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Migrant Integration Models in Modern Russia

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CARIM-East
Creating an Observatory of Migration East of Europe

Research Report
CARIM-East RR 2013/13

Migrant Integration Models in Modern Russia

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CARIM-East – Creating an Observatory East of Europe

This project which is co-financed by the European Union is the first migration observatory focused on the Eastern Neighbourhood of the European Union and covers all countries of the Eastern Partnership initiative (Belarus, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan) and Russian Federation.

The project's two main themes are:

- (1) migration from the region to the European Union (EU) focusing in particular on countries of emigration and transit on the EU's eastern border; and
- (2) intraregional migration in the post-Soviet space.

The project started on 1 April 2011 as a joint initiative of the European University Institute (EUI), Florence, Italy (the lead institution), and the Centre of Migration Research (CMR) at the University of Warsaw, Poland (the partner institution).

CARIM researchers undertake comprehensive and policy-oriented analyses of very diverse aspects of human mobility and related labour market developments east of the EU and discuss their likely impacts on the fast evolving socio-economic fabric of the six Eastern Partners and Russia, as well as that of the European Union.

In particular, CARIM-East:

- builds a broad network of national experts from the region representing all principal disciplines focused on human migration, labour mobility and national development issues (e.g. demography, law, economics, sociology, political science).
- develops a comprehensive database to monitor migration stocks and flows in the region, relevant legislative developments and national policy initiatives;
- undertakes, jointly with researchers from the region, systematic and *ad hoc* studies of emerging migration issues at regional and national levels.
- provides opportunities for scholars from the region to participate in workshops organized by the EUI and CMR, including academic exchange opportunities for PhD candidates;
- provides forums for national and international experts to interact with policymakers and other stakeholders in the countries concerned.

Results of the above activities are made available for public consultation through the website of the project: <http://www.carim-east.eu/>

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Абстракт

Настоящее исследование носит одновременно концептуальный и прикладной характер. Авторы уделяют особое внимание определению сущности понятия интеграция мигрантов, его соотношению с понятиями ассимиляция и адаптация, вводят понятия полной и частичной интеграции. Подробно рассмотрено, как на смену игнорированию вопроса интеграции мигрантов в российской государственной миграционной политике в 1990-х и начале 2000-х гг. с большим опозданием, но все же пришло понимание того, что это тесно взаимосвязанные сферы государственной деятельности для такой страны, как Россия, которая ежегодно принимает миллионы мигрантов, постоянных и временных. Пример России четко свидетельствует, что самоустранение государства из этой сферы внутренней политики оборачивается обострением межэтнической напряженности, снижением уровня толерантности в обществе, отчуждением мигрантов со стороны российского общества, их самоизоляцией, открытыми конфликтами между мигрантами и местным населением. Так что теперь, когда интеграция мигрантов осознана, наконец, как исключительно актуальная задача, разработка и осуществление политики интеграции осложняется тем, что она происходит на исключительно неблагоприятном фоне роста ксенофобии и общей политизированности миграционной темы. В статье подробно анализируется политика интеграции мигрантов, осуществляемая с 2007 г в отношении переселяющихся в Россию "соотечественников" - наиболее привилегированной группы иммигрантов, а также дается оценка политике адаптации временных трудовых мигрантов в свете последних государственных инициатив 2012 года. Кроме того, авторы рассуждают об интеграционном и анти-интеграционном потенциале этнических диаспор в условиях, когда – как это имеет место в современной России – официальная инфраструктура приема и интеграции мигрантов не имеет должного развития.

Abstract

The present article is both theoretical and applied. The authors attempt to establish what the *integration of migrants* means and how said integration corresponds to the terms *assimilation* and *adaptation*. They also offer a classification of *complete* and *partial* integration. The paper retraces how a disregard for migrant integration in Russia in the 1990s and the first half of the 2000s was gradually replaced by an understanding that these were closely interrelated State spheres. This interrelation was particularly true for a country like Russia, which annually receives millions of migrants, both for permanent and temporary stays. The experience of Russia clearly demonstrates that the dissociation of the State from this important sphere of internal policy leads to: ethnic tensions; erosion of tolerance in society; alienation of migrants from Russian society; self-isolation; and open conflicts between migrants and local residents. Therefore, now that the integration of migrants has been understood to be an important issue in Russia, the elaboration and realization of the migrant integration policy is complicated by xenophobia and a politically-loaded perception of migration. The Russian policy of migrant integration is evaluated in respect of the most privileged category of immigrants: Russian "compatriots". The adaptation policy of temporary labor migrants is analyzed in the context of the Russian State's 2012 initiatives. The authors also set out the integration and the anti-integration potential of ethnic diasporas when – as in present-day Russia – the infrastructure for the admission and integration of migrants has not been properly developed.

Introduction

The notion of migrant integration as a process leading to their “inclusion” in the society of host countries, their adaptation and further adaptability to this society is a relatively new one: it became the subject of wide public discussions and state policy in European countries in the last third of the twentieth century. In the last decade, with continuously growing migrant inflows, and disputes about different migrant integration models, the whole question has become particularly pressing.

We believe that the lack of clear understanding of the essence of migrant integration and classification has become one of the reasons for the failure of migrant integration policy implemented in the last decades in European countries. Indeed, at some point Europeans began to avoid the term “integration”, replacing it with another notion – “inclusion”. Then, at the end of 2000s, they admitted the complete failure of multiculturalism as applied in most European countries.

The search for new migrant integration policies in host countries takes place under difficult conditions. On the one hand, there is an objective growth of immigration inflows, which is stimulated by labor market demands. Then, on the other, anti-immigration attitudes rise in societies that have failed to adapt to previous inflows of immigrants (Massey and Sanchez 2010).

For Russia – the largest recipient of migrants in the post-Soviet space – a conceptual discussion about migrant integration policy is particularly relevant. First, its experience in the sphere of international migration management is relatively limited. Until recently, indeed, the integration of migrants was not taken into consideration at all as part of migration policy. Second, today, when migrant integration has been finally conceptualized as an extremely important task, the development and implementation of any integration policy is complicated by the fact that it takes place against a backdrop of xenophobia and inter-ethnic tension associated to migration.

