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# Labour migration in the post-Soviet/CIS Space: a system of complementarity?

Tessa Savvidis

With regard to migration, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) can be described as the jointly continued administration of the legacy of the USSR by its independent successor states, with a common, generally visa-free labour market as one of its most attractive features. Labour migration in the post-Soviet space, in terms of numbers, is the second largest regional migration system in the world, determined by a shared past of internal migration and current inequalities in economic advancement. The economies of participating migrant sending states are typically developing, whereas those of recipient countries can be described as newly advanced and/or rich in commodities. Whereas at least one of the major migrant receiving countries—Russia—has a long history of state controlled or instigated voluntary and involuntary migration movements, migrant recipients Ukraine and Kazakhstan lack this experience. In all source states there exists neither tradition nor experience of governing national labour markets and poverty.

Key words: labour migration, Commonwealth of Independent States, Russian Federation, legislation and governance, remittances, migration perception

## Introduction

*"(...) migrants vote by their feet for a single migration space and a common labour market. In the 1.5 decades of post-Soviet development, often complicated by contradictions of interests and lack of understanding, freedom of movement was likely to be the strongest link connecting the former Soviet republics." (Irina Ivakhnyuk, 2006)*

According to an estimate by the *United Nations Population Division*, in 2010 there was a global stock of about 214 million people living outside their country of birth or citizenship, which is 3.1 per cent of the world's population (against 2.3% in 1975) (ILO 2010: 15)[1] More than a third of these belong to the two combined migration systems of Eastern Europe and the nine member states of the Commonwealth of Independent states (Abazov 2009: 1f.). According to Pedro Alba, the World Bank Country Director for Russia, "migration flows between CIS countries have been increasing rapidly in recent years, with 35 million more migrants, or accounting for 40 per cent of all developing world migration."[2] Whereas intra-CIS migration during the 1990s was mainly caused by the conflictual political and economic consequences of the USSR's disintegration, since the early 2000s most of the migration inflows were linked to the rapid economic development in CIS member states Russia and Kazakhstan[3], which at the same time underwent a sharp decline of their population due to massive emigration and demographic changes. Today nearly every third migrant in the CIS space—ten of the 35 million intra-CIS migrants—is a labour migrant.[4] In 2009, three out of four labour migrants to Russia came from CIS states, and nearly every third of the officially registered workers arrived from Uzbekistan (Chudinovskikh et al. 2010: 63); in 2005, 95% of documented immigrants to Russia arrived from CIS states. Together with South America and the Caribbean, the post-Soviet space is also characterised by a much greater increase in the

proportion of women among their migrant populations than other regions, which, as a trend, is more typical for developed than developing countries (cf. ILO 2010: 26).
On the basis of statistics and empirical studies, including field studies conducted by the author, this article analyses the specifics of labour migration in the FSU/CIS space under the following cognitive objectives: 1) To what extent does post-Soviet/CIS migration represent a legacy of internal migration inside the USSR and the Soviet migration regime? 2) What are the main elements of complementarity in the FSU/CIS migration system, and what are their limitations? 3) How does the FSU/CIS migration system fit into the general picture of increasing regionalised international migration? 4) What are the legislative and administrative achievements of the CIS with regard to an integrated labour market and coordinated migration management on interstate and national levels? 5) How did the global financial and economic crisis of 2008-2010 affect intra-FSU/CIS migration flows? 6) How is international migration perceived by native majorities, and how do CIS migrants perceive migration?

## During Soviet rule: from state driven labour distribution to a dual migration system

At first glance, there exists a seemingly stark contrast between the restricted mobility throughout the Soviet era and the post-Soviet conditions, especially with regard to practices such as the notorious *propiska* system, a compulsory territorial registration of the population carried out from 1932 to 1991. Directed mainly against the mobility of rural populations, the passport, or *propiska* system, had been described as the "serfdom of the 20th century" (Popov 1996): only urban citizens were granted the right to hold a passport, while *kolkhozniki* had no passports and therefore had no right to move even within the borders of the administrative unit (province) where they lived (Moiseenko 2004: 89). A closer examination, however, reveals that many specifics of the intra-CIS migration originate in earlier decades or were at least started during Soviet rule, thus suggesting continuity rather than discontinuities.

What were then the main features of the Soviet migration regime? "Regulated by the *propiska* policy, [Soviet] migration was permissive by nature" (Ivakhnyuk 2009: 7), albeit state driven and state controlled, with up to two million people taking part annually. Even the *propiska* which regulated and obstructed the freedom of residency choice did not restrict the right of free travel within the country. The primary aim of the Soviet migration system was to maintain a balance between areas with excess labour and areas with labour deficits in the Soviet realm by re-distributing the population. For this aim,

> *People were moved to large-scale construction and industrial sites within the rigidly organised labour recruitment system (orgnabor). During the 1930s, over 28.7 million people were re-settled across the Soviet Union under this system (Narodonaselenie 1994: 234). These were mainly rural citizens recruited to construction and manufacturing sectors in urban areas, and the urbanization process was accelerated in line with the industrialization policy.* (Ivakhnyuk 2009: 7)

Obligatory *raspredelenie* ("distribution") of recent university or high-school graduates – for at least two or three years – as applied mainly in the 1950s-1970s, was another effective tool used to secure a regular inflow of qualified professionals and a balanced qualification level, even in the remotest parts of Soviet Union. While the mobility of highly skilled labour was state-promoted, massive movements of unskilled labour were largely prevented by the *propiska* system. However, in the longer run, this dual system of restricted mobility and stimulated or even compulsory migration undermined the emergence and development of the labour market, "due to the absence or underdevelopment of competition and free-market mechanisms in education and job hiring" (Abazov 2009: 8).

Despite such restrictions, an increasing informal sector of employment opportunities for temporary migrants already existed in post-war Soviet times, which can be regarded a forerunner to the post-Soviet situation. This non-state sector was comprised of construction sites, often in areas with extremely harsh climate, and the retail sector, especially the *kolkhozniye bazary*, where surplus products from the agricultural cooperatives could be sold almost under free-market conditions. Already in the 1980s the informal sectors of the Soviet labour market consisted annually of between 400,000 to 800,000 people, or 10 to 20 per cent of the underemployed rural population in Central Asia and the Caucasus (Abazov 2009: 9).
It is this combined migration regime of restrictiveness and tolerance turning into permissiveness that continued when internal Soviet migration without state borders developed into external, cross-boundary migration in the post-Soviet space.

## A complementary system: specifics and limitations

Current migration flows in the FSU space are determined primarily by visa regimes (cf. Table 1). The accessibility of countries of entry varies considerably, with Uzbekistan (UZ) having the lowest accessibility, which has practically ruled out all other former Soviet states in the visa waiver, with the exception of Russia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. In its restrictiveness, Uzbekistan is followed by Turkmenistan, with the exception of Belarus and the three Central Asian republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and the three Baltic republics, which are now members of the EU. Moldova (MD), on the other hand, offers free entry for all other previous Soviet republics, including the Baltic States. It is followed by Georgia (GE), which demands visas only from nationals of Turkmenistan, while Ukraine (UA) is the only large territorial state that stays visa-free for nationals of all previous Soviet republics, again with the exception of the Baltic States. 60% of all visitors enter the Russian Federation visa – free, with the exception of Turkmenistan and, since 2008, Georgia (Chudinovskikh et al. 2010: 84). In longitudinal comparison, a trend towards visa regimes can be observed, in particular in the Central Asian republics of the CIS.

Apart from the component of accessibility, the complementarity of intra-CIS migration is based on the following facilitating factors:

Russian domination for at least one and a half centuries in the case of Central Asia and two centuries in the case of the South Caucasus, leading to assimilation and cultural affinities; Geographical proximity, 'transparent' borders; Common transportation infrastructure and relatively low travel fares, allowing frequent and unlimited movement (commuting) between countries of origin and host countries; Psychological easiness to move (Russian language as lingua franca, former common territory; familiarity with the mores and customs of the host country, including common patterns of resolving conflicts): "Most of the people in the CIS zone who entered schools before 1991 speak the Russian language and display remarkable similarities in cultural preferences, work ethics and attitudes towards team-work and conflict management" (Abazov 2009: 20-21); Demographic complementarity; Mutual interest towards the common labour market; Large-scale irregular migration; Regional cooperation aimed at coordinated migration management (Ivakhnyuk 2006: 1-2).

In other words, complementarity here describes a symbiotic situation where the involved source and recipient countries both gain from the migration exchange. Low-wage countries with high rates of unemployment and underemployment discharge their labour markets and domestic policies by exporting surplus labour, while the receiving countries—Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan—fill the deficits of their labour forces and compensate for their own emigration losses and population decline. According to the UNDP, in 2007, i.e. already before the economic crisis of 2008-2010, Armenia had an estimated unemployment rate of 33%, and Georgia experienced a rate of 35-40%. In comparison with both South Caucasian states, the Russian labour market maintains by far a much lower degree of competition: while on average one hundred persons apply for one job in Armenia and 30 in Georgia, less than three apply for a position in Russia.

