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in the Common Wealth  
of Independent States**

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# Current Trends in Migration in the Commonwealth of Independent States

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# Abstract

This paper assesses recent migration trends in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Within the last decade (1999-2009) the Russian Federation became the world's second largest recipient of migrants after the United States, while the Ukraine became the fourth largest and Kazakhstan became the ninth largest. Such large-scale population movement, which includes a significant number of labour migrants from resource-poor to resource-rich states in the region, has had an inevitable impact on the social, economic and human development in both source and host countries. By 2007-2009 Moldova, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan have developed a high dependency on international money transfers from their labour migrants, having the world's highest ratio of remittances to their GDP. During last few years numerous studies focused on migration issues within the CIS region, yet there are a number of problems to be still explored: What are the "push" and "pull" factors that motivate this large-scale migration? What are the current trends in the labour migration in the CIS? What are the short-term and long-term implications of the current migration trends for migrants and their families? What is the impact of the migration on human development in the region, including poverty reduction, social and gender equality, education and health?

The paper addresses these and other questions. First, it evaluates the historical, political and social background and demographic context of the population movement in the region, which has become one of the most important determinants of migration during the recent times. Second, it overviews the most important push and pull factors that have affected migration during recent years and different types of migration responses to the social and economic pressures in sending and receiving countries. Third, it reviews the major impacts of the population movement on human development in the CIS region. In conclusion the paper summarizes the major findings and provides policy recommendations.

Keywords: labour migration, regional labour market, human development, poverty, migration policy, remittances, rural-urban migration, urbanization, CIS, Kazakhstan, and Russia.

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## ***Introduction***

One of the unexpected outcomes of the transitional political and economic reforms in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)<sup>1</sup> since the 1990s has been a rapid rise of population movement among the ex-Soviet republics. Although many people moved around different parts of the USSR prior to 1991, their movement was often subordinated to the needs of the state and state-led economic development. In sharp contrast to the Soviet era, the post-Soviet migrants have had more individual freedom to travel, and their migration is often an individual or family choice aimed at expanding their economic opportunities and human capabilities and entitlements. However, their decision to move is not necessarily a rational economic choice. One of the important enabling factors is a need to deal with growing social, political, cultural and religious tensions in various areas of the CIS. Another factor is a need to deal with the emergence of extreme poverty in some post-Soviet republics and growing disparity in incomes and employment opportunities between the energy-rich and energy-poor countries in the region. A third factor is massive structural changes, the growth of private entrepreneurship and the opening of national economies to the forces of globalization, which lead to changing demands for skills and professional experience within the labor force. On top of all this, people have witnessed the changing nature and role of the state and state intervention in the regulation of labor markets and in providing job and healthcare coverage and social safety nets. All these factors together or in various combinations have affected significant groups of people all over the ex-Soviet space.

Indeed, migration within the CIS had reached an unprecedented scale by 2006-2008. According to World Bank estimates, the Russian Federation became the world's second largest recipient of migrants after the United States; the Ukraine became the fourth largest and Kazakhstan became the ninth largest in the world (as of 2007).<sup>2</sup> The World Bank estimates that the CIS and Eastern Europe account for over one-third of the total world emigration and immigration, if movement between industrial countries is excluded, though they account only

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<sup>1</sup> The Commonwealth of Independent States includes (in alphabetic order as of January 2009): Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, the Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The three Baltic States – Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania – did not join the CIS and have chosen a different path of reform; therefore they are not covered in this research. Georgia officially announced its intention to leave the CIS in 2008, but this step was not formalized (as of July 2009). This paper covers development in the twelve CIS member countries.

<sup>2</sup> Ali Mansoor and Bryce Quillin, eds. *Migration and Remittances*. P. 23.

for about one-tenth of the world population.<sup>3</sup> The total number of foreign-born residents in the CIS zone is estimated between 25 and 30 million people, including 13 million in the Russian Federation,<sup>4</sup> seven million in the Ukraine, three million in Kazakhstan, one million in Uzbekistan, 0.5 million in Belarus, etc.<sup>5</sup>

The migration pattern in the CIS is unique not only in absolute numbers. It is especially significant in the ratio of migrants to the total population of their home state. According to the Russian Federation Migration Service, during recent years between 700,000 and 900,000 citizens of Tajikistan (out of population of 7.1 million) or about 30 percent of the labour force, have been involved in migration; in Kyrgyzstan the numbers are between 500,000 and 900,000 citizens (out of 5.5 million)<sup>6</sup> or about 30 percent of the labour force; in the Ukraine between 2.5-4.0 millions of citizens (out of 45 million) or up to 11 percent of the labor force; in Georgia between 500,000 and 700,000 of citizens (out of 5 million) or up to 25 percent of the labour force; in Moldova the numbers are even higher, as various estimates indicate them at 700,000 to 800,000 citizens of the country (out of 4 million) or about 40 percent of the labor force.

Short- and long-term migration of such magnitude inevitably impacts both the source and host countries. The profound effect – both positive and negative – of the population movement and resulting demographic changes can be seen in economic and social development in the CIS, in the development of the human capabilities and entitlements and in human development in general.

This paper assesses the current trends in population movement in the transitional countries of the CIS zone and focuses on the following questions. What are the “push” and “pull” factors that motivate this large-scale migration? What is the nature of population

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<sup>3</sup> Ali Mansoor and Bryce Quillin, eds. *Migration and Remittances. Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*. Washington DC: World Bank, 2006. P. 3.

<sup>4</sup> The data includes unregistered migrants; see: Irina Ivakhnyuk. *Migration in the CIS Region: Common Problems and Mutual Benefits* (Paper presented at the International Symposium on International Migration and Development). Turin, 2006. P. 3.

[http://www.un.org/esa/population/migration/turin/Symposium\\_Turin\\_files/P10\\_SYMP\\_Ivakhniouk.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/population/migration/turin/Symposium_Turin_files/P10_SYMP_Ivakhniouk.pdf) (accessed on June 20, 2009)

<sup>5</sup> Estimates vary widely and place the migration figures anywhere between 2.1 million (2006, CIS Statistical Committee) and 10 million people (2009, Russian Federal Migration Service) to about 15 million people (2006, World Bank Estimates) See: The CIS Statistical Committee relies on official registration data, see: *Sodruzestvo Nezavisimykh Gosudarstv v 2006 godu* [The Commonwealth of Independent States in 2006]. Moscow, CIS Stat, 2007. Pp. 126-127.

<sup>6</sup> Some other sources give different estimates, see:

<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insightb/articles/eav111008.shtml>; also: [http://www.migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=3209\\_0\\_4\\_0](http://www.migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=3209_0_4_0)

movement and how has it evolved over last decades? To what degree have social and political tensions, rapid population growth, extreme poverty, climate change and environmental degradation contributed to labor migration within the region? What are the current trends in labor migration in the CIS? What is the impact of the migration on human development in the region, including poverty reduction, social and gender equality, education and health?

Section One evaluates demographic, ethnic, economic, social and cultural backgrounds of migrants with a special focus on the Soviet-era social and economic legacies. *Section Two* analyzes the current migration trends in the CIS zone, discussing various types of migration including temporary, permanent and seasonal migration, human trafficking and human smuggling. Section Three examines the impact of migration on human development, including the impact on the economies, education systems, healthcare and living conditions in the CIS. The conclusion summarizes the findings and evaluates the prospects of migration in the region and future developments in the regional labour market.

## ***1.0. BACKGROUND AND EVOLUTION OF POPULATION MOVEMENT IN THE POST-SOVIET ERA***

The dissolution of the USSR in 1991 was an important turning point for all former Soviet republics, as with acquisition of independence they began the process of deconstructing the Soviet legacy and nation-state building.<sup>7</sup> In response to the challenges of the transition period the newly-independent states (NISs) also introduced a series of fundamental market-oriented economic changes and allowed some political liberalization, though each of them chose a different pace and extent of reforms. Most importantly, the new nation-states decided to abandon the Soviet-era practices and centralized command-economy by dismantling the socialist-style state welfare system, eliminating the elaborate system of labour market restrictions and subsidies, and opening the national markets for international trade and the forces of globalization.<sup>8</sup> They also ended the Soviet-era single all-Union citizenship in favor of national citizenship of an individual state; and they institutionalized the Commonwealth of

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<sup>7</sup> For discussion of the changing policies and the concept of the ethnic states, see: Valery Tishkov. *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame*. London, and Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 1997.

<sup>8</sup> Marie Lavigne. *The Economics of Transition. From Socialist Economy to Market Economy*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999.

Independent States (CIS) as a loose regional coalition of nation-states working out various forms of cooperation in various areas.

The aim of this section is to provide a brief overview of demographic changes, population mobility and migration policies during the late Soviet and post-Soviet eras. The severe measures and restrictive migration policies of the Soviet government highly regulated the population mobility; yet, the population movement in the former Soviet Union was quite large. What were the key determinants and drivers of migration among the countries during Soviet and post-Soviet eras?

### ***1.1. Demographic context and population mobility in the USSR/CIS region***

Several major factors affected the development of the migration trends in the region and the formation of the specific pattern of population mobility. Among the key drivers were the demographic changes. The overall birth rate in the Soviet Union was high enough to lift the total population from 255 million in 1975 to 285.6 million people in 1989 (USSR Census 1989),<sup>9</sup> making the USSR the fourth largest nation-state in the world. The closer look shows a more complex picture. Similar to other regions around the world, the USSR had the areas with high birth rate and the surplus of labour force (Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan), and the areas with the low birth rates and aging population and shortages of labour force (Belarus, Moldova, Russia and the Ukraine) (see Table I). However, the Soviet labour market was not formed by the demand and supply mechanisms. In sharp contrast to the market-oriented economies, where the fluctuation of market cost is one of the major instruments that regulate demand and supply in the labour market, the Soviet authorities believed in the intrusive role of the state and state regulation and often used non-monetary instruments and mechanisms to promote controlled population mobility. According to statistical data, about 54.3 million people (or 18 percent) of the Soviet population lived outside of their birth republics by 1989.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, the USSR still experienced a labour surplus in some republics and provinces and a shortage in others.

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<sup>9</sup> The most consistent statistical data about population change and population movement in the CIS comes from the CIS Statistical Agency's quarterly publications and from: *Sodruzestvo Nezavisimyykh Gosudarstv v 2006 godu* [The Commonwealth of Independent States in 2006]. Moscow, CIS Stat (yearbook, published since 1992).

<sup>10</sup> Andrei Korobkov. 'Post-Soviet Migration: New Trends at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century.' In: Cynthia Buckley, Blair Ruble, and Erin Hofmann, eds. *Migration, Homeland, and Belonging in Eurasia*.



The situation has considerably changed since 1991. Official demographic data indicates that the demographic dynamics in ex-Soviet region has changed since 1991, as the total population in the former Soviet republics declined from 285.74 million to 284.66 million between 1989 (the year of the last Soviet census) and 1999-2002 (the years when most of the newly independent states conducted their first censuses).<sup>11</sup> Since the early 1990s, the countries in the CIS zone have paradoxically displayed a combination of the features associated with both the extremely poor developing countries (low life expectancy, high level of inequality, extreme poverty among some groups of the society) and the developed countries of the West (low population growth, low fertility rate, population aging, etc.). The demographic situation, however, has varied from country to country and even within the countries.

The CIS zone can be subdivided into several groups of countries according to main demographic features. The first group is characterized by a high ratio of young people in the total population and moderate population growth. This group includes Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan<sup>12</sup> and Uzbekistan. The fertility rate in these countries between 1960s and 1991 was similar to that of developing countries, hence the high population growth.<sup>13</sup> For example, the population of Tajikistan doubled growing from 2.5 million in 1965 to 5.2 million in 1991. At present between 29 and 34 percent of the population in Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are younger than 14 years of age. This means that a significant proportion of the population entered the labor market in the 1990s and in the first decade of the 2000s.<sup>14</sup>

The second group experiences quite an opposite trend. A low fertility rate combined with high mortality resulted in negative population growth. This group of countries includes Belarus, Moldova, the Russian Federation and the Ukraine. In these countries the fertility rates

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Washington DC: John Hopkins University Press, 2008. P. 72. However, the attempt to calculate the number of migrants according to the ethnic identity contributed to the increase of the so-called “statistical migrants.” For example a Georgian, who permanently settled in Russia before 1991, would be counted a migrant for statistical purpose after 1991.

<sup>11</sup> Timothy Heleniak. ‘An overview of Migration in the Post-Soviet Space.’ In: Cynthia Buckley, Blair Ruble, and Erin Hofmann, eds. *Migration, Homeland, and Belonging in Eurasia*. Washington DC: John Hopkins University Press, 2008. P. 34-52.

<sup>12</sup> Many international experts question the demographic data from Turkmenistan as it shows a very high level of population growth. For further discussion, see: Rafis Abazov. *Historical Dictionary of Turkmenistan*. Lanham, Maryland, Toronto and Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2005. P. 129-130.

<sup>13</sup> These trends have been reflected in the population censuses in 1979, 1989 and 1999; see: *Sodruzestvo Nezavisimykh Gosudarstv v 2006 godu* [The Commonwealth of Independent States in 2006]. Moscow, CIS Stat, 2007.