The goal of this research is to develop a conceptual basis for integration policies in modern Russia. We offer a definition of integration and classification of integration policy mechanisms, which might be relevant for implementation in modern Russia. What is even more important, we develop the typology of migrant groups which can and should be the object of any national integration policies. Obviously, there is different integration depth between migrants who come to Russia for a permanent stay, and for temporary labor migrants. However, we are convinced that besides this, it is crucial to make a distinction among four categories. First, migrants from “newly independent states” and from non-CIS countries; second, migrants from newly independent states, that is migrants who are closer in terms of ethnicity and religion (migrants with Russian ancestry, Ukrainians, Belarusians, Moldovans), and less close (representatives of titular nations from Central Asia and Transcaucasia); third, migrants with Russian ancestry, who left Russia relatively recently, not long before the collapse of the USSR, and those “Russians” who settled in other countries long ago; fourth, migrants representing titular nations of other CIS countries including those who view themselves as part of their own diasporas residing on the territory of the Russian Federation, and those who do not join a diaspora. It is also important to see how migrant integration policy has developed in present-day Russia in the framework of national migration policy. More particularly, it is important to see how it appeared in the format of national policy with regards to the facilitation and relocation of fellow Russians to Russia; a special, preferential immigrant category.

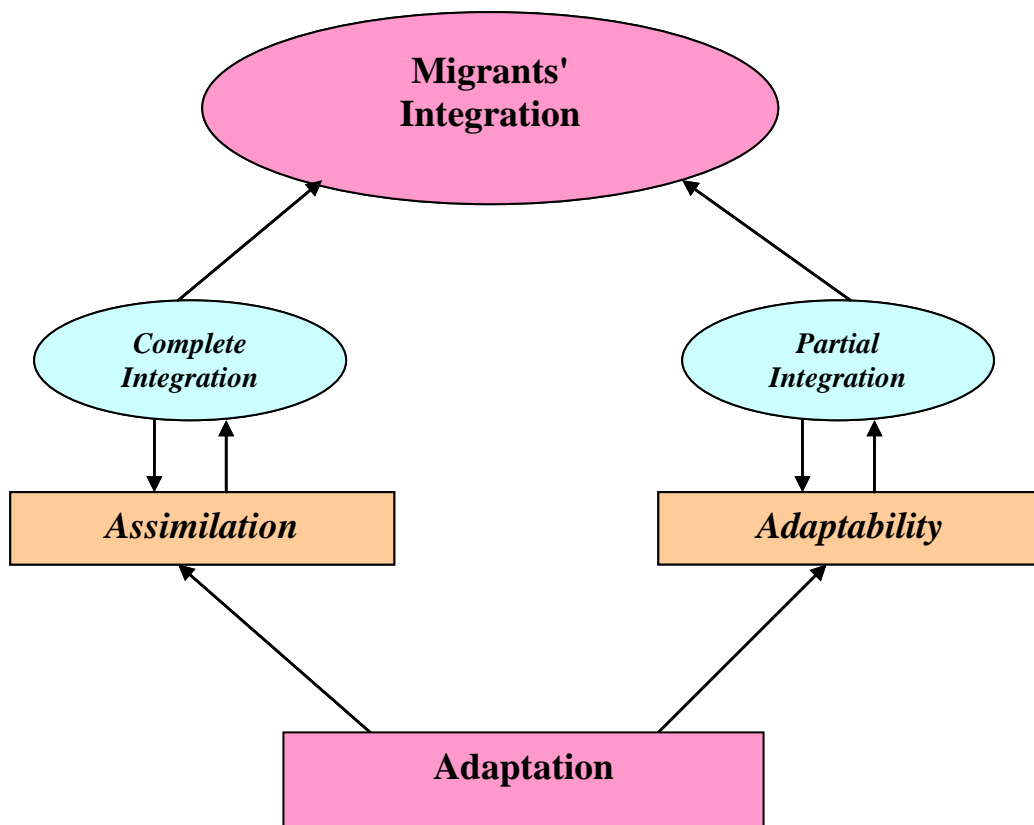
But before we start examining different migrant integration models in Russia, we would like first to review the conceptual framework explaining the essence and complex structure of the notion of “migrant integration”.

Understanding Migrant Integration: Conceptual Framework

Generally, integration can be classified into *complete integration* based on the assimilation of migrants, and *partial integration* including adaptation and survival processes. Classification of notions defining various degree of migrant integration is presented in Figure 1.

Assimilation of migrants means the process by which migrants who differ from the population of the country where they are staying in terms of their values, traditions and culture, transform their self-identification. It is a question of how they adapt to the surrounding community, and to what extent they renounce their unique identity. The assimilation process can be universal or partial. For example, in the course of assimilation people may lose their language, self-definition, traditional structures, while maintaining, say, their religious views, and everyday traditions: this is the form of assimilation found in the United States. Migrant assimilation may come out in social, economic, political, and even demographic terms: the demographic behavior of assimilated migrants (marriage and birth rate models) becomes close, if not identical, to the behavior that is characteristic for the host society in general.

Figure 1. Classification of notions defining various degree of migrant integration



An important factor in assimilation is interethnic marriages: international marriages which are at the root of our conception of the fourth demographic transition (see Iontsev and Prokhorova 2011). At the same time we would like to note that the ethnic self-identification of children born in such marriages depends, to a great extent, on the ethnicity of the leading spouse, as well as on a number of infrastructural factors: for example, policy with respect to ethnic minorities in a given country (Topilin 2010).

Assimilation can be natural or forced.

Natural assimilation is a result of objective processes of economic and political convergence of territories (separate regions and whole states). Here people serve as a strong impulse for cultural convergence: for example, integration processes within the European Union. Natural assimilation is

also characteristic of migrants who join the indigenous population in their new home country, and gradually become part of said population.