The disparity of incomes in countries of origin and host countries is another major pull factor (cf. Table 2). "A steep decline in real personal incomes and wages (…) led to the rise of extreme poverty in some republics of the CIS zone, especially in the so-called southern belt – Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Armenia, Moldova and Uzbekistan" (Abazov 2009: 16). According to CIS statistics for 2008, the Russian Federation led with an average monthly wage rate of 718 USD, followed by Kazakhstan ($485), Belarus ($396), Ukraine ($356), Azerbaijan ($317), and Armenia ($293), while Moldova ($245), Kyrgyzstan ($137) and Tajikistan ($63) tailed the rating (Karimov 2008). In longitudinal comparison, the wage gap between Russia and the CIS source countries has not diminished, but, on the contrary, has widened which also contradicts the observation that international migration leads to an increase of income levels in the countries of origin (Abazov 2009: 34): If in 1990 the average salary in most of the FSU republics was 20-30 per cent lower than in Russia, in 2008 this gap reached more than 90 per cent for Tajikistan, 80 per cent for Kyrgyzstan and more than 60 per cent for Ukraine and Moldova (Chudinovskikh et al. 2010: 60). Admittedly, wage and income gaps are very uneven, when situations in urban and rural areas are compared: according to the CIS Committee's report, a big difference in living standards between capital cities and the province is traced in every country of the Commonwealth. Therefore, the average wage in Moscow is 1.9 times higher than in other cities of the Russian Federation.

The near-disappearance of social welfare and the severe decline of public healthcare systems in the 'southern belt' of the CIS space are major additional push factors. "Anecdotal evidence suggests that in some remote areas, like mountainous regions in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Georgia and Russia, these welfare and healthcare systems have collapsed altogether" (Abazov 2009: 16).

There are considerate financial gains from migration for both the source and the host countries: for the sending CIS states, they consist of direct money transfers from abroad, which in 2011, according to official data, amounted to 45% (96 billion US dollars) of the GDP in Tajikistan, sent by around one million Tajik workers from Russia[5]. For the year 2010 the Central Bank of Russia reported that the biggest recipient of remittances from Russia was Uzbekistan with US $2.85 billion, followed by Tajikistan.[6] In global comparison, Tajikistan (31% of GDP), Moldova (23%) and Kyrgyzstan (21%) were among the top 10 recipients of migrant remittances as a share of their GDP (Mohapatra et al. 2011: 3). In pre-crisis years, Moldova received a total of remittance inflows that equalled her domestic budget revenues (Tishkov et al. 2005: 27). The pre-crisis inflow to Azerbaijan totalled 2.5 billion US dollars and was equivalent to approximately 10% of the country's GDP (Tishkov et al. 2005: 28).

A survey conducted by IOM in 2002 in Moscow found that every second migrant remitted money to his or her country of origin (Tishkov et al. 2005: 28), but nationally the ratio may be three out of five migrants or more, as surveys by the *European Bank for Reconstruction and Development* (EBRD) and other sources reveal. According to a four country survey (Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Russia) by EBRD, conducted during 2006, 58% of the migrants from Georgia polled in Russia transferred money to friends and family at home, while the ratio for the respondents from Moldova was 63% and even 64% for migrants from Azerbaijan (Bendixen 2007: 169)[7]. A 2009 survey among returnees from Moscow, interviewed in Armenia and Georgia, found that 76.8% of the returnees to Georgia had transmitted money to their country of origin, whereas the ratio among interviewees in Armenia was just 40.5% (Savvidis 2011: 209).

Host countries gain additional tax profits and increase their economic competiveness by wage cuts due to the competition of migrants in the labour market. Until the global financial crisis hit Russia in 2008 and food prices inflated for 15.3% in the January-November 2008 period, unqualified cheap labour by immigrants had also helped to keep prices for goods and services low and profit rates high in Russia. Finally, migration also secures political stability in neighbouring countries, since the national labour markets there were relieved of their surplus workforce and social tensions were avoided or at least mitigated.

However, the complementarity of the Eurasian or CIS migration system has its limits. The academic and more so the public discourse critically emphasise financial losses that the

money outflows to countries of origins cause. As a major host country, Russia, for example, is the main source of remittances sent to other CIS states. According to the Central Bank of Russia, the total amount of these money transfers increased seven times between 1999 and 2004, i.e. from 0.5 billion to 3.5 billion USD. According to data corroborated by the World Bank, the total amount in 2009 was 18.6 billion USD, which is nearly thrice above the amount of remittances that Russia has received during the same period (cf. Table 3). Percentage-wise, the outflow of remittances from Russia equalled just 2% of the country's GDP, which surprisingly was the same percentage as in the cases of Moldova, Armenia and Tajikistan. According to the national Bank of Kazakhstan, since 2000 the remittances sent by official channels from that country were growing 1.5-2 times annually, and by 2005 exceeded one billion USD (Sadovskaya 2007).

Whether the financial losses that a CIS state suffers by international money transfer of migrants is compensated by income taxes or other state revenues largely depends on the ratio of irregular migrants, which is generally believed to increase under conditions of economic crisis. For Russia, the expert estimates of the number of irregular migrants range from 5 to 6 million (IOM)[8], or 50 to 60% of labour migrants to Russia. As early as 2006, the head of the Russian Federal Migration Service, Konstantin Romodanovsky, stated that immigration causes economic losses of $7 billion annually: "It is a huge damage to the country. Migrants evade taxes and duty payments," he said, adding that the loss equalled Russia's total budget spending on education and healthcare.[9] On the other hand, irregular migration and shadow economy, which may have been 20-25 per cent of Russia's GDP already before the 2008/9 crisis, seem to be closely linked. Many employers of migrant workers operate in the underground economy.

For the source countries, losses by massive emigration are usually measured as losses of human or cultural (educational) capital ('brain drain' and 'brain waste'). Migration outflows are believed to cause also demographic (gender and generational) imbalances and thus accelerate the trend towards 'aging societies'. In 2006, and compared to other CIS states, Armenia had the highest share of workers abroad – perhaps 700,000 (58%) of a labour force of 1.2 million - followed by Moldova (700,000 migrants in a labour force of 1.5 million) and Azerbaijan (up to 1.5 million migrants in a labour force of 3.8 million).[10] Comparing the global top 29 emigration countries of 2010, Armenia and Georgia hold places 17 and 20, respectively, with 28.2% (= 870,200 emigrants) and 25.1% (= 1,057,000) of their total populations being abroad. In 2000, the emigration rate of the tertiary-educated population was 8.8% for Armenia and 1.6% for Georgia (World Bank 2011: 61, 122). Since the effects of 'brain drain' largely depend on the population size and the average education level, the negative effects are expected to be greater on small countries,—defined as having a population of less than 30 million—, especially "such countries as Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Tajikistan" (Mansoor & Quillin 2007: 183). Tishkov et al. (2005: 16), however, describe the large territorial state of Kazakhstan as the second largest victim of brain drain next to Armenia, estimating that the overall external loss from the CIS space between 1990 and 2005 may reach as high as five million:

> *Such emigration tends to be a 'brain drain' because it takes away the most educated population. These losses have been particularly severe for Kazakhstan and Armenia, which lost much of their population not only to 'distant' countries but also to Russia. Kazakhstan has lost 80% of its Germans (about 800 thousand people) and 1.5 million Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians from a total population of 16.3 million in 1989. This seriously complicates the country's economic development.*

During the 1991-95 peak years of post-Soviet out-migration, Armenia saw a decrease in her scientists involved in research from 15,000 to 3,000 (Mansoor/Quillin 2007: 184). Summarizing the demographic development during the interim period of 2002-2010—the period between the population census of 2001 and 2011—the State Statistical Office of the

Republic of Armenia (ArmStat) gives the net migration rate with a rather unrealistically low sum of -57,000 persons[11], of a de facto population census of 3,002,594 persons in 2001, and the gender imbalance of +3% (= 51.5% of the female share of the population).

Finally another negative effect has to be mentioned here: labour export from former Soviet republics to Russia has so far been convenient for both sides. Exporting unemployed nationals helps the countries of origin avoid social and political tensions. But the long-term danger lies in administrators and decision-makers not working actively and efficiently enough to reduce domestic poverty. If they simply rely upon labour (e)migration to Russia and elsewhere, little efforts are made to foster domestic job growth and employment management. The paralyzing effects of this failure are compounded by the repercussions of the global financial crisis, as we will see below.

## Regionalisation of international migration

There are two reverse tendencies in international migration: On the one hand, economic globalization has brought about the globalization of markets, labour markets included. On the other hand, there is an increasing trend of regionalization of international migration. Since the 1980s, the regional share in international migration increased from 20% to 50%. At present, every second cross-boundary migrant prefers to stay in his or her native region, preferring to migrate to adjacent rather than remote countries. As a result, distinct regional migration systems have emerged, although they often overlap. As examples we quote the European or EU migration system, intersecting in Eastern and Central Eastern European countries such as the Baltic States, Rumania and Poland, with the aforementioned FSU/CIS or Eurasian system,[12] in particular with regard to the migration of highly skilled persons, on the one hand, and European CIS countries such as Moldova, on the other hand. According to an expert estimate, a "sizeable" ratio of external migrants from Moldova works in European countries. Only 53% work in the Russian Federation, which is a significantly low share if compared with the 88% share of foreign workers from the Central Asian CIS member states in Russia (IOM 2011: 37). The East European-Eurasian intersect of high skilled labour migration is clearly showed in the migration of physicians, surgeons and other medical trained professions: while German physicians migrate to the UK and other Western destinations, they are replaced by Rumanian colleagues at home, who in their homeland, but also in Germany, are increasingly being substituted by colleagues from the Russian Federation.

