Migration to Russia and the Current Economic Crisis

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The economic crisis in Russia, which began in 2014, was caused by a rapid fall in oil prices and the imposition of Western sanctions in connection with the events in Ukraine. Prior to the crisis, Russia was attracting a large number of both permanent and temporary labour migrants. International migration has become an important factor in the development of Russian labour market and overcoming demographic decline in the country. For the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), from where large part of migrants originate, work in Russia was an important source of foreign currency, and a factor in poverty reduction. The current economic crisis, however, has had a significant impact on both permanent and temporary migration into Russia. Consequently, it has also affected the CIS countries and the region as a whole.

This chapter analyses the latest available statistical data to address the questions of how the volume and structure of migration flows in Russia has changed since the beginning of the recession, and how the crisis affected the remittances sent to the CIS countries. We shall try to answer these questions by looking at the statistics provided by the Federal Migration Service and Russia's Central Bank. I argue that changes in the migration law of Russia introduced in 2014–2015, and the creation of the Eurasian Economic Union in 2015 have had significant effects. While the economic crisis affects all migrants, the other factors influence only a subset of countries under consideration. It is advantageous here to be specific in explaining migration changes regarding migrants' origin countries, by examining particular components of those changes. Thus, the chapter starts with a description of general trends in labour and permanent migration between Russia and the CIS countries in the post-Soviet period.

The Recent History

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of new state borders in 1992, travel between the former Soviet republics changed from domestic to international. Therefore, Russia became one of the world's largest destinations for migrants overnight.[1] In 1994, migration growth in Russia reached its historical maximum of almost one million people (Figure 1). In the 1990s a significant portion of the movement into Russia involved the repatriation of persons who had once left this country, as well as their descendants. Additional strong factors pushing population from the former Soviet republics to Russia were the political events, especially laws about state languages and armed conflicts in the Caucasus, Transnistria, Tajikistan and others. The combined factors caused a flow of refugees and internally displaced persons of different nationalities. Ethnic Russians dominated this migration (constituting a little less than 60 per cent of all immigrants). According to current registration statistics and Census 2002 data, there was also a significant influx of other ethnic groups of Russia (nearly 15 per cent), Ukrainians (ten per cent), Armenians (more than six per cent) and Azerbaijanis (nearly three per cent). The proportion of indigenous peoples of Central Asia among immigrants was insignificant and did not exceed three per cent at that time.

In total, during the period between the censuses of 1989 and 2002, Russia gained an additional 5.5 million residents due to migration.

Since the beginning of the 2000s, economic factors strongly affected the volume and direction of migration flows in the post-Soviet territories. The rapid economic growth in Russia and Kazakhstan created a high demand for labour. The increasing difference between the CIS countries in their tempos of economic development and, as a result, in earnings (see Table 1) and standards of living also played a role. The number of temporary foreign workers in 2012-2013 in Russia reached seven million people, of which three to four million were undocumented migrants.[3] At the same time, the sizes of Russian-speaking populations outside of Russia significantly decreased.[4]

A distinctive feature of the 2000s compared to the previous decade was a marked increase in the number of migrants from three countries of Central Asia (Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan), where the difficult economic situation was deepened by military and political conflicts. Almost 40 per cent of all permanent workers came from these countries in 2010-2011. Temporary migrants from the three Central Asian states received most (in 2012, nearly 60 per cent) of the issued documents permitting work (work permits and patents). Moreover, unlike in the past decade, migration from these countries to Russia was clearly dominated by people belonging to ethnic groups of Central Asia, rather than by people of European origin. The new post-Soviet generation of migrants from the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus generally have lower levels of education, Russian language skills and vocational qualification training, as compared to the older generations. The majority of the young migrants perform heavy and dirty physical work. Therefore, Saodat Olimova, an expert from Tajikistan, characterised that situation as a *muscle drain,* rather than *brain drain*.[5]

In general, migration exchange has been beneficial for both Russia and the sending countries. In total, between 1992 and 2013 inclusive, Russia accepted over 8.4 million additional residents. The migration gain of over 60 per cent compensated the natural decrease of the population during this period. In the 1990s due to migration from the territory of the former Soviet Union, a significant redistribution of human capital took place, to the benefit of Russia, since the Russian-speaking migrants have higher levels of education and better skills.

