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Migration and mobility in the Eurasian region – Prospects for the future

Report

Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population

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Summary

Throughout centuries migration movements and human mobility have played an important role in the common history and socioeconomic and cultural development of both Europe and Asia. This report makes an overview of recent migration trends in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region and migration flows between Russia (Siberia) and China. In terms of prospects for the future, the report focuses on shifts from survival strategy towards development strategy, the new migration strategy of the Russian Federation, the potential for the CIS common labour market and prospects for regional co-operation in the field of migration management.

As a platform for a political discussion on migration issues, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe could effectively promote common understanding of migration-related benefits and risks, as well as the potential of inter-state co-operation in the Eurasian region, which would enable combined efforts to manage migration more effectively. Members of parliaments from Eurasian states could contribute more actively to achieve orderly and safe migration by developing frameworks for migration policies, by co-ordinating national legislation on migration, by initiating or strengthening inter-state data sharing mechanisms related to migration, and by improving national and international migration infrastructures. In a wider context, proper migration management and inter-state co-operation could make migration an important resource of sustainable economic development of both sending and receiving countries in the region.



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A. Draft resolution

1. Throughout centuries migration movements and human mobility have played an important role in the common history and socio-economic and cultural development of both Asia and Europe. In historical and contemporary terms, Russia and Turkey stand as eastern gates to Europe, connecting Europe to the Middle East, to central Asia and to Far East Asia.
2. After the break-up of the Soviet Union and the creation of independent states, new patterns of migration and mobility have emerged. The nature of migration shifted from primarily forced migrations – as a result of military conflicts, social outbursts, discrimination of ethnic minorities and economic crisis – to voluntary economic migration. Transition to market economies has widened income gaps among the successor states and also within the regions of the Russian Federation. The economic disparities and relaxation of traditionally tight borders created strong incentives to migrate.
3. Due to common history, cultural and linguistic familiarity – the member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) – remain socially and economically closely interrelated. The CIS common labour market could be an effective economic instrument to increase employment of the region's labour force, to balance labour market shortages with labour surpluses, to give boost to less developed economies and to facilitate regional integration.
4. Looking beyond the CIS space, freedom of movement of persons could be an important resource for economic development in a wider Eurasian region. While countries have considerable disparities in terms of economic development rates, they are complementary as a result of differences in demographic growth. Sharp population decline in Russia and Ukraine, contrasts to relatively high population growth rates in the central Asian states, in Transcaucasia, in the Middle East and the Far East.
5. Migration from China to Russia and other Eurasian countries is a growing phenomenon. The total number of Chinese migrants in Russia is estimated sometimes to be 1 million, even if official figures for work permits were 230 000 in 2007. Contrary to migration exchanges with the CIS region where labour migration facilitates regional integration, Chinese migration to Russia is associated with many challenges due to a widespread irregular employment of Chinese workers in the shadow economy run by the Chinese communities and due to extremely low level of integration (Chinese enclaves). Moreover, intense entrepreneurial activity of Chinese migrants, namely export of Russian raw materials to China and sale of cheap Chinese products, is perceived as a threat to the Russian economy.
6. As a result of porous borders, visa-free regime between most CIS countries and over-bureaucratic procedures for issuing residence and work permits, labour migration in the Eurasian region has been primarily irregular. It is estimated that 3 to 6 million undocumented migrants live in Russia, 30 000 in Ukraine, up to 15 000 in Belarus and 1 million in Kazakhstan.
7. Irregular migration and illegal employment of migrant workers is a matter of concern for both receiving countries and countries of origin as it leads to a distortion of labour markets, to growth in the shadow economy, to corruption, crime and trafficking, to a loss of tax revenue, but above all to exploitation of undocumented migrant workers and serious violations of their human rights.
8. The Parliamentary Assembly therefore welcomes a major shift in policy of the Russian Federation which is one of the most important countries of destination and transit in the Eurasian region. In January 2007, new legislation and regulations were adopted to simplify and facilitate the legal flow of migrant workers. Criminal and administrative laws were also reviewed and amended to reinforce sanctions against the illegal employment of migrants.
9. Given that the regulation of migration flows is a relatively recent political priority in the Eurasian region, it is crucial to assist the countries to establish standards with regard to the rights of migrant workers and their families and to raise awareness of human rights of all migrants including migrants in an irregular situation.
10. In terms of standard setting, the Assembly recalls the Council of Europe Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers (ETS No. 93), the UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, its Resolutions 1509 (2006) on human rights of irregular migrants; 1568 (2007) on regularisation programmes for irregular migrants; 1534 (2007) on the situation of migrant workers in temporary employment agencies (TEAs); 1437 (2005) on migration and integration; and 1462 (2005) on co-development policy as a positive measure to regulate migratory flows.
11. Attention is drawn to the need to intensify the activities of intergovernmental committees of the Council of Europe, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in promoting standards and devising guidelines on how to apply them in the Eurasian context.

12. In the context of recent readmission agreements which were signed with the European Union, there is an urgent need to provide assistance to Russia, Ukraine and Turkey to develop standards and capacities to effectively deal with the readmission of undocumented migrants, including third country nationals and stateless persons who will be expelled from the EU. To this regard the Assembly recalls the 20 guidelines on forced return adopted by the Committee of Ministers in May 2005.

13. In terms of regional co-operation, the Assembly has a long-standing and fruitful co-operation with the Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth (IPA CIS), which undertakes important initiatives in the framework of the CIS regional co-operation on migration, particularly with regard to bilateral and regional agreements on labour migration, harmonising legislation, and facilitating transfer of remittances. In April 2008, IPA CIS and the Parliamentary Assembly adopted a joint declaration following the “Conference on the globalisation of migration processes”.

14. Considering the above, the Assembly invites the main destination and transit countries in the Eurasian region – namely Russia, Turkey, Ukraine and Kazakhstan – to undertake the following steps with the assistance of the Council of Europe, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), OSCE and the European Union:

14.1. with regard to labour migration to,

14.1.1. create or further strengthen governmental services for migration;

14.1.2. harmonise data on migration flows;

14.1.3. analyse economic sectors with labour shortages and to identify current and future needs for migrant labour;

14.1.4. establish partnerships between the state employment service, state migration service, regional and local authorities, employers’ associations, trade unions, private employment agencies, foreign diaspora communities and NGOs working in the migration field;

14.1.5. develop norms on migrant labour in accordance with international standards and to include them in the Labour Code;

14.1.6. sign, ratify and implement the European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers (ETS No. 93);

14.1.7. sign, ratify and implement the UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families;

14.1.8. strengthen monitoring mechanisms and to enforce the labour migration legislation through labour inspection, dissuasive sanctions and penalties including criminal prosecutions;

14.1.9. facilitate integration of migrants and their families through the provision of housing, access to services including health care and schooling of children;

14.1.10. monitor and sanction discrimination practices against migrant workers;

14.1.11. use the guidance of the OSCE, ILO and IOM Handbook on establishing effective labour migration policies in countries of origin and destination;

14.2. with regard to irregular migration to:

14.2.1. protect the human rights of undocumented migrants in accordance with its [Resolution 1509 \(2006\)](#) on human rights of irregular migrants;

14.2.2. sign, ratify and implement the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (CETS No. 197);

14.2.3. reinforce control mechanisms to prevent exploitation of undocumented migrants by employers, employment intermediaries or agents, smugglers and traffickers;

14.2.4. consider regularising undocumented migrants who are gainfully employed in the shadow economy while taking into account lessons learned from the pilot regularisation programme which was undertaken by the Russian Federation in 2005;

15. The Assembly encourages the countries of origin in the Eurasian region to:

15.1. negotiate bilateral agreements with host governments to ensure that employers abide by regular employment contracts and social security payments;

- 15.2. create partnerships with regional and local authorities, private recruitment agencies, employers, trade unions, diaspora communities and NGOs with a view to identify job opportunities and to guarantee safe recruitment;
 - 15.3. conduct information campaigns which provide potential migrants with knowledge of safe recruitment and employment procedures and their rights as migrant workers in the countries of destination;
 - 15.4. prior to departure, provide language courses to labour migrants in co-operation with cultural centres of the countries of destination;
 - 15.5. set up assistance in destination countries through labour attachés;
 - 15.6. in co-operation with countries of destination, closely monitor recruitment which is undertaken by employment agencies to minimise abuses and to introduce criminal proceedings against serious offenders;
 - 15.7. consider setting up of migrant welfare funds with a view to providing support services to vulnerable migrants;
16. The Assembly urges the European Union to provide assistance programmes to Russia, Ukraine and Turkey to help those countries develop standards and capacities to effectively deal with the readmission of undocumented migrants, including third country nationals and stateless persons who will be expelled from the European Union.