Forced assimilation is national policy aimed at the destruction – though not the physical destruction – of the separate identity of a certain ethnicity. The following tools can be used as tools of forced assimilation: limiting language use with the subsequent withdrawal of a language from circulation altogether; eradication of national traditions (ban on celebration of national holidays, performance of national rituals); the promotion of the kinds of activities which are not characteristic for this or that ethnicity, etc. These kinds of policies often deform the system of values of both resident and migrant groups. These policies provoke resistance on the part of the assimilated nation, its tendency to show ethnic restraint and artificial emphasis for characteristic features.

Forced assimilation is a potential source of interethnic conflicts. Forced assimilation should be distinguished from cultural survival. This is characteristic of, for example, migrants in developed Western countries, where the quick assimilation of new migrants is an essential condition for their successful social and economic adaptation.

One nation can proactively assimilate several other nations: thus, Russians assimilated multiple Finnish and Turkish ethnic groups. But in certain cases, especially in the case of small groups residing on the territory of traditional settlements of other nations, it can become the object of assimilation.

Assimilation strengthens in the period of stable public life. And, *vice versa*, economic and social instability is a serious impediment in assimilation processes. Thus, in modern Russia the development of assimilation processes is obviously slowed down by widely spread interethnic conflicts and a growing anti-immigrant spirit in society.

Speaking of the *partial integration* of migrants (here we refer first of all to temporary labor migrants), we need to define two notions, such as *adaptation and adaptability*. As a matter of fact, the integration process starts with adaptation, i.e. a person adjusting to new life and labor conditions. The adaptability of migrants can, in its turn, be defined as a phenomenon which is composed of adaptation on one hand, and adjustment to living conditions, on the other, namely settlement in the new place. Essentially, this means the process by which migrants achieve the same level of prosperity as the indigenous population. As a rule, a significant time is required for settling down, more than the time necessary for adaptation, without which, of course, adaptability cannot be achieved.

Obviously, *integration involves a totality of immigrant actions and beliefs as well as the actions and beliefs of the indigenous population*. The actions of the latter group are especially important because they define and have a strong impact on the conditions of immigrant acceptance and the structural conditions of their stay. Therefore, they direct the national identification of immigrants either towards integration, or in the opposite direction, i.e. unwillingness to integrate.

Thus, it is important to emphasize that the *integration of migrants is a bilateral process aimed at the assimilation and adaptability of migrants in the host society. This may contribute to both the economic and demographic development of this society*. This not only refers to the host society's attitude towards migrants, but also to the unwillingness of migrants to integrate in a given society. When this binarity is broken, it makes it impossible for migrants to integrate completely. A vivid example of this kind of failure is the statements made by European leaders, Angela Merkel and David Cameron about "the failure of multiculturalism" in Europe. They imply that migrants themselves were the ones to blame for this failure, as migrants could not, or were not willing to accept European norms and values. But how could these migrants, especially migrants from the Arab world, integrate in the Western society if they were subject to migrant enclaves, i.e. compact settlements of migrants, isolated from the indigenous population? We have to recognize that, in certain senses, Russia is repeating the sad experience of Western countries. It allows, certainly, the same kind of enclaves to form in Moscow, Saint Petersburg, and other large cities, and thus willingly or unwillingly creates impediments towards the complete integration of migrants.

Migrant Integration in Russian Migration Policy

Migrant integration is, as a subject of national policy, a relatively new issue for modern Russia, though there Russia has some experience in this sphere.

In Soviet times population migration was almost exclusively internal. Given that the USSR was a multinational state, this internal migration created a “mix of nations”. National policy favoured internationalism: the notion of “Soviet people” was full of real meaning something ensured by a common language, a single school curriculum across the whole country, not to mention equality of rights and living conditions for all citizens. With all the rigidity of the Soviet political system the state provided conditions for the social and economic integration of migrants wherever they were relocated: they provided jobs, housing, education for migrants and their children, etc.

The situation changed radically after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Policy related to the internal migration of the population in Russia was shelved. The government concentrated, instead, on the creation of a fundamentally new legislation and institutional structure for international migration. This was understood in very narrow terms, as the legal administrative regulation of migration processes.

In the 1990s, despite the large-scale inflow of migrants from the former Soviet republics, there was no migrant integration policy in place. There was no mention of the integration of migrants relocating to Russia in national migration policy documents. And there were reasons for this. Initially the migration inflow to Russia (which in some years climbed as high as 1 million) included ethnic Russians and representatives of other ethnicities indigenous to Russia: these found themselves in the “wrong” Soviet republic, as the USSR came crashing down. Migrants with similar ethnic backgrounds did not, it was considered, need any special conditions for social and psychological adaptation: for example they did not need classes in Russian or Russian culture and history. Also, the conditions for the social and economic integration of migrants (not least, providing work and housing) were quite limited, due to the economic crisis Russia experienced at that point. Even when, at the beginning of the 2000s, titular nations of the CIS accounted for a significant share of migration flows directed towards Russia, migration policy did not touch on integration. For example, the “Concept of regulation of migration processes in the Russian Federation”, approved in 2003, does not mention integration issues. It was, only, in the 2000s that the notion of “integration” started to appear in Russian research literature (for example, Mukomel 2005, 2007; Pyadukhov 2003; Astvatsaturova 2002).

Ignorance towards the need for integration policy resulted in a decreased level of tolerance in society, raising interethnic tension, migrants being alienated by Russian society, self-isolating, open conflicts between migrants and the local population. It became absolutely obvious that given the mass inflow of migrants – even if from historically close, newly independent states – integration should be an integral element of migration policy. This was also acknowledged in the new “Concept of national migration policy of the Russian Federation through to 2025” approved in June 2012. The Federal Migration Service of Russia elaborated and approved certain specific programs in the field ensuring the integration of migrants in Russian society. A Department for the facilitation of migrant integration was created in the structure of FMS. And it was planned that, by 2016, “an infrastructure for integration and adaptation of labor migrants” should be created.

However for migrant integration policy to be efficient, there needs to be a clear understanding of what integration really means. This includes various questions, *inter alia*: which tools can be implemented with regards to different groups of migrants; how big these groups are; and their specifics; and their social, economic, and demographic behavior. In other words, integration policy should have a reliable informational and conceptual foundation, something which is currently lacking in Russia.