<sup>14</sup> The data as of 2008, see: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ti.html#People>

have remained quite low for about two decades at about 1.3 to 1.6 children per woman, and in some areas falling even below 1.0 (for example, in St Petersburg it is 0.95). Experts argue that such a low fertility rate is not sustainable and would lead to a significant natural population decrease within next two decades, especially in Belarus, Russia and the Ukraine. As of 2009, in these countries only about 14 percent of the population are younger than 14 years of age and the proportion of people older than 60 is increasing rapidly.<sup>15</sup> Thus the population of the Ukraine is expected to decline from 49.0 in 1975 to 43.4 million in 2015, and Belarus from 9.4 million in 1975 to 9.3 million in 2015.

The third group is statistically situated between the first two groups. This group includes Armenia, Georgia and Kazakhstan. In these countries, the fertility rate remains high enough to maintain a stable population or to allow a small natural population increase. The situation is relatively stable in Armenia, Georgia and Kazakhstan, as the birth rate compensates for death rate. For example, the population of Kazakhstan is expected to reach 16.3 million in 2015, representing a moderate growth from 14.1 million in 1975.

One of the unique demographic features of the post-Soviet era is a very low life expectancy in most of the CIS countries despite the fact that the average GDP per capita is well above that of the poor developing countries. The average life expectancy in Turkmenistan, for example, for men is about 58.5 years and the average life expectancy for women is about 67.0 years; in the Ukraine the average life expectancy for men is about 62.0 years and for women is about 73.6 years; in the Russian Federation for men is 58.6 years and for women is 72.1 years,<sup>16</sup> placing Russia in the 137<sup>th</sup> place behind Bolivia, San Tome and Principe and Pakistan in the world ranking.<sup>17</sup> The low life expectancy translates into a significantly shortened number of years that people can be active in the labour market and a low number of senior people keeping jobs. According to some experts, the working-age population (aged between 15 and 64) in Russia is expected to shrink by 19 percent between 2005 and 2030 if the current demographic trends would remain unchanged.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> The data as of 2008, see: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rs.html#People>

<sup>16</sup> UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). *UNDP Human Development Report 2007/2008. Fighting Climate Change – Human Solidarity in a Divided World.* New York: United Nations Development Programme, 2008. Pp. 326-327.

<sup>17</sup> The data as of 2008, see: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rs.html#People>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/2008-83-27.cfm>

The Russian Federation also faces another unique demographic trend. Many small cities and towns across vast remote areas in Russia's northern provinces, Siberia and Far East would be challenged with rapid depopulation if the aging population were not replaced by inflow of migrants (see a case study, Box 2. Depopulation of Russia's Siberia and Far East).

**Table 1. Demographic trends**

Country	Total population (mln.)			Annual population growth (%)		Urban population (% of total)			Population under age of 15 (%)		Total fertility rate (birth per woman)	
	1975	2005	2015	1975-2005	2005-2015	1975	2005	2015	2005	2015	1970-1975	2000-2005
Armenia	2.8	3.0	3.0	0.2	-0.1	63.6	64.1	64.1	20.8	17.5	3.0	1.3
Azerbaijan	5.7	8.4	9.0	1.3	0.8	51.9	51.5	52.8	25.3	20.6	4.3	1.7
Belarus	9.4	9.8	9.3	0.1	-0.6	50.6	72.2	76.7	15.7	14.4	2.3	1.2
Georgia	4.9	4.5	4.2	-0.3	-0.7	49.5	52.2	53.8	18.9	15.9	2.6	1.5
Kazakhstan	14.1	15.2	16.3	0.2	0.7	52.6	57.3	60.3	24.2	24.9	3.5	2.0
Kyrgyzstan	3.3	5.2	5.8	1.5	1.1	38.2	35.8	38.1	31.0	27.3	4.7	2.5
Moldova	3.8	3.9	3.6	-	-0.6	36.2	46.7	50.0	20.0	17.2	2.6	1.5
Russia	134.2	144.0	136.5	0.2	-0.5	66.9	73.0	72.6	15.1	15.9	2.0	1.3
Tajikistan	3.4	6.6	7.7	2.1	1.6	35.5	24.7	24.6	39.4	33.6	6.8	3.8
Turkmenistan	2.5	4.8	5.5	2.2	1.3	47.6	46.2	50.8	31.8	27.0	6.2	2.8
Ukraine	49.0	46.9	43.4	-0.1	-0.8	58.4	67.8	70.2	14.7	13.9	2.2	1.2
Uzbekistan	14.0	26.6	30.6	2.1	1.4	39.1	36.7	38.0	33.2	28.3	6.3	2.7

Source: UNDP. *Human Development Report 2007/2008*. New York, UNDP, 2007. Pp. 243-245.

### ***1.2. Soviet legacy and labour mobility: restrictions***

Many scholars suggest that the Soviet era population mobility was shaped by the Soviet authorities' attempt to impose a strict control over population movement through a set of restrictive policy measures, subsidies and policy enforcements. The system of compulsory residential registrations (*propiska*) was one of the most important instruments in regulating population movement within the Soviet Union, especially of unskilled and low-skilled labor.

The *propiska* system required every citizen to register with the local registration office (which was a part of the Soviet law enforcement system). Without the registration no worker could get a job or employment authorization. An important feature related to *propiska* was the distributive nature of the housing system, as the Soviet authorities heavily subsidized residential housing and distributed apartments and houses among contracted unionized workers only. Thus, people could not freely move around without *propiska* and a job offer, because the lack of *propiska* automatically meant no residence. The closely related instrument of population mobility control was a system of *raspredeleniye* (job assignments) of recent graduates from the institutions of higher learning. The Soviet government invested substantial resources into the education system, achieving a nearly universal literacy rate, a high university-education rate and providing higher education for free. However, the free education came at a cost: the graduates were obliged to accept *raspredeleniye* for at least two or three years, or face various administrative punishments; in an extreme case, the university degree could be revoked. This system was quite effective in the short term, as enterprises, schools, farms and local communities in all areas – even in the most remote districts in Siberia, the Far East, Russian Northern and Sub-arctic regions – received a regular inflow of qualified professionals such as doctors, engineers, teachers, pharmacists, agriculture specialists, etc. In many cases the young professionals remained in the assigned place for longer than compulsory two or three years, for various reasons.

Large subsidies to agriculture and some industries and the state allocation of investments into certain geographic localities (Russian Far East, Siberia, some of the Union republics, etc.) allowed the provision of guaranteed life employment opportunities (though low paid) and universal healthcare coverage to all Soviet citizens. The guaranties were granted regardless of the cost of labour, especially in loss-making agricultural state farms and regional and local industries. The maintenance of full employment was, in the words of Timothy Helenik, a part of the “social contract.”<sup>19</sup>

However, in the longer term this policy undermined the development of the labour market as the specialization of higher-education graduates (supply-side) often did not match the demands of the labour market (demand-side) due to the absence or underdevelopment of competition and free-market mechanisms in education and job hiring.

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<sup>19</sup> Timothy Heleniak. Ibid. P. 33.

Therefore, despite the existence of the strict state-imposed restrictions over the population movement and economic activities and various initiatives to restrain free movement of labour, some workers (high-skilled construction workers, retail traders, etc.) moved relatively freely between Union republics and provinces in order to maximize economic return from temporary and seasonal employment. Recent studies of the Soviet era informal sector in Central Asia (Abazov, 1996,<sup>20</sup> Abazov 1998, and some others) suggest that the number of people involved and the economic impact was quite substantial. There were two major sectors in the Russian Federation and to a lesser extent in Kazakhstan, which absorbed a large number of temporary and seasonal migrants from labor surplus areas very often on an informal basis: 1) construction (especially in the areas with harsh climate and short summer season), and 2) the retail sector (especially green markets - the so-called *kolkhozniye bazary*). As there was a high demand for seasonal and temporary workers in labor-shortage areas in Russia's Siberia, Far East and many provinces in the central and northern Russia, the local authorities accepted temporary cash-in-hand hiring of labor migrants from Central Asia and Caucasus and these authorities often ignored many restrictive rules. In addition, Soviet authorities' notorious inability to provide a sufficient supply of agricultural products inspired many entrepreneurs from Central Asia, the Caucasus and to a lesser degree from Moldova and the Ukraine, to sell their product on the informal basis in the less-regulated *kolkhozniye bazary*.

In the 1980s these informal sectors of the labor market became quite large probably involving between 10 and 20 percent of the underemployed rural population in Central Asia and Caucasus, or between 400,000 and 800,000 people per year.<sup>21</sup>

### ***1.3. Soviet legacy and labour mobility: initiatives and subsidies***

The Soviet government attempted to promote labour mobility for certain highly skilled professionals and workers attracting them into labour-shortage areas within the USSR and to certain industries. This was done through an elaborate system of ethnic and professional quotas for minorities (distantly similar to the United States' affirmative action), salary initiatives in certain geographic localities (usually in Siberia, sub-Arctic and Arctic zones, and Far East),

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<sup>20</sup> Rafis Abazov, 'The Balkanization of the economy of the Central Asian Republics and its impact on the non-state sector', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, vol. 20, no. 4 (1996) pp. 744-753.

<sup>21</sup> Author's estimates.

economic and non-economic initiatives to work for certain industries and even waiving the registration requirement. Under this system, between the 1950s and the 1980s a large number of young professionals and skilled workers migrated from one republic to another or were lured from one province to another to fill the labour-shortages in specific job categories. Millions of highly educated professionals from Byelorussia, Russia and the Ukraine landed in Central Asia and the Caucasus, while hundreds of thousands of Central Asian and Caucasus professionals worked in other parts of the Soviet Union.

The most subsidized and intricate system of initiatives and budget transfers was developed to support the politically influential communities of farmers (state-controlled *kolkhozes* and *sovkhozes*). These subsidies were combined with a complex system of residential registration (*propiska*) and various financial and non-financial initiatives in order to slow down the rural-urban migration in the 1970s and 1980s. The proportion of people living in rural areas varied from republic to republic, but it still remained relatively high compared to the developed countries in Western Europe and North America. For example, according to the 1989 census between 55 and 68 percent of the population in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan lived in rural areas or small towns.<sup>22</sup> The picture was somewhat different in some other parts of the USSR; the number of people living in rural areas was between 26 and 43 percent in Armenia, Byelorussia, Georgia, Russia, Kazakhstan and the Ukraine.<sup>23</sup> The official statistical data indicates that the process of the rural-urban migration experienced no sharp turns or sudden changes until the late 1980s and it was relatively slow and gradual. For example, it took about 10 years - between 1979 and 1989 - for rural population to drop from 50 to 35 percent in Byelorussia and from 50 to 30 percent in the Russian Federation.

The entire agricultural sector in the USSR relied on the subsidies and budget transfers so much that even a timid attempt to cut subsidies and impose fiscal discipline introduced by Gorbachev-led administration brought serious negative consequences to this sector. Studies of the rural communities in the former Soviet republics suggest that already in the late 1980s

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<sup>22</sup> *Narodnoie Khoziaistvo*. Moscow: FiS, 1990. P. 24

<sup>23</sup> *Narodnoie Khoziaistvo*. Moscow: FiS, 1990. P. 19-24

many rural communities, especially in Central Asia and the Caucasus, experienced growing unemployment and underemployment due to the cut in subsidies and budget constraints.<sup>24</sup>

The large agricultural subsidies remained in place until the early 1990s, as an influential political lobby, who represented by large state-run agricultural enterprises (*kolkhozes* and *sovkhoses*) prevented any substantial cuts in subsidies. Only the dissolution of the USSR led to sharp changes in the agricultural policies as almost all newly independent republics decided to remove not only most of the subsidies, but also open their agricultural markets for international competitions.

#### ***1.4. Economic transition and economic changes after the USSR***

The new elite, which came to power after 1991 in most of the former Soviet republics, decided to abandon the Soviet-style centralized command economy and embrace the radical free-market oriented reforms. They were assisted and advised by the international donor organizations and economic consultants, who largely represented the so-called Washington Consensus and who succeeded to a certain degree in convincing some of the CIS policy-makers to accept a shock-therapy approach to the economic reform.<sup>25</sup> The reforms included deregulation of the public sector and labour markets, price liberalization, mass privatization and support of private initiatives. These policies implied that the states should trust the self-regulating forces of the market to regulate the survival and failure of enterprises, and that the governments and state institutions should not directly intervene into the economic development.<sup>26</sup>

However, this approach combined with the policy mistakes led to a decade-long economic recession, which brought whole sectors of economy to the total collapse in many CIS countries with the partial exception of Belarus, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. For example, between 1989 and 2002 Armenia's real GDP declined 63 percent (cumulative output decline),

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<sup>24</sup> For a comprehensive study of this trend see: Sergey Polyakov. *Traditsionalizm v sovremennom sredneaziatskom obshchestve* [Traditionalism in the contemporary Central Asian society]. Moscow: Znanie, 1989.