B. Draft recommendation

1. The Parliamentary Assembly refers to its Resolution ... (2009) on migration and mobility in the Eurasian region – Prospects for the future.
2. In this context the Assembly recommends the Committee of Ministers to invite the European Committee on Migration (CEMG) to strengthen regional and bilateral co-operation in eastern Europe and the Euro-Asian region by providing advice and assistance on:
 - 2.1. developing mechanisms for the regular exchange of information, training on institutional reform and inter-ministerial co-operation and the setting-up on a trial basis of a network of migration correspondents (non-EU member states) to provide statistical and analytical information on migration trends in the region;
 - 2.2. strengthening the role of employment services in the management of short-term migration and the protection of migrants' rights including protection against traffickers and smugglers;
 - 2.3. improving the integration of internally displaced persons whether they remain in the societies to which they have been displaced or return to their homes;
 - 2.4. developing links between diaspora and countries of origin including enhancement of the contribution of migrants in their development;
 - 2.5. the impact of female emigration and of young migrant workers on the social cohesion in their countries of origin;
 - 2.6. implementing the European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers (ETS No. 93).

C. Explanatory memorandum, by Mr Tadeusz Iwiński¹

1. Introduction

1. In the course of the preparation of this report, the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population has held several meetings in the Eurasian region: in Kazakhstan on the occasion of the first Euro-Asian Parliamentary Forum on Migration in Almaty (September 2005),² in Krasnoyarsk Krai in Russia in September 2006, in Antalya in Turkey in October 2007,³ and in Saint Petersburg on the occasion of the International Parliamentary Conference on Globalisation of Migration Processes and Problems of Legal Regulation, which was jointly organised by the Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS) and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in April 2008.⁴ The rapporteur has also undertaken a fact-finding visit to the Asian part of the Russian Federation (Irkutsk and Khabarovsk regions) in August 2008.

2. Throughout centuries, migration movements and human mobility have played an important role in the common history and socioeconomic and cultural development of both Europe and Asia. In historical and contemporary terms, Russia and Turkey stand as eastern gates of Europe, connecting Europe to the Middle East, central Asia and Far East Asia.

3. Emigration from Turkey to western Europe has been extensively covered by the report of the Parliamentary Assembly on the Turkish presence in Europe ([Doc. 11083](#)) and its [Recommendation 1774 \(2006\)](#). This report therefore focuses on migration and mobility in Russia and the area of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).⁵

4. Since the expansion of the Russian Empire in the 17th and 18th centuries from Poland in the west to the Pacific Ocean in the east, Russia has been by far the world's largest country in physical terms with the world's longest external land border spanning between Europe and Asia. Representing almost a continent in itself, Russia in its different historical periods attracted many and very diverse migration flows.

5. Throughout most of the 20th century, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) until its dissolution in 1991 contained 15 constituent republics which are today independent states (CIS). Open to the rest of the world, the post-Soviet space remains nevertheless closely interrelated in the economic and social context. Visa-free population movements between the majority of former Soviet republics is a "natural" and humane migration regime for a space where state borders have separated families, relatives, countrymen, and compatriots. After seventeen years of sovereign development, the post-Soviet states are today pragmatically seeking the most appropriate ways to benefit from the globalisation they are drawn into.

6. Freedom of population movements is an important resource of economic development in the Eurasian region and the countries of the region are increasingly aware of this fact. These countries have considerable disparities in terms of economic development rates, GDP per capita, poverty rates, and economic opportunities for their citizens. These factors add up to the demographic imbalance between the CIS countries and other countries of the region, where rapid population decline in Russia and Ukraine contrasts to relatively high population growth rates in the central Asian states, in Transcaucasia and in the Middle East. These factors result in numerous migration flows. In this context, the CIS common labour market could be a reasonable economic instrument to provide most effective employment of the region's labour force, balance labour market deficits with labour surpluses, give an impulse to less developed economies, and serve regional integration for mutual benefit. The Middle East has a very different, and today more difficult political situation, where the principle of an open common labour market is currently seriously undermined by regional instability.

7. Today, labour migration in the Eurasian region takes place primarily in irregular forms, first of all due to administrative barriers and over-bureaucratic procedures of getting permissions in the major receiving country – Russia. Irregular migration and illegal employment of migrant workers is a matter of concern for both

1. The rapporteur wishes to thank Dr Irina Ivakhnyuk, Senior Researcher and Deputy Director of the Department of Population, Faculty of Economics, at the Lomonosov University, Moscow, for her assistance in the preparation of this explanatory memorandum.

2. See AS/MIG/Inf(2005)16.

3. See AS/MIG/Inf(2007)13.

4. See AS/MIG/Inf(2008)5.

5. CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) is a regional structure existing since 1993. The CIS member states are: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia (until August 2008), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan, that is to say all the post-Soviet states except the Baltic countries (Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia).

receiving and sending countries as it is associated with deformation of the labour market, growth of shadow sectors, corruption, criminalisation of migrants, their falling out of the legitimate field, spread of exploitation practices, and disregard of migrants' human rights. The above concerns have been also highlighted by the Director of the Russian Federal Migration Service, Mr Romodanovskiy, during the 8th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Migration Affairs (Kyiv, 4-5 September 2008).

8. Recently, Russia has revised its migration policy towards labour migrants from CIS states, which enjoy a visa-free entry regime with Russia.⁶ The new regulation which was put in force in January 2007 is more liberal with regard to CIS citizens; it widens legal migration channels by simplifying procedures to obtain temporary residence permissions and labour permits and paves the way to orderly labour migration through the introduction of annual labour import quotas. The new policy is promising to be an effective alternative to irregular migration in the CIS region. During the first six months since the new regulation has been in force, over 1 500 000 work permissions were issued in Russia compared to 702 000 during the entire year of 2006.

2. From survival strategy to development strategy

9. The international migration process offers many benefits and gains for participating actors – migrants, employers, receiving states and sending states. However, its benefits are closely related to the individual strategies of migrants, types and forms of migration, and economic patterns in sending and receiving countries. Until recently, cross-border migration was a survival strategy in the Eurasian region. Lack of economic opportunities pushed people from smaller CIS countries to seek jobs elsewhere. The surveys on spending remittances in migrants' households in central Asian republics demonstrate that money earned abroad is spent mainly on consumption: food, clothing and other daily living needs.

10. However, the structure of spending in households of migrants is correlated to both the length of stay of migrants in a destination country (or number of short-term stays for seasonal workers) and to the economic situation in the country of origin where the migrant's family lives. For example, migrants from Tajikistan who have been working in Russia for several years (70% of Tajik migrants surveyed in 2005 have been international labour migrants for over five years) invest more money into health and education that improves human capital. They sometimes manage to accumulate initial capital to start up their own small business upon their return to Tajikistan. The survey conducted in 2004 in Kyrgyzstan⁷ proves that the pattern of spending of migrant remittances does include an "investment segment": 111 small-scale companies owned by former labour migrants who have earned initial capital during their trips to Russia have created workplaces for other Kyrgyz people, about 4 000 in all. A similar pattern can also be found in Armenia.

11. International migration can become a development strategy rather than a survival strategy when the economy of sending countries is developing to provide breeding ground for private sector initiative, which in turn could create additional resources for development. Growth of income in the agricultural sector can be, for example, sustained by migration – by sending a family member to work abroad a household can provide finance for the farm's development.