Research into migrant integration in Russia has only a short history. National statistics available on international migrants provides very little data in order to get a reliable estimation of their integration

in the Russian society¹. Sociological surveys on this subject² are limited in number. They are not always representative, they are typically fragmented, and they do not allow systematic evaluation of the migrant integration process. Neither do they provide a general idea about the integration mechanisms that already exist in Russia, and about how they can be used/adapted/complemented by state policy measures for migrants integration in order to be truly efficient.

In order to understand how the migrant integration process takes place, and whether, indeed, it takes place at all, and its depth in different migrant categories, we need a broad range of indicators. These indicators will characterize the degree of inclusion in various spheres of public life, as well as comparative analyses of indigenous people and migrants. They naturally include such key indicators as position in the labor market, accessibility of education, participation in public and political life and work against discrimination. For thirty states (European Union countries, Norway, Switzerland, the USA and Canada) information of this kind is calculated through MIPEX index (Migrant Integration Policy Index). This information allows scholars to evaluate the quality and level of integration policy and allows comparative analyses (Huddleston *et al* 2011). As has been noted above, obtaining this kind of information for Russia is not yet possible.

The situation is complicated by the fact that the elaboration and implementation of migrant integration policy will take place in the context of established negative attitude towards migrants³ and with the politicization of migration in Russia. There is no consensus in society regarding Russian migration strategy. Moreover, there are politicians' polarising opinions and questions in public opinion about whether Russia should or should not attract migrants in order to solve its demographic and economic problems (Mukomel 2011). The subject of migration has become a political "hot potato", something which creates xenophobia through mass media, speeches given by the public politicians, youth subculture, etc. The formation of migrant integration policy under these conditions, which, as has been mentioned before, implies a common, two-way movement of migrants and the local population towards each other, is no trivial task then. However, Russia confirms the way that the withdrawal of the state from this policy sphere can aggravate xenophobia and interethnic clashes.

Given the absent and weak integration policies non-governmental structures take up the slack in terms of migrant adaptation and integration. These are civil-society institutions, human-rights organizations which provide different kinds of consultation and legal services to migrants, working groups, migrants and diaspora associations, not to mention ethnic businesses. Finally, there are shadow structures which mean that migration in Russia (primarily temporary labor migration) is overwhelmingly unregistered and illegal.

Despite the state's increased interest in the subject of migrant integration in recent years, the weakness of integration policy in Russia remains. There is, above all, the lack of instruments for the coordination of different subjects: state authorities of different levels, including local self-government authorities, non-governmental organizations, employers, other business structures, diasporas and migrant associations.

¹ For example, there were several questions in the all-Russian population census in 2010: about knowledge of Russian, other languages and native languages. However, the answers to these questions do not give an idea about the role of the native language in the respondent's everyday life, nor about the level of Russian language skills and other language skills (<http://www.perepis-2010.ru/news/11.jpg>). Hence, information about the most important fact of migrant integration, which knowledge and use of the host country language represents, is not revealed in the Russian population census data, unlike, for example, US population censuses, which provides information on English language skills taking into account distribution of people born abroad by age, gender, race, citizenship, year of arrival in the USA, place of birth and education level (www.census.gov/hhes/socdemo/language/data/acs/ACS-12.pdf)

² Recent sociological surveys of migrants in Russia regarding their integration, are mentioned in: Mukomel 2011, Tyuryukanova 2011, UNICEF 2011.

³ According to the research of the authoritative Analytical Center of Yuri Levada, in the 2000s the share of those Russian citizens who regard the chauvinistic slogan "Russia for Russians!" positively has been solidly over 55%, and there are fewer who think this is "real fascism" - 19% in 2011 compared to 28% in 2002 (<http://www.levada.ru/14-12-2012/>)

Policy with Respect to Returning Compatriots

First of all, we shall examine migrant integration policy in Russia based on the example of a special, most “preferential” category of migrants – Russian “compatriots” relocating to Russia from abroad.

“Compatriots” are interpreted by the Russian legislation as: (1) Russian citizens residing permanently outside the Russian Federation; (2) persons who do not have Russian citizenship, but whose ancestors, in the direct ascending line, previously resided on Russian Federation territory; (3) persons and their descendants originating from the Russian state, Russian republic, RSFSR, USSR, and Russian Federation, who became the citizens of foreign states (4) persons and their descendants who were previously citizens of the USSR and currently live in states which were part of the USSR, and received citizenship from these states, or became stateless persons. An important factor in acknowledging oneself as a compatriot is self-identification supported by public or professional activity in terms of the preservation of the Russian language and native languages of the nations residing in the Russian Federation; the development of Russian culture abroad; and the belief in friendly relations among the states where compatriots reside within the Russian Federation. In summary, then, compatriots favor spiritual, cultural, and legal connections with the Russian Federation.

It is noteworthy that, after the collapse of the USSR, the Russian diaspora abroad turned out to be one of the most numerous in the world. For a start, almost 40 million people for whom Russia was their historical homeland, found themselves in the newly independent states (former Soviet republics). Of these, 25 million were ethnic Russians, 11 million were non-Russian, but Russian-speakers, then, about 1.5 million represent other nations from within Russia, where their national language is their native language (Tatars, Bashkirs, Udmurts, and others). At the beginning of 2010 over 12 million people (7.5 of whom were Russians) returned to Russia. Thus the Russian diaspora in the newly independent states, though diminished, still represents a significant number, comprising some 28 million people.

The overwhelming majority of Russian and Russian-speakers in the newly independent states are concentrated in Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus, and Uzbekistan. Even before the collapse of the USSR, this accounted for four fifths of the Russian population residing on the territory of the USSR, but outside the Russian Federation.

According to some estimates the Russian diaspora in non-CIS countries exceeds 22 million people, two thirds of whom reside in the US and Canada. At least 25 other countries of the world have over 10,000 people with Russian ancestry. Then there is Germany and Israel where migration flows from Russia were directed after freedom of movement in 1991. Other important countries here include Great Britain, Australia and Argentina (Kosmarskaya 2003)

High hopes are vested in the Russian diaspora abroad. Russians hope that it will contribute to the spiritual, economic, political, and demographic revival of Russia. The demographic resources of compatriots residing abroad becomes relevant in connection with the serious demographic crisis Russia has been going through for the last 20 years, due to its rapid decrease in population.