The CIS or Eurasian migration system is the second largest in terms of quantity after the North American, or US regional migration systems. The total number of foreign-born residents in the CIS zone is estimated between 25 and 30 million people, including 13 million in the Russian Federation (or 8.2% in 2002 and 8.7% of the population in 2010)[13], seven million in the Ukraine, three million in Kazakhstan, one million in Uzbekistan and 0.5 million in Belarus, etc.[14] Major destinations for migrants from Russia are Belarus, Israel, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.[15]

As data in Table 4 reveal, the discrepancy between figures on foreign born residents, given in brackets, and actual foreigners is considerate and is primarily explained by the naturalisation of ethnic Russians or members of Russophone communities who immigrated to the Russian Federation during the 1990s. In about 1997, the 'Slavic' or European influx from Ukraine and Moldova declined, while that of ethnic Central Asians increased, marking simultaneously the dominance of labour migration over ethnic migration, or 'compatriotic' immigration (Savvidis 2009: 149-150). By 2010, the cumulative ratio of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan has exceeded up to 50% of the total inflow of labour migration to Russia. At present, Central Asia is the only sending region whose share in out-migration is likely to increase further, first of all, at the expense of Uzbekistan which became the main 'exporter' of its workforce to Russia in 2007 (Chudinovskikh et al. 2010: 63).

As the core country of the Eurasian migration system, Russia receives immigrants for permanent residence as well as temporary labour migrants, whose inflow since 2008 is at least

thrice bigger than immigration for permanent residence (Chudinovskikh et al. 2010: 60). Correspondingly, temporary labour migration is the most dynamic and extensive sector of intra-CIS migration, or immigration into the Russian Federation.

The post-Soviet Eurasian migration system can be tentatively divided into possible competing migratory sub-systems: three large and resource-rich territorial post-Soviet states attract labour migrants from adjacent resource-poor and low wage countries with underdeveloped and insufficient labour markets, slow or even reverse employment growth and high competition on their national labour markets. These three major recipients are, first of all, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan, while the likewise resource-rich CIS members Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan do not attract migrants at all.

Before the international financial and economic crisis hit the post-Soviet space in late 2008, Kazakhstan had developed into an immigration alternative for migrants from the other Central Asian republics, including tens-of-thousands of labour migrants from Kyrgyzstan (Najibullah 2010), while Ukraine became an entry alternative for migrants from Georgia, which since the so-called Rose Revolution of 2004 has increasingly suffered from deteriorating foreign relations with Russia. As a host-country for Central Asian migrants, Kazakhstan, on the other hand, has compensated its labour deficits suffered due to the loss of a fifth of its population that the massive emigration of Slavic people, Germans and Jews had caused earlier in the 1990s (Ivakhnyuk 2006: 3).

Although Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan have attracted millions of migrants, the three countries appear at the same time in the capacity of massive senders of migrants, as well as migration corridors. The comparison of immigration and emigration reveals in the Russian case a surplus of 1.2 million immigrants, whereas in the case of Ukraine, emigration surpasses immigration by 1 million people. Kazakhstan, on the other hand, does not appear among the global top 29 receivers of migrants. Scored against the entire population, we find none of the large territorial member states of the CIS among the Top 29 countries for emigration, but Moldova and the two South Caucasian republics of Armenia and Georgia (cf. Table 5).

There are other meaningful classification models which can be applied in an assessment of migration effects in the CIS migration system. With regard to demographic criteria such as population growth and generational stratification, the CIS space could be subdivided into three groups: a) the predominantly Muslim Azerbaijan and four of the five Central Asian republics (Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan) are characterised by a moderate population growth, a high ratio of young people (29-34% of the population younger 14 years) and a significant part of the population that has entered the labour market in the 1990s and 2000s. b) The second group that comprises Belarus, Moldova, the Russian Federation and Ukraine has been characterised for about two decades by rather low fertility rates at about 1.3 to 1.6 children per woman. As of 2009, in these countries only about 14 per cent of these countries' populations were younger than 14 years of age and the proportion of people older than 60 is increasing rapidly. c) The third and medium group includes Armenia, Georgia and Kazakhstan. In these countries, the fertility rate remains high enough to maintain a stable population or to allow even a small natural population growth (Abazov 2009: 5-6).

## A common labour market; a coordinated migration policy?

Efforts to create a common labour market and an integrated migration and immigration policy are reflected primarily in legislation. Legislation on migration has been issued on international, CIS and national levels. The founding member states of the CIS pledged to support the free flow of people, goods, and services within the Commonwealth. Subsequently, legislative acts on migration were among the first issued by the CIS, with the frameworks for cooperation in migration being the *Almaty Declaration* (December 1991), the *Agreement on Establishing Consultative Council on Labour, Migration and Social Protection* (November 1992), the *CIS Inter-Government Treaty on Migration and Social Protection of Labour Migrants* (April 1994) and the *CIS Treaty on Cooperation against Illegal Migrants* (March

1998). Parliamentary legislation on labour migration commenced in April 1998 with the signing and ratification of the *Agreement on co-operation and social protection of migrant workers* in the CIS countries, excluding Uzbekistan, followed in March 2009 by the CIS *Agreement on cooperation against illegal migration*, excluding Georgia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. In November 2008, the CIS states, with the exceptions of Moldova and Turkmenistan, signed a *Convention on legal status of migrant-workers and their family mem*bers – *citizens of the CIS*, which was signed by all member states except for Moldova and Turkmenistan. The only states to ratify the convention were Belarus and Kazakhstan (Chudinovskikh et al. 2010: 30). In addition, after 2000 most CIS member states signed bilateral or multilateral agreements and regulations that stipulate a visa-free travel regime between the signing parties or safeguard the social protection of migrant workers. Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan confirmed the visa-free regime by a new multilateral treaty in 2005 which replaced the Bishkek Agreement of 1992 (expired in 2000). However, "in most cases experts consider agreements between the CIS countries to be inefficient. The lower the status of agreement is– the higher its effectiveness" (Chudinovskikh et al. 2010: 30). Although the 1994 CIS *Agreement on Cooperation in the Area of Labour Migration and Social Protection of Migrant Workers* stipulated bilateral treaties between CIS countries which would make provisions for authorities of the involved states to establish an annual quota for foreign labour migrants, or to introduce it if the labour market situation changed, the practice of bilaterally established quotas has not yet started (Tishkov et al. 2005: 34), leaving the fixation of work permit quotas to the exclusive decision of a recipient country. The agreement *On establishing the Council of the CIS Migration Authorities Heads* (5 October, 2007) and the *Declaration on coordinated migration policy*, adopted by a decision of the CIS Council of the Heads of States on 5 October, 2007, Dushanbe, were subsequent steps taken by the CIS states to improve a situation which had been criticised in the mid-2000s by Russian experts Tishkov et al. as a failure in regards to the development of either a common labour market, migration policy or effective legal tools to that aim, while national migration legislation "is not always up to international standards, and is characterised by inadequacy, contradictions and a complex normative and legal basis" (Tishkov et al. 2005: 35).

The reluctance of CIS member states to sign and ratify international conventions is evident: of the 45 parties that ratified the United Nations' *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families* (1990; in force 1 July 2003) there are only three member states of the CIS (Azerbaijan, 1999; Tajikistan, 2002; Kyrgyzstan, 2003) that have ratified this important safeguard of migrants' human rights.[16] Of the four *ILO Conventions* on migrant rights that have been issued since 1919, neither the USSR nor the Russian Federation ever ratified any of them. Among the South Caucasian successor states of the USSR, Armenia is the only country which has ratified the *Migration for Employment Convention* in its revised version of 1949, together with the 1975 *Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention* (C 143)[17], having done so in 2006.

On national institutional levels the situation is highly diversified. While some of the CIS/FSU source states conduct practically no proactive migration policy (cf. e.g. Badurashvili 2011), neighbouring states, comparable in territorial seize, population and migration intensity, have established State Migration Services.

The Russian Federation, as the main destination of FSU/CIS migrants, has signed 196 international agreements related to migration issues. Among them, 165 (84%) were signed with single countries and 21 with international organizations. 60 agreements regulate cooperation between Russia and the other countries of the former USSR. About 27% of all agreements deal with regulations of bilateral trips, 15% with issues of fighting crime, including illegal migration, and 10% regulate labour migration. Readmission has become one of the most important topics over the last years. 13 of 15 agreements on readmission were signed in 2006-2010 (Chudinovskikh et al. 2010: 30).

The migration regime of the Russian Federation is based on various mechanisms and regulations establishing terms of entry, stay, access to the labour market and naturalization. Legislation on migration issues has been developed since 1992 and underwent three main phases, which were characterised by increasing regulation and liberal deregulation. The basic laws are subjected to regular revision and amendments. During the first period, migration policy focused on the regulation of forced migration. Since the mid-1990s temporary labour migration became the main component of the migration process, and migration policies were revised to cope with increasing irregular migration. A major shift in RF migration policies took place around the year 2000, reflected in the adoption of new by-laws and unpublished instructions. But the legislation adopted in 2002 appeared to be rather rigid and ineffective. In 2006, Russia started the re-liberalisation of its legal base in the sphere of international migration, establishing new terms of access to the labour market and labour registration (Chudinovskikh et al. 2010: 96). An amendment (2007) of the 2002 law on foreigners, followed by several regulations, enabled millions of migrants to legalise their stay in Russia by providing them with official residency and work permits independent from employers. The regularisation of so far irregular immigration was also linked with the hope to more effectively fight exploitation and grave deception of foreign workers by their employers, including trafficking and forced labour (cf. Buchanan 2009: 39-48). At the same time, the new laws and regulations brought upon a centralization of the RF migration management, including the dispersion of immigration flows to the economic or geographic regions in need of a foreign labour force by system of pre-planning. While the 2007 amendment liberalised the access to the RF labour market for foreign migrants, it increased drastically the penalties for irregular recruitment of foreigners with a fine of up to 800,000 roubles (ca. 20,000 EUR) for each undocumented worker (Chudinovskikh et al. 2010: 25). Nevertheless, in 2007, 40% of the migrants authorised to work were still hired unofficially (Ioffe/Zayonchkovkaya 2010: 24). Already in 2008, restrictions were introduced once again and migrants were excluded from certain traditional intra-FSU/CIS migration sectors of the economy for the first time, such as the retail sector, which used to be a niche for migrants from the South Caucasus. Two specifics of the RF legislation on migration and migration management have also to be mentioned in this context: a) Local conditions play a considerate role. As a rule, local regulations are more restrictive the more popular destinations are, as the example of the most favourite destinations of labour migrants to Russia— the areas of the capital cities Moscow and Petersburg—prove. The amendment of the RF immigration legislation in 2007 was opposed by administrators, including the then influential Mayor of Moscow, Yuri Luzhkov (1992-2010), and his successor Sergey Sobyanin (Savvidis 2011: 230). b) Semi-legal (based on by-laws or instructions adopted within the interior), illegal or informal practices permeate official regulatory systems.