12. The role of governments is to enhance the development potential of migration: to encourage migrants to remit money home through official channels and to invest it in development projects. The financial and economic institutions of Moldova, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan have shown an interest in learning from the experience of other sending countries such as India, China and Turkey, which have recognised the potential role of migrants remittances for economic development and have elaborated practical instruments to attract these remittances for the purposes of development (by tax reduction, preferential terms of investments, credit, etc.)

6. Russia has a visa-free entry regime with all the CIS countries except Georgia and Turkmenistan.

7. The survey of migrants households was conducted by L. Maksakova and A. Elebaeva, Kyrgyz National Institute for Macroeconomic and Social Studies (Elena Sadovskaya, "International Labour Migration and Remittances in Central Asian Republics: Strategy for Survival or Development?", *International Migration: Economics and Politics*, scientific series, *International Migration of Population: Russia and the Contemporary World*, edited by Vladimir Iontsev, Volume 18, TEIS, Moscow, 2006).

3. Shifts in migration trends within the post-Soviet territory

13. The member countries of the CIS are interconnected by numerous migration flows and can be regarded as a one whole international migration system. The Eurasian migration system is characterised by the following factors:

- historical ties;
- geographical proximity, “transparent” borders (visa-free movements);
- common transport infrastructure;
- psychological easiness to move (language, former common territory);
- demographic complementarity;
- mutual interest towards common labour market;
- large-scale irregular migration;
- regional co-operation aimed at co-ordinated migration management.

14. The scale of international migration within the frames of the Eurasian migration system characterises it as one of the world’s biggest migration systems. The UN estimate (2005) ranks Russia – the major destination country in the region – the second in the list of the countries with the largest numbers of immigrants after the United States, followed by Ukraine and Germany (United States – 38.9 million immigrants; Russia – 12.1 million; Germany – 10.1 million; and Ukraine – 6.8 million).

15. During the last fifteen years, the nature of migration flows in the CIS region has shifted from primarily forced migrations – as a result of strong political and economic push factors, such as military conflicts, social outbursts, discrimination of ethnic minorities and economic crises – to voluntary economic migrations. Already since the mid-1990s ethnic and political factors of migration were supplemented and then replaced by economic ones, both push and pull factors. Socioeconomic differences among the newly sovereign states stimulated important waves of labour migrants. Migration flows were directed primarily towards Russia, which was doing comparatively better in its transition to a market economy and stabilisation of the socioeconomic situation in comparison to most of the other CIS states. People migrate in quest of jobs, to improve their economic and social position and to gain stability.

Table 1. CIS: differences in standards of living

CIS country	GDP per capita, US \$*	Average monthly salaries, US\$**	Poverty rate (population living below poverty line) %**	Percentage of population living on less than US\$2 per day, %***
Armenia	1 234	98.4	...	49
Azerbaijan	2 585.9	78.7	68	9
Belarus	3 316.2	161.8	22	2
Georgia	1 765.8	58.5	11	16
Kazakhstan	4 386.1	207.3	35	25
Kyrgyzstan	507.7	51.7	40	25
Moldova	917.4	89.5	23	64
Russian Federation	6 330.8	237	31	8
Tajikistan	411.5	21.5	...	43
Turkmenistan	3 888.6	44
Ukraine	2 020.6	110.8	32	46
Uzbekistan	498.6	35.8 ^a	...	72

Sources: * IMF, World Economic Outlook Database, April 2006.

** “Population and Standards of Living in the CIS Countries”, statistical bulletin, CIS Inter-state Statistical Committee, Moscow, 2005.

*** UN, Population Reference Bureau, World Population Data Sheet, 2005.

^aData for 1995.

16. It is worth noting that the development of the private sector in Russia in the 1990s and its growing need for labour, as well as migration flows from labour excessive states, were taking place largely spontaneously, without noticeable management by the governments in the region. The channels for regular labour migration were not sufficient, official migration infrastructure (public and private employment agencies, labour demand and supply databases, information and consultation services for migrants, etc.) was not developed. The result was an emerging widespread irregular regional labour market. The situation was aggravated by activities of international networks of criminal organisations specialising in human trafficking across the post-Soviet territory. Human traffickers effectively benefit from gaps in national legislation on migration, lack of official migration infrastructure, over-bureaucratic procedures for getting job permissions and the growing demand for migrant labour in Russia.

17. The number of irregular migrants in the CIS region is estimated at between 5 and 15 million (most of them in Russia; up to 1 million seasonal workers in Kazakhstan; and about 0.2 million irregular transit migrants in Ukraine).

Table 2. CIS: migrant workers abroad (estimates (thousands)), early 2000s

CIS country	Migrant workers abroad	Migrant workers in Russia
Armenia	800-900	650
Azerbaijan	600-700	550-650
Georgia	250-300	200
Kyrgyzstan	400-450	350-400
Moldova	500	250
Tajikistan	600-700	600-700
Ukraine	2 000-2 500	1 000-1 500
Uzbekistan	600-700	550-600
Russian Federation	2 000-3 000	—

Based on: national estimates of origin countries.

Source: "Overview of the CIS Migration Systems", ICMPD, Vienna, 2006.

18. Estimates presented in Table 2 include migrant workers from CIS countries working in other countries, both legally and illegally. For central Asian states and the Caucasus republics, Russia is the major destination country, attracting 70% to 90% of their labour migrants. As for Moldova and Ukraine, only about half of migrants from these countries come to Russia while the other half tends to move westward, to Europe, primarily to the southern European countries, where during the last fifteen years numerous migrant networks of Moldovans and Ukrainians have been established and today facilitate migration and provide support to their newly arrived compatriots.

19. While Russia is the major receiving country in the region, it is at the same time an important sending country. Migrants from Russia move primarily towards more developed western countries in Europe, South and North America, and Asia.

20. Along with Russia, Kazakhstan has become a receiving country in recent years, hosting seasonal labour migrants from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Having lost 20% of its population due to mass emigration of Slavic people, Germans and Jews in the 1990s, Kazakhstan faces a labour deficit, as economic recovery advances with growing wages. Skilled labour migrants come from Russia and countries from outside the CIS region, primarily to work in the oil, transport and construction industries. Similarly to Russia, labour migration to Kazakhstan is overwhelmingly irregular. According to estimations, Kazakhstan hosts up to 1 million irregular labour migrants.⁸ In the 2000s, the nature of economic migration in the CIS region is obviously shifting from commercial circular trips to hired employment, both regular and irregular. Employers in

8. For details please refer to Elena Sadovskaya, "International Labour Migration, Remittances and Development in Central Asia: Towards Regionalisation or Globalisation?", Migration and Development, scientific series, *International Migration of Population: Russia and the Contemporary World*, edited by Vladimir Iontsev, Volume 20, TEIS, Moscow, 2007.

countries of destination are both legal entities and physical persons, both nationals and representatives of diasporas. For example, Armenian construction companies and Azerbaijani wholesale and retail trade companies in Russia commonly hire newly arrived compatriots.

21. Surveys of irregular migrants in Russia⁹ reveal socio-demographic characteristics of migrants. For example, temporary labour migrants, both regular and irregular, are primarily males of working age (average age is 32-33 years, 80% males), married (over 60%) and having children (40-45%), leaving their families behind. Less than a half have secondary and higher education and only one out of four have professional skills needed for their work in Russia. Irregular migrants generally come from rural areas. Kyrgyz and Uzbek migrants often arrive in groups originating from one village. Irregular male migrants concentrate in the construction sector (low-skilled or casual workers), in trade and services (market trade, car repair shops, street cleaning, etc.) and agriculture, while female migrants find jobs in agriculture and – more commonly – in the services sector (house cleaners, dishwashers, waiters, call-girls, sex-services).

4. Transit migration

22. Migrants from Asian and even African countries wending their way to more developed countries of the European Union use the post-Soviet territory as a transit route. According to estimates, over 300 000 transit migrants from Afghanistan, China, Angola, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Ethiopia and other countries have been stranded in Russia and Ukraine after running into an obstacle of tight control at the EU border. They stay in Russia for months and even years (usually without any regular status) in order to raise funds for the onward smuggling fee or purchase of falsified travel documents and visas. They earn money in the shadow sector of the economy or by criminal activities.

