



CENTER
FOR STRATEGIC
RESEARCH

FOREIGN AND
SECURITY POLICY

PROPOSALS FOR
**RUSSIA'S MIGRATION
STRATEGY**
THROUGH 2035

FOREIGN AND
SECURITY POLICY

TEXT: IRINA V. **IVAKHNYUK**

PROPOSALS FOR
**RUSSIA'S MIGRATION
STRATEGY**
THROUGH 2035

EDITED BY: IVAN N. **TIMOFEEV**,
ELENA S. **ALEKSEENKOVA**



MOSCOW
SEPTEMBER 2017

Index

4.....	Index
7.....	Introduction
11.....	Proposals for the migration strategy
19.....	Arguments and recommendations for the implementation of the optimized migration strategy
63.....	Alternative migration policies
68.....	Conclusion

This set of proposals for a new migration strategy for Russia through 2035 and recommendations for its implementation has been examined in two rounds of discussion with participation of experts from the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC), Centre for Strategic Research (CSR), Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPA), Lomonosov Moscow State University (MSU), High School of Economics University (HSE), Centre for Migration Studies, Moscow office of the International Organization for Migration, Institute for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Centre for Social-Economic Demographic Studies at the Moscow State University of Psychology and Education, Forum for Resettlement Organizations, Institute for State Economic Forecasting RAS, Institute of World Economy and International Relations RAS (IMEMO), “Migration XXI century” Fund. The experts’ feedback received helped to develop proposals for a new migration strategy, and concrete recommendations on its implementation.

Introduction

The period that followed the disintegration of the Soviet Union proved to be challenging for Russia from the perspective of politics, socioeconomics, demographics and migration. The unfavourable demographic trends and the declining and ageing of the population were partially offset by an influx of temporary and permanent migrants from other post-Soviet states, but numerous errors in the migration policy led to a decrease in Russia's migration attractiveness, turning migration into a source of social tension and an instrument of political infighting. The errors were caused, among other things, by the lack of a migration strategy and coordinated migration-related decision-making processes. As a result, in contrast to the previous historical periods, the migration policy in post-Soviet Russia was unable to match the nationwide strategy of turning migration into an efficient development resource.

Russia's migration policy is facing specific strategic challenges brought about by the peculiarities of the country's contemporary demographic, economic and political development. These challenges are as follows: **1)** having to offset the natural population decline by stimulating migration from abroad and stabilizing the size of the country's permanent population; **2)** having to meet the Russian labour market's demand for additional workers against the backdrop of a reduction in national labour resources by attracting temporary international labour migrants; **3)** having to change the current migration vectors within Russia, which exacerbate the uneven distribution of the population across the country, and having to ensure the population's growth in strategically important regions, first and foremost in the Far East.

The state migration policy concept that was adopted in 2012, while being officially aimed at making use of the "positive potential inherent in the migration processes", has failed to support the internal logic of the practical measures being taken to manage migration processes. There are still no answers to important questions facing the country as applied to ensuring the desired scale, structure and vectors of migration processes, and to turning migration from a negative factor in Russia's development into a factor that would facilitate its progressive advancement.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The most important achievement of contemporary Russia in terms of migration is that Russian citizens enjoy the **freedom of movement**, are free to choose their place of residence within the country and travel abroad.

One migration decision of great strategic importance was the introduction of a **visa-free travel regime** among the former Soviet republics. This is a truly humane migration policy principle in a situation when the introduction of new frontiers between countries has artificially separated families, relatives and compatriots who had lived in a common country for centuries and generations. In addition, visa-free travel is an important factor in preserving the unity of the post-Soviet space, and in creating conditions for the region's economic and political integration.

The implementation of the **common labour market** concept within the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) resulted from an appreciation of the significance of labour migration to the region's countries. The freedom of travel and employment for citizens of the EAEU member states will be an important incentive for other countries to join this regional integration structure.

Another achievement of the Russian migration policy secured in the past decade is the introduction of a separate migration channel for **highly qualified specialists**. This step was taken in an attempt to increase Russia's attractiveness to highly qualified foreign professionals who could contribute new knowledge to the creation of modern production facilities in Russia and help the country transition to advanced formats of governance.

A important strategic decision with regard to migration was to delegate the regulation of labour migration flows from CIS countries to Russian **regions**, including giving them the powers to issue immigrants with patents and regulate the immigrant influx by way of setting, and annually amending, the price of such patents.

PROBLEMS

The main problem of Russia's migration policy today is that it **lacks conceptual clarity** and clear guidelines for the future. Russia has never managed to arrive at a substantiated idea based on considerations of expedience and adopted at the official level of how many migrants it needs, and what their role in the future development of the country should be. This has resulted in inconsistent administrative decisions, disoriented Russian society as to the objectives of the migration policy and reduced Russia's attractiveness to migrants. The sharp twists of the migration policy and the constant legislative reforms are consequences of knee-jerk reactions to migration problems, which are growing unacceptably big.

The **official labour migration infrastructure**, i.e. the complex of consultancy and information services intended both for Russian employers wishing to attract foreign labour and for foreign citizens seeking employment in Russia remains underdeveloped. As a result of this, the hiring of foreign labour by Russian employers remains largely spontaneous, with shadow groups often based on the ethnicity principle, playing the role of efficient employment mediators for migrants.

The Russian migration policy has failed to introduce instruments that would structure the influx of migrant labour in accordance with the country's demand for a professional and qualified workforce. As a result, despite the significant numbers of incoming migrants, the unmet demand for workers remains steadily high, and the current **migrant qualification potential** often remains unclaimed. At the same time, government institutions overlook the need for the organized employment of foreign labour and professional training services for migrants within Russia in order to meet the needs of the country's labour market. The migration policy is failing to reflect the general situation in the Russian labour market.

One important failure of Russia's migration policy, which has resulted in a sharp aggravation of all the immigration-related problems, has been **the disregard for the need to help migrants to adapt and integrate into the new society**. The Russian perception of integration is oversimplified, with attempts being made to make migrants solely responsible for their integration.

The government overlooks the need for policies related to **internal migration**, despite the fact that the spontaneous trends that have characterized internal migration in Russia over the past 25 years, such as the population's low internal mobility and a steady outflow of the population from the country's eastern and north-eastern regions to Siberia and European Russia, have proved extremely unfavourable to the prospects for the country's economic, demographic and political development. In the Far East, this depopulation trend has actually become a threat to national security and territorial integrity.

CHALLENGES

Russia's declining attractiveness to potential migrants. This is mainly the result of the country's contradictory and incoherent migration policy which, while officially being aimed at attracting permanent migrants in general and "compatriots" in particular, actually creates more administrative obstacles to incoming migrants wishing to legalize their status, seek employment and settle down in Russia. This position has a negative "demonstration effect" on potential migrants, and runs counter to the strategic objective of stimulating an influx of migrants in order to mitigate the demographic crisis in Russia.

Migration remains largely uncontrolled, despite the seemingly active work of the federal migration authorities. This circumstance results in the unregistered employment of a sizable portion of migrants, deforms the Russian labour market and provokes widespread exploitation of migrants, up to and including forced and slave labour and human trafficking. Russian society is concerned about

the obvious absence of an effective immigration control mechanism, which turns migration into a burning problem on the domestic political agenda and increases radical nationalist sentiments.

The lack of understanding of the real scale and structure of migration inflows, and of the role that migrants play in the country's economy. This is primarily related to the low quality of migration statistics. Statistical tricks aimed at making the actual figures match the official targets further distort the picture. The state is not interested in serious economic studies of labour migration. This fact largely explains the absence of conceptual clarity in the migration policy, and its general incoherence.

The scale of illegal migration and unregistered migrant employment, which stems, on the one hand from the specific features of the existing economic system in Russia with its significant informal economic segment, and from administrative and bureaucratic obstacles to the acquisition of work permits by foreign citizens in Russia, forcing them to seek employment illegally, on the other. Illegal migration and the unregistered employment of foreign citizens cost the country's economy dearly, degrading the culture of labour relations, eroding the standards of fair competition in the labour market, and losing the Russian budget hundreds of billions of roubles, as illegal migrants do not pay income tax.

Anti-migrant sentiments in Russian society, which has failed to adapt to the new "migration reality." Society is polarized, with politicians and the public having different views as to whether Russia should attract migrants in order to resolve its demographic and economic problems or put a cap on the number of incoming migrants. Opinion polls indicate that a growing proportion of the Russian population supports a strict line on migration. Against this background, devising a migration policy aimed at increasing Russia's attractiveness to migrants appears to be a difficult task.

The migratory outflow of Russian citizens, which is a serious demographic and economic challenge for the country. The high level of education and qualifications of the Russian citizens leaving the country is particularly painful to the economy. This, coupled with the low educational levels of labour migrants arriving in Russia to seek employment, worsens the quality of the workforce available in the Russian labour market and hampers innovative development of the Russian economy.

Unfavourable internal migration trends. Spontaneous migration processes within Russia exacerbate the already uneven and asymmetric distribution of the population across the country. While there are objective historical and climatic reasons for this irregularity, it is being worsened by migration vectors that are unfavourable in terms of the country's strategic development. Rather than settling in the vast territories in the Asian regions of the country and developing the economy of those regions, which are of strategic importance to Russia, the population is flowing to European Russia and settling down in and around the capital.

1.

PROPOSALS

**FOR THE MIGRATION
STRATEGY**

The state needs to form a strategic vision of the positive effect that the migration resource can have on Russia's demographic and economic development.

Without an influx of migrants, the Russian population will continue to decline steadily, which will negatively affect the country's geopolitical status and its position in the hierarchy of the world's largest powers. There are no examples in history of a country's economic development speeding up against the background of dwindling labour resources. Caused by objective demographic factors, the shrinking of Russia's population and the aging of its workforce is undermining the possibility of progressive economic development. In this situation, attracting an additional workforce from abroad is becoming a necessary condition of the country's further development. The government needs to understand and officially recognize the positive role that migration can play in the further development of Russia in order to send a convincing signal to society that migrants are an indispensable part of Russian life. In addition to recognizing the positive potential of migration, there must be a clear understanding of the migration challenges facing Russia.

The strategic goals facing Russia's migration policy need to be reflected in all migration-related legislative documents and administrative decisions.

As applied to international migration, these goals are to stimulate the influx of permanent migrants in order to stabilize the permanent population, as well as the numbers of temporary migrants in order to replenish the shortages in the Russian labour market. As applied to internal migration, these goals need to stimulate people to move to strategically important eastern regions of the country. It is unacceptable for newly adopted pieces of legislation to contradict these goals.

Visa-free travel across borders needs to be preserved for the sake of continuing relations in the post-Soviet space.

The CIS is a battleground of competing interests for a number of global and regional powers. Many international actors are striving to bring the former Soviet republics as far apart from one another as possible, both politically and economically. Russia, by contrast, is interested in reinforcing the political and economic integration of the region. In this situation, visa-free travel across the borders that separate the former Soviet republics supports the historical unity of the post-Soviet space. In this sense, the Russian migration strategy matches its foreign policy strategy, and could become an additional positive factor in preserving political stability in the region.

The main goal of labour migration is to create a working model for attracting foreign workers, one that would be recognized by both Russian employers and migrants, and would proceed from the actual needs of the Russian labour market, while not encroaching on the rights of Russian citizens and guaranteeing the rights of migrant workers. At the same time, the policy of attracting migrant labour should be an additional, rather than the primary, instrument in rectifying the situation in the labour market. In this sense, the state needs to determine the actual labour shortage on the Russian market, assess the possibilities for redistributing existing national labour resources, and to use this information to calculate the number of migrants that need to be brought into the country. This is not a task for migration policy; rather, it needs to be achieved in conjunction with the implementation of the government's socioeconomic, employment, education and regional development policies.

Putting a cap on the number of foreign labour migrants is not the only way to protect the interests of the national workforce. The priority right of Russian workers to employment already guarantees them an advantage in the labour market. Implementing the principle of equal pay for equal labour for migrants and nationals that is enshrined in legislation is another practical protection mechanism in the national labour market: it prevents migrants from being perceived as a source of cheap labour.

On the other hand, the construction of artificial obstacles to foreign workers seeking employment in Russia, such as having to pass a test in the Russian language, history and law (which is, of course, appropriate in the case of foreigners wishing to obtain permanent residence or Russian citizenship) in order to obtain a work permit, forces migrants to seek illegal employment.

To supply the Russian market with properly qualified foreign labour, the problem of professional training for migrants needs to be addressed at the government level. This is a burning problem, as demonstrated by the high unmet demand for workers in the Russian labour market, despite significant inflows of foreign labour. Experience suggests that the level of professional and linguistic qualifications obtained by potential migrants in their countries of origin often fails to meet the expectations of Russian employers. It would be advisable to organize migrant workforce training in Russia at existing vocational schools and setting up new ones. This would ensure the necessary level of professional and linguistic qualifications. Training should be offered on the basis of student loans, on condition that the migrants will subsequently pay the loans back while working in Russia. When CIS citizens who have undergone professional training in Russia subsequently return to their respective countries, their professional experience and qualifications will help in the development of those countries, thus increasing the stability of economic development in the entire region.

The internal migration policy needs to become an important component of the government strategy. Economic measures to stimulate internal migration, such as social benefits, preferential loans to buy homes and tax benefits, including for small businesses, could partially offset the low mobility that is typical of the Russian population, channelling migration flows in a way that would be favourable for the state. The existing administrative mechanism of mandatory registration at a citizen's place of residence has largely lost its controlling function; in fact, it hampers the population's

geographic mobility and restricts employment opportunities. The system could be replaced with the individual taxpayer number, which is a more flexible economic instrument for controlling the movements of citizens.

