of increasing the quotas for foreign experts are also being discussed in the USA.

Emigration had such consequences as the losses of Russian scientific potential alongside the outflow of scientists to other sectors of economy. One scientist gone abroad, as a rule, “beckons” his students and colleagues. The results of the research show that many emigrants first keep up contacts with their colleagues in Russia, but in a year or two the ties are weakening or completely destroy. The emigrant scientists see the basic reason not in the supporting of the scientific contacts with their colleagues in Russia, but in helping them to move to the West. Thus, the emigration of scientists is characterized by an avalanche-like migration flow. There is a real danger of loosing many scientific schools and directions of research in Russia.

According to the Russian sources, the number of Russian scientists working abroad is estimated at 30 thousand, including 14-18 thousand in fundamental sciences. This figure seems to be underestimated. For

The basic data source are the

According to the data of FMS of Russia, the majority of gastarbeiters (67%) in 2003 worked under

Another CIS country with massive labour migration is Moldova. According to IOM, about 600 thousand citizens of Moldova work abroad and only 30 thousand of them work legally (The Foreigner, 2003, p. 16).

Labour migration from the countries of Transcaucasia is also quite massive. Approximately 800 thousand - 1.5 million Armenian citizens work outside the country which makes up no less than a quarter of the population of the country (Pannossian, 2003, . 142). About 1.5 - 2.0 million citizens of Azerbaijan work abroad. As for Georgia the figures vary greatly – at the lowest rate there are 100 thousand labour migrants abroad; to the maximum – up to 1 million (Topilin, 2002, p. 127; the Information of the First Channel of the Russian television, 2003). We estimate a total number of labour migrants from the countries of Transcaucasia in Russia at the level of 1.2-1.5 million.

Labour migration from the countries of the Central Asia also is great. Tajikistan, though being the country with the lowest social and economic indices in the CIS, can be considered a migration leader. The number of citizens of this country working abroad can reach at least 200 thousand (The Population of Russia in 2002. The Tenth Annual Demographic Report, 2004, p. 128). The latest studies show that the number of labour migrants is much higher and can come up to 600 thousand including 85% leaving for work to Russia in particular (Olimova and Bosk, 2003, p.21). There are approximately 600-700 thousand labour migrants in Uzbekistan now. As for Kyrgyzstan, the estimation varies within the limits of 350-700 thousand with half of the number going to Russia (The Population of Russia, 2004, p. 170).

Labour migration has a number of positive social and economic aspects for Russia. Owing to migrants the whole sectors of economy in the country such as trade, construction, transport services, agriculture develop. The example of Moscow is rather si

other sources of data as this money is quite "transparent" for the statistics. By virtue of the peculiarities of the information collection, there are no estimations of transfers of all CIS countries now. According to some data, gastarbeiters transfer and take out up to 15 billion dollars annually only from Russia (The Information of the First Channel of Russian Television, 2003). With absolute transparency for our country it could give 4.5 billion tax deductions (with a lowest individual income tax rate 30%) to say nothing of the social deductions. The task is to reveal these money resources.

At the same time illegal labour migration has a number of negative aspects - it stimulates the growth of shadow economy, generates the dumping of wage level, forms ethnic enclaves and raises interethnic tension. The formation of the isolated zones of compact settling of migrants according to an ethnic attribute ("ethnic enclaves") is considered but



The most required specialists abroad are Russian specialists with specialized secondary professional education which makes up approximately 40-50% of all people who went to work abroad under contracts. Russian workers with a higher education make up

civilized departure for work abroad on the basis of bilateral and multilateral agreements between Russia and the countries of labour migrants reception.