23. Numerous irregular migrants in transit from remote Asian and African countries carry epidemiological risks. When staying in Russia, Ukraine or other Eurasian transit states they do not have proper access to the health care system.

24. Once in abusive situations, lack of papers and fear of arrest or deportation often prevent transit migrants from seeking help from authorities. The alternative protection framework comes from informal ethnic solidarity or criminal organisations. Therefore, transit migrants in irregular situations can be easily recruited for crime.

25. Migrants in transit will not integrate with the local society. They feel forced to stay in a country that they regard as no more than a staging post on their way to more prosperous states in terms of economic opportunities and the welfare system.

26. Meanwhile, transit countries where these migrants get stuck suffer from a growing shadow labour market, epidemiological risks, ethnic-based conflicts, and a growing criminal sector of smugglers' and traffickers' services as a result of poorly controlled flows of transit migrants.

5. Chinese migration

27. Chinese migration flows to Russia and other Eurasian states have been steadily growing over the last decade. It is due to the encouragement of labour exports and shuttle trade ("people trade", as defined by Chinese authorities) by the Chinese Government and the obvious interest of China in natural resources in the former Soviet republics and widespread illegal employment practices. Chinese citizens come primarily as small-scale traders or labour migrants in construction, trade-related business, catering or manufacturing. Chinese teams of construction workers are employed by Chinese companies contracted (or sub-contracted) for construction projects in Russia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and other CIS states, in a similar fashion to a Turkish construction company's model of labour migration.

28. For Russia, migration from China is a contradictory process having many benefits and challenges. From the positive perspective, Chinese migrants are hard working, concessive and disciplined, and are therefore a valuable labour resource that covers labour shortages in many territories and industries. In 2006, 228 800 Chinese migrant workers were employed in the Russian Federation. Among them, 50% in the central

9. "Problem of Irregular Migration in Russia: Reality and Search for Solutions" (results of the sociological survey), IOM Office in Russia, Gendalf, Moscow, 2004 (in Russian); Evgeny Krasinets, "Irregular Migration and Migration Policy in Russia", *Economics of Crimes and Punishments*, Volume 8; *Irregular Migration in the Contemporary Russia*, edited by Yuri Latov and Olga Vykhovanets, Moscow, 2006, pp. 40-50 (in Russian); and I. Kozina, M. Karelina and T. Metalina, "Labour Practices of Foreign Workers in Russia", sociological surveys, No. 2, Moscow, 2005, pp. 44-45 (in Russian).

European part of Russia, 23% in the Far East Region and 19% in Southern Siberia. Today, Chinese migrant workers make up 13.3% of the total amount of the foreign labour force in Russia; they are the third biggest group of registered foreign workers. In some territories (for example, Far East Russia) Chinese migrant workers make up over 50% of the total number of foreign workers.

29. However, there is a negative perspective as well. In many cases, the activities of Chinese migrants in Russia do not correspond to its national interests. Market trade with cheap Chinese consumer goods undermines the Russian light industries in the territories where “Chinese markets” are located. The key interest of Chinese business in Russia is to import raw materials, which often turns into predation of timber and metals through shadow schemes in co-operation with Russian criminal business groups. In a number of Russian cities, Chinese ethnic communities represent strong, independent economic and social structures, like enclaves in Russia’s economy. Having at their disposal the community’s independent press, financial system, various legal, semi-legal and illegal companies, hotels, hostels, warehouses, etc., the Chinese ethnic communities have become the co-ordinating centres for Chinese migrants’ business activities. A major concern is also related to the geopolitical interest of China in the territory of the Russian Far East provinces, referring to the “lost territories” concept that dates back one hundred and fifty years. This issue is particularly sensitive for the Russian Far East, where the local population is shrinking due to ageing and population decrease and due to the outflow of inhabitants to the western regions of Russia. The population of the Russian Far East decreased from 7 to 6 million between 1994 and 2005. In comparison, the population of the three north-east provinces of China neighbouring Russia is 105 million, and increasing further.

30. The total number of Chinese migrants who live in Russia more or less permanently is estimated to be close to one million. However, surveys of Chinese migrants in Russia prove that over half of them have no intention to stay in Russia for a long time but to return to China or move to other, mainly European, countries after having accumulated money or graduated from Russian high school institutions. Therefore, the Chinese migration potential is growing not only in China itself but also in Russia and other countries where economic and political conditions are suitable for business but not for permanent stay.

31. Therefore, in contrast to migration exchange within the CIS region where labour migration “works” as a facilitator of regional integration, Chinese migration to Russia contributes to additional friction between the two countries. Temporary labour migration between Russia and China is regulated by two intergovernmental agreements signed in 1992 and 2000. Presently, a new agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the People’s Republic of China on counteracting irregular migration and illegal employment of Chinese migrants in the territory of Russia is under consideration. It is focused on suppressing the illegal activities of Chinese citizens in the territory of the Russian Federation.

6. Turkish migration

32. Another sample of “external” migration to the CIS region is migration of Turkish workers. In contrast to Chinese migrants, they are considered as the most orderly, transparent and manageable group of foreign workers. Turkish migrant workers come primarily as project workers hired by Turkish construction companies. They are closely “tied” to their Turkish employers and do not participate in the national labour markets of the CIS countries independently. So, they do not compete with national workers. For this reason, they are welcomed by national governments. Table 3 shows the numbers of Turkish migrant workers in CIS countries registered by the Turkish Employment Office. They concentrate mainly in more developed countries (Russia, Kazakhstan) and in central Asian states and Azerbaijan, which are closer to Turkey in terms of religion, culture and language.

Table 3. Numbers of Turkish migrant workers in CIS countries (cases registered by the Turkish Employment Office), 1998-2003

CIS country	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Azerbaijan	276	152	214	267	668	1 049
Georgia	194	150	157	65	375	357
Kazakhstan	3 145	1 524	1 790	1 290	1 102	1 532
Kyrgyzstan	8	88	177	34	95	34
Moldova	102	119	20	2	132	0
Russian Federation	7 426	2 215	2 199	4 190	10 137	10 816
Tajikistan	0	...	0	245
Turkmenistan	563	1 576	2 184	1 327	1 068	1 603

CIS country	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Ukraine	124	93	222	90	151	89
Uzbekistan	1 326	872	176	455	423	773

Sources: TC Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığı, DİYİH (Dış İlişkiler ve Yurt Dışı İşçi Hizmetleri) Genel Müdürlüğü Bultenleri (1998-2004), Raporları (1999-2003), Ankara, and according to data from Türkiye İş Kurumu (Employment Office).

33. Data from sources in countries of origin provide even higher numbers. For example, in Russia Turkish migrant workers were already one of the largest groups in the foreign labour force in the mid-1990s. The 1998 financial crisis resulted in a decline of the absolute number of Turkish migrants but by the mid-2000s their number had multiplied. In 2005, Turkey was ranked third after China and Ukraine in the list of top countries of origin of migrant workers officially employed in Russia. They concentrate in the boom areas (Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Krasnodarsky Krai, Yamalo-Nenetskiy AO, Tatarstan). Besides project workers, Turkish migrants include the highly skilled personnel of Turkish companies (financial, commercial), teachers in Muslim republics, and small-scale traders of Turkish consumer goods.

Table 4. Turkish migrant workers in Russia, 1994-2007

Years	Numbers (thousands)	Percentage of the total
1994	12.1	9.4
1995	36.2	12.9
1996	39	13.4
1997	33.2	13.7
1998	35.7	14.7
1999	26.7	12.6
2000	17.8	8.4
2001	20.9	7.4
2002	15.4	4.3
2003	37.9	10
2004	48	10.4
2005	73.7	10.5
2006	101.4	10
2007	131.2	7.7

Source: Data from the Russian Statistical Committee (ROSSTAT).