Therefore, the loss of skilled labour that was earlier caused by mass migration from Russia to countries outside the former USSR was compensated.[6] Permanent and temporary migrants smoothed the imbalance in the labour market and solved labour shortages. However, while the immigrants worked where high or medium levels of qualifications were required, temporary migrant workers were mainly taking low-paid jobs with hard working conditions, unattractive for the Russian population. In 2013 almost 80 per cent of foreign workers were employed in construction or performed unskilled jobs in different sectors of the economy.

A significant flow of migrants and temporary workers from the CIS countries to Russia was accompanied by a counter-flow of money that migrants were remitting home to their families. According to the available data, between 2006 and 2013, the annual volume of money transfers from Russia to CIS countries increased by more than three times. In 2013 alone, the CIS countries and Georgia received 21.5 billion USD from Russia.[7] In addition to the money earned, migrants, especially those from rural areas of Central Asia, acquired professional training, improved their qualifications and work experience, and broadened their horizons.[8] This has contributed to the accumulation of human capital in their homelands.

Factors of Migration in 2014–2016

Changes in the Economy

Between 2000 and 2008 the Russian economy was rapidly developing: the average annual GDP growth amounted to seven per cent per year. The engine of development was the oil and gas sector, which was pulling other sectors of the economy, including services and construction. The unemployment rate was kept at five per cent and the state employment service was consistently showing one million vacancies. That pattern of growth was broken in 2009 by the financial crisis, when the GDP fell by 7.8 per cent. In 2010-2012 the economy started to recover, but again fell in 2013. Already in that year, economists were predicting a crisis caused by exorbitant social spending and declining investment.

The immediate cause of the new crisis in Russia was the fall in oil prices in the second half of 2014. As a result, in December 2015 the rouble depreciated by more than 50 per cent against the dollar. The current crisis was further exacerbated by external economic sanctions in connection with the events in Ukraine. In total, in 2015 the GDP decreased by 3.8 per cent. The most significant declines in output took place in the sectors involving predominantly migrant workers: construction (by seven per cent), wholesale and retail trade (by ten per cent), industry (by five per cent), hotels and restaurants (by five per cent).

One distinguishing feature of this crisis is the drop in Russian households' income (which fell by five per cent in 2015 alone), which did not decline during the previous crisis. Russian households employ at least half of all migrant workers. Many people prefer cheap labour of foreign workers – builders, motor mechanics, drivers, nurses, servants etc., to expensive services of the Russian firms. All of the above changes have led to a decline in demand for labour. Demographic factors have been partially counteracting these trends. For example, since 2007, the working age population of Russia has been declining by one million persons annually. Secondly, the imposition by the Russian government in August 2014 of a food embargo against Western countries has stimulated the development of the domestic agricultural sector.

These estimates do not include temporary foreign workers. However, as statistics show (and as will be discussed in the following section), in 2015 the proportion of foreign labour was significantly reduced. This was mainly caused by the fall of the rouble, which led to the reduction of wages in dollar terms. Thus, while in 2013 the average monthly salary in Russia was 963 USD, in 2015 it fell to 560 USD. The wages decreased not only against the dollar or euro, but also against the currencies of the former Soviet republics (Table 1). As a result, for part of population from the CIS countries, the incentives to go for work to Russia have diminished, especially given the fact that the Russian food embargo against the West has led to growth in the agriculture and food sectors in CIS countries. In this regard, Ukraine has been the exception, as due to the ongoing crisis, the living standards continue to decline, even compared with Russia. Therefore, the factors pushing Ukrainian workers abroad continue to intensify.

It should be noted that we are not observing large-scale unemployment among migrants in Russia. A characteristic of the Russian labour market is that wages remains its main regulator. If wages become low, migrants either look for a new job, or leave Russia and go back to their home countries, where the costs of living are lower.

Studies show that in the countries of Central Asia, Moldova and Armenia, a circular migration mechanism has developed. Returning migrants are the most adventurous part of society; they look for and take up new economic niches. Migrants with years of experience abroad in construction, transport and industry offer their specific skills to the local labour markets. They are used to work more than those who did not participate in migration. But soon the former migrants realise that living on the earned money in their home country without significant savings is impossible. They again go to work in Russia, Kazakhstan and other countries (Marat 2009).