#### D. THE MIGRATION POLICY IN RUSSIA: PROBLEMS AND IMPROVEMENTS

##### *1. The Contradictions of the Migration Policy under the Conditions of Demographic*

The second point of view is a **liberal migration project**. It is based on the idea that Russia is bound to use and attract foreign labour. The main reason is





The second vector of measures - the constant control over the sphere of migration from the proper services. In particular, with the simplification of the mechanism of attraction of the labour migrants, the supervising state measures should be kept in the regard of the legality of frontier crossing, the use of labour by the employers, the working conditions of migrants, the observance of their rights and the terms of stay, tax and social deductions from the salaries of migrants. In parallel with the liberalization of the procedures aimed at the attraction of legal migrants, the punishments for assistance and the organization of illegal migration, illegal entrance, stay and employment, infringement of the rights of migrants and illegal use of their work by employers should be seriously toughened.

Also it is important to set up a precise system of the account of the population migration at least in two directions. The first - is necessary to set up the data processing on the registration in a place of stay. The second - is necessary to create a system of the account and processing of the migration cards which are filed on foreigners entering the country and handed over at departing Russia.

Such a combination of measures will allow deducing the use of the work of migrants from the spheres of criminal and shadow economy, and finally, will promote for the social, economic and demographic development of Russia.

#### REFERENCES

- Amossov Yury. (2003). California Stakes at us. *The Expert*, 32 (September 1).
- Bilsborrow, Richard, Hugo, Graeme, Zlotnik, Hania and other. (1999). *The Statistics of the International Migration* (Geneva: the IOM).
- Chudinovskih, Olga. *The Account of Migration in Russia: the Reasons and the Consequences of the Crisis* .  
[www.demoscope.ru](http://www.demoscope.ru).
- Kuznetsov, Vyacheslav. (2004). *The National Purpose: Security and Well-being of People as a Fundamental Problem of Russian Social Sciences*. The Report at the session of the Presidium of RAS. Moscow.

TABLE 1. THE SUMS OF TRANSFERS OF THE LABOUR MIGRANTS TO SOME  
CIS COUNTRIES FROM ABROAD IN 2000



## Figures

Figure 1. Migration Growth of Russia in the International Migration in 1995-2002 According to the Current Record (Thousands)

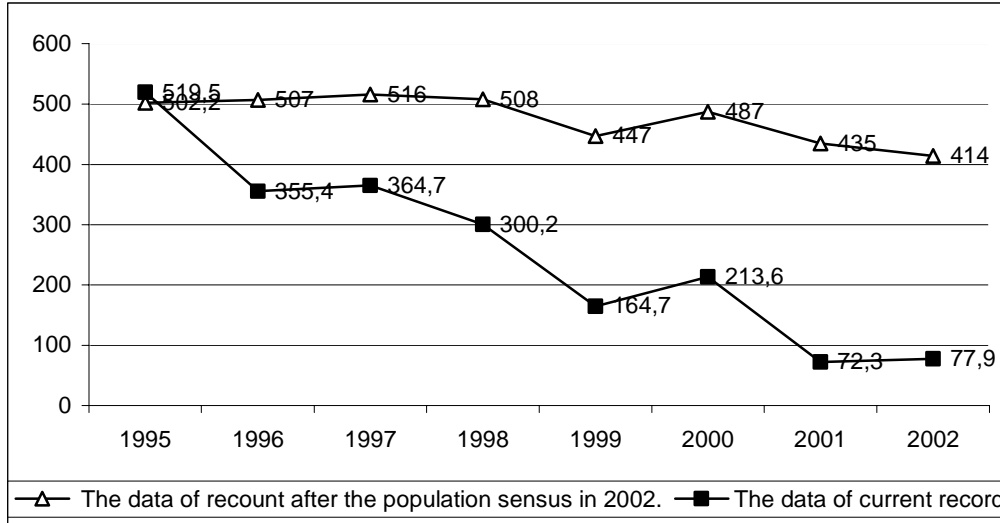


Figure 2. Migration Growth with the Countries of “the New” and “the Old Abroad” (Thousands)