In Tzarist Russian, and especially in Soviet Russia emigrants were always treated with caution, and even with hostility. This attitude held even when people became free to leave the country. But there was a turning point in public perception, which began with a change in legislators’ perception. Those who had previously emigrated from the country, had to be acknowledged as compatriots who should benefit from favorable treatment and support upon their return to Russia. However, this was not the case for compatriots residing in the newly independent states, as their departure from Russia for work in other Soviet republics, was usually only remembered for one generation.

Some compatriots found themselves in the position of an oppressed minority in the CIS and Baltic states. These spurred the adoption of a number of legislative acts in the 1990s aimed at interaction with this part of the Russian diaspora⁴. In fact, state policy with respect to the Russian diaspora in the newly independent states was aimed at the alleviation of their situation in their countries of residence. They stopped the relocation of compatriots to Russia. The term “integration” in these documents is used specifically in this context. Thus, in the annex to the “Decision of the Government of the Russian Federation” No. 1064 the term “integration” is used in the list of actions aimed at the “facilitation of *voluntary integration* of Russian compatriots in the newly independent states in the political, social, and economic life of newly independent states”, as well as the “prevention of mass outflow” from these countries.

Only in the “Social economic development program of the Russian Federation in the mid-term (2003-2005)” is there a precise indication of the need “to elaborate complex measures for the facilitation of voluntary relocation of compatriots from CIS countries and Baltic states to Russia, including providing necessary information about the conditions of relocation, possibilities of acceptance, settlement and stay in the Russian Federation, development of the system of education services on the territory of the Russian Federation for young people from CIS countries and Baltic states”.⁵

However, the implementation of the policy with respect to compatriots, in the 1990s, and up to the end of the 2000s, was inconsistent and controversial. It is enough to mention: the termination as of 31 January, 2001, of facilitated procedures for the acquisition of Russian citizenship for persons who found themselves on the territory of other former Soviet republics at the moment of the collapse of the Soviet Union; or the adoption of the Federal Law in 2002 on citizenship of the Russian Federation; or, indeed, the Federal Law on the legal status of foreign citizens, which granted equal rights for the acquisition of Russian citizenship to persons who had Russian ancestry and who had left Russia, say, at the end of the 1980s, and any other foreign nationals arriving to Russia.

“Integration” was used in Russian legislation for the first time with respect to compatriots staying in the newly independent states. It is historical nonsense to claim, subsequently, that it was never applied to migrants arriving in Russia in order to slow down their return to Russia. Migration inflows reduced significantly due to the fact that these policies were ignored. This tendency to ignore these policies included integration for compatriots relocating to Russia. The “integration” of former Russian citizens “in the political, social, and economic life of newly independent states” was not given up because it was inefficient.

The adoption of the National Program for the facilitation of the voluntary relocation of compatriots abroad in 2006 became a very important, if delayed, step towards the enhancement of the migration attractiveness of Russia. It represented the creation of real conditions for the integration of the relocatees by the state. The state was to undertake: to provide information, consultation, and legal services; to guarantee employment; to facilitate re-qualification; to pay for transportation and luggage fees; to pay the resettlement allowance; and to ensure the acquisition of Russian citizenship within several months, and other associated social guarantees.

Initially the State program was planned for six years (2007-2012), and the presumed relocation to Russia of, optimistically, 300,000 persons who were historically and ethnically close to Russia. However, for lower numbers of people relocated to Russia in the framework of the program. This was

⁴ Orders of the President of the Russian Federation as of 11 August, 1994 No. 1681 on priority directions of state policy of the Russian Federation with respect to compatriots residing abroad, of 14 September, 1995 No. 940 on the approval of the strategic course of the Russian Federation with member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Decrees of the Government of the Russian Federation of 31 August, 1994 No. 1064 on actions for support of compatriots abroad, of May 17, 1996 No. 590 on program of actions for support of compatriots, Federal Law of the RF of 5 March, 1999 on state policy of the Russian Federation with respect to compatriots abroad.

⁵ Social economic development program of the Russian Federation in the mid-term (2003-2005), section 6.3. Approved by the Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of 15 August, 2003, No. 1163-p.

the result of restrictions on places for the settlement of relocatees; lack of assistance from the state in finding housing and tax discrimination;⁶ and also bureaucratic delays. In fact, about 55,000 persons relocated to Russia within five years from 2007 to 2011 as participants in this program, while the total immigration inflow for these years stood at 1.3 million people.⁷

These results made the authorities reconsider the conditions of the program, and, then, reduced administrative barriers for its participants. Beginning with 1 January, 2013 the program became indefinite. Compatriots arriving in the framework of this program will not be as strictly tied to the “settlement territories”. They will have the right to find their own jobs. The restrictions on the right to open their own businesses are also lifted along with other points, which make the life of immigrants easier. The Russian regions participating in the program will gain greater independence in elaborating regional development projects (for example, industrial, agroindustrial, or education clusters), under which they will be able to form their demand for people with certain qualifications, something covered by immigrant compatriots. All of this will create the conditions for the successful integration of relocatees in Russian society.

However, a historical analogy inadvertently comes to mind. Russia, or what was then the USSR, has already had negative experience here. Immediately after the death of Stalin in 1953 the 20th session of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union condemned pre-existing policy. A lot of compatriots went to Russia hoping to come back, or at least enter the USSR in order to connect with family and friends, establish business contacts, etc. Then, the USSR turned its back on them, viewing potential re-emigrants as “undesired elements”. It did not wish to extend a hand of friendship, and thus deprived itself of massive political, if not economic support, aggravating “cold war” tensions.