<sup>25</sup> For more discussions, see: Anders Aslund. *How Capitalism Was Built: The Transformation of Central and Eastern Europe, Russia, and Central Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. Also: Anders Aslund. *Building Capitalism: The Transformation of the Former Soviet Bloc*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

<sup>26</sup> For details, see: World Bank. *Russian Economic Reform: Crossing the Threshold of Structural Change (World Bank Country Study)*. Washington DC: World Bank, 1992.

in Azerbaijan it declined 60 percent, in Georgia – 78 percent, in Kyrgyzstan – 50 percent, in Moldova – 63 percent, in Tajikistan – 50 percent and in the Ukraine – 59 percent.<sup>27</sup>

Scholars argue (R. Pomfret, 1995) that serious “policy mistakes” in response to consumer goods shortages, large output losses and increase in unemployment have contributed to the worsening of the economic situation in the CIS zone.<sup>28</sup> Among these blunders, they cite the “[tight] export controls” that led to the “short-term disruption of trade patterns” between the CIS countries,<sup>29</sup> as the newly independent countries introduced new currencies, new legal arrangements for import and export operations, strict customs control on goods and services and passport control on the movement of people. With practically nonexistent coordination in the legal and economic reforms, these arrangements often led to the creation of additional and serious barriers for trade and economic cooperation and contributed to further economic decline that ultimately climaxed in the prolonged economic recession and the rise of mass unemployment and underemployment.

In addition, there were negative economic consequences of globalization. As elsewhere in the industrialized world the industrial enterprises in the CIS began facing tough competition from cheap products from developing countries (China, South Korea, Turkey, India and others), as the CIS members liberalized their import regulations and opened their markets for international goods. These imports hit especially hard the republics with relatively large labour-intensive textile and garment industries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova).<sup>30</sup>

By the early 2000s, the transitional reforms and macroeconomic stabilization brought in some foreign direct investments (FDIs), consolidation and revival of some sectors of the national economies, and consequently some economic growth. Since 2000, most of the countries in the CIS zone have experienced economic growth, though the pattern of investments and growth-rate has varied from country to country and even within the countries. As elsewhere in the world, the new investments and new economy<sup>31</sup> have been

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<sup>27</sup> Timothy Heliak. ‘An Overview of Migration in the Post-Soviet Space.’ In: Cynthia Buckley, Blair Ruble, and Erin Hofmann, eds. *Migration, Homeland, and Belonging in Eurasia*. Washington DC: John Hopkins University Press, 2008. P. 59.

<sup>28</sup> Richard Pomfret. *The Economies of Central Asia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995. Pp. 43, 51-53.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. Pp. 51-52.

<sup>30</sup> *Narodnoie Khoziaistvo...* Moscow: FiS, 1990. P. 329-390.

<sup>31</sup> See World Bank Report. *Innovation, Inclusion and Integration*. Washington DC: World Bank,



disproportionably concentrated in the largest metropolitan centers. As a rule, in almost all of the CIS countries the major investments have remained in the capital cities and one or two major metropolitan centers. In Russia it has been Moscow and Saint-Petersburg; in the Ukraine it has been Kyiv (Kiev) and Donetsk; in Kyrgyzstan – Bishkek; in Georgia – Tbilisi; in Kazakhstan – Almaty and Astana. In contrast, many smaller cities and towns especially the cities with undiversified economies – the so-called single-industry cities – have experienced particularly deep recession and have been recovering at a much slower rate as they have received significantly smaller investments.

The economic development between 2000 and 2008 is characterized by the emergence of a new trend: an increase of the already substantial economic discrepancy between the resource-rich and resource-poor countries. Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan – the resource-rich countries – have emerged as the fastest growing economies in the CIS zone. Rising prices for oil and gas in the international market brought in significant income both to state budgets and to private resource-export-oriented companies.<sup>32</sup> This contributed to rapid rise in income among the general population and increasing budget spending on salaries, healthcare and welfare, education and infrastructure. In addition, this development generated a significant number of new jobs. The resource-poor countries – that include Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Moldova and Uzbekistan – struggled to revive their economies and to generate new jobs.<sup>33</sup>

Belarus has remained in between these two groups. The country is not rich in natural resources, but it has maintained macroeconomic stability, attracted FDIs and generated jobs through a combination of continuity of economic policies, subsidies and state intervention.

### ***1.5. The economic policies and their impact on human development in the CIS: the rise of extreme poverty, inequality and decline of social capital***

One of the most unexpected outcomes of the development in the CIS zone in the 1990s was the rise of extreme poverty, income inequality and the loss of social capital.<sup>34</sup> These

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<sup>32</sup> This paper is being written in December 2008, when the full impact of the global credit crunch and financial meltdown on the former Soviet Union countries has not yet been assessed.

<sup>33</sup> Georgia managed to attract substantial FDIs and foreign aid between 2005 and 2008 and to achieve accelerated economic growth, though in the 1990s it also faced a steep economic decline.

<sup>34</sup> See: Judyth L. Twigg and Kate Schecter, eds. *Social Capital and Social Cohesion in Post-Soviet Russia*. Armonk NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2003. Also: David Halpern. *Social Capital*. New York: Polity, 2004.

phenomena became particularly profound during the years of the deep economic recession in the mid-1990s. In fact, according to the World Bank estimates, the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia were the only countries in the world where extreme poverty (living on less than US\$1 per day) increased while in all other parts of the world it declined.<sup>35</sup> The economic situation has improved in the first decade in the 2000s, yet the economic growth has been so uneven among various CIS countries and often within the CIS states themselves that it has contributed little to the eradication of extreme poverty, growing inequality and decline of the social capital in many depressed areas.<sup>36</sup>

Bad policy choices negatively affected the social capital in many CIS countries. One of the most important factors was changing policies towards the social welfare system. During the severe economic recession of 1992-1995 most of the CIS countries downsized welfare spending to bare bones, dismantling *de facto* welfare and healthcare guaranties while keeping those guaranties on paper. They reformed the social security system in a way that forced individual citizens to bear all costs and risks of economic difficulties and downturns. For years the governments in the CIS zone allocated inadequate social welfare fundings and often failed to effectively manage the distribution of funds among the neediest members of the community. For example, the average monthly pension in Tajikistan was established at the rate of US\$1.8, in Moldova US\$6.9, in Armenia US\$8.1, in Georgia US\$8.1 and in Kyrgyzstan US\$9.6, and even in relatively better off Russia and Kazakhstan the pensions remained below US\$30 (2000, official est.).<sup>37</sup>

The governments in the CIS did not come up with a cohesive public policy approaches and programs to deal with the rise of extreme poverty and mass unemployment, as there was a long-standing tradition of denial of the existence of extreme poverty and social ills inherited from the Soviet era. Statistical data illustrate the trends in the rise of extreme poverty. For example, in Armenia 49 percent of the population lived on less than US\$2 per day (as of 2006), in Kazakhstan the number was 25 percent, in Kyrgyzstan 25 percent, in Moldova 64 percent, in Tajikistan 43 percent, in Turkmenistan 44 percent, in the Ukraine 46 percent and in Uzbekistan

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<sup>35</sup> World Bank. *Global Economic Prospects*. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2002.

<sup>36</sup> William Dillinger. *Poverty and Regional Development in Eastern Europe and Central Asia* (Chief Economist's Regional Working Paper Series, Vol. 2, No. 1). Washington DC: World Bank. 2007.

<sup>37</sup> *Sodruzhestvo Nezavisimykh Gosudarstv v 2006 godu* [The Commonwealth of Independent States in 2006]. Moscow, CIS Stat, 2007. P. 135.

72 percent.<sup>38</sup> By the beginning of 2000s, Tajikistan became one of the poorest countries in the world with a GDP per capita income about half of that of Sudan, Zimbabwe or Haiti.

Thirdly, in sharp contrast to the developed countries such as the U.S., Britain or Canada the governments in former Soviet countries did not promote or support the income equality and failed to prevent concentration of wealth in the hands of few. For example, according to the UNDP HDR in 2008, the poorest 20 percent controlled 6.1 percent of wealth while richest 20 percent controlled 46.6 percent of the wealth in Russia. On the top of it, there has been no tradition among the wealthy individuals in the CIS to share their wealth by providing various forms of social support to the extremely poor, such as funding shelters or food for the homeless, the unemployed or poor families, children and seniors. In fact, it took many years to open first shelters for the homeless in the Russian Federation and the Ukraine despite the fact that many international agencies and NGOs reported a sharp rise in the number of homeless adults, seniors and children in the 1990s.<sup>39</sup>

Changes in the UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) illustrate the negative trends among the poorest countries in the CIS. In the year 1990, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan were all tied in 31<sup>st</sup> place in the HDI, roughly on par with the rapidly growing newly industrialized countries of South East Asia. In 2007, the HDI ranked Armenia in 83<sup>rd</sup> place out of 177, Azerbaijan in the 98<sup>th</sup> place, Georgia in 96<sup>th</sup> place, Kyrgyzstan in 116<sup>th</sup> place, Moldova in 111<sup>th</sup> place, Tajikistan in 122<sup>nd</sup> place, Turkmenistan in 109<sup>th</sup> place, Ukraine in 76<sup>th</sup> place, and Uzbekistan in 113<sup>th</sup> place.<sup>40</sup>

### ***1.6. Migration: Pull and push factors***

The transitional reforms and the end of the centralized command economy weakened the state control over the lives of the people and empowered ordinary citizens and their families to decide about their ways of life, work and movements. This included the freedom to

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<sup>38</sup> Irina Ivakhnyuk. *Migration in the CIS Region: Common Problems and Mutual Benefits*. (Paper presented at the International Symposium on International Migration and Development). Turin, 2006. P. 2.

<sup>39</sup> Many of these shelters have been opened by foreign-based or foreign-funded organizations and for many years they have struggled to gain local support or raise funds from the local communities. For scholarly discussion, see: Clementine K. Fujimura with Sally W. Stoecker and Tatyana Sudakova. *Russia's Abandoned Children: An Intimate Understanding*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers, 2005.

<sup>40</sup> UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). *UNDP Human Development Report 2007/2008. Fighting Climate Change – Human Solidarity in a Divided World*. New York: United Nations Development Programme, 2008. Pp. 229-232.

conduct a cost-benefit assessment of their personal actions in the labour market. At the same time, the economic, political and social developments contributed to the formation of certain pull and push factors that affected people's decision to stay and deal with the changing economic environment or to migrate for opportunities in other places. It is important to highlight that these push and pull factors complimented each other in contributing to formation of a specific pattern of migration and population change. Recent studies (UNDP, 2005) suggest that a combination of factors created strong initiatives for individuals to migrate from one place to another.<sup>41</sup>

Push Factors: Rising unemployment and underemployment has been among the most important push factors for migration, as decade-long economic recession and job losses estimated in millions contributed to the dramatic deterioration of labour-market conditions in all resource-poor countries in the CIS zone. In labor-surplus republics the local labour markets in many cities and towns did not generate new jobs especially for the growing cohort of young people. In fact, according to the World Bank estimates in 2000, the transitional countries (CIS and Eastern Europe) had the highest unemployment rate in the world.<sup>42</sup> The steep decline in real personal incomes and wages has been another important push factor, as it led to the rise of extreme poverty in some republics in the CIS zone, especially in the so-called southern belt – Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Armenia, Moldova and Uzbekistan. Among other push factors that worsened the situation has been a near-disappearance of social welfare and severe decline of public healthcare systems. Anecdotal evidence suggests that in some remote areas, like mountainous regions in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Georgia and Russia, these welfare and healthcare systems have collapsed altogether.<sup>43</sup> In addition, some places face environmental problems that have become another push factor. Many small agricultural enterprises and individual farmers have been devastated by declining land productivity; soil erosion; salinization and reduced drinking water availability in many areas of the Ferghana valley, along the Amu Darya River and around the Aral Sea (Central Asia); aging irrigation systems in Central Asia, the Caucasus and Russia; and years of neglect combined with the

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<sup>41</sup> UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). *Central Asia Human Development Report. Bringing Down Barriers: Regional Cooperation for Human Development and Human Security*. Bratislava: UNDP, 2005. P. 141.

<sup>42</sup> Gordon Betcherman. *An Overview of Labor Markets World Wide: Key Trends and Major Policy Issues*. Washington DC: World Bank, 2002. P. 9.

<sup>43</sup> For a brief case study of the healthcare system conditions in Tajikistan see: [http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha\\_ol/pub/appeals/96appeals/tajik/141196.html](http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha_ol/pub/appeals/96appeals/tajik/141196.html)

impact of global warming and climate change. This environmental blow forced many of them to abandon their jobs or farms in their home countries and to move to cities or foreign countries in search of income. Among the push factors, some scholars also name growing cultural factor, as nation-state building in the post-Soviet era placed a significant burden on those ethnic minorities who had no knowledge of local languages and thus began to consider moving to other countries in search of a suitable cultural, education and language environment. For example, between 1991 and 1999, the migration was driven by ethnic, cultural and education changes, as the migrant groups consisted of mainly people who decided to return permanently to their titular homeland states from the Union republics. For example, the Russians who lived in Turkmenistan moved to the Russian Federation; the Kazakhs who resided in Russia or Kyrgyzstan went back to Kazakhstan; the Ukrainians of Tajikistan or Uzbekistan returned to the Ukraine and so on. According to Andrei Korobkov, expert on migration in the CIS, this population movement was often motivated by “political and ethnic [reasons].”<sup>44</sup>

Pull factors. Many factors have attracted people to some areas and sub-regions in the CIS region. One of the most important pull factors has been the economic factor. The energy-rich CIS countries have had more resources to spend even during the difficult years of the economic recession, and the recent growth in energy-rich countries propelled by the soaring energy exports and rising energy prices in the external markets led to the inflow of significantly larger investments into the infrastructure, real estate and services sectors. Since 2001 Russian and Kazakhstan have been creating a number of low skilled seasonal and temporary jobs in the agriculture, food-processing, construction, hospitality and services sectors much faster than any other countries in the CIS region. Under the improving economic conditions, Russia and Kazakhstan have been raising the wages much faster than Central Asian republics. The difference in incomes between countries became quite substantial, as for example average monthly salaries in Russia being nearly 9 times higher than in Tajikistan (as of 2000).