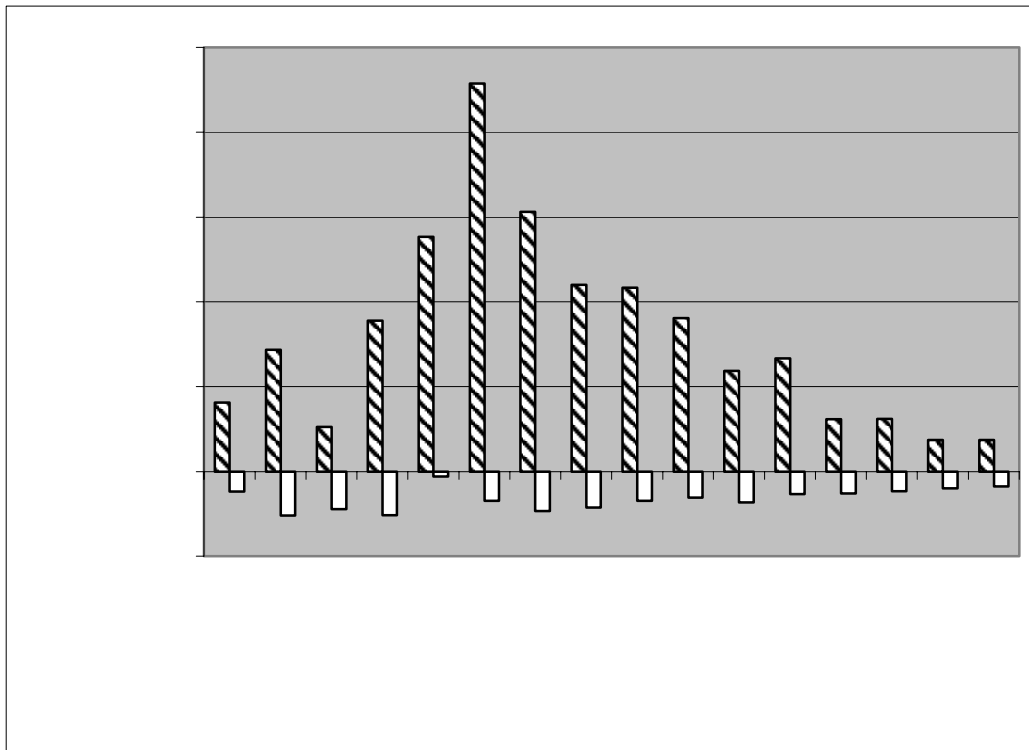


Figure 3. The Basic Parameters of the Migration Exchange with the CIS Countries and the Baltic States (Thousands)