The migration legislation needs to be codified. The incessant reforms of the Russian migration legislation have rendered migration laws unsystematic and internally contradictory. Back in 2004, the Federal Migration Service called for codifying the migration legislation within the framework of the Migration Code, but that initiative was not supported. It is high time the state revisited the idea of codifying existing legislative acts and byelaws related to migration, and created a single document. Apart from putting the legislative framework in order, this would also provide an opportunity for revising, harmonizing and streamlining some of its elements.

A single federal civil agency needs to be tasked with implementing the migration policy. This would allow for uniform, conceptually sound approaches to the migration policy to be formulated and implemented, ensuring that it is systemic in nature and internally coherent and that it is in harmony with other aspects of the state policy. This would also allow for the focus of the migration policy to be shifted from law enforcement to the socioeconomic aspects.

Compliance with the migration legislation (both by migrants and by authorized migration agencies) needs to be subject to strict and effective controls. This thesis does not contradict the objective of creating broad channels for immigration and the legitimate employment of temporary migrants. The migration legislation could offer fairly liberal conditions of entry, stay and employment to certain categories of migrants that are of particular interest to the country. However, these conditions must be strictly observed by migrants, migration officials and employers. In the case of Russia, corruption is a barrier to compliance with the migration legislation. Bribe-taking practices create a feeling of impunity for breaking the law, so the targets of reasonable laws remain unmet. Migration has turned into one of the most corrupt spheres in Russia: virtually all the instruments of migration policy, which were originally intended to help bring migration flows under control (registration, certificates and patents), can now be bought or forged.

Stricter control over the implementation of migration legislation appears to be an effective method of fighting illegal migration and the unregistered employment of migrants. These control measures should be aimed not so much at migrants (which is also important) as at those employers who breach the Russian labour code by hiring foreign citizens without the proper registration. In this light, the role of labour inspectorates – which need to become active participants in the management of international labour migration – grows.

The policy of migrant adaptation and integration needs to be radically revised. The migrant integration policy must be based on reliable information, not social stereotypes. The diversity of migration flows into Russia necessitates multiple variants of the migrant adaptation and integration policy. Developing multiple migrant integration models is one of the most topical aspects of Russia's migration policy.

Typically, the main focus of migrant integration policies is on the sociocultural aspect (studying the language, adapting to the cultural norms, etc.). Nevertheless, the most important, and sometimes even decisive, ingredient of integration is the economic component. The participation of migrants in the labour market inevitably entails measures to preclude discrimination and exploitation, and help them raise their qualifications and technical education level. In other words, migrants need to adapt to the host society, but the host society also needs to take certain reciprocal steps. It is in the economic plane that the fundamental principles of the correlation between the rights of labour migrants and those of national workers need to be implemented: while Russian citizens will enjoy priority employment opportunities, the principle of equal pay for equal labour must be strictly observed, as must the protection of migrants' social and labour rights. This will facilitate the social perception of migrants not as a source of cheap labour, but rather as an instrument of replenishing the shortages in the Russian labour market.

One important objective of the integration policy is to reduce the risks to national security (the ethnic segregation of society and the loss of uniform values and norms) that are related to mass migration. The host country needs to take steps to ensure migrants' rights and prevent discrimination, marginalization, illegal employment, exploitation and social exclusion, while at the same time promoting tolerance towards migrants, publicly recognizing their contribution to the country's economy, and explaining certain motives behind the migration policy to the population. Only then will a favourable environment in which migrants and society can interact effectively emerge.

Creating a reliable information base as the foundation for the development of a migration policy. The scope of demographic, socioeconomic, professional and qualification information about migrants collected and published by statistical agencies needs to be expanded, so that this data can be used as the informational basis for scientific studies aimed at identifying the role of migrants in the Russian economy, the level of their social integration, and the degree of their participation in population growth. The government needs to create demand for variegated scientific research on migration. Based on the results of such studies, the state should build a decision-making system for improving migration management in Russia and ensuring its conceptual unity.

Reinforcing the economic component of counteraction to illegal migration. Global migration experience demonstrates that, wherever the migration regime becomes stricter and the channels available for legal employment of labour migrants are made narrower, the illegal employment segment begins to grow. On the other hand, the most effective measures for fighting illegal migration and unregistered employment are well researched. They are primarily to do with economy. A large-scale offensive on the part of the government against the shadow economy, particularly in the construction, services and housing and utilities sectors, would help legalize the large masses of migrants illegally employed in those industries.

Simplifying the academic mobility and educational migration procedures. Measures for attracting university instructors and scientists could revive Russia's innovative economic development, stimulate advances in the hi-tech sector and enable Russian students to learn about advanced

methods of production management and organization. On the other hand, attracting foreign students from CIS countries to Russian universities can be viewed as an investment in the human capital of Russia's partner countries, which has both an economic (training personnel for developing the national economies of CIS countries) and a political dimension (so-called "soft power", which is capable of bolstering Russia's political positions in the region).

Launching a massive educational campaign in support of the migration policy. Shaping a satisfactory psychological climate in society should be an important element in migration management. The state should prevent negative stereotyping of migrants ("migrants raise crime levels in society", "migrants take Russians' jobs", etc.); these stereotypes have been repeatedly disproved by research. The migration policy must be understood and tolerated, if not supported, by the population.

Developing a public-private partnership in migration management. Specifically, the task of integrating migrants could be delegated to local administrations and civil society institutions. Business could be involved in developing the migration infrastructure, assessing the market's need for migrant workers, and providing professional training for migrants. The expert community, international organizations and non-governmental foundations could participate in scientific research that would inform administrative decisions.

Developing international cooperation to optimize migration processes. The CIS countries, which are both the primary migration donors for Russia and its geopolitical partners when it comes to the development of regional integration, need to remain Russia's priority partners in migration cooperation. Primary attention should be paid to further developing the common EAEU labour market and creating relevant institutions that would coordinate labour migration within the EAEU. Development of cooperation within the BRICS association also holds a potential. The declarative nature of such cooperation may very well transition into practical application given that the drastically different demographic situations in the BRICS countries could serve as a driver for forming migration flows between member states.

Ensuring coordination of Russia's economic and geopolitical interests in migration-related contacts with CIS countries. The CIS countries are Russia's primary migration donors, and simultaneously its main geopolitical allies and partners in regional integration. In this connection, it appears that Russia's migration-related contacts with former Soviet republics should be of a special nature, as is the case with their economic and political contacts.

In the global context, countries which attract migrants have no qualms about enticing foreign qualified specialists and students with various preferences. This process is depleting the development potential of immigrants' native countries. Russia's position with regard to the former Soviet countries cannot follow this model. The attraction of CIS labour migrants and students to Russia should not bleed the former Soviet republic's economies of resources, preserve their backwardness, and widen the gap in the socioeconomic development levels of the region's countries. A more far-sight-

ed approach aimed at strengthening regional integration is needed. A balance of interests could be ensured by attracting CIS labour migrants needed by Russia economy while simultaneously investing in the development of the human (opportunities for professional education and industrial experience in Russia) and economic potential (Russian investment in the economies) of these partner states.

Thus, Russia's geopolitical interests are effectively narrowing the decision-making channel with regard to migration, with a priority focus on catering for the countries' mutual interests. These interests imply the existence of multiple channels for legal labour migration in the region for different categories of migrants, and the joint efforts of countries in the region to protect migrants' rights and fight unregistered employment.



Russia's new migration strategy is expected to impart internal logic into the state migration policy, turn it into an effective part of the national development strategy, increase Russia's attractiveness as a migration destination, ensure an influx of migrants into the country, help solve the problems of labour shortages without encroaching on the rights of Russian citizens, reduce the scale of illegal migration and employment and lower the levels of corruption, xenophobia and intolerance in Russian society. In other words, it would turn migration from a **problem** into an effective development **resource** for Russia.

The migration strategy presupposes the development of state programmes that would support its implementation. Such programmes would help improve the informational and analytical basis of the migration policy¹, develop of the official international labour migration infrastructure², introduce stricter control over the compliance with migration laws and step up the fight against corruption³, organize professional training for migrants⁴, develop specialist education programmes for implementing the migration policy, etc⁵.

¹ The programme for improving the informational and analytical basis of the migration policy must be aimed at improving the system for collecting information about migrants and detailing migration statistics using different information sources: censuses, current records, sampling surveys, etc., as well as at the formation of state demand for scientific research on migration.

² The programme to develop an official international labour migration infrastructure must be aimed at creating a complex of governmental and non-governmental consultancy and information services for Russian employers who want to attract foreign labour, and for foreign citizens arriving in Russia to seek employment.

³ The programme to strengthen control over compliance with migration laws and fight corruption must be focused on creating effective monitoring mechanisms for the implementation of laws and other legislative acts on migration, monitoring the correlation between their implementation and the strategic targets of the migration policy, and uncovering corruption schemes and practices in migration management.

⁴ The programme of professional training for migrants must be oriented towards forming a system of vocational training for migrants both in Russia and in their home countries, taking into account the demand for qualifications on the Russian labour market, as well as strengthening interstate interaction in terms of providing career guidance to migrants in the region.

⁵ The programme to train personnel for the implementation of the migration policy must be aimed at creating a network of specialized training programmes at Russian universities to train/retrain specialists in the management of migration processes.

2.

**ARGUMENTS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE OPTIMIZED
MIGRATION STRATEGY

1.

A strategic vision of the positive role that migration plays in Russia's demographic and economic development must be formed at the state level.

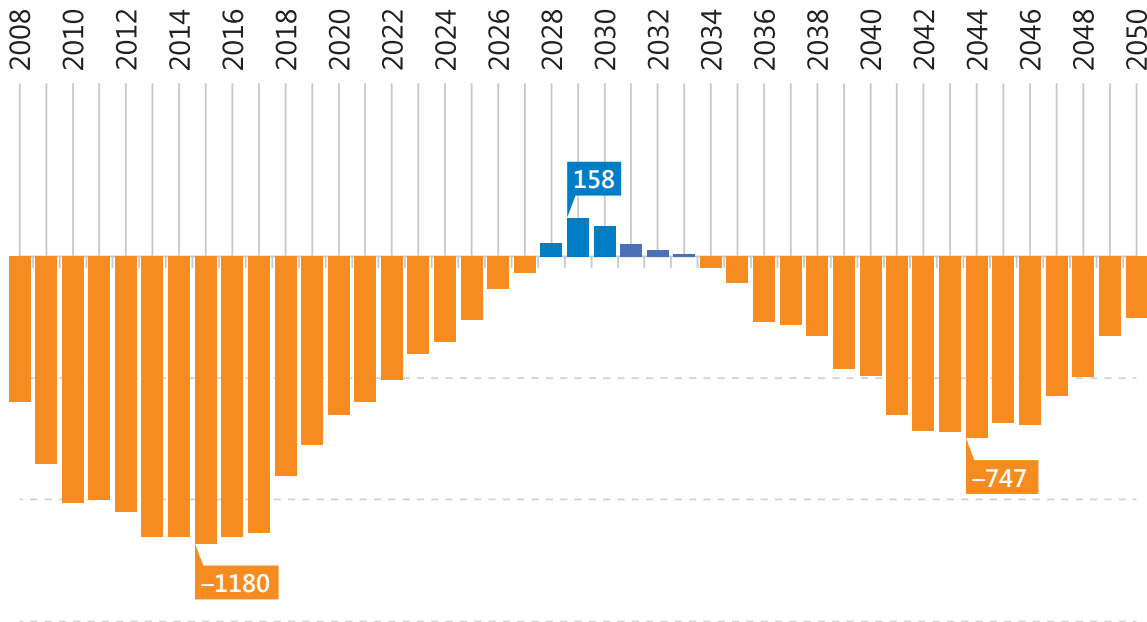
Argument

To assess the positive potential of migration for Russia's further development, we need to understand the profound nature of the demographic transformation that the country is currently experiencing. Russia is living through a unique period in its history: owing to the current age structure of the population, labour resources are rapidly depleting and aging. This, coupled with the growing demographic burden on the working population, is undermining progressive economic development. In this situation, the migration resource is becoming more important than ever before.

All the variants of the demographic forecast through to 2030 calculated by the Federal Statistics Service of the Russian Federation (Rosstat) proceed from the premise that between 250,000 and 500,000 immigrants will be entering Russia annually to settle down permanently. Without this influx of migrants, the country's population will continue to decrease steadily, affecting its geopolitical status and its position in the hierarchy of the world's largest powers.

The prospects for the size of the working-age population are particularly unfavourable. Due to the peculiarities of the age structure of the Russian population, the country has lost over 10 million working-age people in the past decade, and will lose 10 million more by 2050 as the result of the "demographic wave." Diagram 1, which is based on a medium-term forecast by Rosstat, indicates that after the extremely unfavourable 2010s, during which the working-age population has been decreasing at an average of 1 million people per year, there will be a period of "relative prosperity", when the attrition rate will slow down and a modest increase in the size of the working-age population will be observed for around five or six years. However, this period will inevitably be followed by a significant drop-off in the working-age population once again.

Diagram 1. Changes to the Size of the Russian Working-Age Population (16 to 59 Years Old for Men, 16 to 54 for women) in 2008–2050, thousands



Source: Rosstat. Demographic Yearbook of Russia, 2015

There are no examples in history of a country’s economic development speeding up against the background of dwindling labour resources. Attracting additional workforce from abroad could give Russian citizens an opportunity to participate in the most advanced economic sectors, thus implementing the “modernization push” desired by the country’s leaders.