The International Situation

In addition to economic factors, in 2014 and 2015 migration processes were influenced by political circumstances. Since 1 January 2012 Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia have been united in the Common Economic Space (CES). This form of interstate integration provides for the removal of restrictions on citizens' access to the labour markets of CES countries, the abolition of the quota system and compulsory work permits for migrant workers, and a more liberal procedure for migration registration. On 1 January 2015, the three states formed the Eurasian Economic Union (EAZS) and shortly after Armenia and – in August 2015 – Kyrgyzstan entered the organisation. As Armenia and Kyrgyzstan are significant exporters of labour to Russia, joining the EEU has created more opportunities for labour migration of their citizens.

Another group of political factors was generated by the military-political crisis in Ukraine. The armed conflict in the east of the country has caused a flood of asylum-seekers from Ukraine. With the beginning of the combat operations, Russia introduced preferential conditions in terms of residence and employment (no need for work permits) for the citizens of Ukraine who have left their homes and moved to Russia. However, at the end of 2015, Russia cancelled these benefits and instead gave persons of Ukrainian descent the same migration rights as are enjoyed by citizens of CIS countries that do not belong to the single economic space

Changes in Migration Policy and Irregular Migration

In June 2012, the Russian government adopted a new *Concept of the State Migration Policy until 2025*.[10] Its content reflects the experience of reforming migration policy in Canada, Australia, Germany, the UK, the US and other countries. The first phase of implementing the Concept was targeted towards preventing irregular migration. Between 2012 and 2015 more than 50 laws were adopted, almost half of which was aimed at strengthening the administrative and criminal penalties for violating migration laws. Let us now consider the laws that have the greatest direct impact on the size and structure of both legal and undocumented migration flows.

Under the new rules from 1 January 2014, a temporary stay in Russia is still limited to 90 days, but individuals can enter the country only once within a period of 180 days. After the introduction of the rule, the number of crossings of the Russian border fell and migrants from CIS countries coming with the purpose of work for a longer period have had to obtain authorisation to work. This policy was further supported by a ban to enter Russia introduced in 2013 for migrants who had overstayed in the country during their previous trip. This is the most common offense in the field of migration, which is directly related to illegal employment. Those who lived in Russia illegally for more than 270 days are forbidden to enter the country for ten years, whereas those who overstayed between 170 and 270 days cannot re-enter Russia for five years. Those who overstayed for less than 170 days are not allowed to enter the country for three years. In the middle of 2016 the total number of offenders approached two million persons.[11] Most of them were the citizens of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. It means that almost ten per cent of the male population between the ages of 20 and 50 of those two countries is now barred from entering Russia.

Let us also note two important changes in the Russian migration legislation. Before 2015 there were two types of labour authorisation documents: work permits and the so-called patents (2010). Work permits are further divided into general permits, permits for qualified professionals and permits for highly qualified specialists. General work permits are subject to numeric quotas. Patents were introduced in 2010 to allow individuals (or households) to employ foreign nationals from CIS visa-free countries.

Under the new law, from 1 January 2015, foreigners who arrive from the CIS countries with visa-free entry to Russia do not have to obtain work permits.[12] Instead, they need to acquire patents for their work, whether they want to be employed by an individual, an organisation or an individual entrepreneur. By introducing patents, the government has eased the access of CIS citizens to the Russian labour market. Another policy change adopted on 1 January 2015 requires all foreigners who seek employment (except highly qualified professionals) to pass an exam in the Russian language, Russian history and the fundamentals of law of the Russian Federation.

According to estimates of the Federal Migration Service (FMS), as a result of the above changes the number of undocumented migrants decreased in 2015 by more than 900,000, from 3.6 to 2.7 million. The head of the Federal Migration Service, Konstantin Romodanovsky, noted that 'for the first time in many years the number of legally employed persons exceeded the number of workers without permits.'[13] In Russia, undocumented immigrants are mostly citizens of CIS countries, who work without appropriate permits. The tightening of migration legislation was reflected in their number.