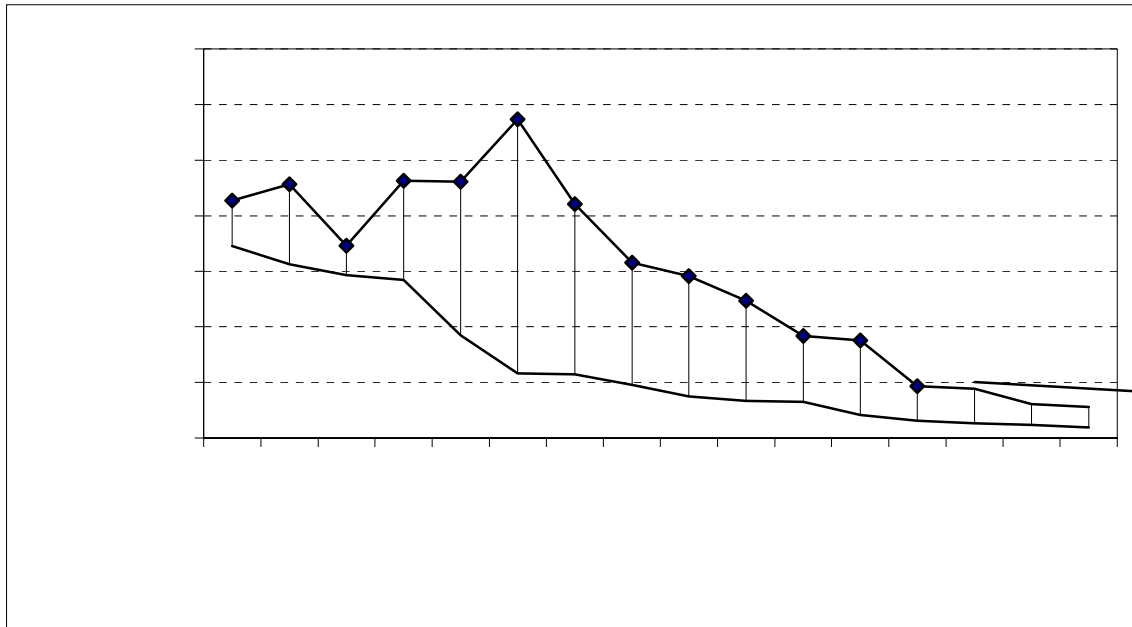


Figure 5. Migration Growth with the Countries of “the Old Abroad” in 1989-2004  
(Thousands)

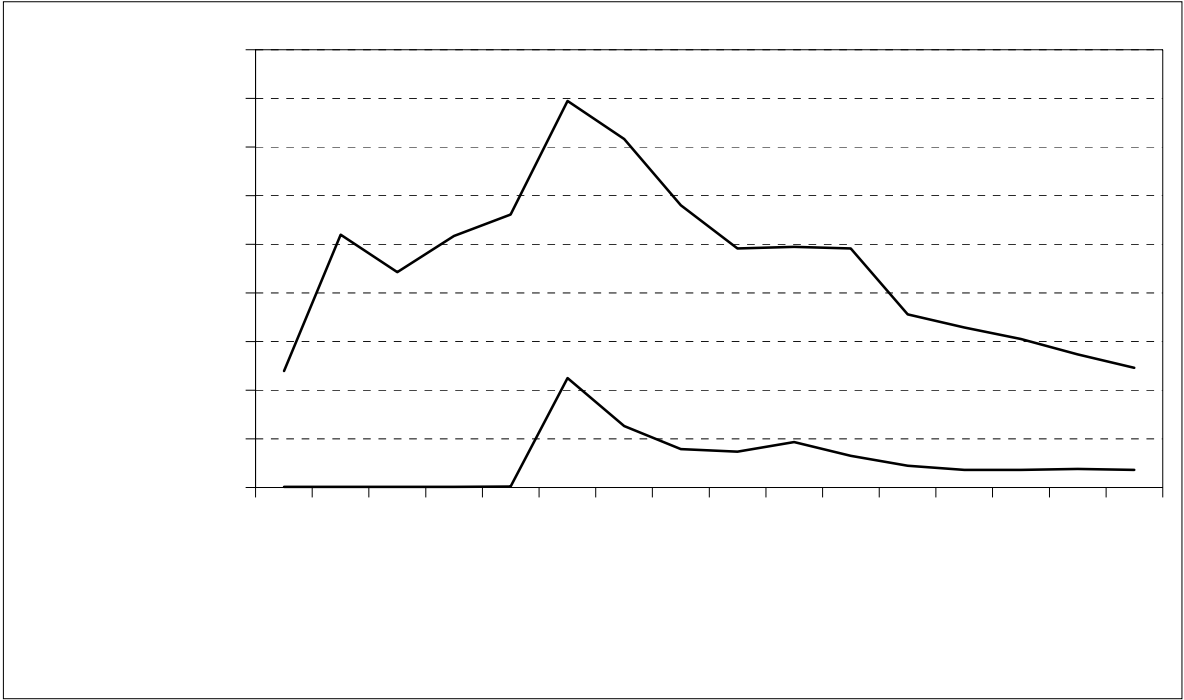


Figure 7. Other Countries of Emigration from Russia in 2004  
(People)