The leading Russian agency dealing with external and internal migration is the *Federal Migration Service* (FMS), which started operating as a newly established branch of the Ministry of Interior in 2002. With his Decree No. 724 of 12th May 2008 ('Structure of Federal Bodies of the Executive Power'), President Medved'ev brought the FMS and the Ministry of Interior under direct presidential control. Alongside other numerous tasks, the FMS is responsible for the issuance of migration cards, work permits (2008: 2.4 million; Chudinovskikh et al: 2010: 62) and temporary (valid for three years) or permanent residence permits which were introduced in 2003, including migrants from the CIS space. However, it is the *Ministry for Healthcare and Social Development* that annually determines the entrance quotas for migrant workers by regions of the RF and sectors of occupation. The RF quota system, which basically follows immigration patterns of the Northern American migration system, has been implemented after the much criticised 2002 *Law on the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens on the Territory of the Russian Federation*. This law has "introduced complicated procedures for legalizing sojourn/residence. The legal employment of migrants requires a long time, and an enormous amount of paperwork both for migrants and for employers" (Tishkov et al. 2005: 35). Among others, the law stipulated eight categories of legal residency for foreigners; one of these forms of residency status is that of a foreign

worker, although visa-free CIS migrants usually arrive as 'temporary visitors' with the right to stay up to 90 days and the obligation to apply to the FMS for a work permit if they wish to obtain legal employment. In 2010, two further types of migrant workers' status were added, which are indicative of the current needs of the Russian labour market: patent holders and highly qualified specialists (Chudinovskikh 2010: 23-24).

The unevenness of the Russian migration regime and legislation reflect the inconsistent interests of Russian economic, demographic and domestic politics. Since 1992, Russia's population has declined by 6.5 million. The United Nations predicts that if current demographic trends continue, the population could decline from 142 million in 2007 to 100 million by 2050. Although Russia recorded a renewed, albeit modest population growth of 10,500 for the first time in 15 years in 2009, thanks to maternity incentives and other targeted measures, in 2011, with a total of minus 132,200 in Russia's natural net population balance, the mortality rate was again higher than the number of births[18]. The demographic crisis is expected to result in labour shortages as early as 2012-2014, which will worsen over time, totalling up to 20 per cent of demanded labour.[19] To compensate for its demographic losses, Russia needs an annual inflow of one million immigrants (Andrienko 2005: 3). According to the UN projection mentioned above, Russia requires an overall net migration of 35.8 million by 2050 to maintain its working age population and economic competiveness at current levels.

As a rapidly aging society, Russia tries to compensate its demographic deficits by immigration and accordingly eased the naturalisation of CIS nationals in 2003. However, immigration of ethnic non-Russians is obviously not the first choice for decision-makers, who also have to address their compatriots' fear for a profound change of the country's ethnic composition: "More and more immigrants will come to Russia and they will bring their own culture. Russian culture will disappear. This is the most horrible vision I can imagine. We are one of the ancient, rich cultures of the world", quotes a 2006 report of *The Globe and Mail* the opinion of a 28 year old female Russian shop owner (Krehm 2006).

In light of such fears, Russian decision-makers have tried to increase the population by encouraging the 'repatriation' of expat communities in the first place. In his state-of-the-nation address of May 2006, the then President V. Putin vowed to make Russia's population decline his highest priority and initiated changes in the migration policy, such as an attempt to attract compatriots from abroad. Subsequently, a six-year government programme started in June 2007 encourages 'compatriots' living abroad to return to Russia. They will receive cash, social benefits and support in gaining or regaining Russian citizenship. However, the immigration potential of this group only accounts for 6-7 million people and is expensive. The reintegration of one million 'repatriates' will cost approximately US$6 billion (Krehm 2006).

Leading Russian migration scholars have outspokenly rejected the inconsistent migration policy of the RF government and characterised it as being determined by ignorance, incompetence and wishful thinking:

> *Design of a migration policy is a matter of political and public debate. The debate is to be based on knowledge of the subject, its advantages and disadvantages, its past, present and future. In this context, the Russian society and policy-makers are in dramatic contrast with, for example, those in the USA, where the nation is created by immigration, and the social, economic, cultural, and political aspects of immigration are thoroughly studied. The lack of knowledge of the phenomenon of migration in Russia, a dominating alarmist approach, and a stereotypes-driven decision making process make the Russian migration policy slack, reactive and contradictory. The fact that there is no migration strategy and clearly defined purposes of migration policy can be explained by a lack of development strategy detailed in economic strategy, demographic strategy, social strategy, etc. In fact, the call for fertility growth and resettlement of compatriots to cope with the current demographic crisis can hardly be taken seriously (Ivakhnyuk 2009: 75).*

## Effects of the global financial crisis

The crisis of 2008/9 proved to be a further obstacle to the legislative and economic integration of the CIS in the field of migration. There is an on-going debate in migration studies regarding the effects financial and economic crises have on international migration: while it is generally believed that a national, regional or even international crisis reduces migration and financial (remittance) flows, there are also indicators of the large amplitude of susceptibility for the effects of a crisis. Major determinants here are sectors of occupation, levels of education, gender and also the origin and dimension of the crisis itself. In this context it has to be mentioned that conclusions and more so predictability of the effects are obscured by the fact that the 2008 crisis began not in developing countries or in the periphery, but in the very centres of financial economy, i.e. in the US.

Available data reveal the heterogeneous effects of the 2008/9 crisis: while the average decline of remittances to developing countries in 2009 was estimated to be 6.1% "as a result of weak job markets in major destination countries" (Mohapatra/Ratha 2010: 1), growth was also reported. Despite the global crisis, remittances from the United Arab Emirates increased up to 15% in 2009.[20] At the same time, flows from the Russian Federation to Kyrgyzstan, Armenia and Tajikistan, each having about one million members of their populations outside the country, temporarily decreased by 15%, 33% and 34%, respectively (Mohapatra/Ratha 2010: 4). Cash flows increased again in 2011 when the total amount of around $3 billion sent by Tajik workers to Tajikistan has surpassed that of the previous year by 30%, thus equalling nearly half of Tajikistan's GDP, according to the Deputy Head of Tajikistan's National Bank.[21] Armenia's Central Bank reported an increase in private remittances of 23.1% for January-November 2011, with a total amount of $1,380,600 million; of these, the biggest share and more than two thirds comes from Russia ($1,028,700 million), followed by remittances from the U.S. ($40,5 million), Kazakhstan ($16,9 million) and Ukraine ($8,2 million).[22] Kyrgyzstan saw a recovery of its remittance flows already in 2010, when, according to the Kyrgyz National Bank, remittances from migrant workers in Russia and elsewhere exceeded $900 million in the first 10 months. That was about $157 million more than Kyrgyz migrants sent home in all of 2009, contributing greatly to the country's revenue of 5.5 million (= 21% of the GDP; Mohapatra et al. 2011: 3), which has an annual budget of about $1.36 billion (Najibullah 2010). Of the European CIS remittance recipients, Moldova saw a decline of 35% in 2009, compared to the previous year 2008. With a total of $1,247.1 billion in 2010, Moldova has not yet regained the pre-crisis (2008) level of $1,660.1 billion.[23]

Reaching a conclusion regarding the effects of the global crisis, Mohapatra and Ratha believe that "(u)nlike private capital flows, remittance flows have remained resilient through the crisis and have become even more important as a source of external financing in many developing countries" (Mohapatra/Ratha 2010: 1). According to these migration experts, the average remittance growth in Eastern Europe and Central Asia was 11% in 2011 (Mohapatra et al. 2011: 2), but with a total amount of $40 billion in 2011, it still lagged behind the pre-crisis level of $45 billion (2008; Mohapatra et al. 2011: 15).

The comparison of data from the migration intense FSU/CIS space reveals that the conclusion of general remittance resilience or the prospects of a timely recovery can be applied to Central Asian and South Caucasian member states, but remains to be seen with regard to the European CIS space. According to a general forecast of economic growth by the *European Bank for Reconstruction and Development* of early 2011, "Eastern Europe and the Caucasus will grow in line with the regional average, benefiting from robust external demand and commodity price increases. Georgia will lead the way, expanding at 5 per cent, followed by Armenia and Moldova, both set to grow at 4.5 per cent" (Lall 2011).

On the other hand, migration and financial flows can likewise be interpreted as an indicator for a rather slow recovery of the CIS space after the global financial crisis in 2011, for many CIS states are "still unable to create new jobs for those who found themselves unemployed during the crisis", according to Sudharshan Cangarajah, the head of the World Bank's CIS Migration Program. "As a result, the challenging economic and political

transition in many countries of the CIS in the post crisis period is pushing individuals and families to migrate, making migration management more challenging for governments and border control agencies."[24] But as it was pointed out in the end of Paragraph 2 of this contribution, no or little job growth had been a permanent concern in sending CIS member states long before the crisis.