34. In the central Asian states and Azerbaijan, which are mostly countries of origin, Turkish migrants are a major group of foreign workers engaged in construction and infrastructure projects, the banking sector, education and commerce. As regards Azerbaijan, over 20 000 Turkish workers were employed in the country in 2004. In Kazakhstan, there are 15 700 workers from Turkey. In Uzbekistan, there are 6 300 Turkish migrants.

35. Equally, there are migration flows from the CIS to Turkey. Students from the central Asian states, Azerbaijan, and Muslim republics in the Russian Federation go to Turkey for higher education, training, and for work. During the tourist season tens of thousands of labour migrants from post-Soviet states seek jobs in the tourist areas where there is a high demand for Russian-speaking guides, administrators, waiters, etc. The problem arises from the fact that most of them come to Turkey with a tourist visa, which gives no right to paid employment.

7. Human trafficking and labour exploitation

36. Widespread human trafficking practices are serious and growing problems, and are common to both countries of origin and destination countries in the Eurasian region. Men, women and children from low-wage CIS countries are trafficked for labour and sex exploitation, sometimes by deceit, sometimes by consent. Pushed by despair and poverty, people agree to over-exploitation, degrading treatment and irregular

situations in order to provide economic support for their families. Hundreds of thousands of Tajik, Kyrgyz, Moldovan or Uzbek migrants are taken to Russia for seasonal work in construction and agriculture, and their seasonal earnings provide income to their families left behind. They “pay” for that with their human rights being violated, with oppression and health risks.

37. The governments in the countries of origin are not indifferent to this situation. The Government of Russia also realises that widespread human trafficking practices in the sphere of irregular labour migration damages the national labour market, causes the shadow sector of the economy to grow, gives rise to corruption, and provokes criminality and social tension. So, both sending and receiving countries have a strong interest in counteracting human trafficking in the region. It can be effective only with the combined efforts of the governments, within the framework of inter-ministerial co-operation, exchanges of information, joint counter-trafficking operations, etc.

38. The human dimension of migration requires the particular attention of government bodies responsible for migration management. Development of legal channels of migration, access of potential migrants to information about migration possibilities, migrants’ rights, and threats of illegal employment, specialised juridical and consultation services for migrants, and severe penalties for unscrupulous employers hiring migrants illegally can all contribute to reduce the sphere of human trafficking and to increase the security of migrants.

39. More efforts are necessary at national level and by NGOs to help cultivate zero tolerance within society towards exploitation, violence and forced labour.

8. Brain drains/gains

40. The Eurasian region, especially Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan, have suffered serious losses due to an outflow of highly skilled professionals in the 1990s. For Russia, the UNDP estimates annual losses resulting from brain drain amounting to US\$25 billion (data from 2004).

41. Many researchers from former Soviet republics are today working in European and American universities and research centres. They were pushed to leave their own country due to low wages in the R&D sector and reduced prestige of intellectual labour. Some of them have emigrated forever, while others keep contacts with their homeland and inspire international projects, training courses, etc., for the mutual benefit of researchers from the CIS and other countries.

42. The nature of contemporary science is shifting. It is becoming more internationalised. In many fields of science, like space investigation, energy technologies, high energy physics, molecular biology, etc., development in the framework of only one country is hardly possible today. Projects of the highest priority in these fields need considerable resources – human and financial. In addition, co-operation between researchers from different scientific schools gives more effective results, and “brain exchange” is an important instrument of scientific progress and mutual enrichment of scholars. So, nowadays development of fundamental science needs global management. This means that new forms of organisation and mobilisation of intellectual resources at the global level are to be found. Another side of this new approach is to make national economies able to apply and integrate the results of globally produced advanced technologies.

43. Gradually, the most advanced Eurasian states are coming to a new understanding that in order to participate in a newly organised scientific research process most effectively they should not only give their brains but also be ready to absorb the consequent innovations in their own economy. For this reason, Russia, for example, is focusing on speeding up the development of advanced technologies sectors. The IT sector in Russia demonstrates the highest annual growth rate of 15%. With a view to reduce brain drain damage and to stimulate application of advanced technologies, Russia concentrates on: (1) reorganisation of the R&D sector with priorities given to forward-looking studies, scientific schools and talented young researchers; (2) restructuring of the economy with special emphasis on the IT sector; (3) encouragement of private investments in R&D; and (4) development of interstate co-operation in the R&D sector, etc. On the other hand, growing foreign investments in the CIS states are often followed by human inflow of “international staff” employed by transnational corporations: highly skilled workers, managers, financial experts, etc. They provide the benefits of “brain circulation” that partially compensate for the brain drain losses in the countries of origin. Highly skilled migrants bring new knowledge with them and assist local workers to advance professionally.

9. Migrant remittances

44. Improvements in living standards of migrants' households are the most obvious positive effect of labour migration. Money earned in other countries is sent to the families that are left behind and used by migrants' households to purchase consumer goods, houses, and to make investments in human capital and business.

45. In the 2000s, the scale of remittances in the post-Soviet space considerably increased. The major receiving country, Russia, is the main source of remittances. According to the Central Bank of Russia, the total amount of remittances sent from Russia to other CIS states increased 12 fold between 1999 and 2005: from US\$0.5 billion to US\$6 billion. According to the National Bank of Kazakhstan, since 2000 the remittances by residents and non-residents sent by official channels were growing 150-200% annually, and by 2005 exceeded US\$1 billion. However, a considerable proportion of migrants' money is delivered to their countries of origin not by official channels (bank transfer, postal order, other money remittance systems) but rather non-officially – through friends, relatives, or carried personally as cash. According to the Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation, migrants take away up to US\$10 billion from Russia annually.

46. In many smaller CIS countries migrant remittances play a more important role in stabilising economic development than foreign direct investments (FDI) or official development aid (ODA) (Table 5). Along with official IMF data, the table includes estimates of total remittances.

Table 5. Comparative role of remittances in the smaller CIS states, 2006

Country	Migrant transfers BOP	FDI	ODA and official aid	Exports of goods and services
in millions of US\$				
Armenia	1 175	543	213	1 408
Azerbaijan	812	- 584	206	13 862
Georgia	485	1 060	361	2 554
Kyrgyzstan	739	182	311	1 099
Moldova	1 182	242	228	1 546
Tajikistan	1 019	339	240	646
Uzbekistan	...	164	149	6 528
as a share of GDP (%)				
Armenia	18.3	8.5	3.3	22
Azerbaijan	6	- 2.9	1.1	70
Georgia	6.4	13.8	4.7	33
Kyrgyzstan	27.8	6.5	11.1	39
Moldova	36.2	7.3	6.9	46
Tajikistan	36.2	12	8.6	23
Uzbekistan	...	1	0.9	38

BOP – balance of payments, IMF data.

FDI – foreign direct investments, World Bank data.

ODA – official development aid, World Bank data.

GDP – gross domestic product.

Source: IMF balance of payments statistics, August 2007; and World Bank, world development indicators database, April 2008.

47. The major concern of both sending and receiving countries in the CIS region is to widen official channels for migrant remittances and to develop incentives for labour migrants to transfer money legally. Central banks of the countries of the region co-ordinate their activities to provide information to migrant workers on how to transfer remittances officially. National banks of both sending and receiving countries expand services for migrants in co-operation with Western Union, MoneyGram, TWML, Contact, and other money remittance systems.

10. Towards the CIS common labour market

48. Disparities in the demographic and economic potential of CIS countries “naturally” lead to inter-regional migration, which could be an instrument to promote co-development based on mutually complementary resources. Properly managed, international migration in the region can balance labour supply in different countries and industries. Similarities in educational systems, including professional training and secondary education, can further facilitate inter-regional migration of skilled labour.

49. Multimillion flows of irregular migrants across the CIS territory prove the enormous potential of labour migration in the region. In fact, migrants “vote by their feet” for a single migration space and a common labour market. Migration and freedom of movement was always likely to remain the strongest link between the former Soviet republics, despite many contradicting interests and lack of understanding among states over the last fifteen years of post-Soviet development.