Despite the objective unfavourable trends in demographic development and the development of the Russian labour market, the government’s attitudes towards using migrants as an instrument to replenish the permanent population and bring new workers to the market remain controversial. A struggle is taking place between different groups, some of which are lobbying for a liberal model of attracting migrants, whereas others are advocating stricter migration policies. This situation leads to incoherent administrative decisions, disorients Russian society as to the objectives of the migration policy and reduces Russia’s attractiveness to migrants

It is important to understand that even the best-case scenario of Russia’s demographic policy – a growth in the country’s birth rate, coupled with a decrease in the mortality rate and the an increased average life expectancy – would not diminish the role of the migration potential. Paradoxically, the role of migrants will actually grow under this scenario. While extremely important to Russia in the long run, this demographic scenario will result in medium-term growth in the number of children and senior citizens and will increase the demographic burden, resulting in an inevitable imbalance in the labour market and an even more urgent need for growing numbers of labour migrants⁶.

⁶ See E. Andreev, A. Vishnevsky. Russia’s Demographic Prospects. Demoscope, Nos. 601–602, June 2014: <http://demoscope.ru/weekly/2014/0601/tema05.php>

Only a clear understanding and recognition at the official level of the positive role that migration can play in Russia's further development can send a convincing message to society that migrants are an absolutely necessary part of Russian life: they fill vacancies that are not attractive to local workers; they make it possible for the state to pay pensions; their presence gives Russian people access to education, etc. Such a message, supported by relevant migration-related legislation that would ensure the balance of interests between Russian citizens and migrants, would create an environment of social support for the state migration policy, and for the preservation of peace in society.

In addition to recognizing the positive potential of migration, there must be a clear understanding of the challenges – both objective challenges, caused by the influx of a great number of people with different ethnic identities, cultures and religions, and subjective challenges, caused by the ill-conceived and strategically ineffective management of migration processes.

It should be noted that implementing a migration policy in order to achieve specific objectives would require certain government expenses (administrative and technical costs; remuneration of administrative personnel; training and retraining of immigration officials; the costs associated with stimulating specific internal and transnational migration flows; money to cover travel and accommodation expenses; subsidies and social benefits; the costs associated with replenishing labour shortages in Russia; professional training and retraining programmes, etc.). The government will have to allocate money for this, because numerous studies indicate that the benefits the host country gets from welcoming migrants significantly exceed its expenses⁷.

Recommendations on implementation

1. 1. The demographic challenge must be perceived in the context of Russia's national security. Instead of creating barriers to migrants, which is the approach currently in place, the attractiveness of the country as a destination for migrants needs to be improved through the creation of incentives for global and regional migrants to both settle down permanently and come to the country for temporary employment. A manifesto, or message, on the role of migration in Russia, one that would be signed by the government or president, needs to be drafted and published *as soon as possible*. The role of media in clarifying the government's strategic position on migration is also significant.
2. Convincing studies on the prospects for Russia's demographic development and the role of migration in the country's socioeconomic development (including studies that have already been carried out and studies to be conducted *in the next few years*) need to be submitted to senior

⁷ Research conducted in mid-2016 across the EU countries in relation to the acute migration crisis in Europe, and also data provided by the World Bank, indicate that every euro invested into migrants (to cover resettlement expenses, integration and language learning programmes, professional training and retraining, and medical expenses) will bring the state 2 euros in profit in five years' time (Legrain, Philippe, *Refugees' Work: A Humanitarian Investment That Yields Economic Dividends*. The Tent Foundation. May 2016: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55462dd8e4b0a65de4f3a087/t/573cb9e8ab48de57372771e6/1463597545986/Tent-Open-Refugees+Work_VFINAL-singlepages.pdf). This economic pragmatism largely explains the relatively refugee-friendly policies of many EU countries.

officials responsible for decision-making with regard to migration (annual analytical reports, professional development programmes, parliamentary hearings and roundtable discussions). This activity could be undertaken by a government commission on migration policy, the Presidential Council for Interethnic Relations, the Public Chamber and the expert community.

3. The General Administration for Migration Issues of the Ministry of the Interior of the Russian Federation needs to introduce, *as soon as possible*, professional development programmes for federal and regional officials to acquaint them with a scientifically sound perception of the role of migration in Russia's economic and demographic development, familiarize them with foreign examples of migration policies, and help them understand the necessity of a systemic approach to the management of migration processes⁸.
4. *By 2025*, the government needs to develop a professional training programme in support of the migration policy. The programme needs to proceed from the necessity to create a class of highly professional migration management professionals and set up a network of specialized training programmes at Russian universities to train and retrain migration management specialists.

⁸ One possible model on which to base a training programme on migration could be the educational materials compiled by the Russian International Affairs Council as part of the project "International Migration Processes: Trends, Challenges and Outlook" entitled "Migration in Russia: The Economic Aspects": http://russiancouncil.ru/inner/?id_4=6588#top-content

2.

The strategic goals of Russia's migration policy must be seen behind all the regulatory acts passed and administrative decisions taken in this area.

Argument

Russia's migration policy faces concrete strategic goals stemming from the specific features of its current demographic, economic, and political development. These are: **1)** replacing Russia's natural population decline by bringing in migrants from abroad and stabilizing the size of the permanent population; **2)** given the decline in national labour resources, meeting the demand of Russia's labour market in additional workforce by attracting temporary international migrant workers; and **3)** changing the current vectors of internal migration that increase the uneven population density in Russia, and ensuring population increase in strategically important regions, primarily in the Russian Far East. These goals, which effectively mean stimulating migration flows, should be tied to the no less crucial goal of ensuring the security of Russia and its citizens by surmounting the risks involved in large numbers of migrants entering the country. This goal is achieved by effectively monitoring compliance with migration legislation, creating effective mechanisms for controlling migration into Russia and minimizing the number of illegal migrants entering the country. At the same time, overcoming migration risks should not take the place of or contradict the realization of the positive potential of international and internal migration that Russia needs.

These goals were reflected in the Concept of the State Migration Policy of the Russian Federation through to 2025 approved in 2012. On the whole, however, the Concept signed by the President as a goal-setting document failed to enshrine a clear strategic policy of the state on migration. Acknowledging the role of migration flows in stabilizing and increasing Russia's permanent population and meeting the economy's demand for labour, the Concept pushes national security to the forefront, which is effectively understood as curbing the influx of migrants. As a result, in contradiction to the goals and principles declared in the document, legislative acts adopted "to develop the Concept" clearly lead to tightening migration rules, which ultimately results in Russia losing its appeal for potential immigrants, falling numbers of legal migrant

workers and in increased illegal migration. Experts admit that, “in essence, all the practical work in the area of migration goes against the vector set in the Concept of the State Migration Policy”⁹.

In the absence of a strategic vision on the part of the state of the role that the migration resource plays in Russia’s demographic and economic development, migration legislation often proclaims certain tasks while actually being geared toward others entirely. Having passed through the stream of intra-agency statutes, orders and documents, a piece of legislation becomes an instrument that opposes the objective goals faing migration policy. Overcoming such practice should become part of *both the short- and long-term prospects* of the migration strategy.

Recommendations on implementation

1. *By 2025*, an expert committee that works as a permanent body and not as a public service should be established to assess legislative initiatives in migration management and the results of their implementation. Such a committee, which would be made up of a relatively narrow circle of migration professionals (anthropologists, economists, lawyers, demographers), could carry out or commission studies of the migration situation, analyse emerging migration trends and challenges, and assess the adequacy of decisions on migration with regard to the overall socioeconomic strategy of Russia’s development. Such practices have been adopted in many countries, where expert committees outside the purview of governmental migration control agencies are charged with expert assessment and monitoring the measures undertaken in migration policy.
2. *In the immediate future*, an extensive discussion of the legislation on granting Russian citizenship and its enforcement should be held in order to uncover contradictions and “sticking points”; such a discussion should involve the academic community and civil society institutions. Creating simplified procedures for granting citizenship should not contradict the policies for migrant adjustment and integration¹⁰. Clear distinctions between naturalization procedures for various immigrant categories; flexibility in issuing residence permits; well-defined limits for applying the selectivity principle that foregrounds the economic and demographic “rationality” of immigrants: these issues must be the subject of a public discussion.
3. *In the immediate future*, the unjustified difficulties in obtaining citizenship by “native Russian speakers” should be removed (the requirement that the applicant must receive and present a document proving that his or her country of origin has agreed to revoke previous citizenship, which is, for instance, virtually impossible for citizens of Ukraine). Renouncing one’s previous

9 “The Concept of the State Migration Policy through to 2025: Declarations vs. Reality.” Report by the Civil Initiative Committee. Moscow, 2015

10 In academic research, the process of naturalization and the preparations for making an application to become a naturalized citizen, as well as the time between arrival in a country and the granting of citizenship are closely linked with the idea of integration. The residence requirement of several years that is in place in most countries implies that migrants will have obtained the requisite knowledge, skills and qualifications, will have become used to life in the host society, and will have been integrated by the time citizenship is granted. (Chudinovskikh O. S. State Regulation on Obtaining Citizenship of the Russian Federation: Policy and Trends. Moscow, Higher School for Economics Press, 2014: https://www.hse.ru/data/misc/library/WP8_2014_04.pdf)

citizenship with a postal stamp or an embassy seal, which is recognized for other categories of migrants that have grounds to use the simplified procedure for applying for Russian citizenship, can be extended to include “native Russian speakers.” Procedures for granting Russian citizenship to minors with a parent who is a Russian citizen should be simplified as well.

4. The State Programme to Assist the Voluntary Resettlement of Compatriots Living Abroad to the Russian Federation should be improved and developed. *In the immediate future*, the Programme should be given repatriation status (similar to the analogous programmes in Germany and Israel), thereby expanding the number of potential participants and confirming the idea of “gathering the Russian nation.” People applying for this status under the Programme should not be selected and discriminated against based on their age, education, profession and skills, as this would be in direct contradiction with the idea of state promoting the repatriation of compatriots. Administrative barriers preventing participants in the Programme and their family members from gaining a legal status, finding employment and settling in the Russian Federation should be minimized. Excessive barriers have a negative “demonstration effect” for potential immigrants and directly contradict the strategic goal of stimulating the inflow of migrants to mitigate the demographic crisis in Russia. For instance, the requirement for participants in the State Programme to be registered at their place of residence is impossible to comply with for those participants who do not have relatives in Russia. A reasonable alternative could be to introduce the requirement to register as a migrant.
5. *In the short term*, the list of categories of foreign citizens who need to take a test in the Russian language and history and the basics of Russian legislation should be adjusted. This is a requirement that is justified when applying for a residence permit or Russian citizenship, but proves to be a pointless hurdle for temporary migrant labourers applying for work permits in Russia. The Russian language requirements for migrants are very low, and migrants can hardly use them to bolster their position on the labour market, improve their professional skills, or defend their rights. Introduced “to create prerequisites for migrant adjustment and integration”, the test has only resulted in increasing the costs of finding legal employment and has thus prompted migrants to shift into illegal employment. Migrant labourers work in various areas of the Russian economy and their contacts with the local population vary in scale. Logically, it is not so much the state as it is the employer that should determine whether a temporary migrant’s command of the local language is adequate to the work the migrant performs.

3.

It is important to retain visa-free travel as a factor in the cohesion of the post-soviet space.

Argument

The CIS is a point of intersection where the competing interests of many global and regional powers meet. Many actors on the international stage aim for maximum political and economic divisions between the former Soviet republics. Russia, on the contrary, is interested in boosting economic and geopolitical integration in the region. In such circumstances, visa-free travel between former Soviet republics could be viewed as a factor that supports the historical unity of the post-Soviet space and provides conditions for the region's economic and political integration. What is more, retaining visa-free travel in the CIS is an important factor in shaping intra-regional migrations. This is important both for the development of Russia, which obtains additional labour resources on the labour market of the former Soviet republics, and for the countries that serve as Russia's principal migration partners: their interest in finding jobs on the regional labour market for a share of their employable population and in obtaining significant money in remittances from migrants working in other CIS countries, primarily in Russia and in Kazakhstan, is thereby realized.

Recommendations on implementation

1. Russia's migration strategy *through 2025* should be in alignment with its foreign policy strategy as it is reflected in the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation approved by the President of the Russian Federation on November 30, 2016, which directly states that developing bilateral and multilateral cooperation with CIS member states and further strengthening integration structures operating in the CIS space are priorities of Russia's foreign policy. In such circumstances, visa-free travel between the region's countries is an important condition for bolstering regional cooperation.
2. Visa-free travel does not exclude (and given the current situation, it implies) enhanced border and customs control, installing state-of-the-art technical equipment for checking legality of border crossing and preventing possible violations. *For the period up to 2035*, technical requirements for paperwork that grants the right to cross borders, especially for foreign passports, and for fingerprinting procedures should be constantly improved.

4.

The principal goal in international labour migration is to create a working model (a model that is not ignored by employers and migrants) to attract foreign labour. Such a model should be based on the real demands of the Russian labour market, should not infringe upon the rights of Russian employees and should guarantee the rights of migrant workers.

Argument

Contrary to popular belief, attracting foreign labour may not be the only solution to the labour shortage problem in Russia. A well-thought-through government policy in education and employment may significantly improve the situation by enhancing the system of professional education (both vocational and higher education), through a more rational distribution of existing labour resources, implementing professional retraining programmes, involving the economically inactive population, re-introducing a system of work incentives, etc. **The policy for attracting migrant workers should be an additional, not a principal, instrument in remedying the labour market situation.** Once the actual number of positions that cannot be filled by Russians is determined, the state may allow employers to hire foreign workforce.