It is important to learn from this bitter lesson. Currently Russia is in an extremely difficult economic and demographic situation, and any friendly assistance provided by compatriots would be useful. But in order to attract these people, their knowledge and capital, their spirituality and political weight, it will be necessary to change attitudes fundamentally. To revive a strong and politically independent Russia and to recognize them as an integral and equitable part of that Russia, the Russian government should acknowledge the mistakes and unfairness of the past years.

The first thing that needs to be done is facilitation of the acquisition of Russian citizenship for all compatriots who want this. This means legalizing dual citizenship, something extremely important for those who do not intend to move to Russia, but who are ready to collaborate and represent the interests of Russia in the countries where they live. Integration here goes outside of the frame of migration management, and becomes part of a broader political framework.

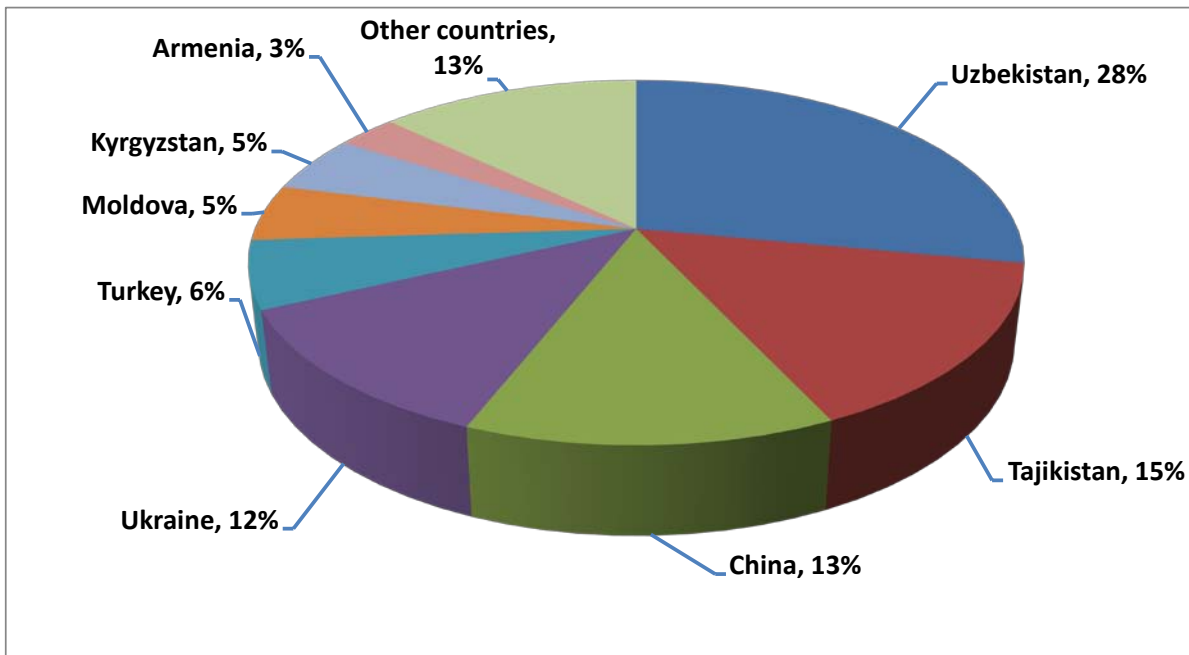
Temporary Labor Migrant Adaptation Policy

The most numerous category of migrants arriving in the Russian Federation are temporary migrants seeking employment. In 2011, 1.2 million work permits were issued to foreign citizens, 80% of which were issued to CIS citizens. Besides this, 810,000 patents were issued to citizens of CIS countries. These patents grant holders the right to be employed by natural persons in Russia. Figure 2 presents the structure of the foreign labor force attracted to Russia, by countries of origin. Citizens of Central Asia states (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan) account for almost two thirds of work permits issued in Russia.

⁶ Initially participants of the Program arriving in Russia were supposed to pay income tax as non-residents, at 30%, while for Russian citizens income tax rate is 13%. Since 2011 participants of the Program started being treated on a par with tax residents of the RF, and income tax for them was set at 13%.

⁷ FMS data for Russia.

Figure 2. Structure of foreign labor force attracted to Russia, by countries of origin, 2011, % (by number of issued work permits)



Source: Data of FMS of Russia

As was mentioned above, the integration of temporary migrants is a question of partial integration. It is most often limited to the adaptation of the migrant to working and living conditions which are new to him/her. An important condition for the successful adaptation of the labor migrant is his/her legalization i.e. registration with migration authorities and with proper permits as required by legislation (work permit or patent). Having legalized his/her stay in Russia the labor migrant receives certain rights, which contribute to his/her integration in the Russian society.

The problem is that a significant proportion of labor migrants arriving in Russia, drop out of the legal sphere at this early stage and fail to legalize their stay in the country. According to estimates 70-80% of labor migrants work in Russia illegally, without work permits, and without legally registering their labor relations with their employer. In other words, the real number of labor migrants staying in Russia may be as high as 5-6 million people.

How can we explain the scale of illegal immigration? First, there are favorable conditions of visa-free entry (in many cases just with “internal” national passports). Second, Russia has weak immigration control. But another important point is, third, underdeveloped official labor migration infrastructure: i.e. the public and non-public service institutions which ensure that migrants are legal, informed, and safe, at different stages of migration (information consulting centers, employment services, legal services, etc). And these are the services which represent a crucial condition for migrant’s access to the legal (and not the shadow) labor market and his/her integration in Russia throughout his/her stay.

The issue of integration becomes particularly important when the rural background of many migrants is considered. Certainly, migrants from Central Asia, arriving for work in Russia, are not typically from urban backgrounds. This is compounded by the fact that, very often, they have not studied Russian in their home country – as it was the case in the beginning of 2000s (Mukomel 2011). Currently, over 20% of citizens of CIS countries who come to Russia to work do not know any Russian at all; while 50% are not capable of filling out even the most basic questionnaire without help (Zayonchkovskaya and Tyuryukanova 2010).

Knowledge of the language of the country of stay, is likely to be the most essential condition of any migrant's adaptation. Knowledge of Russian lets migrants receive information about the rules of employment in Russia. Knowledge of Russian, likewise, maximizes chances of getting a legal job. It reduces dependence on one's compatriots in terms of employment and settlement. It expands the opportunities for networking with the local population. It ensures that migrants benefit from their rights to, *inter alia*, professional education and medical assistance.