Permanent Migration from the CIS Countries

The study of permanent migration into Russia is complicated by frequent changes in the statistical definitions of migrants. The last such change occurred in 2011. Until that time, permanent migrants were considered to be only those who were permanently registered in a new location (or were withdrawn from the migration registry at their former places of permanent residence). However, in 2011 the statistical category of permanent migrants was extended to include other long-term migrants who were registered at a given place of residence for a period of nine months or longer. Withdrawal from the register of this category of migrants is carried out automatically upon termination of their stay. As a result, large groups of foreigners started to be treated as migrants: students of academic programmes, workers with employment contracts for a period of over nine months and relatives of permanent residents of Russia who arrived for a longer period.[14] Obviously, these changes immediately increased the number of arrivals and after a year – the number of departures.[15]

As a result of the changes in the flows of arrivals and departures, migration gain in Russia between 2013 and 2015 decreased from 296,000 to 245,000. Especially significant changes occurred in the migration exchange between Russia and Uzbekistan. Prior to the crisis, over 20 per cent of migration gain to Russia was due to Uzbekistan. According to official statistics, in 2015 Russia has started to lose population in the migration exchange with this most populous Central Asian country. The only exception is Ukraine, which in 2015 provided more than half of the total migration gain in Russia, although in 2012–2013, i.e. before the Ukrainian economic and political crisis, its contribution to the Russian migration gain was limited to 12 per cent.

Whereas Uzbekistan demonstrates how significant economic factors are in explaining long-term migration, Ukraine underlines the importance of non-economic factors. Long-term migrants, as already noted, are divided into several groups. The first group consists of immigrants, i.e. those who come to live in Russia. As a rule, such a decision is not taken spontaneously, but long before the move and is strongly influenced by the situation in the countries of origin. In many cases, statistical reports on migration cover those who have stayed in Russia long ago and in a given year received their permanent resident status i.e. temporary residence permit or a residence permit.

Some migrants arrive in Russia with their Russian citizenship already in hand. There are many such migrants from Moldova (45 per cent), or to be more precise – the territory of Transnistria, as well from Kyrgyzstan (41 per cent) and Kazakhstan (41 per cent), with which until 2011 Russia had an agreement about simplified procedure of citizenship acquisition.[16]

A separate group is composed of migrants who arrived within the framework of the*State Program of Assistance to Voluntary Resettlement to the Russian Federation of Compatriots Living Abroad*. Under this programme, the government provides certain immigrants who have strong ties to Russia (known as 'compatriots') with financial support and work. Between 2007 and 2016, over 400,000 persons arrived in Russia under this scheme and until 2014 most participants were from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. The situation changed in 2015, when out of 183,000 participants 110,000 (more than 60 per cent) were citizens of Ukraine. Thus, the majority of all 194,000 migrants from Ukraine in that year arrived in Russia as 'compatriots.' The use of this term is striking in light of the political conflict.

Among the migrants who have arrived for a longer term (nine months or more) and failed to receive permanent residence, students and migrant workers are highly represented. The number of students from the CIS countries, despite the crisis, has increased from 156,000 in 2013 to nearly 200,000 in 2016. In contrast, the economic crisis has directly affected the number of labour migrants from CIS countries. Below we shall examine these changes in temporary foreign labour migration in more detail.

Labour Migration

Statistics show that the highest number of work permits in Russia was granted to foreigners in 2014, the first year of the current crisis. The total number of such permits issued was 3.4 million, of which 1.3 million were work permits and 2.1 million – patents. Over 95 per cent of the documents were granted to the citizens of CIS countries with visa-free entry to Russia.[17] Let us now consider how the flow of foreign workers has changed along the major channels of labour migration: work permits, patents and free movement within the single labour market of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAZS).

Work Permits

In 2014 there were three types of work permits in Russia: (1) general permits, (2) permits for skilled workers and (3) permits for highly qualified specialists. General Work Permit for a long time was the main channel for labour migration to Russia. They are granted for up to one year with a possibility of prolongation. The number of permits issued is subject to numeric quotas; in total, over the time period between 2010 and 2014, about six million such permits were issued. Most of them were granted to citizens of Uzbekistan (about 42 per cent), Tajikistan (15 per cent) and Ukraine (11 per cent). Non-CIS countries accounted for less than 15 per cent of permits. As noted above, from 1 January 2015, all foreign workers who arrive in the Russian Federation without a visa must acquire a patent. General work permits are granted only to foreign citizens who enter Russia with a visa.[18] In 2015, more than 140,000 such permits were granted (25 per cent less than in 2014), half of them to the citizens of China and Turkey.