An important pull factor is improving standards of living and better social and security conditions in the host countries due to economic stabilization, rising prosperity, availability of better healthcare services and falling criminality rates.

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<sup>44</sup> Andrei Korobkov. ‘Post-Soviet Migration: New Trends at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century.’ In: Cynthia Buckley, Blair Ruble, and Erin Hofmann, eds. *Migration, Homeland, and Belonging in Eurasia*. Washington DC: John Hopkins University Press, 2008. P. 75.

**Table 2. Average Monthly Nominal Wages and Salaries (in US dollars)**

Country/ year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2008*
Armenia	42.1	44.1	47.7	60.1	81.4	113.7	149.8	293
Azerbaijan	49.5	55.8	64.9	78.8	101.2	130.8	166.8	317
Belarus	73.6	86.6	104	120	160	215	271	396
Georgia	36	45	51.7	58	81	112	...	...
Kazakhstan	101	117.9	132	154	208	256	323	485
Kyrgyzstan	25.7	39	35	43	52	63	81	137
Moldova	32	42	51	63	89	104	129	245
Russia	79	111	139	179	234	305	391	718
Tajikistan	8.5	9	11	14	20	26	35	63
Turkmenistan	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ukraine	42	57	70	86	110	157	206	356
Uzbekistan	...	39	39	41	52	...	...	...

Source: *Sodruzhestvo Nezavisimyykh Gosudarstv v 2006 godu* [The Commonwealth of Independent States in 2006]. Moscow, CIS Stat, 2007. P. 134.

For data on 2008 see: <http://eng.24.kg/cis/2008/07/31/5732.html>. (accessed on February 04, 2009)

### ***1.7. Formation of the CIS migration zone and regional cooperation***

One of the important legacies that affect population movement in the CIS zone is the legacy of a distorted labour market and the “massive misallocation of labour inherited from the socialist era.”<sup>45</sup> These problems combined with the impact of globalization, industrial restructuring and downsizing of the public sector have resulted in the need for a massive labor-market adjustment in the post-Soviet era. During the post-Soviet era two approaches have emerged in dealing with transition issues including regional cooperation on migration and population movement in the former Soviet space. Liberal market-oriented economists and their supporters promoted free trade, free movement of people, goods and services, development of regional infrastructure and a single labour market in a belief that all of that

<sup>45</sup> Mansoor Rashid and Jan Rutkowski. *Labour Market in Transition Economies. Recent Developments and Future Challenges*. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2001. P. 1.

would improve the international competitiveness, and sustainable economic growth and would advance human development. The other school of thought has promoted an opposite idea, claiming that the national governments should protect the national industries and job markets by building up various forms of restrictions, regulations and permits.

Despite of all difficulties and problems the cooperation within the CIS zone has led to the formation of the CIS migration zone. According to experts' estimates as of 2008 about 80 percent of citizens of the former Soviet Union still migrate within the CIS.<sup>46</sup> The CIS nationals can still travel within the CIS zone without entry visa and using inexpensive transportation infrastructure that makes travels around the CIS zone extremely affordable even for poorest citizens of the CIS countries.

The development of the regional cooperation on major issues, including development of some forms of regional economic and labour markets can be contributed to several factors.

Cultural. The CIS social, economic and cultural zone has been formed as a successor of the Soviet socio-political and economic system. For nearly 70 years prior to 1991 people lived in a single state building up the vast personal and professional networks and strengthening their social and human capital. Therefore, it was quite natural to preserve some forms in dealing with major issues and working on integration on the CIS into the global economy and to maintain some forms of close cultural, social, language and educational links.

Political. Since 1991 the national governments in the CIS region have worked on developing regional political cooperation, including threat from terrorism, drugs and human trafficking and human smuggling.

Trade. The founding members of the CIS pledged to support the free flow of people, goods and services within the CIS zone. In addition, the private regional trade networks have been active for several decades and some of them have deep and strong roots in the Soviet era, as they started as small private trade enterprises in the green markets and other enterprises during the Soviet era.

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<sup>46</sup> Ali Mansoor and Bryce Quillin, eds. *Migration and Remittances. Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*. Washington DC: World Bank, 2006. P. 3. The experience of the post-colonial development in Asia and Africa illustrates that people often prefer to travel and migrate within the familiar cultural, education and language environment. Thus, migrants from the former French colonies in Africa often move to France, migrants from the former British colonies in South Asia often prefer to move to the UK, etc.

Legislature. The framework for cooperation on migration between the Commonwealth members was established by the Almaty Declaration (December 1991),<sup>47</sup> the Agreement on establishing Consultative Council on Labour, Migration and Social Protection (November 1992), the CIS Inter-Government Treaty on Migration and Social Protection of Labour Migrants (April 1994) and the CIS Treaty on Cooperation against Illegal Migrations (March 1998). In addition, between 1992 and 2000 most of the members of the CIS signed bilateral agreements that allowed a visa-free travel regime between their countries.<sup>48</sup> Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan confirmed the visa-free regime by signing a new multilateral treaty in 2005.

In addition, the non-state institutions, agencies and organizations have increasingly begun playing an important role in lowering barriers and easing population movement within the CIS zone. When time is tough, the policies on regional cooperation in addressing issues related to population movement often come under attack from non-state players, such as populist politicians and nationalist groups, popular pressure from public opinion of certain segments of the society, Trade Unions or industries. Yet, other non-government actors work hard to promote liberalization of migration policies, regional cooperation on migration and they call for maintaining a single cultural zone and regional cooperation. In this regard, two trends increasingly play an important role. One is the formation and strengthening of intensive social and ethnic networks in various CIS countries using new media and communication tools (internet and cell-phone-messaging systems) into which all migrants can tap in for help, support and security. These networks – often built around specific web-services and cell-phone-messaging services – include extensive and often large groups of former classmates, former colleagues, friends and relatives who make strong efforts to preserve their links with extensive social and ethnic networks and build the social capital.<sup>49</sup> The other trend is an effort to maintain the regional language (in this case Russian) as an essential lingua franca and avert the decline in the knowledge of Russian language and of multicultural values among the younger generations. Most of the people in the CIS zone who entered schools before 1991

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<sup>47</sup> Letter dated 27 December 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, New York: United Nations, 30 December 1991 (A/47/60-S/23329): [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/47/60](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/47/60)

<sup>48</sup> This was reinforced by the multilateral treaty between members of the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), including Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation and Tajikistan, in 2005.

<sup>49</sup> One of the largest internet-based networks in the CIS is <http://www.odnoklassniki.ru/>



speak the Russian language and display remarkable similarities in cultural preferences, work ethics and attitudes towards team-work and conflict management.

## ***2.0. CURRENT MIGRATION TRENDS IN THE CIS ZONE***

Traditionally migration represents an action by individuals, families and groups, who would like to maximize their economic returns, to achieve political security, to gain social benefits, or to retain cultural identity and cohesion. Therefore, migration is often motivated by pressures from the changing environment at home countries and/or perceived benefits outside the home countries. In the CIS region migrants have been motivated to move by various factors including ethnic and cultural, economic, political (political tensions, inter-ethnic conflicts, civil wars, etc.), as well as by false promises of benefits by criminal gangs and false expectations.

The aim of this section is to discuss the current migration trends between the countries in the CIS region focusing on recent changes in migration flows.<sup>50</sup> This includes discussion of the emergence of the ethnic migration in the post-Soviet era, economic migration (both long-term and short-term), forced migration and human trafficking and transit migration.

### ***2.1. Ethnic migration in the 1990s***

After the dissolution of the USSR in 1991 a sizable number of people moved among the newly independent states. This migration was dubbed as the ethnic migration, and it continued at a large scale probably for a decade between 1991 and 1999-2000 peaking between 1993 and 1996. During this decade several million people moved from one country to another, as estimations range from nine millions to fifteen millions. For example, according to various estimates the Central Asian Republics and the Caucasus lost about 3.1 million Russians and 300,000 Ukrainians, who moved to the Russian Federation and the Ukraine respectively. In the meantime, about 120,000 Kazakhs moved to Kazakhstan from Russia, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Importantly, this migrant population included a number of ethnically mixed

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<sup>50</sup> The international migrants are not discussed here.

families. According to experts' estimates the ethnic migrants constituted between half and two-thirds of all migrants moving in CIS member countries in the 1990s.<sup>51</sup>

Scholars still debate the main reasons behind the rise of ethnic migration (Paul Kolstoe, 1995),<sup>52</sup> including “ethnic turmoil” and deteriorating inter-ethnic relations, “language question,” perception of “social marginalization,” “lack of information,” removal of the elaborate system of ethnic, gender and social quotas, and loss of cultural identity and sense of belonging due to the need to master local languages in order to get jobs and to maintain social status.<sup>53</sup> Many migrants have taken into consideration not only ethnic and cultural factors, but also social, family and economic factors in calculating cost benefits of such migration.

In some degree this was correction of the Soviet era migration and population distribution that accumulated some demographic and settlement distortions over the period of 50-70 years due to the forced migration and deportation of some groups of people from one area to another and mass recruitment through various economic and non-economic initiatives to the areas of the high economic growth. Some field studies and observations suggest that a significant proportion of these migration flows included people who moved from their home towns and communities in one republic to another republic during last decade or two, especially those who continued to maintain relations with their family members and communities despite long-term migration to a different place. It also included those who initially thought to move on a permanent basis because of marriages, job offers, and so on, but who changed their minds due to the changing circumstances.

Between 2000 and 2009 the number of ethnic migrants in the Commonwealth declined drastically. Scholars believe that this change occurred due to the fact the most of the socially mobile and active ethnic migrants had already returned to their home countries, while the remaining groups experienced lesser cultural pressure and lesser interethnic tension in their communities. With the improving economic conditions in almost all CIS countries between 2001 and 2007, the economic opportunities opened to the ethnic minorities as well. Some studies also suggest that recently the lines between ethnic and other form of motivations for

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<sup>51</sup> Vladimir Mukomel. *Migratsionnaa politika Rossii: postsovetskie konteksty* [Migration Policy of Russia: Post-Soviet Contexts]. Moscow: Dipol-T, 2005. P. 52.

<sup>52</sup> For a discussion see: Paul Kolstoe. *Russians in the Former Soviet Republics*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995.

<sup>53</sup> Paul Kolstoe. *Russians in the Former Soviet Republics*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995. Pp. 200-257.

migration (economic, etc.) have blurred especially among young school and university graduates. According to experts' estimates the proportion of ethnic migration declined to about five to ten percent of the total migration flow in the former Soviet space between 2000 and 2008.<sup>54</sup>

## **2.2 Economic migration in the CIS region**

Economic migration in the CIS region since 1991 was to a certain extent a continuation of population movement during the Soviet era rising in absolute terms from about 2-3 million in 1992 to 8-10 million in 2006,<sup>55</sup> and it is expected that the migration would increase further within the next decade if the economic conditions in host countries improve further. Between 1991 and 2009 people moved between the republics with the expectation of improving their human capabilities and entitlements, escaping social and political tensions, extreme poverty or marginalization of their communities. Despite increasingly restrictive regulations in the host countries, these migrants expected to acquire access to better schooling, social welfare and healthcare benefits for themselves and their family members, to better work conditions and higher wages and better choices in building personal and family relations.<sup>56</sup>

Overall, the economic migrants can be subdivided into the two distinctive groups. The first group includes mostly skilled and highly-skilled professionals usually migrating from urban areas in home country into urban areas in host countries.

A significant number of such migrants have been searching for similar life-style and similar jobs. This movement pattern was facilitated by the fact that most of the ethnic and business (work) networks are usually located in urban centers, and these networks were crucial in gathering information about the destination cities, conditions in the job market, accommodation, salaries, etc. Although very often the new jobs in host countries meant lower social status and highly-qualified professionals often accepted low-skill jobs in the new location, the salaries were five to ten times higher than in the home country.<sup>57</sup> For many highly

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<sup>54</sup> Vladimir Mukomel. *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> 'Russia: CIS migrants.' *Migration News* July 2006, Volume 12, No. 3.  
[http://www.migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=3209\\_0\\_4\\_0](http://www.migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=3209_0_4_0)

<sup>56</sup> For an overview of the major changes see: Andrew Robarts, 'The Russian State and Migration: A Theoretical and Practical Look at the Russian Federation's Migration Regime.' In: Cynthia Buckley, Blair Ruble, and Erin Hofmann, eds. *Migration, Homeland, and Belonging in Eurasia*. Washington DC: John Hopkins University Press, 2008. Pp. 99-121.

<sup>57</sup> Personal interviews in Russia and Kazakhstan. 2008 and 2009.

skilled workers, in fact, migration was the only way to escape unemployment in their home country.