Probably due to these considerations, the issue of migrant's knowledge of Russian in Russia is set as the priority issue for integration. In accordance with Federal Law No. 185 of 12 November, 2012 amending the Law on the legal status of foreign citizens, as of December 1, 2012, touches on the knowledge of Russian. Thanks to this law it is now mandatory for labor migrants employed in retail, municipal and household services to pass an exam on basic Russian. The exam takes place at special centers: currently there are 160 centers at Russian and foreign universities which are accredited by the state to perform Russian tests. The certificate confirming that the exam was passed is now a requirement for obtaining or extending a work permit in Russia. The certificate can be replaced by a foreign education credential confirming at least secondary education and the fact that the person had Russian classes in the home country, or education credentials issued by educational institutions in Russia or the USSR. Labor migrants from countries where Russian has the status of national language (Belarus) and from member countries of the Common Economic Space (again Belarus, and Kazakhstan) do not have to pass Russian language tests. If a migrant does not have sufficient knowledge of Russian, they are offered language learning services.

The introduction of Russian language tests for temporary labor migrants caused disputes among Russian experts. Yes, learning Russian is an exceptionally important condition for labour migrants' access to the labor market, self-fulfillment and, indeed, the surrounding community. But it is the possibility of studying, and not the need to pass an exam as a prerequisite for obtaining a work permit, especially when the system of teaching Russian to foreign citizens arriving for work in Russia has not yet been created. Passing the exam will cost labor migrants 3,000-5,000 rubles (75-125 euro), and for a foreign citizen who has not started working, this is, very often, an impossible sum of money.

Hence, experts acknowledge the fact that the state is paying attention to the language needs for labor migrants arriving in Russia to know Russian. However, many express their concerns that this legal norm, in its current form, might, in fact, result in corruption and the even greater illegality of migrants rather than successful integration. These concerns grew after the statement of the director of FMS of Russia Konstantin Romodanovskiy "the plan is to apply this norm to all categories of labor migrants by 2015".⁸ The only exception will be highly-qualified international workers who represent a relatively small group of labor migrants in Russia: 11,294 highly qualified migrants obtained work permits in 2011.

The Federal Migration Service (FMS) of Russia also undertake other steps to facilitate the successful adaptation of labor migrants arriving for work in Russia. It publishes handbooks and guides for migrants, explaining, *inter alia*: the basics of Russian migration legislation; the rules of registering with the migration authorities; application for extending work permits and patents; how to find an employer; the advantages of legal employment; liability for violating the rules of entry, stay, and work in Russia; not to mention useful addresses and phone numbers. A prospective form of FMS activity has been, in recent years, participation in the pre-departure orientation of migrants. The FMS has had offices in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan since 2009. These, together with the national migration authorities, organize courses for potential labor migrants on professional training, Russian, cultural traditions and behavioral norms in Russia. At the end of training graduates who have been successfully trained as workers are supposed to benefit from targeted employment. This practice is called *orgnabor* (organized recruitment), and migrants arriving under organized recruitment programs naturally feel

⁸ <http://ria.ru/society/20121203/913188314.html>

much more comfortable and confident in Russia than those who go to Russia at their own risk. However, the scale of organized recruitment is still quite modest. At FMS it is considered that more proactive involvement on the part of employers in labor migrant integration, and therefore, the expansion of the sphere of legal employment of foreign citizens, is a prerequisite for the improvement of collaboration between migrants and local employees.⁹

Diasporas in Russia: Integration vs. Anti-Integration Potential

In the context of the discussion of migrant integration it is important to emphasize the importance of studying the formation of migrant communities and diasporas in modern Russia. After all, these can both serve as conductors of integration policy, and impede the same.

First of all, definitions: diaspora is a part of a nation (ethnicity) or group of nations (for example, the Russian diaspora which includes ethnic Russians, but also representatives of many other nations which are indigenous to Russia), settled outside their country of origin. Diaspora growth can occur both on account of subsequent relocations (for economic, political, ethnic, and other reasons), and due to natural growth inside the diaspora itself. The primary indicators that determines the existence of a certain diaspora are knowledge of the native language, studying and preserving said language for communication with compatriots; exposure to ancestors' culture; unification based on self-identification as a part of a historical motherland (even if the diaspora member was born in another country); self-identification of cultural affiliation; and a feeling of connection with the historical motherland.

In Russia, which was part of a multinational country for centuries, numerous ethnic communities of nations from former Soviet Republics have resided and are still residing there: after the collapse of the USSR, in fact, these became foreign diasporas of Armenians, Ukrainians, Azeris, Kazakhs, etc. Today, migration has further diversified Russia's ethnic make up. Given this situation it is exceptionally important to remember how these communities can contribute to migrant integration and the preservation of civil peace.

Table 1 employs data from the all-Russia population census, which took place in the Russian Federation in 2010. It gives a very approximate idea about the numbers of diaspora representative from former Soviet republics residing in Russia. It should be remembered that information about ethnicity is based on the self-identification of respondents. A person can, should they want, evade the question about ethnicity. Thus, information about nationality is missing on 5.6 million respondent sheets. However, in the absence of other official information, we can use this source. It is important to remember that according to independent estimates of diasporas residing in Russia their population is several times larger than population census data. Thus, the Union of Armenians in Russia estimates that the number of persons in the Armenian diaspora in Russia to stand at 2.7 million people¹⁰, the Union of Georgians in Russia provides an estimate of 300,000 persons¹¹, the "Kazakhs of Russia" Association estimates the number of Kazakhs residing in Russia at 800,000.¹² The largest diaspora in Russia, the Ukrainian diaspora is estimated to stand at 4.5 - 5 million people.¹³

⁹ From the interview of the Chief of Department for facilitation of integration, FMS of Russia, T.A. Bazhan, 10 August, 2011: http://www.fms.gov.ru/press/publications/news_detail.php?ID=47407