Channels for finding foreign workforce should be clear and convenient both for Russian employers and for migrant workers. In the late 1990s, when CIS citizens flocked to Russia en masse in search of employment, the procedures for obtaining the appropriate work permits for foreign citizens were made unduly complicated and bureaucratically convoluted. This virtually pushed migrants and employers hiring migrants beyond the legal boundaries. Given the state's weak control over employment, the unregistered hiring of migrants became a norm for Russian businesses; it fed the already large-scale shadow sector of the Russian economy and made illegal labour migration a mass phenomenon. Subsequently, changes to the Russian legislation on labour migration and the introduction of stiff fines for employers who breach migration and labour laws failed to turn the situation around, especially since the rules for employing foreign workforce were constantly changing.

Given the traditional model of hiring foreign workers that emerged in Russia, migrants are not guaranteed social employment standards: their labour and social rights are violated, and discrimination and exploitation are a publicly recognized norm in labour relations. That results in violations of fair competition on the labour market, and Russian workers lose out. The situation needs to be remedied.

The undeveloped official migration infrastructure is a “sticking point” of the current model of attracting foreign workers; consequently, labour migration processes remain largely spontaneous, while the role of effective intermediaries has been assumed by shadow groups, mostly of certain ethnic origins, that take migration flows beyond the legal boundaries.

The procedure for attracting highly skilled migrants by offering them special preferences for employment and residence in Russia is a promising instrument for providing the Russian economy with highly skilled foreign workers, especially given Russia’s orientation toward innovative development. However, practice shows that this procedure calls for the elimination of the discrepancies between migration regulations that apply to the entry, stay and employment of highly skilled professionals in Russia on the one hand and the provisions of administrative, financial and labour legislation on the other.

Recommendations on implementation

- 1.** Before the demand for foreign labour on the Russian market is determined, the real labour shortage should be worked out and the possibility of redistributing national labour resources investigated. Such a task cannot be set to the migration agency, since it does not have adequate methodologies and personnel. This task should be set primarily to the Federal Service for Labour and Employment of the Russian Federation. The task testifies to the need of inter-agency cooperation in the practical implementation of the migration policy. The task should be resolved while simultaneously implementing the government’s socioeconomic, employment, education and regional development policies. The medium-term prognosis for economic development, investments and, accordingly, the regional labour market based on analyses of all available information resources (both administrative and research) at the federal and regional levels could serve as good instrument for a more precise assessment of the current and prospective shortage on the labour market distributed by professional groups and regions. This work should be started *immediately and intensified through to 2035*.
- 2.** Installing effective mechanisms for protecting the national labour market should become an important aspect in attracting foreign workers. The migration policy *through to 2025* should focus precisely on developing such mechanisms. The quota system used in many countries proved to be ineffective in Russia in the face of widespread corruption, as quotas were bought and sold. The current mechanism for regulating the prices of patents also appears to lack sufficient flexibility. The interests of the national workforce could be protected by imposing quantitative limitations on the number of foreign labourers in the country. Priority hiring for Russian workers already guarantees that they have an advantage on the labour market. The legal and properly applied

principle of equal pay for migrant and Russian workers is another mechanism for protecting national labour market, since it prevents employers from viewing migrants as cheap labour. Such an approach allows us to tackle the problem of wage-dumping in sectors that have high numbers of migrant workers, as well as the problem of migrant exploitation and human trafficking. The key here is to monitor the activities of employers hiring foreign workers.

3. *By 2025*, the mechanism for attracting foreign highly skilled professionals (HSP) should be worked out. This will require: **1)** a more precise definition of the criteria used to grant HSP status (currently, the only criterion is a minimum annual salary), including educational and professional qualifications; **2)** regulations to be developed with regard to the duration of stay and employment for foreign HSP in Russia (especially for those who work in Russia for less than one year); **3)** the possibility of being employed as an HSP in Russia both under dual-employment and freelance contracts (not only under labour and civil labour contracts, as is the case currently) to be extended.
4. With regard to employing migrant workers from countries whose citizens must obtain a visa in order to enter Russia, *by 2025*, the current quota system for bringing in foreign workers, according to which quotas are determined based on the number of applications received from employers (which has already proven ineffective given widespread corruption), should be replaced with a mechanism for determining whether it is indeed impossible to hire a Russian worker for a specific vacancy (labour market test).
5. *By 2025*, a state programme for the creation of the official international labour migration infrastructure should be developed. The goal of this infrastructure should be to create a complex of governmental and non-governmental consulting and information services intended, on the one hand, for Russian employers hiring foreign workers and for foreign nationals arriving in Russia for the purposes of employment on the other. This will allow shadow intermediaries to be removed from the system of labour migration management.
6. *In the immediate future*, the mandatory test in the Russian language, history and legislation should be abolished as a condition for obtaining a work permit for temporary migrant workers. The test is essentially an artificial restriction blocking the access of foreign workers to the Russian labour market, prompting migrant workers to move into shadow employment. The global experience of migration management demonstrates that many countries hosting migrants administer local/national language tests only for persons applying for a residence permit or citizenship.
7. Given the variegated situation on the labour market in Russia's regions, it is necessary to develop the regional aspects of migration policies. The first strategically important decision on migration in Russia was the resolution to transfer the powers to issue patents to migrants and regulate the influx of migrants into the country by setting patents costs and their annual adjustments to the regional level. Regions may strike a balance of labour resources and independently determine the shortage of workers and the demand for foreign labour.

5.

Bringing foreign workers with the necessary skills into the Russian labour market requires a state-level approach to solving the issue of the professional training of migrant workers.

Argument

Despite the fact that there are 3–4 million foreign workers on the Russian labour market, there is a permanently unmet high demand for labour: the number of vacancies registered with state employment services steadily remains between 1.3 and 1.4 million. This means that the required professional competencies of foreign workers do not meet the demands of the Russian labour market. This stems from the discrepancy between the professional and linguistic training received by migrants in their home countries and the requirements of Russian employers, as well as from migrants' readiness to be employed outside of their profession, wherever there are vacancies. Research shows that nearly half of professionally trained foreign workers are employed in positions outside their specialization.

To ensure that the labour migration potential does indeed become a resource for replenishing the shortage of workers on the Russian labour market, it is necessary, on the one hand, to tie migration policy tighter to the overall situation on the Russian labour market and, on the other hand, to create possibilities for migrants to receive professional education that is in line with the demands of the Russian labour market.

Currently, the Russian labour market is mostly geared toward attracting low-skilled foreign workers, which artificially bolsters the competitive advantage of Russian business. However, in the long run, as the Russian economy moves along the path of modernization, and when labour productivity increases, then (in reality, and not in declarations only) the need to hire highly skilled and qualified professionals will increase. Then a working system of professional training for migrants in current professions will be in particularly high demand.

It is also important to take the long-term foreign political advantages into account: in the future, CIS citizens who have received a professional education in Russia will take the professional experience and skills they have gained in Russia back with them to their

home countries and thus contribute to the development of those countries and thereby increase the stability of economic development in the entire region.

Recommendations on implementation

- 1.** Instruments for structuring the flow of migrant workers into Russia in accordance with the structure of demand for particular professions and skills should be developed *by 2025* and introduced into practical use *by 2035*.
- 2.** By 2025, a channel for the organized hiring of foreign workers should be set up so that Russian employers and foreign workers may agree on the required and existing skills prior to the workers' arrival in Russia.
- 3.** By 2025, a system for training migrant employees in Russia should be set up at the existing vocational educational institutions, and new educational institutions should be established. Creating an educational market segment for training foreign workers would ensure the necessary level of professional and language training. Education should be paid for with student loans to be paid back from future earnings in Russia.
- 4.** Central Asian countries will remain the main migration donors *until 2035*. Their demographic potential will suffice until then to ensure the flow of migrant workers into Russia. The bulk of efforts to provide professional training to migrants should be geared toward those countries. *By 2025*, it would be wise to set up language and professional training centres for potential migrants in their home countries and to arrange for their further professional training in Russian educational institutions; these activities should be based on bilateral intergovernmental agreements with Central Asian countries.
- 5.** A state programme of professional training for migrants should be developed *by 2025*. The programme should be geared towards shaping a system of vocational education for migrants both in Russia and in their home countries and toward bolstering governmental cooperation in career counselling for migrants in the region. Such a system should take into account the demand for particular skills on the Russian market.

6.

Internal migration policy should be an important component of the government's strategy.

Argument

The trends that have appeared spontaneously in Russia in recent decades (low internal mobility and stable flow of people from Russia's eastern and north-eastern regions into Siberia and European Russia) proved extremely unfavourable for the prospects of Russia's economic, demographic and political development, and in regard to the Russian Far East, they have put Russia's national security and territorial integrity at risk¹¹.

Given Russia's huge territory and uneven population density, internal migration policy can and should be an important component of the government's strategy, especially when major economic projects are being carried out. Currently, such a policy is particularly relevant due to the demographic crisis in Russia and the existing unfavourable trends in spontaneous internal migration (the outflow of the population from the eastern regions, and the concentration of the population in the metropolitan area of the capital). The state's interest lies in stimulating internal labour and internal migration, which would help to partially overcome the low population mobility that is typical of Russia, make the Russian labour market more flexible geographically, and shape the migration vectors that are required by the state in accordance with Russia's regional and spatial development strategy.

Recommendations on implementation

1. Stimulating internal migration and shaping the mobility vectors required by the state may be achieved through coordinated measures in the migration, regional development, employment, housing and taxation policies. Priority should be given to economic measures that stimulate internal migration, such as social benefits,

¹¹ Zayonchkovskaya Z. A., Nozdrina N. A. Migration Experience of the Population of Russia's Regional Centres (Based on a Survey Conducted in 10 Cities) // Problemy prognozirovaniia (Forecasting Problems), 2008, No. 4, pp. 98–112. Also available at: <http://www.demoscope.ru/weekly/2009/0389/analit03.php>; Denisenko M.B., Karachurina L. B., Mkrtchian N. V. Are Russia's Unemployed Prepared to Move to Find Jobs? // Demoscope Weekly, Nos. 445–446, November 29 – December 12, 2010: <http://demoscope.ru/weekly/2010/0445/tema07.php>

reduced-rate mortgages and tax reliefs, including tax reliefs for small businesses. A system of such stimulating measures should be developed *by 2025*.

2. In order to overcome the spontaneous nature of internal migration in Russia, the official migration infrastructure for labour migration (governmental and non-governmental consulting and information services for migrants offering information on employment opportunities in Russian regions and providing specific aid in looking for jobs, offering information on housing rentals, obtaining a professional education etc.) should, *by 2025*, be oriented towards offering their services to internal migrants as well.
3. The current administrative requirement to be registered at one's place of residence has largely lost its control function; it only slows down territorial mobility and narrows employment opportunities. It would be wise, *by 2025*, to replace this requirement with a more flexible economic instrument of registration – the Individual Taxpayer Identification Number, which would remove excessive administrative barriers blocking migration mobility.
4. *By 2025*, coordination should be ensured between the instruments for implementing Russia's migration strategy, the Framework State Policy for the Regional Development of the Russian Federation through to 2025, and the Federal Programme for Supporting Migration to the Russian Far East in place since 2014. Implementation of that Federal Programme is slowed down by a series of administrative restrictions, particularly in obtaining mortgages. Nevertheless, the programme could be considered a pilot project in shaping the eastern vector of internal migration in Russia. Surveys carried out in 2008–2009 of residents of European Russia who have trouble finding employment showed that **one in five people** (!) are willing to consider moving to Siberia or the Russian Far East depending on what kind of support is provided by the state¹². The forms such state support assumes should naturally fit the reality of market economy, but they should constitute a conscious step of the state towards people willing to take part in solving a strategic state task

¹²Denisenko M. B., Karachurina L.B., Mkrtchian N. V. Are Unemployed People in Russia Prepared to Move to Find Jobs? // Demoscope Weekly, Nos. 445–446, November 29 – December 12, 2010: <http://demoscope.ru/weekly/2010/0445/tema07.php>

7.

The need to codify migration legislation¹³.

Argument

Migration legislation in Russia is in a constant state of flux, and it mostly happens within the framework of the existing laws and other legal acts that are often inadequate to the newly posited goals. For instance, Federal Law No. 115-FZ “On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the Russian Federation” dated July 25, 2002 remains the framework regulatory act that forms the core of migration legislation. This law serves as the framework for the entire corpus of migration legislation. Over time, it has been amended with over 60 federal laws, and some of these amendments have themselves been amended several times, which increases the overall number of amendments and makes the law cumbersome in application. Constantly “inflating” the contents of the Federal Law largely leads to the destruction of its systemic attributes and systemic approaches to developing migration legislation as a whole.

Today, it is obvious to migrants, officials at migration agencies, employers, and even the heads of migration agencies that the “accumulated” Russian migration legislation is non-systemic and internally contradictory; it needs greater precision and logic. Hence the 2004 initiative of the Federal Migration Service, which proposes the development of a Migration Code as a single document that covers the entire complex of legal norms regulating migration. In 2004, the initiative was not taken any further, probably because there were too many conflicting interests and stances at play with regard to regulating migration in Russia. Those interests and stances were reflected in previously migration laws, and they proved an obstacle in the path to drafting a document founded on a single conceptual basis.

Now it is the time to return to the idea of codifying the entire corpus of migration legislation and the subordinate legal acts and draft a single act that would both streamline the regulatory framework and serve as grounds to radically rework some of its elements,

¹³ Codification is broadly understood as activity intended to systematize and radically rework existing legislation by developing and passing a new framework regulatory legal act (Theory of Law and State. Student’s Book. Moscow: Pravo i zakon, 2001, pp. 213–229). Today, Russian law has 20 codes: the Tax Code, the Family Code, the Civil Code, the Penal Code, the Housing Code, etc.

ensuring their coordination and conciseness. Developing and approving a Strategy of Russia's Migration Development at the state level could become a conceptual foundation for a single regulatory legal document on migration management. In other words, a Migration Code could contribute to resolving those problems that are detrimental to the current state of migration management and law enforcement in the area and serve as a foundation for implementing the strategic vision of the role of migration in Russia.