Second group of migrants includes mostly unskilled and low-skilled migrants who moved in search of job opportunities including jobs in the construction sector, retail, etc. Most of these migrants originated in rural areas in home countries and they often moved to large urban centers in host countries. With the long-term transitional crisis in the state-controlled agricultural sector in the southern-belt countries and rising unemployment and underemployment an increasing number of rural inhabitants began considering temporary and seasonal migration to other former Soviet Union countries. Many of them initially tried their luck in major urban centers in their home country picking up any kind of paid job and gradually opting for migration to large cities in higher-wage host countries. However, many of them joined the flow of the seasonal and temporary workers who went to the former Soviet Union countries directly from their rural hometowns. These rural migrants often had little industrial experience or experience in living in large metropolitan areas. Out of desperation they were ready to accept extremely low-paid and low-skilled jobs in the construction and service sectors. Some of them found their niches in seasonal intensive agriculture, in retail and catering businesses, hospitality industries, cleaning services and care economy in Kazakhstan and Russia.

In the 1990s, the main destination regions were in European Russia (Moscow, St. Petersburg and others) and major industrial and resource-extracting centres in Western Siberia. Eventually, migrants from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan began considering southern and central Kazakhstan. Many migrating farmers ended up working in labour-intensive agricultural enterprises in the host countries (tobacco, cotton, food processing, etc.). Since 1999-2001 a significant number of these migrants become also involved in seasonal construction in Kazakhstan's booming cities of Almaty, Astana and Atyrau. In addition, a significant number of these migrants found jobs in the service sector. Migrants from Moldova, the Ukraine and Caucasus found their primary job markets in Russia as very few of them moved to Kazakhstan or Azerbaijan. Again, the main niches for these migrants were the construction and service sectors in major Russian urban centers. However, with the accession

of central European countries to the European Union, many of the workers have begun moving to other non-CIS countries.<sup>58</sup>

It might be argued that post-Soviet labour migrants have probably followed the routes established during the Soviet era and the same patterns. Like during the Soviet era, many migrants prefer employment in the informal sector and informal contractual relations (cash payments) for their jobs to avoid the red tape and bureaucratic maze of job permits, taxations and other issues. However, after 1991 there was an important difference as most of them now come as foreign citizens and are treated as foreign citizens with serious negative implications for their access to healthcare and welfare benefits. After dissolution of the USSR and introduction of market oriented reforms, the access to the healthcare and welfare benefits is on the discretion of employers, and is not automatically guaranteed by the state to labor migrants.

### ***2.3. Long-term migrants***

Permanent migration implies that a person relocates to another place and resides there for a long period of time. During the Soviet era millions of people were relocated from one place to another for various reasons and many of them decided to remain in their new place of residence. Movement between the Soviet republics did not require a change in citizenship and there were no restrictions on accessing pensions, social welfare and healthcare benefits.<sup>59</sup> With the independence of 1991, the first issue the newly independent states faced was the question of citizenship. Almost all of the CIS republics opted for the status quo automatically granting citizenship to everyone who resided and was registered (system of *propiska*) on the territory of a state at the time of independence.

During first years after the dissolution of the USSR, Russia maintained a quite liberal naturalization policy, accepting about 1.5-2 million people a year. This wave of migration consisted of about five million so-called Russian-speakers (ethnic Russians, Tatars, Mordvins, etc.) who had previously resided in various Soviet republics and decided to return,<sup>60</sup> despite the

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<sup>58</sup> For example, empirical studies suggest that since 2000 many Moldovan workers have moved to Romania, Poland, Italy and some other Western European countries. Ukrainian workers have moved to Poland, the Czech and Slovak Republics, Spain, the United Kingdom and other countries.

<sup>59</sup> Significant restrictions were in place for political prisoners, for former prisoners of war and for those convicted of various crimes, including political crimes.

<sup>60</sup> According to the official Russian statistics between 1992 and 2004 about 4.8 million people received permanent residence permits to naturalize. 'Russia: CIS migrants.' *Migration News* July 2006, Volume 12, No. 3. [http://www.migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=3209\\_0\\_4\\_0](http://www.migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=3209_0_4_0)

fact that many of them lived in there for decades or generations. Other CIS member states followed similar policies. For example, the government of Kazakhstan sponsored a special program funding the relocation of tens of thousands of ethnic Kazakhs from Mongolia, Iran, China, Russia and other countries. However already in the 1990s a noticeable proportion of permanent migrants consisted of other ethnic groups (Azeris, Georgians, Armenians, etc.) who decided to move to Russia permanently.

By the first decade of the 2000s the profile of permanent migrants began changing as the number of ethnic migrants moving for cultural and ethnic reasons diminished considerably, while the number of migrants intending to move permanently for purely economic reasons increased. Most of the permanent migrants still chose the Russian Federation as the place of residence, though recently some permanent migrants have begun settling in Kazakhstan and the Ukraine. The average annual number of the forced and permanent ethnic migrants fell several folds due to combination of factors, including changing regulations on permanent migration and citizenship in the receiving countries, decline in inter-ethnic tensions and increasing political stability and rule of law in their home countries. For example, according to Russian expert on migration Vladimir Mukomel, between 1992 and 2001 emigration from Estonia to Russia decreased 29 times, from Lithuania – 20 times, and from Kyrgyzstan nine times.<sup>61</sup>

#### ***2.4. Short-term migrants***

Not all migrants consider moving to other countries in the CIS zone permanently. Many people regard their migration as a temporary measure and intend to return to their communities and families within a few months or years.<sup>62</sup> As in many other countries, temporary migrants in the CIS zone move in response to economic changes in their home cities and towns, relocating to areas with higher wages and better job market conditions.<sup>63</sup>

As elsewhere in the industrialized world, the construction industry in the resource-rich countries of the CIS, especially in Russia and Kazakhstan, is one of the major sources of employment for temporary and seasonal workers. This industry has probably absorbed about

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<sup>61</sup> Vladimir Mukomel. *Ibid.* p. 26-30.

<sup>62</sup> For a discussion about defining temporary migrants see: Manolo Abella. *Policies and Best Practices for Management of Temporary Migration (International Symposium on International Migration and Development)*. Turin, Italy: UN population Division, 2006.

[http://www.un.org/esa/population/migration/turin/Symposium\\_Turin\\_files/P03\\_SYMP\\_Abella.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/population/migration/turin/Symposium_Turin_files/P03_SYMP_Abella.pdf)

<sup>63</sup> For a definition of short-term migration see: UN Statistics Division.  
<https://unstats.un.org/unsd/pubs/gesgrid.asp?ID=116>

40 percent of the temporary migrants during the last decades.<sup>64</sup> Traditionally, the temporary workers have been employed to work at large infrastructure projects in Russia's Siberia and Far East where the labour shortages have been particularly severe due to the harsh climate, difficult working conditions and underdevelopment of social infrastructure. In the most recent trend between 2000 and 2008 the real estate boom in major urban centres in European Russia (Moscow, St. Petersburg, Saratov, etc.) has also attracted a substantial number of temporary workers.<sup>65</sup> These construction projects draw workers from the labour-surplus regions, usually from Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Ukraine, Moldova and in some cases from China. This migration has a seasonal character specific to Russia's harsh climate conditions: most of the workers are hired for the warmer months of the year – late spring, summer and early autumn – and in winter the workers usually return home.

Trade and related services have become another large source of employment for temporary migrants providing employment for about 30 percent of migrants.<sup>66</sup> The huge demand for the trade and related services was fuelled by two factors. One factor, very specific to the Soviet Union, was related to the underdevelopment of retail-trade services and chronic shortages of consumer goods and food products before 1991. The second factor was related to the collapse of the state-controlled trade and supply chains among the former Soviet republics that further accelerated the shortages of basic consumer goods and products especially in the first half of the 1990s. The growing demands combined with the trade liberalization and the removal of restrictions on small and medium enterprises (SMEs) led to explosive growth in a number of retail SMEs across the CIS especially unregulated cash-in-hand street trade. In turn it led to emergence of a large class of short-term temporary migrants unique to the CIS – the so-called *chelnoki* (shuttle-traders). The *chelnoki* usually travelled for short periods of time (from a few days to several months) buying consumer products at discounted prices in some areas of the CIS, China or the United Arab Emirates (usually at wholesale markets),<sup>67</sup> and then selling them in small quantities in the bazaars or streets in the areas where those goods were in

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<sup>64</sup> 'CIS: Influx supplies Russia with lower-quality labor.' *Oxford Analytica*. April 22, 2008.

<sup>65</sup> The global financial meltdown in 2008 led to temporary suspension of many construction projects, though full impact of the crisis was not clear at the time of preparing this report.

<sup>66</sup> 'CIS: Influx supplies Russia with lower-quality labor.' *Oxford Analytica*. April 22, 2008.

<sup>67</sup> Several dozen wholesale markets (bazaars) were established across the CIS in the early 1990s. Their supply of cheap Russian, Chinese, Turkish and Eastern European made products (garments, textile, children clothes, car spare parts, food, etc.) was redistributed across the CIS zone. One side-effect of *chelnoki* trade was emergence of the temporary and permanent enclaves of traders and intermediaries in host countries.

short supply. Many traders have supplemented their income picking up low-skilled jobs either in the real estate servicing sector, repairing electric goods, in plumbing, cleaning in the shopping malls and bazaars or constructing kiosks and small shops. Experts estimate that in its peak in the mid-1990s, the *chelnoki* trade provided employment up to 30 million traders, especially women.<sup>68</sup> In the early 2000s the number of *chelnoki* migrants declined, but this type of business still remained a source of income for a large number of people especially from Central Asia and the Caucasus.

The third important sector for temporary migrants is agriculture, which provides employment for about seven to eight percent of migrants.<sup>69</sup> The dismantling of the Soviet-style state-controlled collective farms freed up private initiative, and many farmers established their own agricultural SMEs. Some of them provided employment in labour-intensive farming around the major urban centers (for example, greenhouse production of vegetables, fruits, berries, flowers, etc.). Others provided seasonal employment in large labour-intensive plantations (cotton, tobacco and some other crops). In the most recent trend, with the rise of the wealthy upper-middle class, there has been a growing demand for gardeners and landscape workers.

Fuelled by the demand the temporary migration has been steadily increasing since 1991, and it has especially accelerated over the last eight or nine years. It is very difficult to obtain accurate statistical data, but several available examples illustrate the trend. In 2001-2002 it was estimated that between two and three million temporary migrants from Central Asia, the Caucasus, Moldova and the Ukraine have been employed in other Commonwealth countries. In 2007-2008, temporary migration was estimated between five and fifteen million people. These estimates suggest that there was a three-to-four times increase in temporary migration over the period of six to seven years. According to official Russian sources, most of the temporary migrants are employed in the informal sector of the Russian economy (which constitutes about 25-35 percent of the GDP) and therefore they do not pay taxes, do not contribute to pension and social funds, work in dangerous conditions and are open to various forms of abuse.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Vladimir Mukomel. *Ibid.* p. 31.

Also: Jane Falkingham. *Country Briefing Paper: Women and Gender Relations in Tajikistan*. Bangkok: ADB, 2000; IOM. *Deceived Migrant from Tajikistan - A Study of Trafficking in Women and Children*. Dushanbe: IOM, 2001.

<sup>69</sup> 'CIS: Influx supplies Russia with lower-quality labor.' *Oxford Analytica*. April 22, 2008.

<sup>70</sup> 'Russia/CIS: Russian growth draws in economic migrants.' *Oxford Analytica*. May 21, 2003.



The choice to migrate, including the choice between temporary and permanent migration, is influenced by many factors: economic, social and cultural. According to Douglas Massey these choices are often affected by four group of factors: push factors (causes that stimulate people to move out), pull factors (causes that attract people to head on to specific destination points), expectations (desire of achieving particular goals), and available resources (economic, social and human capital).<sup>71</sup> In many areas across the CIS people consider the importance of the cultural aspect of human capital since they highly value their cultural, communal and extended family bonds and traditions. The migrants also consider the importance of building up their social capital by integrating into the local communities in host countries. In addition, many migrants have to take into consideration the economic cost/benefit equation in spending resources for legalizing their residency status in the host country calculating short- and long-term gains and losses in integrating themselves into the economic system and in dealing with legal immigration rules and norms.

### **2.5. Forced migrants**

The rise of forced migration was one of the painful outcomes of the sudden dissolution of the USSR. The combination of political factors, instability and inter-ethnic tensions forced many people to abandon their homes and communities for other countries in the former Soviet space. Unlike in the case of Yugoslavia, the political tension did not boil over into long-term open and violent conflict in the CIS zone. Therefore most of the people had time to plan their move and make choices around timing and direction.

According to various estimates about 710,000 migrants in the territory of the former Soviet Union could be regarded as forced migrants (as of 1991).<sup>72</sup> Most of them arrived in the Russian Federation and the Ukraine from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. With the destabilization of the situation in the Russia's northern Caucasus and especially with the decade-long conflict in Chechnya a number of people moved between different provinces in the Russian Federation. Many of the forced migrants decided to settle in the host countries and to integrate into the local communities.

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<sup>71</sup> Douglas Massey, et al. *Worlds in Motion: Understanding International Migration in the End of the Millennium*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002. See also: Timothy Heleniak. 'An overview of Migration in the Post-Soviet Space.' Pp. 30-47.

<sup>72</sup> Andrei Korobkov. *Ibid*. Pp. 70-71.