Until 2015, work permits were granted to *skilled specialists* – representatives of certain professions, the list of which is approved annually by the Russian Federation Ministry of Labour. The first such list was drafted in 2009 and contained only 17 professions. By 2014, the list was expanded to include 62 positions, mainly executives of companies, engineers and technicians, as well as workers of culture and art. A contingent of qualified specialists was formed mainly by the citizens of CIS countries. The number of permits issued annually for permanent work increased and in 2014 reached its peak, amounting to 160,000. In 2015, about 25,000 of these permits were issued, only for workers who had Russian visas.

In 2010, another channel of labour migration opened up for *highly qualified professionals*. The main criterion in the definition of highly qualified specialist is the salary; it must not be less than two million roubles (about 66,000 USD) and for professors of universities and researchers – not less than one million roubles (about 33,000 USD) a year. Unlike other programmes, highly qualified professionals can obtain a residence permit for up to three years. In total, between 2010 and 2014 about 90,000 such work permits were granted, over 90 per cent of which were issued to citizens of non-CIS countries. Between 2014 and 2015 the number of highly qualified professionals from the European Union, the United States and Canada went down. However, at the same time, the number of work permits issued for this category of migrants increased due to China. At the end of 2015 there were about 36,000 highly qualified specialists in Russia, including over 8000 Chinese citizens, 7500 citizens of the EU countries, 3600 citizens of CIS countries and 3000 citizens of Turkey.

Patents

Since 2010, foreign workers from countries with visa-free entry to Russia may be employed by individuals. For this purpose, it is necessary to acquire a patent for the ‘execution of works or services for personal, household and other similar purposes unrelated to business activities’ and unlike work permits, the number of patents is not limited. Their initial price was up to 1000 RUB per month (about 32 USD), but by the end of 2014 it increased to 1200 RUB (about 21 USD). Initially patent-based migration complemented the work-permit based one which serves the needs of the government and private companies. However, since the beginning of 2015 patents have become the main channel for the inflow of foreign workers from countries with visa-free entry. Currently, patents are granted for a period of one to 12 months, after which they may be extended by up to a year. Their prices vary and have been regulated by regional authorities; the most expensive ones at the end of 2015 were in Moscow and costed 4200 RUB (about 65 USD).

In total, between 2010 and 2014, 12.7 million patents were granted, of which 48 per cent were bought by the citizens of Uzbekistan and 21 per cent – by the citizens of Tajikistan. The number of patents obtained in 2015 (1.7 million) was lower than in 2014 (2.1 million), partly due to the fact that citizens of Armenia (since January 2015) and Kyrgyzstan (second half 2015) gained the right to work without quotas and patents, following their countries' accession to EAZS. However, their share in the total number of patents during the previous years did not exceed 15 per cent. Importantly, the number of patents granted in 2015 should be compared to the number of both patents and work permits granted in 2014, and for the sake of accuracy should exclude Armenia and Kyrgyzstan.

If we take into account the total number of all work permits and patents issued, we will see (Table 2) that the inflow of migrant workers between 2014 and 2015 from Uzbekistan Tajikistan, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova declined. Not only labour migration has decreased, but also emigration to Russia from CIS countries, with the exception of Ukraine. The available data suggest that part of labour migrants changed their temporary status to permanent by receiving a temporary residence permit, citizenship, becoming students, etc. These data answer the important question of how the volume and structure of migration flows in Russia changed since the beginning of the recession.

Free Movement of Labour Force

The citizens of the Eurasian Economic Union's member states (Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan) now participate in a single labour market, which means that they do not require any permits to work in Russia. However, for this same reason there is a problem of statistical accounting of this group of foreign workers. Indirect data (registration statistics, information from employers) show that in 2015 the flow of labour migrants from these countries did not significantly decrease. This is explained by the accession of these countries to a common labour market of the Eurasian Economic Union, the expansion of opportunities for finding and getting work, reduction of costs associated with migration, and a new amnesty for formerly irregular immigrants and those who had been denied entry to Russia for violating immigration laws.