Recommendations on implementation

1. Developing a migration code *by 2035* could serve as grounds for conducting broad legal, sociological, economic and psychological research into the migration situation and migration policy in Russia in order to determine the areas for improving the system of migration management that accord with contemporary realities.
2. Drafting a Migration Code would require professionals with sufficient knowledge and skills in various areas to work together, as well as the cooperation of the state, civil society, business community, and international organizations, all of which would help ensure transparency of the law-making process.

8.

It is mandatory that the issues in implementing migration policy be realized via a single federal agency.

Argument

For Russia, migration is an important socioeconomic and demographic process that needs to be managed in close connection with the state's socioeconomic, employment and demographic policies. At the same time, migration carries challenges and risks linked to national security and law enforcement. Essentially, searching for a balance between socioeconomic goals and ensuring national security within the state's migration policy is a task facing all countries that admit large numbers of migrants. In Russia, this issue became particularly relevant when the Federal Migration Service of Russia was dissolved in April 2016 and the functions of managing migration issues were transferred to the Ministry of the Interior of the Russian Federation, where the General Administration for Migration Issues was established. Law enforcement became the sole focal point of migration management.

Management of migration processes comes within the purview of an entire series of Russian agencies: the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Federal Service for Labour and Employment and the Border Service of the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation. But since these bodies perform a large volume of state functions, migration issues hold a relatively small place in their activities. Given the role that migration, especially international migration, has acquired for the development of Russia, it would be wise to concentrate issues of developing and implementing migration policy in its "civil dimension" (that is, attracting migrants for permanent residence, granting citizenship, attracting temporary migrant workers to the Russian labour market, ensuring that they are properly qualified, and managing the processes of internal migration, migrant adjustment and integration) within the purview of a single civil federal institution. Issues pertaining to law enforcement and ensuring national security (granting visas, crossing borders, uncovering crimes committed by foreign nationals, etc.) should remain within the responsibilities of the agencies that perform the appropriate functions (the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Border Service).

In the history of institutionalizing Russia's migration policy, there was a period when migration management was transferred to the Ministry of the Interior. This happened in 2002, and was largely due to the fact that the official attitude of the authorities to migration was clearly negative. The reason for the decision was, among other things, the "9/11 effect" and the increased illegal migration into Russia, which was declared a threat to national security. The results of the reform are well-known: the work of the new Federal Migration Service became much less transparent; the skills of the employees dropped sharply; most civil servants quit their positions, meaning that the service became "shut off" from contacts with human rights organizations and the academic community; and corruption in migration area skyrocketed. Later, several high-ranking Russian officials admitted that transferring migration issues to the Ministry of the Interior had been a mistake¹⁴.

Transferring the Federal Migration Service to the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Interior in 2002 was a short-sighted decision, not because ministries of the interior are inherently unfit to implement migration policies, but because the Russian police is a security agency, and consequently, migration policy was transformed from a management task into a national security task¹⁵. Such migration policy areas as the adjustment and integration of migrants to their new society turned out to be entirely outside the scope of the migration service, since the agency had neither the experience nor the necessary competencies to handle such tasks.

The 2002 institutionalizing mistake resulted in migration being tightly binding to the police – and therefore to crime – in public consciousness. The agency itself and now society, too, view migration as a phenomenon that problematizes Russia's development, and this is fundamentally wrong. For Russia, migration is not so much a problem as it is a resource, and it must be used skilfully or else it may put a question mark over Russia's future demographic and economic development. Migration becomes a problem when unskilled, inconsistent management results in increased illegal migration, the unregistered employment of migrants, corruption, the development of shadow services for migrants, multiple violations of migrants' rights, an increase in anti-migrant sentiments and interethnic clashes.

¹⁴ Chairman of the Federation Council Sergey Mironov said that transferring migration policy issues to the purview of the police had not solved a single problem, but gravely exacerbated corruption. Sergey Mironov's interview with Interfax News Agency (Vedomosti, 23.07.2008): <http://www.vedomosti.ru/newsline/index.shtml?2008/07/23/627973>

¹⁵ It should be noted that there are indeed countries where migration policy falls within the purview of the respective ministry of the interior, for instance, Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy and Spain. However, in those countries, the ministry of the interior is responsible for a single segment of the migration policy: issuing entry and stay permits, carrying out immigration control, granting citizenship and deporting illegal migrants. Issuing work permits falls within the jurisdiction of the ministries of labour, and issues of integration and social protection of migrants are the responsibility of the respective ministries of social development. Independent departments work with refugee issues. Thus, implementing migration policy is divided up in accordance with the agencies' competencies and differentiation of migration flows. Not to mention the fact that developing migration policy is posited as a comprehensive task in which the ministry of the interior does not play a leading role.

Recommendations on implementation

- 1.** *By 2025*, a federal civil service should be established that is capable of implementing migration policy in accordance with the strategic vision of the role of the migration resource in the development of Russia and in close connection with other state policies. At the regional level, the agencies' bodies would ensure the attraction of migrants for permanent residence and temporary employment based on the specific migration and labour market situation. As a civil agency, such an institution could manage migration as a socioeconomic and demographic process (which corresponds to its real significance for Russia) and implement the crucial area of migration policy that is to help migrants adjust to their new home and integrate into the host society, combining socioeconomic and sociocultural measures in order to do so.
- 2.** The Ministry of the Interior should retain its functions of uncovering offences committed by foreign nationals and controlling compliance with migration legislation.
- 3.** Issuing Russian citizen passports and foreign travel passports is also the function of the Ministry of the Interior; although this falls within the purview of the migration service, it is unrelated to migration management.

9.

Compliance with the migration legislation that has been passed should be subjected to rigorous and effective control.

Argument

This tenet does not contradict the creation of broad channels for immigration and the legal employment of temporary migrants. Migration legislation may offer quite liberal terms of entry, stay and employment to certain categories of migrants, if such terms are in Russia's interests. But these rules must be strictly observed by migrants, officials employed at migration agencies and employers. In Russia specifically, **corruption** is a barrier to compliance with migration legislation. Bribes create an atmosphere where laws can be violated with impunity, and apparently reasonable legislation remains unobserved or even perverted. Migration became one of the most corruption-ridden areas in Russia: virtually all instruments of migration policy initially intended to regulate and control migration flows (registration, verification letters, certificates, patents) are sold and counterfeited, and violations of legally stipulated employment procedures for foreign workers often become a source of profit for monitoring agencies.

The current system of attracting foreign workers from CIS countries is not entirely effective: workers purchase a patent and make the appropriate monthly payments. However, they may work without an employment contract. Even when there is a contract in place, employers do not have to inform the migration and taxation agencies that a foreign worker has been hired, and the labour relations remain "semi-legal" – the appropriate social payments are not made, the labour and social rights of migrants are not guaranteed, and the full amount of income tax is not paid into the treasury. The same applies to labour migration within the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU): based on statistics, experts claim that no more than a quarter of employers hiring workers from Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan submit the necessary paperwork with regard to hiring foreign workers to the appropriate services, although they are legally mandated to do so within three days of signing an employment contract.

Only by overcoming corruption in monitoring compliance with migration legislation can we ensure that international migration really does contribute to stabilizing the situation on the Russian labour market and developing the Russian economy.

Since enforcing adopted laws is evidently a weak spot of Russian migration policy, the Federal Migration Service of Russia proposed a crucially important draft law “On Immigration Control” in 2014. The draft law failed to reflect the entire complex of issues related to means and mechanisms of ensuring compliance with migration legislation, but rather reflected a narrow departmental approach to migration management by suggesting that the Federal Migration Service of Russia be granted police functions¹⁶. Apparently, the vaguely formulated goals of migration policy make it difficult to carry out the task of monitoring compliance migration legislation, while a well-set-up immigration control can effectively “channel” specific migrant flows depending on the current and future demands of the economy, the labour market and education.

The obvious fact that the Russian authorities do not have an effective mechanism for controlling migration into Russia is a cause for concern for society. It makes migration a pressing problem in domestic policies, and provokes the growth of radical nationalist sentiments.

Recommendations on implementation

1. *In the immediate future*, a law “On Immigration Control” should be drafted. The law should be intended not only to prevent, uncover and suppress violations of migration legislation by foreign nationals, Russian employers hiring foreign workers, intermediary agencies and officials working in migration management, but also to protect the rights granted to migrants by Russian legislation.
2. Despite the existence of Federal Law No. 172-FZ “On Anti-Corruption Assessment of Regulatory Legal Acts and Draft Regulatory Legal Acts” dated July 17, 2009 and the new migration rules introduced in 2010 (patents, the “90/180 rule”, deportation for administrative violations, entry prohibition, etc.), human rights organizations state that there has been no noticeable decrease in the level of corruption. Corruption linked to quotas was replaced with trade in permits, certificates and even citizenship, striking persons from “black lists” in exchange for bribes, etc. Given the degree of corruption in migration management, the anti-corruption assessment of migration legislation should be bolstered *in the immediate future* through expanding the expert community and involving public organizations.
3. *In the immediate future*, effective control over Russian employers hiring foreign workers must be established. It is often the employers themselves who force migrant workers to not legalize their labour relations. Existing legal norms concerning fines imposed on employers (stripping them of the right to hire foreign workers and even suspending their business activities if they violate migration legislation) should be rigorously enforced.
4. *Starting already in 2017*, migrants renewing their patents should submit copies of labour contracts for the previous year, and the authenticity of these contracts must be verified.

¹⁶The draft law was rejected by the State Duma.

5. *By 2025*, the role of labour inspectorates should be increased. Inspectorates should become active participants in managing international labour migration. To achieve this, the existing legislation should be amended to extend the functions of state labour inspections to controlling the guarantees of labour rights of foreign workers on the Russian labour market.
6. The activities of intermediaries that obtain paperwork and find employment for foreign citizens in circumvention of the existing legislation should be made illegal.
7. Heads of the territorial police branches should be held accountable for not taking measures intended to stop the counterfeiting and sale of government documents and stop such advertising in the media.
8. *By 2025*, a state programme should be developed to strengthen control over the implementation of migration legislation and fight corruption in migration. The programme must focus on setting up effective mechanisms for monitoring compliance with the laws and other regulatory acts, ensuring that their practical application is in line with the strategic goals of the migration policy, and uncovering corruption schemes and practices in migration management.

10.

The policy of migrant adjustment and integration must be drastically reconsidered.

Argument

The adjustment and integration of migrants is a crucial component of the migration policy. National security risks involved in mass migration (such as the division of society along ethnic lines, the loss of common values and norms, the emergence of immigrant enclaves, interethnic conflicts) are far more likely to be eliminated through an integration policy than through regulating entry into and departure from a country. Since the Russian state does not see this, it has virtually withdrawn from this area of domestic policies, ignoring the subject of integrating migrants. As a result, migration has turned into a pressing domestic problem. Given the lack of a clearly articulated official policy on migrant integration, the role of unofficial integration practices via social networks is increasing, and it creates an additional threat of society becoming divided along socio-ethnic lines¹⁷.

In 2015, Russia introduced a test in Russian language, history and the basics of the Russian legislation for foreign citizens under the auspices of “creating conditions for the adjustment and integration of migrants.” This test is certainly necessary for those who apply for permanent residency or citizenship, but as far as temporary migrant workers are concerned, it does not create the conditions for adjustment and integration. On the contrary, it pushes them into illegal employment, where quasi-integration is marginal. This measure testifies to a simplified, one-sided understanding of the essence of integration, shifts responsibility for integration entirely to migrants, underestimates the significance of social protection for migrants as a condition for their integration, and blinds society to the importance of creating a migrant-friendly social environment and the importance of involving civil society institutions in the process of integrating migrants.

Migrant integration in a host country is a totality of beliefs and actions on the part of both migrants and the host society that are aimed towards closing the sociocultural gap, adhering to mutually acceptable norms of behaviour, mutual respect, equality of social and

¹⁷ Mukomel V. I. The Policy of Migrant Integration in Russia: Challenges, Potential, Risks. Working Paper. Russian International Affairs Council. Moscow: Spetskinga, 2013: <http://www.slideshare.net/RussianCouncil/ss-16968643>

labour rights, and the elimination of discrimination. It is generally recognized that migrant integration is a two-way street that involves including migrants in the socioeconomic and sociocultural reality of the host society and the adjustment of the host society to the fact that it is becoming objectively more diverse due to the influx of migrants.

The conditions for migrant integration are created primarily by the host state and society. The only way to create an atmosphere that makes it possible for migrants and society to interact effectively is if the host state takes real steps to guarantee the right of migrants, fight discrimination and marginalization, work to prevent shadow employment and the exploitation of migrants and their exclusion from society. The state should simultaneously promote a tolerant attitude towards migrants among the local population, publicly acknowledging the role that they play in the country's economy, and explaining the specific motives behind the state's migration policy.