The number of forced migrants probably peaked in 1998 reaching about 1.2 million people registered under this category by the statistical agencies. The policies of the Russian government had a positive impact on the situation with the forced migrants, as these policies established relatively efficient procedures and steps to obtain citizenship and to settle in the host communities.

As most of the ethnic minorities left the conflict zones, the situation with forced migrants stabilized. This political stabilization in the first decade of the 2000s and the end of the civil war in Tajikistan contributed to a decline of the migrants in this category. According to the available data about 360,800 people were registered as forced migrants in the Russian Federation in 2004.<sup>73</sup>

## **2.6. Human trafficking**

One of the most disturbing trends since the dissolution of the Soviet Union has been the rise in human trafficking throughout the CIS zone. This was quite an unexpected development, as most of the population in the CIS zone is quite well educated due to the near universal school education coverage. However the lack of information about foreign job market conditions and inadequate work of the law enforcement agencies, government institutions and NGOs on educating vulnerable groups of the population on human trafficking made some groups of the society susceptible to activities of highly sophisticated criminal networks. Despite virtually universal literacy rate and high communication connectivity (phones, cell phones, etc.) the trafficking rate in the region have remained among “very high” (Belarus, Moldova, Russia, and the Ukraine) and “high” (Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan) in the world.<sup>74</sup> Several factors contributed to this phenomenon. Some factors were similar to those in other parts of the world including such problems as harsh economic conditions, feminization of poverty, inefficient social welfare system and falling living standards. The other factors were specific to the CIS region after many decades of the iron curtain, including “romanticized” views of work abroad and “perceived marriage

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<sup>73</sup> Andrei Korobkov. *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> UNODC. *Trafficking in Person: Global Patterns*. UNODC, April 2006.  
<http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/HT-globalpatterns-en.pdf>

opportunities.”<sup>75</sup> In addition until the mid-1990s there were virtually no NGOs in the region; only recently some NGOs have begun working with vulnerable groups of population, though these NGOs still lack adequate experience and skills.

In most cases women, children and men are trafficked for labour exploitation from low-wage and high-unemployment countries in the CIS zone or economically depressed provinces from the Russian Federation to the more prosperous regions and countries in the CIS and Western Europe (according to various estimates up to 70 percent of trafficked women from the CIS are sent to Western Europe).<sup>76</sup> Experts from the region report that in many cases the victims are lured to the network of the shadowy dealers by deceit, false contracts and promises, or by “coercion from parents, colleagues, friends and acquaintances.”<sup>77</sup> In destination areas they are often sold or detained and forced to work in various sectors, including sex services for little or no pay. The victims are often subject to violence and oppression; they often have to work under dangerous and unsafe conditions, and therefore, they often have higher infection rate of HIV and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).<sup>78</sup> Their human rights are often violated and they are kept in slavery-like conditions being forced to work through torture and violence.

Since 1991 human trafficking has grown from a few isolated cases into a widespread phenomenon and well-established black-market industry. Independent media, investigative journalists and NGO activists have reported thousands of cases in which children and young women have been lured out of their homes and families and fallen victims to criminal gangs without realizing that they would be forced to live in horrible life-threatening conditions and forced to work in the sex industry. There are also reports that during last decade many victims have been trafficked and forced to work in agricultural farms, underground industrial enterprises, on construction sites or servicing wealthy families without pay or under threat of violence.

Experts estimate that between 120,000 and 200,000 Moldovan, Kyrgyz, Russian, Tajik, Ukrainian and Uzbek migrants have been trafficked annually within the CIS or have been moved to countries in Central and Western Europe, the Middle East and North America. The

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<sup>75</sup> Gulnara Shahinian. *Trafficking in women and girls*. Glen Cove, New York. November 08, 2002. P. 1. Available at: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/trafficking2002/reports/EP-Shahinian.PDF>

<sup>76</sup> ‘Eastern Europe/EU: States Combat People-Trafficking.’ Oxford Analytica, December 24, 2004.

<sup>77</sup> Gulnara Shahinian.... *Ibid*. Pp. 1-2.

<sup>78</sup> Gulnara Shahinian.... *Ibid*. P. 2.

total number of the people trafficked from the CIS to Western Europe and now residing in that region is estimated at 500,000.<sup>79</sup>

### ***2.7. Transit migrants***

Transit migration is a new phenomenon for the CIS. During the Soviet era the iron curtain prevented any unauthorized or undocumented person from entering or leaving the USSR, but these tough controlling measures ended after 1991. Liberalization of the regulations on population movement in many CIS countries including Russia and the Ukraine has changed the situation. Some individual migrants began considering using the territory of the CIS as a transit zone for moving further to the developed Western European countries utilizing the relatively simplified entry-visa requirements, ineffectiveness of the passport control institutions and lack of clear legal regulations, especially in the 1990s. In addition, the criminal groups from South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa began exploiting the new routes through the CIS zone, as the European governments imposed stricter visa and passport control on their air- and sea-routes.

The long land and sea borders that separate the CIS and Eastern Europe from the Western European countries are still relatively porous, despite the fact that they are guarded on both sides by border patrols and special forces. Underpaid and understaffed border guards in poorer CIS states (for example, in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Moldova, etc.) are often unable to provide adequate border protection and passport control. These borders do not stop human smugglers and traffickers from numerous attempts to move across their human cargo. Once the transit migrants are on the territory of the CIS members, it is very difficult if not impossible to extradite them to their home countries due to inadequate legal and institutional tools to deal with this type of migration.

According to the IOM estimates the number of transit migrants increased from several hundreds in the mid-1990s to 300,000-500,000 in 2005.<sup>80</sup> Most of the transit migrants are concentrated in the three western CIS-member countries: Moldova, Russia and the Ukraine.

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<sup>79</sup> Eastern Europe/EU... *Ibid*

<sup>80</sup> Aspasia Papadopoulou. *Exploring the Asylum-migration Nexus: A Case Study of Transit Migrants in Europe*. Geneva, Switzerland, 2005. P. 6

### ***3.0. IMPACT OF MIGRATION ON HUMAN DEVELOPMENT***

The large-scale domestic and intra-CIS migration have inevitably made a significant impact on development in both the source and host countries. Empirical records and studies since 1991 suggest that these population movements have indeed made positive and negative impacts on the human development in the former Soviet republics. Several important recent studies focused on developmental (UNDP, 2005), economic (World Bank, 2006), social and economic (Blair, 2008) and demographic aspects of migration (Korobkov and Zainchkovskaia, 2004).<sup>81</sup> For example the studies conducted by the UNDP suggest that “there is a range of evidence detailing the positive impacts of migration on human development, through such avenues as increasing household incomes, education and health of children in the family. And there is evidence that migration can empower traditionally disadvantaged groups, and women in particular. At the same time, risks to human development are also present where migration is a reaction to threats and denial of choice, and where regular avenues of movement are constrained.”

Indeed, the evidence from the CIS region suggest that the impact of migration on human development, household income and accumulation of physical, social and human capital could be both positive and negative. For example, the economic, social and cultural changes empower men and especially women by changing their economic, social and political status in society. Yet, on a number of occasions migrants from a different ethnic, religious and language setting might face difficulties in integrating into host communities.

The aim of this section is to assess the most important impacts of migration on human development in the CIS region, focusing on economic, demographic, social and cultural impacts, as well as impacts on gender, health and education.

#### ***3.1. Economic impact of migration***

General consensus among experts is that the current migration flow within the CIS zone has a profound positive impact on the economic development due to expectation that “the

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<sup>81</sup> Andrei Korobkov and Zhanna Zainchkovskaia. ‘The changes in the migration patterns in the post-Soviet states: the First decade.’ *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*. 37 (2004), Pp. 481-508.

quality of life will rapidly improve,” “remittances can exert a positive impact on macroeconomic growth” and with proper public policies “the negative aspects of undocumented migration... could be avoided.”<sup>82</sup> These experts consider that migration usually have a particularly strong economic impact on labour market, household incomes, remittances and local consumption.

In general the current consensus is that labour migration in the CIS region makes an economic impact at several levels.

a) At the microeconomic level the most important and immediate positive impact of migration is on the income and working conditions of actual labor migrants who often escape unemployment or underemployment and significantly improve their earning potentials. Simple calculations from available statistical sources indicate that the labour migrants sometimes (but not always) need to spend from ten to twelve times less working hours to earn a certain level of income in host countries compared to their source countries. We have strong reasons to suggest that labour migration and remittances have helped to lift salaries in all source countries. For example, in summer 2008 the average monthly wage reached the equivalent of US\$718 in Russia (up from \$79 in 2000) and US\$485 in Kazakhstan (up from \$101.1 in 2000), US\$293 in Armenia (up from \$42 in 2000), US\$245 in Moldova (up from \$32.8 in 2000), US\$137 in Kyrgyzstan (up from \$25.7 in 2000) and US\$63 in Tajikistan (up from \$8.5 in 2000) (See Table 2).<sup>83</sup>

b) There is also an important positive impact at the family level as the labour migrants’ incomes are redistributed among immediate and extended family members and often in the source communities. The increasing purchasing power of migrants’ families and returning migrants also changes the pattern of consumption fuelling the local economies, especially in the poor labour-source countries. In source countries remittances are often invested in real estate, construction and SMEs in the service sector (retail, catering, hospitality, etc.) thus generating local jobs and contributing to the growth of indigenous private businesses. This increases consumption and economic growth lifting up the depressed economies in many localities. Surveys in the extremely poor labor-source countries such as Tajikistan, Moldova

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<sup>82</sup> Ali Mansoor and Bryce Quillin, *Ibid.* Pp. 2-7.

<sup>83</sup> <http://eng.24.kg/cis/2008/07/31/5732.html>. In addition there are significant disparities in wages within the countries: for example, average monthly wages in Moscow are 1.9 times higher than in other cities of the country. For data on year 2000 see: *Sodruzhestvo Nezavisimyykh Gosudarstv v 2006 godu* [The Commonwealth of Independent States in 2006]. Moscow, CIS Stat, 2007. P. 134.

and Kyrgyzstan demonstrate that the remittances nearly always have a positive impact on the development of the real-estate sector attracting investments and credit and consequently boosting economic confidence.<sup>84</sup> There is no sufficient statistical evidence that these incomes are invested in building long-term social and human capital such as investing into education of children, self-training or opening own businesses.

c) At the macroeconomic level there is a positive impact on the labour markets of both host and source countries. The emigration of a considerable number of working-age groups of population who otherwise would be unemployed, eases the pressure on the labour markets in the countries with a labour surplus. Social tensions related to unemployment are also reduced. Consequently the out-migration contributes to reducing the extreme poverty related to economic downfall, as very often it is the poorest members of society who opt to move to foreign countries in search of incomes and jobs. They often leave their families (usually the elders and children) behind, but they support them by transferring financial resources to them. In the absence of an adequate social welfare system these transfers are the only form of support and source of livelihood for those families.<sup>85</sup> This impact is two-fold and extends to the labour markets in the host countries. The migrants are the source of relatively cheap work-force who accept seasonal and temporary jobs at salaries significantly lower than the local workers would have been paid. Thus they increase international competitiveness of industrial and agricultural sectors in the energy-rich countries by bringing down the labour cost, though in the time of economic difficulties the public perception often re-focuses attention from positive to the negative consequences of migration.

d) At the macroeconomic level there is also a positive impact on the macroeconomic stability in source countries, as the remittances have become an important source of foreign exchange transfers and investments. They help to finance a large trade-deficit in goods and services in those small countries in the CIS zone. This is especially important with the increase of labour migration that has led to an increase in money flow between the migrant-sending and migrant-hosting countries. Within the last decade the remittances have been augmented to the extent that they have become the most important factor. They have also become a stabilizing

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<sup>84</sup> For a case study of Moldova see: Milan Cuc, Erik Lundbäck, and Edgardo Ruggiero. *Migration and Remittances in Moldova*. Washington DC: IMF, 2005. See also: 'Emigration From Kyrgyzstan is Surging' <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/civilsociety/articles/eav032106.shtml> (accessed on February 02, 2009)

<sup>85</sup> Ali Mansoor and Bryce Quillin, *Ibid.* Pp. 63-64.

factor in maintaining a free-floating currency exchange system and fuelling people's savings and incomes. For many smaller CIS countries the amount of estimated remittances has approached the level of FDIs (Georgia) and in some cases even exceeded them (Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan). According to various estimates the migrants' international transfers amount to between 5 and 25 percent of the GDP in Tajikistan,<sup>86</sup> and between 5 and 20 percent of the GDP in Kyrgyzstan, Armenia and Moldova.<sup>87</sup> In addition some experts believe that some remittances also arrive in the form of investments, thus contributing to overall macroeconomic stability and boosting economic growth.<sup>88</sup> In Uzbekistan, for example, one study found that the returning migrants invested into SMEs, creating up to 350,000 jobs.<sup>89</sup>

### ***3.2 Demographic and social impacts***

Large-scale population movement has a strong and direct impact on the demographic balance in the source and host countries. In the source countries, the emigration helps to reduce the imbalance in the labour market as evidently most of the migrants are young people and who have a high probability of being unemployed or underemployed, if they do not migrate. Existing statistical data suggest (see Table 1) that during last decades there was a significant decline in birth rate in all CIS countries, including source countries, which previously had a high fertility rate. There is no direct evidence that this decline can be attributed to the temporary or permanent emigration of a large number of young people; however, it is evident that it is probably one of the factors along with the impact of the economic crisis. Some studies suggest that the average age of migrants is mid-30s and 73 percent of temporary migrants in Russia are 40 years old or younger.<sup>90</sup> This development also suggests that the out-migration probably reduces the fertility rate ultimately stabilizing population growth in those labor-surplus countries. The impact on the host countries with an aging population, like Russia, is probably more complex. It is evident that the labour migrants from the CIS countries fill the gap in the labour market compensating for the lack of the force in labour intensive industries

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<sup>86</sup> These figures include transfers from both CIS and non-CIS countries.