50. The new approach to regional migration came in the 2000s when relative economic stability was achieved and the benefits of labour migration were understood at the high state level. Presently, facilitating the orderly movement of labour, guaranteeing the social and labour rights of migrant workers is on the agenda of regional organisations and is part of bilateral agreements. The new impulse to interstate co-operation in the field was made by revision of the Russian migration regulation in 2007; it stimulated elaboration of expedient bilateral agreements on labour migration between Russia and Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and development of guest worker programmes in the form of direct arrangements between sending countries and the Russian enterprises with labour shortages.

11. New Russian migration strategy

51. International migration policy in Russia is presently at a turning point. Negative demographic trends (absolute population decline of about 1 million a year due to dramatic differences in the numbers of births and deaths; starting from 2006 an absolute decline in labour age-groups, up to 700 000 from 2010 onwards; and population ageing and growth of the dependency ratio) and economic recovery that needs additional labour resources (stabilisation of the economic growth rate, expansion of the private sector, particularly in the services and construction industries that are labour consuming) incited the Russian authorities to adopt a new outlook to migration. This shift in policy was a consequence of the rather restrictive migration regulation of the 1990s, which resulted in a dramatic decline in regular migration inflows to Russia from other CIS states: from over 900 000 in 1994 to less than 50 000 in the early 2000s.

52. At the same time, irregular labour migration has boomed. This phenomenon clearly indicates a high migration potential within the post-Soviet space and the need for a new strategy on migration management in Russia, which should address pragmatic economic and demographic interests. While irregular migration remains a major security concern in Russia, national security has shifted from being seen exclusively in terms of the state to a wider approach balancing economic, social, demographic, cultural, ethnic and the human security of the nation. Correspondingly, the general purpose of tackling irregular migration is likely to be achieved through a combination of policing instruments (proper border management, exposure of human traffickers, immigration control, secure identification documents, etc.) together with more humane measures such as regularisation of irregular migrants and development of legal channels for permanent and temporary migration as an alternative for irregular migration and human trafficking.

53. Following the implementation of the new immigration law in January 2007, 1 717 137 labour migrants obtained regular work permits in Russia in 2007. According to the figures of the Russian Federal Migration Service, the number of labour migrants with regular status coming from CIS countries has significantly increased from 537 700 in 2006 to 1.15 million in 2007. The number of regular labour migrants from other countries has increased from 476 300 in 2006 to 564 300 in 2007. Table 6 illustrates the breakdown of figures (in percentages) according to countries of origin.

Table 6. Migrant workers in Russia, 2007

Country of origin	Migrant workers in Russia
Uzbekistan	20.1%
Tajikistan	14.6%
China	13.3%
Ukraine	12.2%
Turkey	7.6%

Country of origin	Migrant workers in Russia
Kyrgyzstan	6.4%
Moldova	5.5%
Vietnam	4.6%
Others	15.7%

Source: Russian Federal Migration Service, 2007.

54. Currently, Russia's migration policy is shifting from a primarily restrictive to a more flexible approach that widens the legal space for migration and removes cumbersome bureaucratic barriers for migrants. The authorities came to the conclusion that the existing model of migration management in Russia is inefficient. Such a model does not correspond to national economic and demographic interests; it pushes migrants into the shadow sector; creates obstacles for development of the national labour market; leaves millions of people in Russia without any legal protection; gives rise to corruption; and provokes growth of criminality among migrants. These were the reasons for revising the migration management strategy.

55. The following recent legal documents in the field of migration management illustrate a radical about-turn in Russia's migration strategy:

55.1. The 2006-12 state programme on providing support for voluntary resettlement of compatriots to Russia (adopted by presidential decree, 22 June 2006);

55.2. The 2005 concept of regularisation of irregular labour migrants from the CIS states that have a visa-free entry regime with Russia;

55.3. The Federal Law on Registry of Foreign Citizens and Persons without Citizenship in the Russian Federation (in force since 15 January 2007);

55.4. Amendments to the Federal Law on the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the Russian Federation (in force since 15 January 2007);

55.5. The new concept of the state migration policy (considered at the sessions of the Gosudarstvennaya Duma in 2006).

56. These legal documents were prepared in consultation with experts, employers' associations, private labour recruitment agencies and NGOs, in parallel with active public debates in the media and with the participation of senior officials from the Ministry of the Interior, Federal Migration Service, Ministry of Economic Development and Federal Employment Service.

57. The "keywords" for the new migration policy are selectivity and regularisation. The policy envisages mechanisms to facilitate regular status and legal employment for migrants coming to Russia from other former Soviet states for permanent residence or for temporary work.

58. Russia therefore encourages regular migration and regional co-operation in the field, giving migrants from smaller CIS states an opportunity to work, earn money and send it home to support their families and national economies. Moreover, labour migration in the CIS region – inspired by historical and cultural ties and knowledge of the Russian language – effectively works as a factor of stabilisation and integration among the countries for their mutual benefit and development. Destination countries, namely Russia and Kazakhstan, and origin countries – Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Ukraine and Armenia – all emphasise their interest in developing the CIS common labour market.

12. Regional co-operation in the field of migration management

59. Co-ordination of migration management in Eurasia has been a concern of several regional organisations such as: the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS); the Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC) involving Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan; and GUAM involving Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova. There are also numerous bilateral agreements.

12.1. Major multilateral agreements:

- agreement between the CIS states on co-operation in labour migration and social guarantees for migrant workers (1994);

- agreement between the CIS states on co-operation in preventing irregular migration (1998);
- the EAEC agreement on visa-free journeys: Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan (2005);
- participation in the Budapest Process (since 2004);
- Issyk-Kul Dialogue of the International Conference on Migration Policies in Central Asian States, Caucasus States and Neighbouring Countries;
- International Agreement on Migration Management between Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (2000).

12.2. Bilateral agreements on labour migration:

- Russia-Belarus (in the framework of the Agreement on the Union between Russia and Belarus);
- Russia-Tajikistan (inter-governmental, inter-ministerial, and Representation Office of the Ministry of Labour of Tajikistan in Russia);
- Russia-Kyrgyzstan (inter-governmental, between ministries of the interior, and attaché dealing with migration issues);
- Kazakhstan-Kyrgyzstan (inter-governmental on agricultural workers in border regions);
- Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan (inter-governmental);
- Russia-Ukraine (inter-governmental and inter-ministerial);
- Russia-Armenia (inter-governmental);
- Ukraine-Moldova;
- Ukraine-Armenia;
- Ukraine-Slovakia;
- Uzbekistan-Turkmenistan (on a simplified border-crossing regime for inhabitants of frontier areas);
- Uzbekistan-South Korea (labour quotas);
- Tajikistan-Turkey (between ministries of labour).

12.3. Ongoing projects:

- elaboration of the CIS Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers in the framework of the Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC) and elaboration of the agreement on temporary employment of citizens of member states of the EAEC on the territories of other member states;
- Common Economic Space of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine, aiming to facilitate free movement of capital, goods and labour.

12.4. Non-governmental activities:

- direct agreements on labour exports (organised recruiting) between Russian enterprises and migration services in labour source countries;
- establishment of “migration bridges” between central Asian states and the Russian provinces (NGOs: information, consultations and training);
- co-operation between private recruitment agencies (International Association of Labour Migration).

60. Co-ordination of activities at non-governmental level is a new and very promising alternative to irregular migration, illegal employment and human trafficking. For example, in 2003 the International Association of Labour Migration (IALM) was established as a regional professional association of private labour agencies from Russia, Ukraine, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. The main purpose of the IALM is to promote legal temporary employment options by means of wide information campaigns for employers and potential labour migrants, co-operation between labour agencies of sending and receiving countries, creation of the CIS regional labour demand and supply databases, etc. Working in partnership with national state bodies engaged in migration

management and international organisations, IALM is a structural element of a newly shaping international migration infrastructure in the Eurasian region, and a good example of a combination of interests between states and the business community.

13. Conclusion

61. Migration in the Eurasian region is growing and has become a more diverse and complex phenomenon over the last fifteen years. It is strongly stimulated by the globalisation process and it is often a response to disparities in development and demographic growth. The significance of labour migration is growing in the region. Governments, interstate organisations and the public are increasingly faced with issues such as irregular migration, transnational organised crime and trafficking in human beings. Therefore, the Eurasian region displays a full range of advantages and disadvantages resulting from international migration. While there are many benefits from labour movements including transfer of migrants' remittances, negative implications of irregular migration represent a threat to national and human security. CIS states have therefore a common interest to focus on proper management of migration flows, both at national and international level.