How did the 2008 crisis affect Russia as the main recipient of labour migrants in the FSU/CIS space? What had begun in the USA as the so called Lehmann crisis was felt in Russia not only as a crisis of the existing financial system, but was aggravated by the decline in market prices of many commodities that Russia exports. In the construction industry where, according to the FMS, 40% of all labour migrants in Russia are employed, the impact of the crisis was first felt in autumn 2008, when this erstwhile booming industry had to slow down because developers and constructors experienced increasing difficulties when trying to receive bank credits to finance their projects. This resulted in the announcement of key real estate developers to freeze future projects and to dispose of on-going projects in early stages. Developers and builders of a lesser scale faced a "struggle to survive", especially in regional cities, according to Dmitriy Lutsenko, board member of the *Mirax Group* (Pan 2008: A12).

However, Russia's migration policy is not only driven by economic developments, but also by short-term, often populist political and protectionist considerations of statesmen and administrators, including trade unions. With regard to the on-going election campaign, RF Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, who is expected to win the presidential election, demanded in a televised address to immigration officials that people who violate immigration and labour laws should be barred from entering the country for up to 10 years. He also said that Russians, who profit from hiring and enslaving migrants or from issuing fake work and residential permits, should face criminal charges instead of "symbolic fines."[25]

Indicative of the "deficit of a clear long-term migration strategy" was also the "axing" of the work permits quota "from 6 million in 2007 to 1.8 million in 2008, which caused a renewal of illegal employment practices among Russian employers" (Ivakhnyuk 2009: 76): As early as June 2008 in some of Russia's regions local FMS offices stopped issuing work permits because the unrealistically limited quota had been exhausted. After strong protests from employers, the *Ministry of Healthcare and Social Development* revised its mistake and nearly doubled the quota from 1.8 to 3.4 million for 2008, but reduced it again, rather spontaneously, to 1.4 million work permits for 2009, while the quotas for 2010 and 2011 were set for 1.9 and 1.7 million respectively. Patent holders, highly qualified specialists and a shortlist of certain professions were excluded from any restrictions (Chudinovskikh et al: 2010: 26), reflecting Russia's priorities in immigration, i.e. her increased demand for qualified labour. For all other labour migrants, restrictive practices of the pre-2007 period were re-established in order to avoid a rapid increase of unemployed migrants. But even during the 2009 peak year of the crisis, there still remained about one million officially reported vacancies in Russia (Chudinovskikh et al. 2010: 61), against an overall unemployment rate of 8.1% (= 6.1 mil unemployed) in January 2009 (7% in 2011). Existing job vacancies notwithstanding, in February 2009 the FMS ordered the first work permit for a migrant from a visa-free state without a job contract to be limited to 90 days. After this period, the migrant must submit a job contract to prove his or her employment by the end of the permitted stay in Russia (up to 12 months). In addition, the employer must confirm that he or she will hire this migrant. Only then can the expiration date of the work permit be extended for the remainder of the year, since the date of the migrant's arrival. (Chudinovskikh et al. 2010: 25)

With the issuance of the Federal Law *On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the Russian Federation* in 2002, a continued regularization of migration to Russia took place. But as was expected, the crisis and perhaps more so the return to entrance and labour restrictions in 2009 caused a new decrease in regular immigration and a drop of 8% in the number of foreign workers in Russia, according to official data. As the main destination for migrant workers in Central Asia, Kazakhstan issued 31,886 work permits in the crisis year 2009, but a

UNESCO/OSCE survey found that 38% of labour migrants there worked without authorization (Baruah 2010: 4).

This was paralleled by a decrease of labour emigration from CIS source states. According to estimates in countries of origin, by 2009, the decline reached about 18% in Moldova (Moşneaga 2009) and 20-25% in Tajikistan (Olimova 2009), while departures from Armenia to Russia and other CIS countries declined by 25% in March 2009, according to a report by the UN World Food Programme (published in May 2009).[26] As for 2011, temporary migration from Uzbekistan still has not recovered, while it was rebounding in Kyrgyzstan and has fully recovered in Tajikistan (IOM 2011: 36).

The majority of migrants in Russia, as well as in many other host countries in the world, simply stayed on, hoping for the stabilization of the economic situation (Chudinovskikh et al. 2010: 62). For this aim, they faced considerable wage cuts or even terminations of their employments, widespread underemployment, the devaluation of the Russian currency by 25% and increased consumer prices in their countries of origin as well as inn Russia. In Tajikistan, which is the poorest country in the CIS and also on the United Nations list of 12 countries most adversely affected by the global food crisis, bread and other food prices have already doubled since August 2007 (Buchanan 2009: 110). It is against this bleak background that news about the above quoted stabilization of remittance flows read as an impressive success story. For what it really means is that a reduced stock of people had to compensate for their reduced numbers abroad, for currency depreciation and a tighter labour market against all odds in order to maintain and support their transnational families.

However, the global financial crisis did not at all diminish the high migration potential within the 12 Post-Soviet republics, as surveys by Gallup and others confirmed. A 2009 Gallup survey found that an estimated total of 70 million people would like to migrate temporarily for work and 30 million permanently. The highest emigration intention exists in Armenia, where more than a third of the respondents (39%) want to leave the country permanently, while the same percentage would prefer to study or participate in a work-study program abroad. The share of respondents who want to leave for temporary work was 44% and only topped by Moldova with 53% (Esipova/Ray 2010). In contrast to Armenia and Moldova, which tend towards permanent emigration, societies in the five Central Asian republics are more rooted: A 2010 Gallup Survey found ratios of 16% (Turkmenistan) to 21% (Kazakhstan) for respondents voting for temporary labour migration abroad, but only 2% (Tajikistan) to 13% (Kazakhstan) voting for permanent emigration (Esipova 2011: 14). Mobility beyond the CIS space seems mainly dependent on education levels and skills. As a rule, most temporary labour migrants from CIS countries prefer non-CIS destinations, such as the USA or EU countries if they have tertiary education, whereas migrants with low and medium (secondary) education profiles prefer Russia and other destinations within the Commonwealth. The 2009 Gallup survey found that only 13% of the potential CIS temporary labour migrants and 19% of the permanent migrants to Russia had tertiary education, whereas 28% of the permanent migrants had primary education or less and 34% had secondary education (Ray/Esipova 2010).

At any rate, increased competition is ahead for states and individuals: if Russia wants to satisfy her increasing demands for highly skilled labour, it will have to successfully compete with other regional migration systems, in particular with the Northern American system and the USA, followed by the EU space. If migrants from the FSU/CIS space enter labour markets beyond their visa-free "native" zone they will have to compete not only with similar highly skilled East European nationals of the EU migration system (including returnees to Poland, Rumania, Czech Republic etc., trying to escape the crisis in Western and Central European host countries), but also with an entire generation of tertiary educated South Europeans who are compelled to emigrate to Germany and elsewhere in face of collapsing labour markets in Greece, Spain, Portugal or Ireland with every second (Spain) and nearly every second (Greece) young native national being unemployed.

## The subjective factor: perceiving (labour) migration

In this final paragraph, we proceed from the thesis that international migration flows are not only determined by economic demands, social needs or legislative acts, but are also encouraged or discouraged by the perception of migration and by the personal experience of the workers in question. In the CIS space, the discrepancy between positive or negative migration receptions varies largely and depends upon whether the opinions of migrants or members of majority societies are polled.

In Russia "migrantophobia" has become an integral part of the increased societal xenophobia that has been observed since the 2000s, when Russia entered a phase of economic growth and relative social stabilization. The xenophobia in turn appears as a result of racism that is discriminatory both against foreigners and RF nationals of non-Slavic appearance. International bodies of the United Nations as well as RF human and civil rights NGOs have expressed profound concern about grave and wide spread violations of the rights of migrants residing in Russia and particular in Moscow. A preliminary 2011 report for the Moscow based SOVA Centre that has closely monitored xenophobic hate crimes since 2004, "shows that such attacks killed 20 people and injured 130 across 34 regions of the Russian Federation. Additionally, six individuals received death threats" (SOVA Centre 2012). In 2010, 37 persons died as victims of racial violence against ethnic non-Russians (Savvidis 2011: 233). Although the year 2009 brought "significant change" and the "clear reduction in the number of victims of racist and neo-Nazi motivated violence for the first time in six years of observation (…), xenophobic violence remains alarming in its scope and extends over most of the Russian regions, affecting hundreds of people" (Kozhevnikova 2010). The SOVA Centre found that since the second half of 2008, RF law enforcement agencies had suppressed the largest and most aggressive ultra-right groups in the Moscow region, and the *Federal List of Extremist Organizations* for 2011 included 28 organizations (without a separate 19 groups considered terrorist), whose activities have been prohibited in a court of law, and whose continued actions are punishable under Article 282-2 of the RF Criminal Code (establishing an extremist organization). The annual *Country Report on Human Rights practices* in 2010, issued by the US Department of State, noted aside from numerous violations of migrants' rights in the Russian Federation, that "some officials appeared to stoke societal antipathy toward migrant workers from Central Asia by making statements imputing greater criminality to migrants than to citizens" (US Department of State 2011).

Although immigration to Russia had already peaked in 1994, it was not before the second wave of work related migration and the gradual 'Asianization' of migration in the 2000s that ultranationalist sentiments and xenophobic violence in the indigenous majority society increased, in particular among young Russians. But already since the 1990s, Russian scholars started to explore the perception of foreign immigrants by the Russian population. A 1994 survey revealed that 30 to 34 per cent of the ethnic Russians do not trust Armenians, Azerbaijanis and Chechens; the only ethnic group which is treated with more suspicion by Russians than 'Caucasians' is the Roma people (36.3 %).[27] More recent surveys confirm the significant increase of this trend. A study among 2,500 respondents, published by the Moscow based demoscopic institute *Expertisa* in February 2004, found that one third of Russians favour entry limits for foreigners to Russia, with 60% of those polled expressing dislike for people from the Caucasus region, 51% for Chinese, 48% for Vietnamese, 47% for Central Asians, and 28% for Africans and Jews. Mark Umov, the head of *Expertisa*, commented in an interview of 2004 that "chauvinism, xenophobia, and authoritarianism are worsening. Not because life in Russia is so hard. On the contrary, such phenomena occur whenever life becomes just a little easier, and people immediately want more. The rest depends on the moral climate within society."[28] Others ascribed the emergence and growth of racist youth movements in Russia and elsewhere to neo-liberal reforms and the socio-economic decline of the erstwhile "Soviet middle class", whose members are frequently parents of the Russian skinheads (Tarasov 2002).