Recommendations on implementation

1. *By 2025*, the conceptual framework of a state policy on migrant adjustment and integration should be developed with the participation of relevant experts (members of the academic community, employer associations, international and human rights organizations) and taking into account the experience of other countries, as well as Russia's history as a multi-ethnic and multid denominational state.
2. *By 2025*, an outline of a state policy on migrant adjustment and integration should be developed for various categories of migrants in Russia (permanent residence; temporary employment; migrants from various age, gender, ethnic, denominational groups; children of migrants; migrants who speak Russian; migrants who do not speak Russian, etc.). This should be followed by the establishment of an infrastructure that creates the conditions for integrating migrants from various groups in accordance with the outline.
3. A migrant integration policy should be built upon a solid information foundation. For this purpose, the set of statistical indicators related to migrants and migration should be expanded *by 2025*: indicators of migrant integration should be developed; regular surveys should be conducted; and the measures taken should be monitored. Assessing the progress of migrant integration (or lack thereof) and its depth for various groups of migrants requires information on a fairly extensive list of indicators that characterize the degree of migrants' involvement in various areas of public life and a comparative analysis of the situation of the local population and migrants in such key areas as labour market position, access to education, participation in the public and political life, counteracting discrimination, etc. Globally, about 30 states (EU countries, Norway, Switzerland, the United States and Canada) calculate these indicators using MIPEX (Migrant Integration Policy Index), which allows for a relatively objective assessment of the national policy of promoting migrant integration and makes it possible to carry out a comparative analysis¹⁸.

¹⁸Huddleston T., Niessen J., Eadaoin Ni Chaoimh, White E. (2011) Migrant Integration Policy Index III. The British Council and Migration Policy Group – Brussels.

4. It is necessary to actively involve civil society institutions in the process of carrying out the policy of adjustment and integration of migrants (diasporas and migrant, religious, human rights organizations) which, due to the specifics of their work, prove to be far more apt than the state to carry out daily, painstaking work with migrants. To develop the conceptual framework of such cooperation, it is necessary *in the immediate future* to launch academic research into the role of diasporas and other ethnic communities of migrants in the social structure of Russian society and into the degree to which they are involved in helping their compatriots adjust and integrate. The function of establishing unofficial contacts between the locals and migrants should be delegated to educational, public and commercial organizations. These contacts could assume such forms as Russian language courses, community centres, children's arts groups, folk celebrations, etc.
5. In order to ensure that Russian society adjusts to the objective increase of migrants entering the country, it is necessary *in the immediate future* to start developing regional programmes for harmonizing interethnic and intercultural relations, preventing xenophobia and fostering tolerance. Educational and public organizations and cultural institutions (theatres, museums, particularly regional studies museums) should also be involved in this work. Establishing a migration museum in Russia could become an important step, setting the tone for the adjustment of Russian society to migrants and performing an important educational function. Such museums exist in many countries with large migrant populations.
6. *By 2025*, the Presidential Council for Interethnic Relations should launch the development of a state federal programme for promoting migrant adjustment and integration. Measures taken currently to implement Russia's National Policy Strategy through to 2025 do not touch upon the issue of migrant adjustment and integration.
7. Institutional provisions for the policy to help migrants adjust to and integrate into Russian society should be developed by *2025*. The General Administration for Migration Issues of the Ministry of the Interior of the Russian Federation will hardly be capable of developing and implementing this area of migration policy. The Administration for Promoting Migrant Integration established in 2011 under the auspices of the Federal Migration Service of Russia failed to launch work in this area, and in 2014, the Administration was dissolved. The Federal Agency for Ethnic Affairs is focused solely on domestic ethnic policies, protecting the rights of ethnic minorities and small indigenous peoples, and preventing ethnic and religious extremism, so issues of integrating international migrants remain outside the scope of the agency. Thus, the relevance of developing and implementing the state policy of migrant adjustment and integration raises the issue of the need to establish a single federal civil agency responsible for comprehensive migration management, where this area of migration would hold a proper place.

11.

Establishing a reliable information base as a foundation for developing migration policy.

Argument

The indisputable fact that any decisions made must be based on in-depth knowledge of the migration processes taking place in a country, their scale, structure and consequences for the economy and society is a crucial prerequisite of an effective migration policy that is in line with the interests of the host state and society. This implies collecting statistical data on a broad range of characteristics on the demographics, occupations, skills and other attributes of migrants, as well as conducting academic research based on this information.

In Russia in particular, the quality of migration statistics remains exceedingly low. The lack of a clearly articulated time criterion for registration makes it difficult to distinguish between permanent and temporary migration. The summary data that is available does little in the way of combining several attributes in order to create a comprehensive “profile” of migrants. Statistics on granting citizenship and permanent and temporary residence permits are only available by country of origin (citizenship), while there is no data on gender, age or the socioeconomic attributes of these groups of migrants. Existing methodologies do not allow adequate data on seasonal migration to be obtained.

The 2011 decision to amend the criterion for categorizing foreign nationals arriving in Russia as permanent or long-time migrants from “12 months or more” to “9 months or more” is perplexing. As a result, multiple temporary migrant workers were categorized as “permanent migrants”; demographic statistics usually treat the latter category as the source of changes in the number of permanent population. As a result, re-categorization utterly distorted the picture of permanent migration.

As for temporary migrant workers, statistics for this category of international migrants are based only on the number of work permits issued in Russia per year. The distinction between work permits issued to foreign nationals for the first time and renewed/reissued permits is not drawn, which inevitably results in people being counted twice. There is no data on the number of working foreign nationals, the sectors they work in,

their education and skills, or the age and gender makeup. There is also a lack of federal and regional data on the duration of their stay.

One cannot help but agree with the authors of the “Concept of the State Migration Policy of the Russian Federation until 2025: Declared Plans and Reality” report prepared in 2015 by the Civil Initiative Committee, who state that, “Administrative statistics on migrant count maintained by the Federal Migration Service of Russia reflect the results of the Service’s work rather than the migration situation.”

This explains the absence of serious economic research on labour migration, since such work requires detailed data. And the state has no interest in such research. Studies that are being done with the view to following the trends in the development of the migration situation, establishing patterns and constructing prospective scenarios, are based primarily on scant aggregated official statistics that essentially distort the picture. Given such circumstances, we can hardly expect Russia’s migration policy to be well-founded and developed. The numerous amendments and adjustments made following the passing of new regulatory acts on migration indirectly confirm this¹⁹.

The lack of well-oiled and proper information sources that can characterize the dynamics of migration situation in Russia is also an obstacle for monitoring the results of the adopted amendments to the migration legislation. The consequences of migration reforms remain unexplored and unperceived, and this is one of the reasons for the current convoluted and contradictory migration legislation. This largely explains the lack of a clear conceptual articulation of the migration policy and its inconsistency.

Recommendations on implementation

1. *By 2025*, the range of demographic, socioeconomic, occupational and skill-based characteristics of migrants collected and published by statistical agencies to serve as information foundation for conducting academic research into the current migration situation and the role of migrants in Russia’s development should be expanded.
2. *By 2025*, migration statistics should be made maximally open and accessible so that the data can be used by academics, university instructors and students specializing in studying migration and migration management.
3. *In the immediate future*, multi-faceted academic research into migration with a view to determining the role and place of migrants in the Russian economy and the degree of their integration into Russian society and participation in population reproduction should be launched. In particular, a well-founded academic paper on the place of migration in Russia’s future economic and demographic development could contain economic, demographic and political scenarios of the country’s development without migration, as well as a concrete analysis of the real possibilities

¹⁹Chudinovskikh O. S. Labor Migration Statistics in the MIRPAL Network Countries. Moscow, 2011, pp. 6–7

of compensating for labour shortages through a reform of the employment structure, increasing productivity and conducting an active internal migration policy. The paper's conclusions should serve as the foundation for a system of decision-making in improving and achieving the conceptual unity of migration management in Russia.

What is more, such a paper could be presented to the general public and promoted by the media as the conceptual foundation of Russia's migration policy. Russian people should understand that since they are in no hurry to have children and do not want to work in jobs they deem to be "beneath" them, they should thankfully accept migrants who are willing to do those jobs. And if there are no migrants, prices will go up, pensions will go down and the retirement age will increase.

4. It is necessary to put an end *immediately* to the practice of "tinkering" with statistical data to fit the established goals (as was the case with changing the criterion for defining "long-term" migrants, who are treated as a means of replenishing permanent population), which confuses the real migration picture.
5. *By 2025*, a state programme for improving the information and analytical basis for migration policy should be developed; the policy should be geared toward improving the system of collecting information about migrants and detailing migration statistics using various information sources: census data, current records, cluster sampling, etc., and shaping a state demand for academic research into migration.

12.

Strengthening the economic component of the strategy to combat illegal migration.

Argument

The fight against illegal migration has been posited as a priority goal of Russia's migration policy for a long time now. However, assessments show that instead of shrinking, illegal migration has grown in recent years.

Various measures have been proposed for combatting illegal migration, from making migration regulation more rigid to legalizing the status of all illegally employed migrants. Such extreme measures are equally ineffective. Global migration experience proves that tightening the migration regime and narrowing the channels for legal employment result in increased illegal employment. Russia has already gone through this phase during periods of tightened migration rules for foreign workers. On the other hand, the idea of legalizing all migrant workers in Russia proposed by some experts appears dubious, because if many Russian employers (particularly small and medium-sized businesses) are forced to hire foreign workers legally, with subsequent social contribution payments, they will lose the competitive edge afforded to them by the fact that they save money by hiring workers illegally. Thus, even if they are granted legal status in Russia, many migrants will still be employed illegally, since they will be offered nothing else.

The most effective measures for fighting illegal migration and employment are well known – predominantly economic steps that involve instituting simple and transparent rules and procedures for hiring and using foreign workers, eliminating shadow practices of formalizing labour relations, increasing penalties imposed on employers for illegally hiring foreign workers, including criminal liability for cases of labour slavery and human trafficking. A sweeping attack by the state on the shadow economy (bringing construction, the services industry, housing and utilities outside the shadow economy) would result in migrants leaving shadow economy, since they are concentrated in those areas.

Recommendations on implementation

1. *By 2025*, a new conceptual understanding of the fight against illegal migration involving administrative and economic measures should be developed. Given Russia's large-scale shadow labour market, migration policy is incapable of independently solving the problem of unregistered employment of migrants. It may become only an **additional instrument** in the overall state strategy of legalizing the economy (such a strategy would involve: administrative measures to suppress shadow entrepreneurship and illegal employment; the creation of favourable conditions for entrepreneurship; lowering administrative pressure on legal businesses; protection of company against encroachment by organized criminal elements and dishonest governmental officials; assistance in lending to businesses; the elimination of the system of cash grabs and extortion in all its forms; support for small and medium-sized business; the creation of a system of business incubators, etc.)²⁰. As regards migration policy, such a state strategy could be complemented with: transparent procedures for hiring foreign workers that are understandable both to migrants and employers; decreasing administrative hurdles in obtaining work permits in Russia; monitoring compliance with migration and labour legislation.
2. Ensuring protection of rights of foreign entrepreneurs doing business in Russia to prevent their involvement in the shadow and criminal economy.
3. To uncover cases of forced labour, slavery and human trafficking for the purposes of labour exploitation. Migrants, both internal and international, who came to look for work and have no recourse to official employment services, headhunting agencies and information and consultation services for migrants are the most frequent victims of such crimes.
4. *By 2025*, instruments should be developed to stop the activities of criminal ethnic intermediary groups that build their "business" on the promotion of illegal migration and the unofficial employment of migrants.
5. *By 2025*, a network of official services for migrants providing information on legal employment opportunities in Russia, existing vacancies and the risks of unregistered employment should be established.
6. By involving labour inspectorates, Russia should ensure the implementation of such principles as equal pay for the same work for Russian and foreign workers. This principle is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and at the national level, in article 132 of the Labour Code of the Russian Federation. In order for labour inspectorates to protect the working rights of both Russian citizens and foreign nationals, it is necessary, to introduce appropriate amendments into the federal and regional legislation *by 2025*.

²⁰Latov Y. V., Kovalev C.N. Shadow Economy. University Textbook. Moscow: Norma, 2006.

13.

Simplifying academic mobility procedures and educational migration.

Argument

In the context of the ongoing globalization of academia and higher education, academic mobility becomes an important factor in improving the quality of teaching and research. Attracting foreign faculty and researchers could boost the innovative development of Russia's economy, stimulate the advancement of high technologies and afford Russian students the opportunity to learn advanced production management and organization methods.

Since the number of Russian students is falling due to demographic factors, developing educational migration into Russia and attracting foreign students to Russian universities is an important practical task. The number of foreign students is growing, but at present, they make up less than 5 per cent of the overall figure. Meanwhile, foreign graduates of Russian universities who have already been integrated into Russian society and possess skills that are in demand on the Russian labour market are a promising demographic and labour resource, provided that favourable conditions are created for them to remain in the country as permanent residents.

What is more, attracting foreign students from CIS countries to Russian universities may be viewed as investing in the human capital of these partner countries. Such an investment has both an economic (training personnel for developing the national economies of CIS countries) and a political dimension (what is now called "soft power", capable of bolstering Russia's political positions in the region)

Recommendations on implementation

1. Certain steps have already been taken towards creating special conditions for attracting faculty and researchers within the framework of creating a migration channel for highly skilled professionals. This area should be developed further to make obtaining residence and work permits for this category of migrants and their families as easy as possible, and to subsidize universities and research centres that hire foreign faculty and researchers.

2. Similarly, *in the immediate future*, a special channel should be set up for foreign students arriving in Russia to study at a higher education institution. Regulation of the arrival, stay, education and employment of educational migrants, particularly from CIS countries, should proceed from the state's greater interest in maximally increasing of the number of these migrants in Russia.
3. *By 2025*, attracting foreign nationals to Russian vocational colleges to train skilled personnel for blue-collar jobs on the Russian labour market should become part of the policy of exporting educational services. Given the falling numbers of Russian nationals enrolling in vocational colleges, attracting foreign nationals (who either pay tuition or take out student loans) could become a source of additional revenues for colleges. In addition, such a policy could be viewed as an instrument of "soft power" that increases Russia's influence in the region and promotes the stable development of that region.
4. A state programme for expanding the export of educational services and promoting educational migration into Russia should be developed and set up in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation *by 2035*. The programme should aim to create the most favourable conditions for attracting foreign students to Russian universities, expand information and advertising campaigns on studying in Russia, set the stage for the adjustment and integration of foreign students, and make it possible for them to obtain residence permits and Russian citizenship upon the completion of their studies.