62. In order to maximise benefits related to development of poorer countries of origin and to minimise negative effects, the Eurasian states are coming to a common understanding of the following necessary steps:

13.1. In the sphere of labour migration management:

62.1. to reduce the scale of irregular migration and illegal employment by tackling the shadow sector of the economy in receiving countries, labour market regulation, and development of official channels of labour migration through the combined efforts of state and private labour agencies in both sending and receiving countries.

13.2. In the sphere of transit migration:

62.1. to respond to the challenges of "asymmetric borders" through improvement of border control facilities and co-operation among the transit CIS states in immigration control; and to use international instruments to reduce the risks of "extended transit" and thousands of migrants getting stuck in transit countries.

13.3. In the sphere of brain drain:

62.1. to encourage the R&D sector and interstate co-operation in the field of research in order to develop a knowledge-based economy and to stimulate the return of intellectuals; and to initiate new forms of managing fundamental science at a supra-national level, which would attract the necessary human and financial resources and elaborate fair access to innovative technologies in different countries.

13.4. In the sphere of migrant remittances:

62.1. to encourage migrants to send their remittances via official channels, to lower the costs of remittance transfers, offer incentives for migrants to invest the earned money in business, human capital, local infrastructure and development projects.

63. The CIS migration strategy is at a turning point. Both sending and receiving countries of the region are coming to a better understanding of the benefits of international migration for regional development. Countries of the region have already established co-operation at the government level and there are many joint efforts of non-governmental organisations, academics and the media, which aim to turn migration into an effective instrument for mutual development of national economies and the region as a whole. Establishing permanent parliamentary dialogue is therefore of particular importance.

64. As a platform for a political discussion on migration issues, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe could effectively promote common understanding of migration-related benefits and risks, as well as the potential of inter-state co-operation in the Eurasian region, which would enable combined efforts to manage migration more effectively. Members of parliaments from Eurasian states could contribute more actively to achieve orderly and safe migration by developing frameworks for migration policies, by co-ordinating national legislation on migration, by initiating or strengthening inter-state data-sharing mechanisms related to migration, and by improving national and international migration infrastructures. In a wider context, proper migration management and inter-state co-operation could make migration an important resource of sustainable economic development of both sending and receiving countries in the region.

14. The fact-finding visit of the rapporteur to Russia

65. In August 2008, the rapporteur undertook a fact-finding mission to the Asian part of the Russian Federation: the Irkutsk Region, the Khabarovsk Region and the Autonomous Jewish Region (*oblast*). The purpose of the visit was to gather information on recent migration trends and policy responses in two significant border regions, focusing particularly on Chinese migration to Russia.

66. In the course of his visit, the rapporteur met with the Deputy Presidential Plenipotentiary Envoy to the Far Eastern Federal District, with the Deputy Head of the Government of the Khabarovsk Region, with the Governor of the Autonomous Jewish Region (*oblast*) in Birobidjan, representatives of regional authorities in Irkutsk, with staff of regional labour departments in Khabarovsk and Irkutsk, and regionally deployed staff of the Federal Migration Service. The rapporteur has also met with researchers of the Far Eastern Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, of the state regional legal research institute and the Centre for Independent Social Research in Irkutsk. At the end of his visit, the rapporteur had a discussion with the Deputy Director of the Federal Migration Service in Moscow.

67. Currently, at the regional level in Russia there are no specific legal norms on migration, as this falls under the federal competence since 2002. In 2002 there was a radical shift in federal migration policy, establishing the Federal Migration Service with regional branches and introducing a number of legal norms to streamline and optimise migration flows in Russia.

68. The rapporteur observed that the federal policy objectives to create incentives for CIS migrant workers and to restrict non-CIS immigration do not always meet regional needs. The situation is of course very diverse across Russian regions depending on their geographical situation, on the number of urban centres and specific labour demands in different sectors of the economy. Border regions, regions with large industrial agglomerations, and regions extracting and exporting raw materials and natural resources (petrol, gas, mining, timber, etc.) have a greater need for foreign labour. The Irkutsk Region and the Russian Far East (Khabarovsk Region, Autonomous Jewish Region (*oblast*), Amur Region and Primorsky *kraj*), due to their geographical proximity to China, have more difficulty in attracting migrant workers from the CIS region than from the neighbouring provinces of China.

69. The statistics provided by the Federal Migration Service show that in 2007 the overall federal quota for non-CIS workers was limited to 318 752 work permits compared to the figure of 6 million that was available to CIS workers. However, in actual terms the non-CIS quota was exceeded while only 30% of the CIS quota was fulfilled for that year. For example, districts in the Russian Far East have only reached 16% of the CIS quota.

70. Moreover, the rapporteur observes that annual work permits issued under the quota system are not directly linked with employment contracts. This often causes a mismatch of the skills that are needed in certain sectors (for example, in construction or the timber industry). Therefore, it seems necessary to promote the use of private recruitment agencies to assist regional labour departments and employers to recruit migrant workers with the necessary skills and to avoid migrants falling into an irregular situation.

71. There are no reliable statistics regarding irregular migration, only estimates. The Federal Migration Service estimated the number of irregular migrants at between 7 and 15 million in 2006. That figure has been significantly reduced following the implementation of the new federal law; the number of irregular migrants in Russia is now estimated to be between 3 and 6 million. Since the 2007 migration legislation reform came into force, regional authorities in co-operation with the Federal Migration Service proceed more severely with expulsion and they apply a five-year re-entry ban. Employers are also financially sanctioned.

72. In both Irkutsk and Khabarovsk regions, like in many other industrialised regions of Siberia and the Russian Far East, the major problem is depopulation and loss of labour due to ageing of the population and outflow of skilled workers who migrate internally to the European part of Russia or abroad. Foreign skilled workers, particularly from the CIS region, are rather difficult to attract to eastern parts of Russia due to very difficult climatic conditions and the high costs of housing. A federal budget of 40 million roubles has been allocated for the period 2007-12 to create incentives to attract skilled workers from the CIS countries. However, the number of skilled migrants involved in the federal programme is still very low compared to the estimated needs.

73. For example, the Irkutsk Region has a population of 2.5 million with an annual loss of 12 000 people (due to both emigration and mortality). The region has lost 100 000 people over the last ten years. Migrant workers are therefore crucial for the economic development of the region. The non-CIS immigration quota for 2008 was fixed at 11 000 by the federal authorities. By August 2008, 10 000 work permits had already been

issued mainly to Chinese, and to some extent Mongolian and Korean, migrant workers. According to regional statistics, there are an additional 20 000 migrant workers with a regular status coming from the central Asian republics (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan) and only 10% from Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and Serbia.

74. In comparison, the Russian Far East (greater region) has a population 6.3 million, a population loss of 2 million over the last two decades. The example of the Autonomous Jewish Region (*oblast*) shows, at a regional scale, the massive migration outflows of the Jewish population in the course of the early 1990s. It is estimated that approximately 1.6 million Jews left Russia, mainly to Israel (75-80%), United States of America, Canada and Germany. The integration experiences of most of these migrants were generally more difficult than those of their predecessors in the 1970s, especially in Israel, where the number of migrants was so overwhelming that one can speak of a great Russian *Aliyah*. Today, due to the economic recovery of the Far East, this trend is reversed and many Jewish emigrants regularly come back to maintain family links and make local investments.

75. Due to population losses and past emigration, the Russian Far East today hosts 98 000 non-CIS workers and 49 000 workers from the CIS. The most represented are migrant workers from China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea and the Philippines.

76. In the Khabarovsk Region, migrant workers currently represent 3-4% of the working age population. According to the regional development strategy (covering the period until 2025), the forecast for future migrant labour needs amounts to 10%. Currently, there are 10 000 Chinese workers with regular status and it is estimated that an additional 10% are working with irregular status. Different rules apply to Chinese entrepreneurs who employ Chinese workers.