<sup>87</sup> These large discrepancies are related to the fact that most of the remittances are sent through informal channels.

<sup>88</sup> However, the economists also highlight some negative side effects of the remittances including appreciation of exchange rate and reduction in the competitiveness of exports.

<sup>89</sup> UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). *Central Asian Human Development Report*. P. 142.

<sup>90</sup> Oxford Analytica, 2008.



(such as construction, agriculture and services). The growth of the healthcare, homecare and social welfare services, suggest that the labour migrants are increasingly involved in providing care and support to the rapidly aging population in some host countries (Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus). In addition, some studies suggest that demographic stabilization and growth in Russia and in Kazakhstan in the 1990s and early 2000s could be attributed to the large inflow of the ethnic migrants (see also previous section).

The population mobility also affects the social and family relations. The impact on family relations is two-fold. On the one hand, the remittances help to finance better nutrition and better education for children. The inflow of remittances eases the pressure on families to send under-age children and teenagers out to earn wages in order to support themselves and their families at the expense of school education; thus children have a chance to receive appropriate schooling and training. On the other hand, the children often grow up without one or both parents, thus losing out on important social knowledge and family support that are so critical during the formative years. Some scholars also suggest that the mass departure of young men from certain areas in labour-source countries negatively affects family formation in those areas, as many women cannot start families due to the lack of potential marriage-age partners. For example, up to three-quarters of labour migrants from Tajikistan are men, and there are many towns and villages in this source country where the male population virtually disappears due to the long- and short term migration.

Yet there is the other side of the coin. Some studies also suggest that there is mixed evidence of the impact of migration and remittances on income inequality as some experts find that “remittances sharpen inequality” though others that “in long-run, income distribution becomes more equal... through trickle-down effects in the labor market.”<sup>91</sup> According to the World Bank studies, it is better-off families and individuals who get the most of the gains from migration and remittances, as these people usually more mobile, better educated, have better access to information and are in a superior position to invest into costly international trips of their members to the areas with higher salaries and business opportunities.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Ali Mansoor and Bryce Quillin, *Ibid.* P. 67.

<sup>92</sup> Ali Mansoor and Bryce Quillin, *Ibid.* Pp. 72-73.

### ***3.3 Labour migration and brain drain and education***

One of the most hotly debated aspects of population movement in the CIS zone is its impact on education, brain drain (or human-capital flight) and brain waste. Brain drain, the emigration of much-needed highly skilled professionals from developing low-wage countries to developed countries, has become one of the most visible and far-reaching consequences of emigration since 1991. Brain waste emerged as a different type of human-capital loss: it implies that highly skilled professionals in the absence of appropriate job opportunities abandon their professions and accept jobs in low-skilled sectors of the economy. There are two competing schools of thought about the emigration of highly skilled professionals and the brain drain.

The first group of experts emphasize the positive impact of emigration. They argue that the source countries receive compensation for education in form of remittances from highly skilled professionals, who moved from the resource-poor countries to resource-rich countries, mainly Russia and Kazakhstan. Many CIS countries cut R&D throughout the 1990s due to economic recession and structural changes and not due to brain drain. Industrial enterprises and research universities have undergone restructuring and consolidation, and R&D laboratories have been downsized. These professionals would have been unemployed or underemployed if they remained in their home countries. These highly qualified professionals had no choice but to migrate from their native countries, even if they had to accept low-skilled jobs. Temporary migration of education professionals and students helps to increase access to information, new education expertise and best practices around the world, helping enrich all migrants and to bring down cold-war-era barriers and isolation. During the last two decades, many young individuals have received education in foreign countries in Western Europe, in the United States, Japan, Russia, and Australia bringing back knowledge of new approaches in education, new curricula and ideas of decentralization of the education system including opening private fee-based universities. For example, the newly created US-style liberal art colleges – the American University of Central Asia (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan), the American University of Humanities (Tbilisi, Georgia) and KIMEP (Almaty, Kazakhstan) – have a significant proportion of native staff members with PhD degrees obtained from Western universities.

The second group of experts highlights the negative impact of the brain drain and brain waste both at school and university level. Hundreds of thousands of school teachers left their

jobs especially in remote rural areas moving to urban areas in the home country and in other republics of the CIS causing severe shortages of teaching staff in many rural schools. In addition, many qualified lecturers and researchers left universities and institutions of higher learning, especially in the poorest countries of Central Asia, the Caucasus, Moldova and the Ukraine for universities in Russia and to a lesser degree in Kazakhstan. The gap is growing in the quality of schooling between cities and countryside and between the low-wage countries and energy-rich countries of the CIS. Practically all low-wage countries (Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Georgia and Uzbekistan) report shortages of school teachers in villages and towns. The CIS countries are also losing their top-notch talents for industrialized countries in Western Europe, North America, Australia and East Asia: for example, the brain drain from Russia alone in 2004 is estimated in human capital losses of about US\$25 billion or the equivalent of about one third of FDIs in Russia in the same year.<sup>93</sup>

Recent studies (World Bank, 2006) also suggest that in fact brain drain has multiple effects on the source and host countries and not all of them are negative. The consequences of brain drain vary depending on a) the population size and b) the education base. It probably has a lesser effect on countries with a larger population (above 30 million) such as Russia and the Ukraine and has greater impact on the smaller countries, especially such countries as Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Tajikistan.<sup>94</sup> Yet all CIS countries have strong schooling and university education systems capable of educating and training large numbers of highly skilled professionals who would fill the gap left by the current emigration of such professionals. The CIS countries, even the poorest of them such as Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Tajikistan, have very high education enrolment and a significantly higher proportion of highly educated professionals (engineers, medical doctors, PhD graduates and so on) in per capita terms compared to many countries in Africa, South Asia or the Middle East. The argument goes that the migration of highly skilled professionals within the CIS and their emigration to industrialized countries was an adjustment to changes in the job market as the post-Soviet job market could not absorb all of them.

The debates, however, have not stopped here. In the recent discussions experts have begun looking at the qualitative aspect of the brain drain arguing that mass brain drain would

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<sup>93</sup> Irina Ivakhnyuk. *Migration within CIS region*. P. 5

<sup>94</sup> Ali Mansoor and Bryce Quillin. *Ibid.* P. 183.

negatively affect the education system due to declining quality of education. Thus, the brain drain of young professionals would undermine the potential of the states, especially smaller CIS countries, to reproduce the human capital and to maintain quality R&D in the future. In addition these smaller CIS countries have been losing their comparative advantage in attracting the FDIs and new technologies to their countries; for the loss of the large pool of well-educated, well-trained and highly-skilled labour force. As one government official in Central Asia put it - even if industrial plants in his country were to resume production, there were no qualified workers to operate them.<sup>95</sup>

### **3.4 Health factors**

Large-scale population movement has had both direct and indirect impact on the healthcare system and health of the population across the CIS zone. This impact has been largely negative due to the fact that this migration has happened against a background of increasing poverty, decline of healthcare providers, growth of communicable and non-communicable diseases and decline in immunization coverage in the poorest former Soviet republics and in the remote areas in the Russian Federation.

The direct impact of migration includes the out-migration of healthcare specialists from the countryside to large urban centers and emigration from poor CIS countries to more prosperous countries within the CIS and beyond. There are no official data on the migration of this category of professionals but some sources estimate that between 10 and 20 percent of medical professionals left their fields.<sup>96</sup> In some of the poorest countries such as Tajikistan, Armenia and Moldova the number is probably higher. Even relatively better off countries -- Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan -- are also affected. The out-migration of experienced medical specialists led to the severe deterioration of the monitoring and prevention of infectious diseases such as tuberculosis and sexually transmitted diseases leading to the outbreak of these devastating illnesses across borders. In addition, the shortage of specialists

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<sup>95</sup> 'Kyrgyzstan: Migration response.' *Oxford Analytica*. July 05, 2000.

<sup>96</sup> Some reports indicate that the rate may be even higher. See:

<http://eng.24.kg/community/2009/02/02/6967.html>

<http://www.tol.cz/look/TOL/article.tpl?IdLanguage=1&IdPublication=4&NrIssue=299&NrSection=3&NrArticle=20257>

<http://www.tol.cz/look/TOL/article.tpl?IdLanguage=1&IdPublication=4&NrIssue=153&NrSection=4&NrArticle=15807&search=search&SearchKeywords=uzbekistan+doctors&SearchMode=on&SearchLevel=0>

(accessed on February 05, 2009).

combined with inadequate funding led to severe decline in immunization coverage, especially in the Central Asian republics and some southern provinces of the Russian Federation and the Ukraine, leading to outbreaks of malaria (once eradicated in the CIS), typhoid fever, viral hepatitis and other diseases. In 2006 and 2007, a large outbreak of new HIV cases in Kazakhstan was attributed to inadequate experience and training of medical staff and to weak monitoring of basic medical procedures in local hospitals.

The indirect impact of migration on the general healthcare situation in the CIS is also significant. Migration of people from the extremely poor areas and life and work in poor-hygiene conditions, sometimes even dangerous conditions, leads to exposure to various diseases including diarrhea, TB, malaria and others. Some workers especially those who work in the sex-service industry are also exposed to HIV and STDs. As many migrants have limited or no access to healthcare in host countries and move constantly in search of jobs and income opportunities, this leads to exposure of both the general population and large numbers of migrants to these dangerous diseases. In addition many returning migrants expose their families, relatives and friends to diseases they did not know they acquired. For example, in 2008 there was an outbreak of HIV cases in southern Kyrgyzstan, as a returning migrant unknowingly infected with HIV several patients at a local hospital. According to a UNDP report, the number of HIV/AIDS registered cases in five Central Asian republics skyrocketed from 50 in 1996 to 8,078 in 2004.<sup>97</sup> In 2006, around 60,000 newly diagnosed cases of HIV were reported in the CIS; nearly 65 percent of them from Russia and 22 percent from the Ukraine. The cumulative HIV cases officially registered in Russia exceeded 400,000 in 2007, but experts believe that the actual number is 2-3 times higher.<sup>98</sup> Many experts attribute the rise of HIV cases to the rise of extreme poverty and lack of access to preventive healthcare services among vulnerable groups of the population, including migrants.

Yet, not all influences of migration on the healthcare system have been outright negative. Many medical professionals have received opportunities to travel to other countries for education, training, to study best practices and in search of foreign investors and business partners. The decentralization of the medical system allowed for the introduction of private hospitals, medical centers and clinics, many of which were opened with international

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<sup>97</sup> UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). *Central Asia Human Development Report*.... P. 146.

<sup>98</sup> HIV/AIDS surveillance in Europe. [http://www.eurohiv.org/reports/report\\_76/pdf/report\\_eurohiv\\_76.pdf](http://www.eurohiv.org/reports/report_76/pdf/report_eurohiv_76.pdf)

investments or as international partnerships, or were equipped according to foreign technologies.

### ***3.5. Does migration empower women? Gender and migration***

In order to understand the impact of migration on a status of women in the society, we have to remember that the former USSR employed a set of gender policies that made the country quite different from many other countries around the world. The women in the former Soviet Union were uniquely positioned as not only did the state encourage but it also enforced equality of women through elaborate system of quotas, subsidies and requirements. Paradoxically, the paternalistic role of the state reinforced the traditionalist views among male members of the society that women were empowered in the society only by the paternalistic power of the state, but they could not be independent breadwinners or public figures. The Soviet policies on women were largely abandoned after 1991 in nearly all former Soviet republics and women were required to recapture their position in the society and in public space in the new environment of the economic recession, political and cultural changes.

The migration affected women and gender relations in several ways.

First, migration became a strategy for economic survival and economic adaptation to the market-oriented economies. It were women who experimented first with the private entrepreneurship and small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) in the CIS region by becoming *chelnoki* – small-scale traders intensively travelling between the CIS countries and beyond. They displayed remarkable skills and entrepreneurship in adjusting to the new labour market environment finding new incomes and job opportunities and often becoming the only breadwinners for their families. According to some estimates a number of female migrants in the CIS region reached 25-30 percent by 2008 and it would probably continue to rise.

Second, migration helped women to achieve some degree of economic independence and higher economic status. Many women began opening and owning an SME and they began buying land and properties. This development has been especially important for Central Asian and Caucasus republics, where the traditions of male patriarchal domination in ownership have been particularly strong. A large number of women became economic providers not only for themselves, but also for their family members, relatives and even local communities. Some

field studies indicate that an increasing number of women became heads of households, which were quite rare 10 to 15 years ago.<sup>99</sup>

Third, migration empowered women to deal with patriarchal social and cultural norms and family roles. In the pre-1991 past society often unfavorably viewed unmarried and independent women attaching a social stigma to those women who decided to devote themselves to a career or business. Since the 1990s the perceptions of traditional gender norms and ideologies have begun changing. Many young women gained personal autonomy and self-esteem in moving away from the restrictive social norms imposed onto them by their patriarchal family members. In addition, migration provided a way to escape abusive and violent husbands, partners and other family members or forced marriages that are still widespread in Central Asia, Caucasus and some provinces in Russia.