14.

Implementation of migration policy should be accompanied by an extensive awareness-raising campaign.

Argument

Shaping a satisfactory psychological climate in society should be an important element in migration management. Migration policy should be understandable and the local population should if not endorse then at least understand it.

Nevertheless, over the last 15–20 years, several factors have caused Russia to become permeated with anti-migrant sentiments (the rapid growth of migration into Russia; the objective increase in the ethnic gaps between native Russians and migrants; the ignoring of policies for migrant adjustment and integration; increased illegal migration due to misjudgements in migration policy; society's lack of understanding of the objective role of migration for Russia's development; and certain public figures and media inciting xenophobia, ethnic animosity and racial superiority). Surveys show that half of the Russian population supports the nationalistic idea of "Russia for Russians!" and 75 per cent of the population support a severely restrictive migration policy²¹.

Against this background, constructing a relatively liberal migration policy that accords with the interests of Russia's demographic and economic development is very difficult. Russia's interest in attracting migrants as permanent residents to offset unfavourable demographic trends and in attracting temporary migrant workers to offset the labour shortage should be the topic of an extensive awareness-raising campaign intended to foster tolerance, especially when the ethnic structure of society encounters the challenge of growing ethnic diversity.

The state should convey the crucial message mentioned above Section 2.1 to society – namely, that migrants are objectively a necessary part of Russian life. Being buttressed by appropriate regulatory acts on migration, that message will ensure a balance of interests between Russian citizens and migrants. Such a message will

²¹According to Levada Center data. Survey conducted in August 2016: <http://www.levada.ru/2016/10/11/intolerantnost-i-ksenofobiya/>

create conditions for reducing anti-immigrant sentiments and increasing the integration potential of society, as well as for the population to accept the strategic measures enshrined in the state's migration policy.

Recommendations on implementation

1. *In the nearest future*, the state should launch an extensive federal campaign to eliminate xenophobia and delegate some of the activities of integrating migrants and guaranteeing their rights to non-governmental organizations and civil society institutions.
2. The information campaign that accompanies the migration policy should become an integral part of the work performed by the General Administration for Migration Issues of the Ministry of the Interior of the Russian Federation (or other federal executive authority charged with implementing migration policy), thereby ensuring the transparency, logic and complementarity of decisions made and also ensuring the population's awareness of the goals that these decisions pursue.
3. When making statements for the media or attending various public events (conferences, round tables, meeting with the public), public officials should broadcast to the Russian population the strategic vision of the positive role that migration plays in Russia's demographic and economic development. This will help prevent the emergence of negative myths about migrants ("migrants take Russians' jobs", "migrants drive wages down", etc.), which have been consistently disproved by research.
4. *By 2025*, politicians and officials should be held administratively liable for spreading "fake news" about migration and migrants, stressing the topics of criminal activity and ethnic crime, which has a negative effect on the public opinion of migrants.
5. Awareness campaigns launched in the media should aim to make migration policy understandable and to gain, if not support, then at least understanding on the part of the population. "It is the job of governments to create a more positive atmosphere in which migration policy matters may be discussed by leading rather than following public opinion²²." Explaining why migrants arrive, the role they play in the Russian economy, and that they, as a rule, take jobs Russian citizens do not want, could shape a more positive public opinion of them. It should be explained to the population that migrant labour makes it possible for the state to pay pensions to Russian retirees, and the money migrants take out of Russia is far less than the value they generate by working in the Russian economy; and sometimes, such an explanation is more effective in fostering tolerance than ethnic festivals.

²²Toward a Migration Management Strategy. Council of Europe. Strasbourg, 2002, p. 16

15.

Developing a public-private partnership in migration management.

Argument

Migration policy is not just the prerogative of the state, although a state's declared policy on the migration model it wants to shape does hold crucial significance. Together with the state, the expert community, business (associations of employers that hire foreign workers, private employment agencies, etc.), NGOs (human rights organizations, information and consulting services, trade unions, migrant associations, etc.), diasporas, the media, and to a certain degree international organizations offering their experience and aid are also subjects of migration policy. If a state's leaders and society clearly understand the means for providing and using the positive potential that migration can have, then cooperation between all the subjects listed could ensure a logical and effective migration policy.

The state develops strategic goals of migration policies tied to other state policies and ensures their implementation by creating the appropriate legislative and institutional foundations. At the same time, the state may delegate some of the functions of implementing specific migration policy tasks to interested and competent public and private bodies while monitoring their activities for compliance with the posited goals.

Recommendations on implementation

- 1.** In order to improve the mechanisms for attracting foreign workers, employer associations should, in collaboration with research bodies, be charged with monitoring and forecasting the situation that emerges in hiring foreign workers in Russia and assessing the Russian market's demand for additional labour resources.
- 2.** By 2025, implementing the policy for migrant adjustment and integration should be delegated to local self-governance bodies. Regional programmes for harmonizing inter-ethnic and inter-cultural relations, preventing manifestations of xenophobia, fostering tolerance by involving wide circles of experts in sociology, political science and ethnography, as well as members of educational and public organizations, should be developed. A system of state financial support for public institutions participating in implementing migrant adjustment and integration policy should be developed.

3. *By 2025*, business structures, private employment agencies and non-profit organizations should be involved in developing an official infrastructure for promoting labour migration (information services for migrants containing data on: employment options in Russia; the rules for staying in Russia, renting or buying a home, obtaining an education and receiving medical care; how migrants can protect their rights, etc.). Joint initiatives of the Russian state and business, such as creating migrant labour exchanges, migration “terminals” and “bridges”, concluding direct contracts between large Russian enterprises and migrants’ countries of origin, etc., should be promoted. Such bodies will make finding each other fast and easy for both employers and workers.
4. *In the immediate future*, the hiring of foreign workers should be carried out in a systematic manner in accordance with the demand of Russian enterprises for specific professions and skills. While still in their home country, future migrant workers would clearly determine where, in what capacity, and on what terms they will be working in Russia. This form of importing foreign labour implies the joint participation of the state and entrepreneurial bodies both in Russia and in the migrants’ home countries, concluding the appropriate bilateral agreements and employing private employment agencies.
5. *By 2025*, Russian business should have developed the ability to shape a system of professional training for migrant workers in accordance with the demand of Russian enterprises for specific professions and skills.
6. *By 2025*, the expert community, international organization, and non-profit foundations should be involved in establishing an academic assessment institution for in-development administrative decisions and boosting the anti-corruption assessment of migration legislation.
7. To decrease the scale of unregistered migration, *by 2035*, programmes for pre-entry training of migrants should be developed; NGOs in migrants’ countries of origin should be given the task of offering information and education courses for potential migrants in order to inform them of the principal rights and obligations of foreign workers in Russia to prevent the risks of illegal employment and falsified documents, and to decrease the risks of illegal employment, forced labour and human trafficking.

16.

Developing international cooperation to optimize migration processes.

Argument

In essence, international migration is a process that involves the interests of both the destination countries and countries of origin. Historically, destination countries were the first to launch migration management, either to encourage or to limit it. However, since the late 20th century, countries of origin have been increasingly interested in participating in migration management. Their interest is largely linked to guaranteeing migrants' rights, their legal employment in host countries and thereby ensuring steady earnings and a growing volume of remittances to migrants' homelands. It has been globally recognized that bilateral and multilateral cooperation among destination countries and countries of origin is an important prerequisite for the successful management of transnational migration. This global trend is clearly manifested in the post-Soviet region. Regulating processes related to international labour migration is the object of bilateral and multilateral cooperation between host countries and countries of origin. Fighting the most pressing problems linked to international migration (the spread of illegal migration, transnational organized crime, human trafficking) is the most well-developed area of migration cooperation.

For Russia, the CIS countries are priority partners in inter-governmental migration cooperation; they are Russia's principal migration donors as well as its geopolitical partners in developing regional integration. In the 2000s, international migration cooperation between the CIS countries was stepped up, which testifies to mutual understanding of the significance of international labour migration as a long-term factor in the development of the region, as well as to the desire to make maximum use of the migration potential, in particular, through its regulation. It is important to understand that the consistently constructive stance that the CIS countries take on migration cooperation will largely determine the future of integration in the post-Soviet space.

Implementing the idea of a single labour market within the EAEU results from an understanding of the role that labour migration plays for the countries in the region.

Freedom of movement and employment for citizens of the EAEU member countries will serve as an important incentive for other states to join this regional integration structure.

Recommendations on implementation

1. The practice of concluding **bilateral partnerships** with the principal countries that supply labour to Russia should be developed. By 2035, existing bilateral international agreements with Central Asian countries on labour and the protection of the rights of migrant workers should be made into working mechanisms for optimizing migration processes²³. This can be done by making them more specific, supplementing them with agreements concluded with Russia's regions, and involving private employment agencies in their implementation, developing a system for monitoring and controlling the practical implementation of agreements²⁴.
2. *By 2035*, the range of multilateral cooperation on migration with post-Soviet states should be expanded. Currently, such cooperation is focused largely on fighting illegal migration (within the CSTO and the CIS). Improving migration statistics; providing professional and language training for migrants both in their home countries and in Russia; recognizing professional education diplomas and certificates; guaranteeing migrants' rights, including the provision of pensions; readmission; and fighting illegal migration and human trafficking. All of these could become crucially important **areas of inter-governmental cooperation**. Coordinating migration policies between CIS member states could promote the development of mutually acceptable mechanisms for optimizing migration and thereby contribute to the stable development of the entire region.
3. At the non-governmental level, it would be wise to develop a **regional consultations process** within the post-Soviet space *by 2035* as an unofficial forum of the states concerned; such a forum would serve as a permanent platform and comprise members of the governments, the business community, civil society institutions and experts. The purpose of the consultations process would be to achieve a consensus in the understanding of migration interlinking the post-Soviet space, providing aid to governments in improving the mechanisms of migration management and developing the prospects of migration cooperation and the exchange of information, ideas and positive experiences in international migration. The consultations process should focus on identifying common interests and problems in such areas as the contribution that migration makes to the economic development of participating states, developing the common labour market, guaranteeing migrants' rights, establishing the migration infrastructure, and fighting illegal migration and human trafficking.
4. *By 2025*, the outline of **private-public and social-public partnerships** in the development of cooperation between Russia and the principal migrant donor countries to offer vocational guidance

²³ Specifically, Russia has bilateral inter-governmental agreements on labour migration with Tajikistan (2004) and Uzbekistan (2007).

²⁴ Handbook on Establishing Effective Labour Migration Policies in Countries of Origin and Destination. OSCE, IOM, ILO, 2006: <http://www.osce.org/secretariat/19242>

to migrants in the region and set up a system of professional, language and career development training in countries of origin and the development and implementation of programmes for providing pre-departure information and educational courses for potential migrants should be worked out.

5. Further legislative development of the **single labour market** model within the EAEU should be guaranteed. The appropriate supra-national structure within the EAEU for regulating labour migration issues and developing the single labour market should be established. Discrepancies between Section XXVI (“Labour Migration”) of the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union and the provisions of the Russian migration legislation with regard to granting citizens of the member states legal status during their stay and employment in Russia should be eliminated. These discrepancies primarily make it more difficult for Russian employers to hire workers from Armenia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan; employers therefore risk being fined for violating the rules for hiring foreign workers.
6. *Long-term*, steps should be taken to develop inter-governmental migration cooperation within BRICS. The foundations for this were laid at the meeting of the heads of the migration agencies in October 2015. The declarative nature of such cooperation may very well transition into practical application given that the drastically different demographic situations in the BRICS countries could serve as a driver for forming migration flows between member states. For instance, it would make sense to hire migrant workers from India to work in areas where India has gained a world-class reputation, such as IT and software and the medical profession.

17.

Ensuring the Consistency of Russia's Economic and Geopolitical Interests in the Implementation of Its Migration Interaction with CIS Countries.

Argument

Russia's historical ties with other former Soviet states and its focus on the development of political and economic integration in the region leaves a significant mark on the formation of the country's migration strategy. The vast majority of migrants to Russia come from the CIS countries, which at the same time are Russia's main allies and partners in regional integration. In this regard, it would seem that Russia's migration interaction with the former Soviet republics should be special in nature, which is the case with its economic and political interaction with these countries. The policy to attract qualified specialists from the CIS countries to Russia actually weakens the economies of the former Soviet states. Furthermore, it consolidates their backwardness and widens the gap in terms of the level of the socioeconomic development of the countries in the region. At the same time, the possibility for CIS citizens to work and earn money in Russia is an important condition for maintaining social stability in the region and strengthening inter-state regional integration – and Russia has placed a significant stake in this.

Russia's geopolitical interests effectively narrow the decision-making channels in terms of migration, as they give preference to satisfying the joint interests of countries. These interests presuppose the existence of multiple channels of legal labour migration in the region for various categories of migrants, and that joint efforts are being exerted by states to maximize the use of qualified migrants, ensure their labour and social rights, and counteract illegal migrant labour. Russia is concerned about ensuring that labour migration from other CIS countries does not weaken the economies of donor countries; on the contrary, it wants migrants to become a resource for further development – migrant remittances to their home countries “work” in terms of maintaining the standard of living in these countries, and the new skills and professional experience acquired by migrants during their time in Russia help to increase their “economic potential” upon returning home.