77. In the Russian Federation, Chinese migrants are mostly involved in trade (43.5%), construction (27.8%), agriculture and the timber industry (15.9%). In the Autonomous Jewish Region (*oblast*), for example, Chinese farmers lease agricultural land. Regional and district authorities are, however, concerned about excessive use of pesticides and the quality of agricultural goods. Currently, there is a policy shift in the Khabarovsk Region to attract Tajik farmers and to provide subsidies to local farmers to improve farming technologies.

78. Chinese migration to eastern parts of Russian causes the most controversy. There are diverging views between federal and regional authorities, as well as between officials who apply a restrictive migration policy and researchers who argue that restrictive migration policy can only curb regular migration flows but not irregular ones.

79. The rapporteur also draws on interesting observations by Vilya Gelbras, senior research fellow at the Institute of the World Economy and International Relations at the Russian Academy of Sciences and Professor at Moscow State University.

80. According to Professor Gelbras, the nature of Chinese migration to Russia has in many respects changed over the last years. The frequency of trips to Russia has sharply increased, indicating "pendulum migration". A specific form of manpower has emerged that facilitates the flow of goods. In other words, the Chinese authorities are stimulating cross-border movement of people and goods. Migrants have seemingly become an integral part of China's commercial and production strategies. At a first glance, the cross-border flows resemble a pendulum migration, but actually they reflect a specific mechanism of cross-border delivery of goods, which makes it possible to minimise financial expenses (non-payment of duties and taxes) or to bypass official procedures restricting the flow of goods.

81. A common pattern of Chinese cross-border activity in Russia seems to be the following. A company registers itself simultaneously in China and Russia. One of its subsidiaries is registered in Russia by a Russian citizen who has no authority for financial signature. This subsidiary engages in wholesale and retail trade. The other company is registered in China by a Chinese citizen and it engages in wholesale operations. Goods are supplied in small shipments from a storehouse in China to Russia. The revenues from sales are sent back to China. This form of trade accounts for 40-60% of Chinese exports to Russia.

82. In addition, the accumulated revenues of trade companies that are allocated for turnover and development are used (by means of Russian companies) to store up, purchase and send back to China scarce goods and raw materials such as timber and non-ferrous metals. For example, about 1.5 million cubic metres of wood is cut down illegally in Primorsky *kraj* (Maritime Territory) every year. In China these goods are sold and the revenues are divided among all those who took part in the transactions at different stages.

83. In order to curb such practice and to safeguard its economy and natural resources, Russia needs an immigration policy that would take into account the specific features of its different regions. The differences between the European part of Russia, Siberia and the Far East are immense. China and eastern parts of Russia – and particularly the Russian Far East – are economically interdependent.

84. The rapporteur draws on some conclusions and recommendations that were made in the course of his discussions with different interlocutors during his visit:

84.1. The federal migration policy and labour migration quota system in particular need more flexibility to take into account specific regional economic and labour needs;

84.2. Migration policy has to be an integral part of a regional socioeconomic development strategy (forecasts of labour needs according to economic sectors);

84.3. Migration policies have to be defined in consultations between federal authorities, regional authorities, employers, representatives of migrant workers and trade unions;

84.4. There is a need to harmonise wages to guarantee equal treatment and welfare protection for migrant workers (labour code) in order to avoid discrimination and imbalances in local economies;

84.5. There is a need to accompany migration policies with appropriate infrastructure to implement such policies (more trained staff for border controls, custom controls, in labour inspectorates, but equally in labour centres, welfare infrastructure and legal protection services to assist migrant workers and to facilitate their integration);

84.6. Public or private recruitment agencies ought to be involved in the immigration process to assist regional labour services and employers in recruitment of migrant workers with the required skills.

85. The rapporteur concludes that, given the wealth of natural resources in the Russian Far East, on the one hand, and extremely low population density and lack of infrastructure, on the other hand, flexible migration policies ought to be used in the future as a positive element to enhance regional economic development.

Reporting committee: Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population.

Reference to committee: [Doc. 10719](#), and Reference No. 3198 of 17 March 2006 (expired 17 March 2008) – reference extended until 31 December 2008 (Bureau's authorisation of 21 January 2008).

Draft resolution and draft recommendation unanimously adopted by the committee on 29 September 2008.

Members of the committee: Mrs Corien W.A. **Jonker** (Chairperson), Mr Doug **Henderson** (1st Vice-Chairperson), Mr Pedro **Agramunt** (2nd Vice-Chairperson), Mr Alessandro Rossi (3rd Vice-Chairperson), Mrs Tina **Acketoft**, Mr Francis **Agius**, Mr Ioannis Baniias, Ms Donka Banović, Mr Jean-Guy **Branger**, Mr Márton Braun, Mr André Bugnon, Mr Mevlüt **Çavuşoğlu**, Mr Sergej Chelemendik, Mr Vannino Chiti, Mr Christopher Chope (alternate: Mr Bill **Etherington**), Mr Boriss **Cilevičs**, Mrs Minodora **Cliveti**, Mr Telmo Correia, Mrs Claire Curtis-Thomas (alternate: Baroness Anita **Gale**), Mr Ivica Dačić, Mr Taulant Dedja, Mr Nikolaos Dendias, Mr Arcadio Díaz Tejera (alternate: Mr Jordi **Xuclà i Costa**), Mr Mitko Dimitrov, Mr Karl Donabauer, Mr Tuur **Elzinga**, Mr Valeriy **Fedorov**, Mr Oleksandr Feldman, Mme Doris **Fiala**, Mr Paul Giacobbi (alternate: Mr Denis **Jacquat**), Mrs Gunn Karin **Gjul**, Mrs Angelika **Graf**, Mr John **Greenway**, Mr Tony Gregory (alternate: Mr Peter **Kelly**), Mr Andrzej Grzyb, Mr Michael Hagberg, Mrs Gultakin Hajiyeva, Mr Davit Harutyunyan, Mr Jürgen Herrmann, Mr Bernd Heynemann, Mr Jean Huss, Mr Ilie **Ilaşcu**, Mr Tadeusz **Iwiński**, Mr Mustafa Jemiliev (alternate: Mrs Oksana **Bilozir**), Mr Tomáš **Jirsa**, Mr Reijo Kallio, Mr Hakki **Keskin**, Mr Egidijus Klumbys, Mr Ruslan Kondratov (alternate: Mr Ivan **Savvidi**), Mr Dimitrij Kovačič, Mr Andros Kyprianou, Mr Geert **Lambert**, Mr Younal Loutfi, Mr Andrija Mandić, Mr Jean-Pierre Masseret (alternate: Mr Jean-Pierre **Kucheida**), Mr Slavko Matić, Mrs Ana Catarina Mendonça, Mr Gebhard **Negele**, Mr Hryhoriy **Omelchenko**, Mr Morten **Østergaard**, Mr Alexey Ostrovsky (alternate: Mr Oleg **Panteleev**), Mr Grigore Petrenco, Mr Cezar Florin Preda, Mr Milorad Pupovac (alternate: Mr Mario **Zubović**), Mrs Mailis **Reps**, Mr Gonzalo Robles Orozco, Mr Giacomo **Santini**, Mrs Michaela Sburny, Mr André **Schneider**, Mr Samad Seyidov, Mr Steingrímur J. Sigfússon, Mrs Miet Smet, Mr Giacomo **Stucchi**, Mr Vilmos Szabó, Mr Tuğrul **Türkeş**, Mrs Özlem **Türköne**, Mr Michał Wojtczak, Mr Marco Zacchera (alternate: Mr Pasquale **Nessa**), Mr Yury Zelenskiy (alternate: Mr Arsen **Fadzaev**), Mr Andrej **Zernovski**, Mr Lasha Zhvania (alternate: Mr Guiorgui **Kandelaki**), Mr Jiří **Zlatuška**.

NB: The names of those members present at the meeting are printed in bold.

Secretariat of the committee: Mr Lervik, Mr Neville, Mrs Odrats