¹⁰ <http://www.sarinfo.org/armw/?c=diasporas>

¹¹ <http://www.georgians.ru/default.asp>

¹² <http://russia.kazakh.ru/article/?a=8#1>

¹³ <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/analit/rusideo/rusvoprosukr.htm>; <http://www.zatulin.ru/institute/sbornik/016/01.shtml>

Table 1. Population of Russia by Ethnicity (Nationality), 2010 (sampling)

	People
Total population	142.856.536
Including:	
Russians	111.016.896
Ukrainians	1.927.988
Armenians	1.182.388
Kazakhs	647.732
Azeris	603.070
Belarusians	521.443
Uzbeks	289.862
Tajiks	200.303
Georgians	157.803
Moldovans	156.400
Kyrgyz	103.422
Nationality not indicated	5.629.429

Source: Data of 2010 all-Russian population census of the Russian Federation
http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/perepis2010/croc/perepis_itogi1612.htm

It is important to understand that ethnic diasporas in Russia represent a controversial and complex phenomenon in terms of structure (Ivakhnyuk 2008). Typically, each diaspora of titular nations of former Soviet republics can be subdivided into three groups.

The first group is the “old diaspora”, i.e. those who moved to Russia, most commonly from other republics, back in the Soviet times, and their descendants who were born in the Russian Federation, who are not just Russian citizens but who are completely integrated into Russian society. Generally these are intellectuals and public servants.

The second group is the “new diaspora”, those who moved to Russia after the collapse of the USSR, within the last 15-20 years, who acquired Russian citizenship or intend to do so, and who acquired, too, real estate. Most of these do not plan to return to their home country. They tend to integrate, but there are also those who perceive Russia as a place for temporary stay, and even with a Russian passport they will return to their home country if economic and political life were to become more stable.

The third, most numerous group, includes labor migrants who can stay in Russia for years, but these do not tend to integrate, and they plan to return to their home country. This is a special part of the transnational ethnic community; adherers of a narrow definition of diaspora are not likely to consider them as part of diaspora. They live separately, as a rule, they do not take part in the activity of non-governmental organizations of “their” diaspora. But there is an entrepreneurial core which performs the function of intermediary between migrants arriving to seek employment, and employers, who often represent part of “the new diaspora”.

This structure has been directly or indirectly confirmed by the empirical data on Azeris, Armenians, Moldovans and Tajiks in Russia. Diasporas are not just social and cultural formations. Recently they have acquired a quite obvious economic meaning in Russia: formation of so-called “third sector” ethnic businesses has been observed. So far this has not been the subject of research in Russia, not least because of the lack of reliable statistical data (one of the few research papers is Brednikova & Pachenkov 2002). This is in contrast to, for example, the United States, where this area has been e.g. the Cuban diaspora (see Portes and Bach 1985). Ethnic businesses stimulate the inflow of migrants, contribute to the integration of migrant labor in the structure of the economy, and thus become part of the general mechanism of stable migration interaction between countries.

However, ethnic businesses play a dual role in migrant integration in the host society. Since they are mostly represented by enterprises/companies, which belong to the representative of a diaspora, and where compatriots are almost exclusively employed, Russian is not an issue. Likewise, education and qualifications are meaningful only inside the relevant ethnic business. Ethnic businesses need a constant inflow of migrants, as these are ready to work for low wages counting on future vertical mobility. This provides the companies with certain competitive advantages. Therefore, ethnic business often becomes a mechanism providing an inflow of illegal labor to Russia.

Joining the diaspora in Russia may mean additional opportunities: help with adaptation; help with employment information; help with documents; receiving medical assistance, etc. Thus, the diaspora can act as an intermediary for adaptation and integration even for temporary labor migrants. It is important for diasporas to facilitate the adaptation of migrants, and to not replace the state regulation of migration processes. Experts note that “there is sometimes inverse proportion relationship between the efficiency of state regulation of migration processes and the participation of diasporas in such regulation” (Gaibnazarov 2012: 341). In other words, when the rules set by the state migration policy are non-transparent, and excessively complicated and artificially adjusted to corrupt schemes, the diaspora “takes up the slack”. It assumes a regulatory role in the information support provided to newly-arriving migrants; the creation of commercial employment organizations; the creation of a data bank for vacancies and employment conditions; help resolving everyday issues; working and living conditions, health care, etc.

We can talk about the integration or anti-integration potential of diaspora activities. This will depend, of course, on how much diasporas contribute or hinder adaptation and integration in relations with the local population (Pyadukhov 2012). This potential is seen in the example of one of the regions of Russia – Penza oblast – based on the infrastructure in the framework of diasporas, providing services to labor migrants. In the collaboration with migrants compatriots-intermediaries normally provide reliable information about a specific region, possible risks, threats, and ways to minimize the same. Thus, they indirectly perform the role of social integrators for foreign workers, who contribute to successful adaptation in the foreign cultural environment, something which becomes particularly important for newly-arrived migrants when official migration infrastructure is not properly developed.

Certain activities performed by the diaspora intermediaries contribute to the formation of migrant *integration settings*. These are: explaining the requirements of Russian migration legislation to foreign workers; assisting in applying for proper permit documentation, and legalizing their status; assisting in learning Russian; using the resources of the diaspora social networks in order to solve the issues of migrant stay and employment; interacting with the leaders of migrant groups who provide control over their stay and activities; and providing informal patronage and protection to migrants. At the same time diasporas may undertake actions which contribute directly to formation of *anti-integration tendencies* among migrants. These may include: shadow services; underestimation of the importance of knowing Russian; tendency to organize migrant life within isolated micro-groups alienated from the host society; exaggerated tariffs for services; arranging for employment with employers who practice forced labor, deception and the illegal status of migrants; and psychological pressure on migrants (Pyadukhov 2012).

* * *

We hope that some of the theoretical methodological approaches outlined by us will help give a better idea about the essence of Russian integration policy, and the possibilities for migrant integration in Russia. Ideally, they will be used for implementation of the new Concept of state migration policy of the Russian Federation in which, for the first time, migrant integration policy is to become an important component of migration policy.

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