Xenophobic and racist sentiments are also wide spread among the academic youth of Moscow, as a 2002 survey, conducted by the sociology department of MGIMO, revealed: Among 306 students, only 21% of the respondents said they are tolerant of people of other ethnic groups. More than half (54%) concede that they express intolerance and resentment against people who do not look like them. Only 33% say they were ready to marry people from other ethnic groups, against 40% preferring their own nationality. About 20% mentioned that their choice of partner depends on nationality. Other findings indicated that about 45% of the respondents were against having Roma as neighbours, while 31% were against Chechens and 14% against Jews. Finally, 69 per cent said they will support any measures to restrict the freedoms and rights of Caucasian and Central Asian residents in Moscow.[29] A 2004 study by the University of St. Petersburg on the anti-foreign sentiments of Russians in the age-group of 16 to 19 years found that four out of ten young Russians support extreme nationalist groups, and one in ten of those aged 16 to 19 would be willing to beat up foreigners for money. Two out of three respondents felt that Russia belongs to the Russians, while only one fifth felt opposed to nationalism.[30] In 2005, Alexander Brod of the Muscovite *Human Rights Office* declared that, according to polls, 60 per cent of respondents sympathised with xenophobic slogans.[31] In another survey in 2005, headed by Tatiana Yudina, 60.5 per cent of the Muscovite respondents admitted to having a "negative attitude towards migrants*"* (Yudina 2005: 597).

Despite the above quoted empirical proof of xenophobia and 'migrantophobia' in Russia, the phenomenon of their rapid growth since the mid-2000s in Russian cities and in particular in the megalopolitan milieus of Moscow and St Petersburg demands further research, and most of all, explanations, because as T. Galkina has rightly pointed out, in "Russia there are no obvious cultural and civilizational distinctions between the indigenous population and most migrants. Basically, they all come from CIS countries (…), with Russian as the language of intercultural relations" (Galkina 2006: 190). Hostility against migrants from the Post-Soviet space is all the less comprehensible since multi-ethnic and multi-religious Russia and her adjacent neighbours share a history of more than two centuries, albeit involuntarily, as far as Central Asia or the South Caucasus are concerned. Cultural alienation caused allegedly by Post-Soviet Islamization and accelerated linguistic 'de-Russification' provides no sufficient explanation for the 'othering' of people which appeared as co-nationals for 70 years of Soviet rule and frequently regard Russia as sort of 'extended homeland'. Lack of civility in Post-Socialist societies could be a reason, but there are certainly other key explanations for the prevailing xenophobia in Russia's majority society, including administrators and statesmen.

In a 2009 survey "Out-migration from Armenia and Georgia" (ArGeMi), financed by the German Volkswagen Foundation, eight cohorts of migrants have been polled in their countries of origin—Armenia and Georgia—and in Moscow as a favourite destination for CIS migrants: returnees from Moscow and 'other destinations', potential migrants without migration experience and migrants in Moscow. Migrants from the South Caucasus and in particular from Armenia represent a medium income group on the Russian labour market and are on average higher qualified than migrant workers from Central Asia.

Two sets of the ArGeMi questionnaire referred to the overall assessment of migration with regard to the country and society of origin, and to the respondents' assessment of personal migration experiences. Assessing migration in general, the ArGeMi respondents showed a clear understanding of the dual and even conflictual nature of international migration that may enhance, on the one hand, personal liberties, employment and income opportunities, while on the other hand negative individual and national effects become increasingly noticeable in the countries of origin. In the ArGeMi questionnaire, these possible individual and collective pros and contras of migration were highlighted in four corresponding questions. On the whole, the respondents from Armenia displayed a more critical attitude than the respondents in the four samples from Georgia: roughly every third in the Georgian cohorts 'fully agreed' with the statement that 'migration is a blessing for Georgian people, because they can freely travel and work abroad' (cf. Table 6), while about every second respondent in all samples from and in Armenia fully disagreed with such an assumption. Somehow unexpectedly, with 53.3%, the

critical attitude toward out-migration was most explicit among the sample of migrants from Armenia to other destinations than Moscow, while the ratio in the Georgian equivalent cohort was only 18.3%.

The issue of brain drain, in particular, has touched a nerve among migrants from Armenia (cf. Table 7): 60.7% of the returnees from other destinations "fully agreed" that "migration is a curse, because the country loses its best people", while another 26.7% from the same sample expressed partial agreement. Scepticism about out-migration was lowest in the sample of returnees to Georgia from destinations other than Moscow. The divergence in the general perception of migration probably stems from the collective self-image of Georgians and Armenians and from particularities in the history of migration in the two countries.

The personal experiences of the ArGeMi respondents reveal a) discernment similar to the differentiated general evaluation of migration, and b) a curious discrepancy between the sceptical migration perceptions as shown in particular by the respondents from and in Armenia in contrast to their personal contentment with migration. In other words, migrants from Armenia are generally sceptical about migration, but personally happy to live abroad or to have migrated. On average, migrants from Georgia feel and behave exactly the opposite.

For example, the respondents' sceptical evaluation of 'brain drain' only partly corresponds with their personal experience, because only 18.7% of the returnees from other destinations than Moscow mentioned that their occupation abroad did 'not at all' correspond with the level of their education. However, the ratio of discontent is higher among interviewees in Moscow. About every fourth migrant polled there mentioned the qualitative discrepancy of his/her education and the requirements of the job. As seen from another point of view, nearly 70% of the returnees to Georgia from destinations other than Moscow admitted that the level of their education did 'not at all' correspond with their last employment abroad. But only a third of the same sample – i.e. half of the ratio among respondents from Armenia - concluded that migration 'is a curse because the country is losing its best people'.

Compared with other migration systems, migrants from the post-Soviet space, and in particular those from European or South Caucasian states, possess a rather high level of education, which makes the frequent experience of '3 D jobs' in labour migration – dirty, degrading and dangerous – especially painful or humiliating. Low skill employment is often combined with little security and low wages.[32] But surprisingly enough, low skill employment obviously has not affected the satisfaction of the ArGeMi respondents, for more than every second returnee to Armenia was 'entirely' satisfied with his or her last stay abroad (cf. Table 7). Here, the feeling of satisfaction is obviously determined by other criteria than employment conditions or the correspondence of the personal education with employment levels. The most satisfied sample was the returnees to Armenia from destinations other than Russia (66.7%), whereas the equivalent sample in Georgia was not half as content (34.6%). Furthermore, the highest poll of 'entire satisfaction' (66.7%) was found in the sample of returnees from other destinations to Armenia, who in contradiction to their personal experience showed the highest agreement (60.7%) with the assumption that Armenia is losing her best people from migration.

In general, the mention of complete satisfaction was lower among the samples in and from Georgia, with the exception of those who were interviewed in Moscow (42% against 40.5% of the respondents from Armenia). It is also noteworthy that the margin with the highest percentage of 'entirely satisfied' respondents from Georgia is to be found among the returnees from Moscow, whereas the lowest degree of 'entire satisfaction' was to be found among the returnees from other destinations to Georgia. In contrast, all interviewees in Moscow expressed less contentment than the returnees interviewed in their countries of origin. This may be explained by the fact that the interview situations during or after a migration cycle are psychologically quite different.

Another striking contrast to the overall personal contentment with the last migration trip consists in the personal feeling of insecurity (cf. Table 9), which was experienced by more than every fourth returnee from Moscow and more than every tenth returnee from destinations other than Russia. Furthermore, every third interviewee in Moscow reported that he or she

had been offended in that city, while only 15.5% of the returnees to Armenia experienced threat or menace while being in Moscow. Finally, in the Moscow samples, 13% of the respondents from Armenia and 10.5% of those from Georgia have suffered physical attacks or intentional injuries. While in the Moscow samples offence concerned the respondents from Georgia more than those from Armenia – a difference of 6% -, threat or menace has been reported nearly twice as much among the returnees from Moscow in Armenia (15.5%) than among the returnees to Georgia (8%). Among those who suffered assaults and injuries, the difference between respondents from Armenia and Georgia in Moscow was insignificant (2.5%). More than every tenth Armenian returnee from destinations other than Moscow experienced offence, while the ratio in the equivalent Georgian sample was just 4.3%.

How can emotions such as insecurity or negative experiences such as offence and assault be consistent with general migration contentment? A weak tradition of human and in particular worker rights standards and a corresponding unawareness of such rights and their violations may provide an answer. Closely linked with the above-mentioned absence or weakness of legal rights is the phenomenon of individual self-reliance and remarkable resilience. As in their countries of origin (cf. Savvidis 2011: 224; Savvidis 2011a: 129-132), regional migrants in the post-Soviet space do not count on national legislation, law or law enforcement, neither in their homelands, nor in their host lands. In case of an emergency, more than every second of the ArGeMi respondents polled in Moscow relies on personal, but not ethnic networks instead of compatriots (38% in the sample from Armenia, 46.5% in the sample from Georgia), diplomatic representations (3.5% : 10.0%), churches (1.0% : 2.0%), human or civil rights NGOs (5.0% : 2.0%), lawyers (7.5% : 8.5%) etc. (Savvidis 2011: 223). In a larger societal context these results of the ArGeMi and other surveys indicate widespread mistrust of formal structures, dysfunctional institutions and even a lack of social cohesion.