Remittances

Russia is the main source of remittances for CIS countries. Between 2010 and 2015, according to the Central Bank of Russia, the volume of personal remittances to these countries reached 108 million USD.[19] The main recipient of remittances is Uzbekistan, which received 30 per cent of the above amount followed by Tajikistan and Ukraine (Figure 2). For a number of CIS countries, remittances are the most important factor of development. According to World Bank estimates, the ratio of the volume of cash remittances to GDP in 2014 was 36.6 per cent in Tajikistan, 30.3 per cent in Kyrgyzstan, 26.2 per cent in Moldova and 17.9 per cent in Armenia.[20]

The highest volume of remittances from Russia to CIS countries was reached in 2013, when their total volume amounted to 24.7 billion USD. However, in the second half of the following year the cash flows started to decrease. Personal remittances of migrants from Russia to CIS countries in 2015 were half as large as in 2013 (Table 4). The main reason was the fall of the rouble, which began in the middle of 2014. In early July, the exchange rate was 33.4 roubles per dollar. At the end of December 2014 one dollar was sold for 56 RUB, while at the end of December 2015 – for 72 RUB. Another reason was the reduction of the flow of migrant workers, both legal and undocumented.

The flow of remittances has fallen most to Uzbekistan and Moldova and least – to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (Table 3). Differences between countries in the reduction of remittances from Russia can be explained not only by the difference in migration flows, but also by the characteristics of their structure (i.e. the relationship between legal and undocumented migrants and migrant employment industry trade). Among the undocumented migrants, the citizens of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan predominated, while among the citizens of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan who have received permission to work before the crisis, almost one-third worked as unskilled workers. Among Ukrainian citizens that professional group comprised less than ten per cent.

Based on the data, it is reasonable to say that economic factors have determined a significant reduction in the number of permanent and migrant workers in Russia from countries that are not included in the Eurasian Economic Union: Azerbaijan, Moldova, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The military-political conflict in Ukraine also caused a stream of people who sought and received asylum in Russia. Many of those persons have changed their migration status, which was accompanied by a significant increase in the number of permanent migrants from Ukraine to Russia. However, the flow of legal labour migrants in 2015 reduced almost twice.

The fall in the inflow of migrant workers and the value of the rouble against the dollar and euro have led to the reduction of remittances sent to the CIS countries. Their volume in 2015 was twice smaller than in 2013. Such a significant reduction in cash flows obviously affected the well-being of the population in those countries where remittances comprise a large part of the GDP (such as Tajikistan, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, and Armenia). This is particularly significant considering that according to forecasts, the current crisis in Russia will continue until 2019–2020 (Center of Development Institute 2016). Thus, the reduction in population income will also continue. The decrease in labour demand due to the crisis in the coming years will be accompanied by the reduction in labour supply. According to the estimates of the UN Population Division, between 2015 and 2015, the number of persons between the ages of 15 and 60 in Russia will decrease by nine million (UNDESA 2015). Therefore, the need for a large number of foreign workers (most probably less than in 2013/2014) will continue.

However, the resources to meet this demand in traditional sources are likely to go down. Moreover, the decline of working age population in all the former Soviet republics in the coming years is expected.[21] Therefore, it is likely that the importance of migration from the three Central Asian countries for Russia will increase. Correspondingly, for Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan migration to Russia remains vital due to the financial resources that exceed international aid. If the inflow of transfers of migrants continues to decline due to the Russian economic crisis, under the absence of significant economic progress, the well-being of the population of Central Asian countries will significantly deteriorate, which will complicate the internal political situation on the ground.

Conclusion

This chapter has analysed the latest available statistical data to assess how the volume and structure of migration flows into Russia have changed since the beginning of the recession, and how the crisis affected the remittances sent to the CIS countries. The data show that while migration to Russia is determined by multiple and continuously changing factors, it is possible – and indeed important – to disaggregate the economic, policy, and geopolitical influences on migration and understand their relative significance. As discussed, whereas Uzbekistan demonstrates how significant economic factors are in explaining long-term migration, Ukraine underlines the importance of non-economic factors. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, strong migration links between Russia and other former Soviet republics remained. However, over time, the migration ties between Russia and the newly independent states have generally weakened. This is unlikely to bode well for either Russia or the countries in the region.