Recommendations on implementation

1. Ensure that Russia's migration strategy is consistent with its foreign policy strategy *up to 2025* (the Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation approved in 2016), a priority area of which is to develop cooperation with CIS member countries and further strengthen existing integration structures in the post-Soviet space.
2. *In the long term*, assist migrants' home countries in converting the processes of labour migration to Russia into a resource for strengthening their socioeconomic development (reintegrating migrants returning to their home countries; helping them make use of their newly acquired professional qualifications, skills and experience; making the most of the investment potential of remittances; developing small and medium-sized businesses). Stimulating Russian investments into the economies of these countries and creating new jobs there.
3. Expand the channel of education migration into Russia from the CIS countries, seeing it not so much as a promising resource for replenishing Russia's demographic and labour potential as an investment in the human capital of its partner countries. Training personnel with the aim of developing the national economies of CIS countries is of great importance in terms of increasing the sustainable development of the region. It also strengthens Russia's political positions on the regional stage.
4. Review *before 2025* the policy for allowing refugees – and on a wider scale, humanitarian migrants – into the country. This issue goes beyond the framework of the CIS region, but it will bring important foreign policy dividends for Russia in the event that a competent and responsible policy is developed with regard to this category of migrants. Developing a special programme for the resettlement of persons in need of asylum in Russia will help raise Russia's profile on the international stage and at the same time solve the economic and demographic goals of Russia's migration policy²⁵. The flows of humanitarian migrants to Russia from the southeast regions of Ukraine in 2015 gave Russia a chance to demonstrate its ability to carry out humanitarian policies with regard forced migrants. On the whole, Russia's policy on migrants is strongly defensive. Only a handful of migrants are afforded the opportunity to stay in Russia and acquire Russian citizenship.

²⁵For more on the economic returns of allowing refugees into a country, see: Legrain Philippe, Refugees' Work: A Humanitarian Investment That Yields Economic Dividends. The Tent Foundation. May 2016: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55462dd8e4b0a65de4f3a087/t/573cb9e8ab48de57372771e6/1463597545986/Tent-Open-Refugees+Work_VFINAL-singlepages.pdf

3.

**ALTERNATIVE
MIGRATION** POLICIES



Russia's proposed migration strategy implies the formation of a model of state migration policy that focuses on using the potential on international and internal migration to ensure both the short- and long-term economic and political interests of the country's development. This model is designed to give state migration policy an internal and ensure that it becomes an effective component of the national strategy, increases the Russia's attractiveness as a destination for migrants, brings an influx of people into the country, helps tackle labour shortage problems without infringing upon the labour rights of Russian citizens, contributes to reducing illegal migration and the illegal employment of migrants, optimizes internal migration processes, helps eliminate corruption, xenophobia and intolerance in Russian society and strengthen Russia's positions as a regional leader in the foreign political arena.

However, this is not the only possible route that can be taken.

There is no common opinion among the decision-makers and the Russian expert community on how the country's state migration policy should develop, or whether it even makes sense to build a migration strategy in the face of a changing migration situation. In these circumstances, the likelihood of alternative migration policies – policies that would have a fundamentally different impact on Russia's future development – being implemented is extremely high.

ALTERNATIVE POLICY 1 – “INERTIA.” This policy is based on the conceptual postulate that it is essentially pointless to build a migration strategy, as migration processes are changeable and unpredictable. The state is allocated the role of controller, the task of which is to uphold and enforce, using the existing methods, the laws on migrants entering, staying and working in the country. Such a scenario assumes that migration policy will follow the migration situation and have no claims to forming migration trends that are desirable for state and society. This is in many respects a policy of “inertia”, which consolidates the existing migration policy model. As part of this scenario, the struggle with more serious issues such as the spread of illegal migration and unregistered migrant labour is carried out using methods that already exist in the power-wielding agencies for the implementation of the migration policy. The issue of adapting and integrating migrants will remain within the purview of their own interests, with all the associated risks

for Russian society. New administrative barriers will be built to obtaining legal status under various categories of migrants and to proving foreign nationals with access the Russian labour market under the pretext of safeguarding national security interests.

Despite all the declared efforts to eliminate corruption, it will not disappear, as the main condition for overcoming it is transparency and simplicity of the rules established for migrants.

The Russian labour market, while preserving the existing model of attracting foreign workers, which allows for the existence of a significant segment of undocumented migrant employees, is under threat of its structure becoming deformed, its labour relations being degraded, widespread discrimination and the exploitation of workers.

A refusal to choose a strategy in the formation of migration policy is counterproductive in the long term: migration policy will inevitably continue to be inconsistent, reacting impulsively to new challenges, incapable of forming a structure of migration flows and implementing long-term national priorities.

ALTERNATIVE POLICY 2 — “DEFENSIVE.” This policy assumes a stricter migration policy for both permanent and temporary residents. The possibility of such a scenario arising is all the more real now that the need for tougher migration controls is recognized in many countries that routinely accept migrants, primarily the United States and EU countries. According to sociological surveys, three quarters of the Russian population are in favour of a strong restrictive migration policy, meaning that toughening the migration policy will be welcomed by the population with greater understanding than policies that encourage immigration and the flow of labour migrants²⁶.

In practice, narrowing the channels for permanent and temporary migrants to enter the country will have devastating consequences for Russia’s socioeconomic development: a shortage of workers in the Russian labour market; a decline in the competitiveness of Russian businesses; a slowdown in the country’s economic development; a growth of undocumented migrants and illegal employment. A labour market that is not complemented by a reasonable number of migrants will lead to a drop-off in the Russian population, a growing demographic burden on the working population, a narrowed pension base, lower pensions and a higher retirement age. Restricting employment opportunities in Russia could destabilize the social situation in countries that provide the highest number of migrants to Russia and lead to mass uncontrolled humanitarian migration into the country.

The unacceptability of this migration strategy to deliberately reduce the flow of migrants to Russia, including and primarily from the former Soviet countries, is shaped by economic and

²⁶This is according to data from the Levada Center obtained as the result of a survey conducted in August 2016: <http://www.levada.ru/2016/10/11/intolerantnost-i-ksenofobiya/> A survey carried out by the Russian Public Opinion Research Center generated almost exactly the same results: <https://wciom.ru/index.php?id=236&uid=116061>

political short-sightedness. The introduction of a visa regime with CIS countries, which fits perfectly into this scenario, could have extremely negative consequences for Russia in terms of foreign political relations: CIS countries would likely perceive such a move as a violent destruction of traditional ties on the part of Russia, and it could distort economic and political integration processes in the region. But introducing a visa regime is difficult to implement in the short term from a technical point of view. This is why tightening the rules for permanent and temporary migrants would most likely happen through complicating the procedures for legalizing their status and obtaining the necessary permits (which is essentially what we have been witnessing over the past two or three years). This will inevitably lead (and is already leading!) to an increase in unregistered migration. Global migration experience has demonstrated that migrant flows are adaptive – they gain strength and do not stop. If administrative barriers are put in their way, they only change their form: if migrants cannot enter a country and work there legally, then they will find other ways to get in and obtain employment, bypassing the laws and effectively working in the shadow economy.

Concentrating the functions for implementing migration policy within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is a law enforcement agency only, increases the likelihood that Russia's migration policy will continue to become stricter, which was already the case following the institutional reforms carried out in 2002.

The option to introduce a stricter migration policy, which would inevitably lead to a decrease in Russia's attractiveness as a destination for migrants from citizens of the former Soviet countries, a reorientation of migrant flows to other countries and a reduction in the number of migrants entering Russia, is in direct conflict with the strategic interests of the country, namely, the need to find a suitable response to the demographic transformation that Russia is currently undergoing in order to ensure its further progressive development. Migration is a part of that response. This is why the very possibility that a points system could be introduced for granting permanent resident status to migrants wishing to obtain the legal right to remain in the Russian Federation causes heated debates within the expert community²⁷.

In such a scenario, it is not necessary to talk about creating more liberal conditions for internal migrants (in particular, abolishing the mechanism of compulsory registration for citizens at their place of residence), which could help increase internal mobility (which is sorely needed) and the formation of preferred geographical vectors.

ALTERNATIVE POLICY 3 – "ECONOMIC." An alternative migration strategy could be to adopt an approach that is focused exclusively on reaping the immediate dividends from international migration. The logic of this policy is that the Russian economy would be the main beneficiary of migration (businesses, state-owned and private enterprises, and employers with labour

²⁷Draft Federal Law "On the Introduction of Amendments to the Federal Law 'On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the Russian Federation' in the Section on Improving the Institution of Permanent Residence." Put forward for public debate on February 7, 2017: <http://regulation.gov.ru/projects#npa=61950>

shortages). All the state's efforts should be concentrated on ensuring the maximum economic return from migrants.

The task, which seems quite logical in terms of attracting temporary foreign workers, acquires unreasonably hypertrophied forms in respect to other categories of migrants.

For example, migrants wishing to enter Russia for the purposes of permanent residence as participants in the State Programme to Assist the Voluntary Resettlement of Compatriots Living Abroad to the Russian Federation face a rather rigid selection process that filters compatriots according to their age and qualifications, which essentially goes against the very essence of the State Programme.

Foreign graduates of Russian universities, the overwhelming majority of whom are citizens of the former Soviet republics are seen solely as a promising resource for replenishing the Russian labour market, which is why they are afforded preferences when it comes to obtaining permanent residence status and Russian citizenship. The fact that enticing these qualified and well-educated individuals away from their home countries, which just so happen to be important geopolitical partners of Russia, damages the economies of these countries and goes against the economic and political integration goals for the countries in the region – the sustained development of which is most definitely in Russia's interests – is forgotten.

What is more, this scenario of economic pragmatism effectively allows for the existence of a large number of undocumented migrant workers. For Russian business (and thus the Russian economy), which is relatively weak and uncompetitive, the ability to hire migrants on an unofficial basis and thus save on costs provides an important competitive advantage that allows it to survive, particularly during a time of economic crisis. The ineffective, deeply corrupt system of monitoring labour relations is in no position to exert a restraining influence on this vicious practice.

In such a scenario, which is focused ensuring the maximum economic benefit from migrants, it would seem that the state should actively participate in the development of the labour migration infrastructure and create a system for training migrant workers in Russia at existing educational institutions and set up new vocational training schools with the aim of providing migrants with the necessary professional qualifications in accordance with the requirements of Russian employers. But this is not happening. As a result, the massive presence of labour migrants on the Russian market means that there is a persistent unmet demand for workers

As we can see, none of the alternative options we have considered for the development of migration policy is complete in terms of the perception of the strategic role that migration could play in Russia's long-term development.

CONCLUSION

The proposed migration strategy model and the recommendations for its implementation have been developed on the basis of the global and domestic challenges (economic, demographic, sociopolitical, foreign policy) currently facing Russia. The axiom on which the proposed migration strategy is based is the theory that Russia's key strategic task at the present stage is to ensure progressive economic development. This development cannot be achieved in the current demographic situation, without attracting additional human resources from outside the country, which means that the Russian economy has a vested interest in migration in the near, medium and long term. Progressive economic development is also impossible without the ability to guarantee sociopolitical stability, which means that it is necessary to provide such conditions for the integration and adaptation of migrants entering the country and thus ensure the peaceful coexistence of the host society and the migrant population. Most people in Russia do not understand the benefit that migrant labour can bring to the Russian economy. This much is evident from the observable growth of xenophobic sentiments, the desire to conceptualize migration as a security threat (the "securitization" of migration), and calls to limit the flow of migrants into the country. Such attitudes are in conflict with the interests of economic development. The task of the state in these conditions is – with the help of expert structures, civil society and the media – to work on changing public consciousness with regard to migrants and at the same time provide a legislative framework and system for enforcing migration legislation that is capable of successfully reducing the number of infractions. This would guarantee the safety both of Russian citizens and of migrants entering the country.

Russia's proposed migration strategy presupposes the formation of a relatively liberal state migration policy with regard to attracting permanent and temporary migrants, as the prevailing demographic situation and socioeconomic development of the country would require. This does not imply an "open door" policy for migrants; we are talking about establishing clear rules for migrants with regard to their entry, stay, legal status and employment, and removing the administrative barriers that create a breeding ground for corruption. Establishing clear rules requires a certain coherence of legislative measures and a consistency in terms of law enforcement practices. In this regard, the

need for codification, systemization and harmonization of the legislative acts on migration that have been adopted and the establishment of transparent work on the law-enforcement system are of paramount importance in the implementation of the migration strategy.

Certain recommendations on the implementation of specific areas of the migration strategy go beyond the scope of migration management, which testifies to the close interrelation between the tasks facing migration policy and tasks that are pertinent to socioeconomic policy – in employment, education, demographics and foreign policy – and emphasizes the role of inter-departmental interaction in resolving the strategic goals of Russia's development.

A more detailed study of measures for implementing the migration strategy and the preparation of proposals on the corresponding mechanisms for implementing the strategy and reforming the legislative framework will be possible when the proposed migration strategy is introduced in the format of a national strategy for the development of Russia up to 2035. It should be closely linked at the conceptual level with other related areas of state policy – economic, demographic and political – as they relate to employment, education and foreign policy. The proposed model of the migration strategy will also require the readiness on the part of the state to provide substantial financial outlays; however, these costs are essentially an investment in Russia's economic development, in developing the human capital potential of the country and of other post-Soviet states and in socio-political stability, all of which are vitally important for Russia in terms of ensuring its own security





ЦЕНТР
СТРАТЕГИЧЕСКИХ
РАЗРАБОТОК

125009, Москва, ул. Воздвиженка, дом 10

тел.: (495) 725 78 06, 725 78 50

e-mail: info@csr.ru

web: csr.ru