## Summary and conclusion

The above analysis of labour migration inside the FSU/CIS space allows the following generalizations: This migration system has emerged as one of the primary legacies of the disintegrated USSR. In contrast to the EU, visa-free mobility and a common labour market emerged not as the result of political integration, but as the legacy of a collapsed state. Although political re-integration of the previous Soviet republics into the Commonwealth of Independent States *de jure* and *de facto* remained fragmentary, their now independent markets are still linked by flows of migrant workers, their money and numerous other effects of international migration, including the organization of trans-border migration and recruitment of a labour force as a large scale business both in source and recipient countries. In the best case, this situation resembles a symbiotic system of complementarity, which so far has operated even in the face of lacking or vestigial coordinated migration management or despite rudimentary migration regimes on national levels. The question of how long this situation will prevail depends, among other things, on the grade and pace of divergence of the now independent post-Soviet states. It further depends on whether migrant workers can escape from the post-Soviet area into neighbouring migration systems of Europe and Asia.

Similar to other regional migration systems, the FSU/CIS system has been affected by the crisis of 2008/9, but despite temporary recession, remittance flows stabilised or rebounded already during 2010/11. Although migrant flows still lag behind pre-crisis levels, potentials for temporary migration in the traditional sending countries were 13% (Turkmenistan) to 53% (Moldova), according to polls during the crisis years 2009 and in 2010. Empirical surveys also prove that Russia continues to be the main cynosure for FSU/CIS labour migrants, in particular of primary and secondary education levels, and despite xenophobic attacks and hate crimes against migrants of ‘non-European/non-Slavic appearance’, which are only gradually and sometimes reluctantly countered by the Russian judicial and law enforcement systems. During the 2000s, Russian immigration policies underwent rapid and frequent changes from centralization and regularization to re-liberalization and back, without ever succeeding in

drastically reducing the high ratio of undocumented migration, which, on the contrary, increased again as a result of the drastic reduction of entrance and work permit quotas during the crisis, and also as a result of the high share of shadow economy in the Russian Federation.

Against RF media and statesmen that have equally taken part in the emergence of xenophobic sentiments in the majority population, RF scholars of migration and demography have long since advocated open labour market policies and the integration not only of the FSU/CIS space into a single labour market, but also of adjacent regional migration systems. This position, which stems from an objective analysis of facts and trends causes naturally academic opposition to the Schengen agreement and the restrictive migration policy of the EU, which in no way appear as a model for the CIS migration system*:*

> *The Schengen agreement in neighbouring European countries affects and impedes the integration of the CIS states into the world migration system. Those who advocate restricting migration policy see it as an indisputable argument in their favour. They advocate CIS borders to be strengthened in the same way that Schengen borders are strengthened, using the European Council's policies as positive examples to combat drug and human trafficking, irregular labour migrants and transiting criminals. This, however, is inconsistent with a developing market economy's demands, and it prevents the preservation of family ties in the region, and hampers humanitarian dialogue. (Tishkov et al. 2005: 3)*

In a similar vein, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has warned political decision makers in early 2009 to react to the crisis restrictively, and to take into consideration the positive experiences from previous crises:

> *Previous downturns in the economy at both global and regional levels (e.g. the oil crisis in the early 1970s and the 1998 Asian financial crisis) indicate that migration will continue regardless (and irregular migration may even increase) because of the continuing structural demand for labour in certain sectors of the economy and despite increases in unemployment. Such demand is partly attributable to broad demographic considerations – aging and shrinking populations in much of the industrialized world compared to growing populations in much of the developing world -- as well as to the fact that in many countries local workers either lack required skills or are reluctant to take up certain low or semi-skilled jobs. The Asian financial crisis also demonstrated that keeping markets open to migrants and migration is important to stimulating a quicker economic recovery.*[33]

## Notes

[1] Cf. also World Bank 2010.

[2] "Better legislation key to improving management of migration flows in CIS countries". http://go.worldbank.org/B78EE01B10.

[3] Ibid.

[4] http://go.worldbank.org/TA6NZKG83.

[5] http://remittancesgateway.org/index.php/index.php/country-information/70-europe/520- russian-federation.

[6] "Russian remittances to Uzbekistan nearly $3 billion". Central Asia Online, 7 March 2011. http://centralasiaonline.com/en_GB/articles/caii/newsbriefs/2011/03/07/newsbrief-11.

[7] Quote from Savvidis 2011: 206.

[8] Data of IOM. http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/activities/europe/eastern-europe/russian-federation.

[9] "Immigration to Russia hits 20 mln annually – official". 15 March 2006, Russian News and Information Agency Novosti. http://en.rian.ru/russia/20060315/44345843.htm.

[10] "Russia: CIS Migrants". Migration News, July 2006, 13 (3).

http://migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=3209_0_4_0.

[11] Armstat: The components of changes in de jure population numbers for intervening years (2002-2010) of the 2001 and 2011 censuses. http://www.armstat.am/file/doc/99465803.pdf.

[12] The term has been coined by Irina Ivakhnyuk (cf. Ivakhnyuk 2008).

[13] Data of IOM. cf. http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/russian-federation; "over 12 million" according to Chudinovskikh et al. 2010: 95.

[14] "Estimates vary widely and place the migration figures anywhere between 2.1 million (2006, CIS Statistical Committee) and 10 million people (2009, Russian Federal Migration Service) to about 15 million people (2006, World Bank Estimates)." (Abazov 2009: 2, footnote 5).

[15] Migration Information Source: Russia. http://www.migrationinformation.org/resources/russia.cfm.

[16] Neither Germany nor the US are signatories. http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-13&chapter=4&lang=en.

[17] Cf. http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/subjlst.htm.

[18] Cf. Rosstat. http://www.gks.ru/bgd/free/b12_00/IssWWW.exe/Stg/dk01/7-0.htm.

[19] "The United Nations in the Russian Federation", Demographic Policy in Russia: From Reflection to Action, 2008. http://www.undp.ru/index.phtml?iso=RU&lid=1&cmd=publications1&id=73 (accessed August 25, 2008). The International Labor Organization (ILO) has made similar predictions. ILO, "Russia Needs Migrant Workers to Support Economic Growth," July 20, 2006. http://www.ilo.org/global/About_the_ILO/Media_and_public_information/Feature_stories/lang--n/WCMS_071244/index.htm (accessed August 25, 2008).

[20] http://remittancesgateway.org/index.php/press-clippings/industry-news/672-2010-04-12-11-03-26.

[21] „Tajik workers send home $3 bln". The Voice of Russia, 19 January 2012. http://english.ruvr.ru/2012/01/19/64191508.html.

[22] "Private remittances to Armenia totaled $1 380,6mln in Jan-Nov 2011." PanArmenian, 16 January 2012. http://www.panarmenian.net/eng/news/88335/Private_remittances_to_Armenia_totaled_1_3806mln_in_Jan Nov_2011.

[23] IFAD Remittances Database: Moldova.http://remittancesgateway.org/index.php/country-information/europe/622-moldova.

[24] http://go.worldbank.org/B78EE01B10.

[25] Mirovalev, Mansur: "Putin: Crackdown Needed on Illegal Immigration." abc News, 26 January 2012. http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/putin-crackdown-needed-illegal-immigration-15447079#.TykvMIFrU1I.

[26] Lesser declines were corroborated by Gallup Poll. According to them, in 2009 the number of migrant workers from Moldova declined for 10% (compared with the previous year), followed by Tajikistan (8%), Uzbekistan (7%) and Kyrgyzstan (5%). – Cf. Conference of Irregular Migration, Panel I: Scope of irregular Migration, January 21, 2010, slide 8. http://www.un.int/iom/Neli%20Esipova.pdf.

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[30] Cf. Parkkonen, Mika (2004): "Russia hit by wave of xenophobia; Professor worried of rise of nationalism". Helsingin Sanomat – International Edition - Foreign, May 9, 2004. Web site: http://www.hs.fi/english/article/Russia+hit+by+wave+of+xenophobia/1076152701326.

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[32] Cf. Amnesty International, Web-Action, 12 September 2005. http://amnesty.name/en/library/asset/ACT30/027/2005/en/ca1dd0b3-d470-11dd-8743-

d305bea2b2c7/act300272005en.pdf.

[33] IOM Policy Guidance Note 1, January 12, 2009.

# Tables

**Table 1: Visa regimes in former Soviet republics**

| Country of entry | COUNTRY OF ORIGIN | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | RU | BY | MD | UA | AM | AZ | GE | KZ | KG | TJ | TK | UZ | LV | LT | EE |
| **RU** | | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | V | -- | -- | -- | V | -- | V | V | V |
| **BY** | -- | | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | V | V | V |
| **MD** | -- | -- | | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| **UA** | -- | -- | -- | | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | V | V | V |
| **AM** | -- | -- | -- | -- | | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | V | -- | V | V | V |
| **AZ** | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | | -- | -- | -- | -- | V | -- | V | V | V |
| **GE** | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | | -- | -- | -- | V | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| **KZ** | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | | -- | -- | V | -- | V | V | V |
| **KG** | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | | -- | V | -- | V | V | V |
| **TJ** | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | | V | V | V | V | V |
| **TK** | V | -- | V | V | V | V | V | -- | -- | -- | | V | V | V | V |
| **UZ** | -- | V | V | V | V | V | V | -- | -- | V | V | | V | V | V |
| **LV** | V | V | V | V | V | V | V | V | V | V | V | V | | -- | -- |
| **LT** | V | V | V | V | V | V | V | V | V | V | V | V | -- | | -- |
| **EE** | V | V | V | V | V | V | V | V | V | V | V | V | -- | -- | |

Notes: All information for regular passports; -- = no visa required; V = visa required.