Notes

[1] According to estimates of experts from the Population Division of the United Nations, Russia is on the second place in terms of the number of migrants in the world after the United States. International migrant is defined as a person born in a country other than that in which he/she lives. In Russia, as in the other new states on the territory of the former USSR, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, 'large numbers of international migrants appeared, literally from one day to the next, as persons who had moved within each of those countries and were born in a successor State different from that in which they resided at the moment of independence, became international migrants without necessarily having moved at that time' (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division.*Trends in Total Migrant Stock: The 2005 Revision*. United Nation 2006, 5)

[2] Rosstat – The Federal State Statistical Service of the Russian Federation

[3] The Head of the Federal Migration Service, Konstantin Romodanosky, said there were more than 3.5 million undocumented migrants in 2013 (www.rwbc.ru/rbcfreenews/20130730135511.shtml).

[4] According to the last Soviet census (1989) and the last national censuses, during 1989-2009 the number of Russians in Kazakhstan declined from 6.2 million to 3.8 million; in Kyrgyzstan, from 962,000 to 420,000; and in Tajikistan, from 388,500 to 34,500. The number of Ukrainians in Kazakhstan fell from 896,000 to 108,000; in Kyrgyzstan, from 108,000 to 22,000; and in Tajikistan, from 41,000 to 1000.

[5] Money transfers and their influence on living standards in Khatlon oblast of Tajikistan. MOM-NITS, 'SHARK', Dushanbe, 2006, 30 (*Denezhnye perevody i ikh vliyanie na uroven zhizni v Khatlonskoi oblasti respubliki Tadkhikistan MOM-NITS*, 'SHARK', Dushanbe, 2006, 30)

[6] By the author's estimation over 1.5 million persons in 1990s had left Russia, of which more than 90 per cent for

Germany, Israel and the US.

World Bank, Migration and Remittances data. http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/migrationremittancesdiasporaissues/brief/migration-remittances-data

[8] Central Asian countries are poorly urbanised. According to the results of the last censuses the proportion of the total urban population in each country is as follows: in Kazakhstan (2009) – 54 per cent, Kyrgyzstan (2009) – 34 per cent, Tajikistan (2010) – 26.5 per cent. Rural youth predominates among migrants.

[9] CIS STAT – Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth Independent States

[10] *Concept of the State Migration Policy until 2025.* Adopted by the president of the Russian Federation on 13 June 2012. http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/15635

[11] Olga Kirillova (The head of the General Administration for Migration Issues of the Interior Ministry of Russia), Interview for Interfax. 1 July 2016. http://www.interfax.ru/interview/516300

[12] With the exception of students who must get work permits, provided they plan to work outside their universities.

[13] Romodanovski K.O., Mukomel' V.I., *Regulation of migration processes: problems of transition from reactive to system policy [Regulirovanie migratsionnykh protsessov: problem perekhoda ot reactivnoi k sistemnoi politike]. Obschestvennye nauki i sovremennost.* 2015, No 5:10.

[14] Those who seek temporary asylum in Russia are not included in the number. In 2015 circa 330,000 persons applied for asylum in Russia.

[15] The number of arrivals in 2011 was twice as large as in 2010, while the number of departures in 2012 was twice as large as in 2011.

[16] At the same time, those who have acquired Russian citizenship have also kept their former one.

[17] Since the conclusion of the agreement on the creation in 1999 of 'The Union State', citizens of Russia and Belarus have equal rights to employment in both countries. From this year they have not been included in national statistics of external labour migration in both countries.

[18] International students must also obtain a work permit if their place of work is outside their universities.

[19] Personal remittances represent households' income received from their members temporarily employed abroad and nonresident households and are mostly related to temporary and permanent migration of population. Remittances can be made through both official channels (via banks, post offices, money transfer operators – MTOs), and direct transfers in cash or valuables from a member of a household temporarily employed abroad to his household or from one household to another. See: The Central Bank of the Russian Federation, General Notes Relating to Personal Remittances http://www.cbr.ru/eng/

[20] World Bank Group (2015). Migration and Remittances. Factbook 2016. Third Edition.

[21] According to the estimates of the UN Population Division, the population between the ages of 15 and 60 from 2015 to 2025 reduced: in Azerbaijan – by about five per cent, Armenia and Moldova – by nine per cent, in Belarus and Russia – by ten per cent, in Georgia and Ukraine – by 12 per cent.

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