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**Table 2: Average salary and GDP in the CIS countries**

| Country | Average annual salary as a per cent of one in Russia, % | | | Average salary 2008, USD | GDP per capita, PPP, 2008, thousand USD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1990 | 2000 | 2008 | | |
| Russia | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 573 | 15,9 |
| Azerbaijan | 64,4 | 62,7 | 59,6 | 341,5 | 8,6 |
| Armenia | 79,5 | 53,0 | 41,2 | 236,1 | 5,3 |
| Belarus | 88,8 | -- | 51,0 | 291,9 | 12,3 |
| Georgia | 70,6 | 45,5 | -- | -- | -- |
| Kazakhstan | 87,5 | 129,3 | 71,9 | 412,0 | 11,4 |
| Kyrgyzstan | 73,6 | 32,2 | 20,1 | 115,1 | 2,2 |
| Moldova | 78,2 | -- | 36,0 | 206,2 | 3,2 |
| Tajikistan | 68,3 | 9,3 | 9,2 | 52,8 | -- |
| Turkmenistan | 80,5 | -- | -- | -- | 2,0 |
| Uzbekistan | 71,9 | -- | -- | -- | 2,6 |
| Ukraine | 80,5 | -- | 39,9 | 228,8 | 7,3 |

© Chudinovskikh et al 2010: Sources: Rosstat, IMF.

**Table 3: Universal top 20 countries; recipients and senders of remittances**

| State | Top Remittance-Receiving Countries 2010: *US$ billions* | Top Remittance-Receiving Countries 2009: *Percentage of GDP (%)* | Top Remittance-Sending Countries 2009: *US$ billions* | Top Remittance-Sending Countries 2009: *Percentage of GDP (%)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Russian Federation | 5.6 | | 18.6 | 2 |
| Kazakhstan | | | 3.1 | 3 |
| Ukraine | 5.3 | | | |
| Armenia | | 9 | | 2 |
| Georgia | | | | |
| Moldova | | 23 | | 2 |
| Tajikistan | | 35 | | 2 |
| Kyrgyzstan | | 15 | | 3 |

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**Table 4: Stock of foreign born population in the Russian Federation by citizenship and country of birth (in brackets) according to 2002 population census**

| Country of citizenship | Number | Percent of total foreign population |
|---|---|---|
| **Ukraine** | 230,558 (3,559,975) | 22.5 |
| **Azerbaijan** | 154,911 (846,104) | 15.1 |
| **Armenia** | 136,841 (481,328) | 13.3 |
| **Uzbekistan** | 70,871 (918,037) | 6.9 |
| **Kazakhstan** | 69,472 (2,584,955) | 6.8 |
| **All other countries** | 362,860 | 35.4 |
| **Total** | **1,025,413** | **100.0** |

Source: Russian Federal State Statistics Service, Census 2002, Table 4.2: Population by citizenship (http://www.perepis2002.ru/index.html?id=12).

**Table 5: Universal top 29 countries: immigration and emigration (2009, 2010)**

| **State** | **Top Immigration Countries 2010:** ***number of immigrants, millions*** | **Top Emigration Countries 2010:** ***number of emigrants, millions*** | **Top Emigration Countries 2010:** ***Percentage of population (%)*** | **Top Emigration Countries of Physicians, 2000:** ***number of migrants, thousands*** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Russian Federation** | 12.3 | 11.1 | -- | 1.9 |
| **Kazakhstan** | -- | 3.7 | 23.6 | -- |
| **Ukraine** | 5.5 | 6.6 | -- | -- |
| **Armenia** | -- | -- | 28.2 | -- |
| **Georgia** | | | 25.1 | |
| **Moldova** | -- | -- | 21.5 | -- |
| **Tajikistan** | | | | |

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**Table 6: Curse or blessing? Evaluation of migration effects on the nation and country of origin (%)**

| ArGeMi cohorts | Do you believe that out-migration is a blessing for Armenian/Georgian people – they can travel and work abroad freely? | | | | | Do you believe that out-migration is a blessing for Armenia/Georgia – it relieves the labour market and brings money into the country? | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Fully agree | Partly agree | Partly disagree | Fully disagree | Not sure | Fully agree | Partly agree | Partly disagree | Fully disagree | Not sure |
| **MIGRANTS FROM ARMENIA** | | | | | | | | | | |
| To Moscow (interviewed after return to Armenia) | 12.0 | 34.0 | - | 49.5 | 4.5 | 11.5 | 45.0 | - | 41.0 | 2.5 |
| To other destinations | 11.3 | 32.3 | - | 53.3 | 3.0 | 11.0 | 39.7 | - | 47.3 | 2.0 |
| In Moscow | 27.5 | 39.5 | 8.5 | 6.0 | 18.5 | 7.0 | 28.5 | 13.5 | 18.5 | 32.5 |
| Potential Migrants | 12.0 | 18.0 | 20.0 | 46.0 | 4.0 | 7.0 | 22.0 | 20.0 | 46.0 | 5.0 |
| **MIGRANTS FROM GEORGIA** | | | | | | | | | | |
| To Moscow (interviewed after return to Georgia) | 32.0 | 44.5 | - | 17.0 | 6.5 | 32.5 | 49.0 | - | 10.0 | 8.5 |
| To other destinations | 31.3 | 45.3 | - | 18.3 | 5.0 | 31.7 | 49.7 | - | 13.7 | 5.0 |
| In Moscow | 29.5 | 43.5 | 11.0 | 3.5 | 13.0 | 9.0 | 35.0 | 20.5 | 13.5 | 22.0 |
| Potential Migrants | 38.0 | 37.0 | 11.0 | 4.0 | 10.0 | 37.0 | 40.0 | 8.0 | 5.0 | 10.0 |

**Table 7: Curse or blessing? Evaluation of migration effects on nation and country of origin (%)**

| ArGeMi Cohorts | Do you believe that out-migration is a curse for Armenian/Georgian people – migrants suffer exploitation and discrimination abroad, families suffer as well? | | | | | Do you believe that out-migration is a curse for Armenia/Georgia – the country loses its best people? | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Fully agree | Partly agree | Partly disagree | Fully disagree | Not sure | Fully agree | Partly agree | Partly disagree | Fully disagree | Not sure |
| **MIGRANTS FROM ARMENIA** | | | | | | | | | | |
| Returnees from Moscow | 27.0 | 51.5 | - | 19.0 | 2.5 | 41.0 | 41.0 | - | 17.0 | 1.0 |
| To other destinations | 37.7 | 39.3 | - | 19.3 | 3.7 | 60.7 | 26.7 | - | 10.0 | 2.7 |
| In Moscow | 12.0 | 27.0 | 14.5 | 20.5 | 26.0 | 35.0 | 27.0 | 14.5 | 7.0 | 16.5 |
| Potential migrants | 38.0 | 36.0 | 13.0 | 9.0 | 4.0 | 47.0 | 38.0 | 7.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 |
| **MIGRANTS FROM GEORGIA** | | | | | | | | | | |
| Returnees from Moscow | 18.5 | 50.0 | - | 18.5 | 13.0 | 17.0 | 43.0 | - | 11.0 | 9.0 |
| To other destinations | 15.7 | 49.3 | - | 29.7 | 9.3 | 34.3 | 44.3 | - | 13.7 | 7.7 |
| In Moscow | 10.0 | 28.5 | 21.5 | 15.0 | 25.0 | 26.5 | 36.0 | 11.5 | 10.0 | 16.0 |
| Potential migrants | 12.0 | 39.0 | 13.0 | 18.0 | 18.0 | 30.0 | 36.0 | 9.0 | 11.0 | 14.0 |

**Table 8: Are you generally satisfied with your (last) stay abroad? (%)**

| Cohorts of ArGeMi Respondents | Entirely | Partly | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|
| **MIGRANTS FROM ARMENIA** | | | |
| Interviewed in Moscow | 40.5 | 54.0 | 5.5 |
| Returnees from Moscow (interviewed in Armenia) | 52.5 | 40.0 | 7.5 |
| Returnees from other destinations | 66.7 | 29.7 | 3.6 |
| **MIGRANTS FROM GEORGIA** | | | |
| Interviewed in Moscow | 42.0 | 53.0 | 5.0 |
| Returnees from Moscow (interviewed in Georgia) | 46.5 | 45.5 | 8.0 |
| Returnees from other destinations | 34.6 | 48.7 | 16.7 |

**Table 9: Experience of insecurity, verbal and physical violence**

| Cohorts of ArGeMi Respondents | „During my last stay abroad I felt insecure…“ | „While abroad, I experienced…“ | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Offence | …Threatened or menaced | …Physically attacked/intentionally injured |
| **Migrants from Armenia** | | | | |
| **Interviewed in Moscow** | 11.0% | 32.0% | 4.5% | 13.0% |
| **Interviewed in Armenia after return from Moscow** | 26.0% | 19.5% | 15.5% | 3.5% |
| **Interviewed in Armenia after return from other destinations** | 10.7% | 13% | 1.0% | 3.3% |
| **Migrants from Georgia** | | | | |
| **Interviewed in Moscow** | 26.0% | 38.0% | 9.0% | 10.5% |
| **Interviewed in Georgia after return from Moscow** | 26.0% | 18.5% | 8.0% | 1.0% |
| **Interviewed in Georgia after return from other destinations** | 11.3% | 4.3% | 3.0% | 1.0% |

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