At the same time migration has some negative impacts on women. For example, in many CIS countries women including women labour-migrants still receive wages that are between 30 and 60 percent lower than wages paid to men (see Table 4). A number of women became victims of human trafficking and forced to work in the slave-like conditions in the sex service industries, in trade and in agriculture. According to the UNDP report, up to 10,000 women are trafficked from the Central Asian republics alone to various countries outside the CIS.<sup>100</sup> Women still face discrimination in wages and hiring, and various forms of abuse, including sexual harassment, from employers in host countries. In many rural areas around the CIS, however, women still struggle for their basic economic rights and economic independence, as they are first to lose jobs. They are often discriminated in the land privatization process, or forced to surrender their incomes to husbands or male members of the extended families or obliged to abandon their jobs for seclusion as housewives and mothers.

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<sup>99</sup> Kathryn Anderson and Richard Pomfret. *Consequences of Creating a Market Economy. Evidence from Household Surveys in Central Asia*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2003. Pp. 141-171.

<sup>100</sup> UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). *Central Asia Human Development Report....* P. 160.

**Table 3. Gender-related development index**

	Gender-related development index (GDI)		Life expectancy at birth (years) 2005		Combined gross enrollment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary education (%) 2005		Estimated earned income (PPP US\$) 2005		HDI rank minus GDI rank
	Rank	Value	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	
67 Russian Federation	59	0.801	72.1	58.6	93	85	8.476	13.581	3
73 Kazakhstan	65	0.792	71.5	60.5	97	91	6.141	9.723	1
76 Ukraine	69	0.785	73.6	62.0	87	86	4.970	9.067	0
83 Armenia	75	0.772	74.9	68.2	74	68	3.893	6.150	0
96 Georgia	..	..	74.5	66.7	77	75	1.731	5.188	..
98 Azerbaijan	87	0.743	70.8	63.5	66	68	3.960	6.137	0
109 Turkmenistan	..	..	67.0	58.5	..	..	6.108	9.596	..
111 Moldova	97	0.704	72.0	64.7	73	67	1.634	2.608	1
113 Uzbekistan	98	0.699	70.0	63.6	72	75	1.547	2.585	1
116 Kyrgyzstan	102	0.692	69.6	61.7	80	76	1.414	2.455	0
122 Tajikistan	106	0.669	69.0	63.8	99.2	64	77	992	1.725

Source: UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). *UNDP Human Development Report 2007/2008. Fighting Climate Change – Human Solidarity in a Divided World*. New York: United Nations Development Programme, 2008.



**Table 4. Gender inequality in economic activity.**

HDI rank	Female economic activity (aged 15 and older)			Employment by economic activity (%)						Contributing family workers (%)	
	Rate (%) 2005	Index (1990 =100) 2005	As % of male rate 2005	Agriculture		Industry		Services		Women 1995-2005	Men 1995-2005
				Women 1995-2005	Men 1995-2005	Women 1995-2005	Men 1995-2005	Women 1995-2005	Men 1995-2005		
67 Russian Federation	54.3	90	80	8	12	21	38	71	50	24	76
73 Kazakhstan	65.3	106	87	32	35	10	24	58	41	54	46
76 Ukraine	49.6	86	79	17	21	21	38	62	41	50	50
96 Georgia	50.1	73	66	57	52	4	14	38	34	65	35
98 Azerbaijan	60.2	95	82	37	41	9	15	54	44	..	..
109 Turkmenistan	60.5	94	83	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
111 Moldova	56.6	92	81	40	41	12	21	48	38	75	25
113 Uzbekistan	56.6	95	78	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
116 Kyrgyzstan	55.0	94	74	55	51	7	13	38	36	65	35
122 Tajikistan	46.3	89	74	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

Source: UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). *UNDP Human Development Report 2007/2008. Fighting Climate Change – Human Solidarity in a Divided World*. New York: United Nations Development Programme, 2008.

#### **4.0. CONCLUSION**

The movement of peoples within national borders is a multifaceted, complex issue which will likely affect political and social development in the CIS for many years to come. Like in many countries around the world, the public policies towards migration have been influenced and often shaped by the public discourse on migration and migrants. Some groups of the society, for example, promote open-door policies of welcoming a large number of migrants who would play an increasing role in the national economies due to population aging and population decline in Russia and some CIS countries; others fiercely endorse restrictive

measures on migration claiming that migrants steal the jobs from local population and dangerously erode the cultural cohesiveness of host communities.<sup>101</sup> The Russian experts highlight importance of the changes in public attitudes towards migration policies and migrants due to the changing economic and political environments and due to impact of political events (tensions or improved relations with individual states, terrorist acts, etc.). These discourses on migration policies illustrate existence of several important stakeholders in this process that can be identified; each of them plays a highly significant role and has own specific interest and stakes in various policies and own tools for pursuing desired policy outcomes.

It can be argued that sufficient evidence base and data to suggest emergence of several trends in the CIS region:

- The development of the demographic complimentarily, as the Russian Federation and probably some other countries in the region, who have aging population, negative demographic growth and labor shortages would continue attracting labor migrants from labor surplus countries in the region;
- The gap in regional disparities in incomes, employment opportunities and in the rate of economic growth would remain unchanged or would decline very slowly, sustaining pressures on labour migrants in source countries to migrate;
- As increasing number of labour migrants and their families depend on incomes in the regional labour market and remittances, there is a growing need to develop further cooperation in developing institutions and mechanisms to support their rights and guarantee some access to healthcare and welfare in the host countries;
- The number of labour migrants, who remained in the informal labour market and in informal contractual relations would probably remain very high and would probably decline very slowly, due to economic and social conditions, cultural perceptions and historical traditions.

The major policy initiatives in dealing with the current and emerging migration trends could be summarized as follows:

First, there is a need to recognize that domestic and intra-CIS migration is not rigid; its directions and the scale might change with shifts in domestic political, social and economic

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<sup>101</sup> For public discourse on migration issues in Russia see: Vladimir Mukomel. *Ibid.* Pp. 80-103.

environments and especially with the changes in the job markets both in sending and host countries; the development in the CIS zone illustrates that the national governments have to build appropriate mechanisms and policy initiatives that help to improve legal, institutional, and social environment for migrants and migrant communities, assist the economic migrants in better integrating into the national labour markets in the receiving countries and would protect the migrants rights in the time of economic, social and political turmoil.

Second, recent development in the CIS indicates that there is a need to continue supporting and strengthening the non-state actors (NGOs, representatives of various local communities, social and ethnic networks, independent experts, etc.) who became important players by providing consultancies, various services and various forms of support for developing specific policies and initiatives, playing an important positive role in shaping educated public discussions and public views on migration and increasingly influencing introduction of specific policies.

Third, in order to enhance the positive impact on expanding the human capabilities and entitlements, the host countries have to develop policies that would establish clear and transparent frameworks for economic and other forms of migration and would reduce various barriers against the free movement of people, goods and services.

Fourth, the CIS governments should make more efforts in order to integrate newcomers into their societies regardless of their country of origin, religious or cultural background promoting the concept of citizenship based on civil identity and citizens' loyalty to the human values and make concrete steps against xenophobia in the society.

Fifth, there is a need to promote a public awareness about the positive contribution of migrants to the development of the national economies and international competitiveness and support educated discussions in mass media and in public, especially during public policy events such as elections, political campaigns and legislative discussions.

Sixth, there is a need to decriminalize the informal employment sector and informal contractual relations, by stopping criminal prosecution and punishment of people involved and by developing monetary and non-monetary initiatives and measures to move to formal economy and formal employment.

Seventh, the policy-makers at the national and local levels should avoid populist policies and decisions made on inadequate knowledge about the global trends in migration.

They should put more efforts in enforcing the rule of law and establish conditions where movement of people, goods and services contribute to the positive human development in their countries.

Eighth, local and international NGOs should develop effective mechanisms for working closely with local governments and local communities across the region in mobilizing their resources to deal with large-scale migration, working with all stakeholders in this process.

***Box 1. Cultural Changes and Rising Xenophobia in Russia***

Large-scale temporary and permanent immigration from Central Asia and the Caucasus have led to the growth of cultural diversity in the Russian Federation. As in many countries across Western Europe, the migrant communities have become especially visible during the last 10-15 years as they have significantly grown in size. According to expert estimates, nearly one-third of the six to ten million migrants currently residing in Russia have immigrated from the Muslim republics of Central Asia and the Caucasus.<sup>102</sup> A considerable proportion of these migrants are Muslim, unlike the ethnic Russians, most of whom are Christian. Many migrants move to the large urban centers, such as Moscow, Saint Petersburg and some others. In general the permanent and temporary migrants constitute less than 10 percent of Russia's total population, but in the major metropolitan centers their proportion increases to about 15-20 percent. As in Paris, Manchester or Chicago migrants often cluster into segregated close-knit communities concentrated in poor districts forming highly visible, culturally different neighborhoods.

Russia has had a long history of dealing peacefully with its own ten-million-strong Muslim population, however for the many decades of Soviet rule the display of religiosity was strongly discouraged and even persecuted. Yet, the general population traditionally tolerated cultural differences and welcomed multiculturalism. The terrorist attack on New York on September 11, 2001, and several high-profile terrorist acts on Russia's soil (hostage taking in a theatre in Moscow and a terrorist raid against a school in the town of Beslan, among others) have negatively affected public attitudes towards Muslim communities and have raised

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<sup>102</sup> 'Russia/CIS: Russian growth draws in economic migrants.' *Oxford Analytica*. May 21, 2003. Also, for more recent estimates see: <http://news.mail.ru/politics/2363878> (accessed on February 21, 2009).

suspensions towards migrants from Muslim countries. The relations between migrants and local communities worsened as a result of these tensions. For example, several political groups and influential political figures have expressed strong opposition to the Muslim community's intention to build new mosques in Moscow and its suburbs.<sup>103</sup>

One of the indicators of such tensions is a growing number of cases of attacks by skinheads and youth gangs against migrants, especially against migrants from Central Asian republics and the Caucasus. The police have reported more than several hundred such attacks during the last few years. On many occasions such attacks led to violence against innocent people and to the death of a number of victims. According to the Sova Center, a Moscow-based Human Rights NGO, 85 migrants were killed and 347 injured in 2008.<sup>104</sup> In January 2009 alone several people became victims of hate crimes in Moscow.<sup>105</sup>

One of the problems in dealing with cases of xenophobia and hate crimes is an institutional weakness of the law enforcement bodies. Russia's police had little experience with such types of violence in the past and have no adequate training and expertise in the present. In addition, many such attacks are directed against migrant workers who often lack appropriate registration documents and therefore are reluctant to contact law enforcement agencies. As in many developed countries, some groups in Russian society have become hostile to the migrants from Central Asia and the Caucasus in times of economic difficulty, such as the global financial crisis in 2008-2009, often claiming that migrants take jobs from Russian citizens and do not integrate into Russian society. Some populist politicians call for tougher immigration regulations and significant reduction in working visa permits for 2009.

During recent years, however, due to the domestic and international public outcry, the Russian government has begun giving more attention to hate crimes. In this regard a trial of a group of teenage skinheads in Moscow in December 2008 has become an important test for Russia's public justice system in fighting xenophobia. The gang members have been convicted of killing or seriously injuring up to 20 migrants in the course of the last two to three years.<sup>106</sup> In the aftermath of the trial representatives of law enforcement agencies have reported that any

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<sup>103</sup> <http://www.wwrn.org/article.php?idd=27077&sec=59&con=42>

<sup>104</sup> <http://www.moscowtimes.ru/articles/detail.php?ID=373191>

<sup>105</sup> <http://www.kp.ru/daily/24088.5/320878/>

<sup>106</sup> <http://news.mail.ru/incident/2361350/>

such case will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.

***Box 2. Depopulation of Russia's Siberia and Far East.***

One of the unique trends in international demographic development is the depopulation of Russia's Siberia and Far East. Asian Russia, which includes Siberia and the Far East, constitutes about 75 percent of Russia's territory or 13.1 million square kilometres, but it has only 30 percent of Russia's population or about 45 million people. During the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the population density in many provinces in the region has remained about three people per square kilometer, while in some areas of the Chukotka and Magadan regions it is less than one person per square kilometer. For comparison the population density in France is about 110 people per square kilometer and in the United Kingdom is about 246 people per square kilometer (as of 2008). Until 1991 a combination of large-scale subsidies for agriculture and industry and various economic and non-economic initiatives, which included forced migration, helped not only to sustain the population, but also to achieve population growth at the average annual rate of between four and nine percent.

The situation changed drastically after 1991, as the region was affected by a triple blow. First was on the demographic front, as the whole region experienced a steep fall in birth rate, a high mortality rate and rapid population aging. Second was on the economic front, as many state-run and private enterprises went bust or drastically reduced their workforce and the Russian government removed or downsized subsidies and rolled back many social welfare and healthcare programs closing thousands of hospitals, kindergartens and schools. Third was on the migration front, as immigration to the region dropped against the background of a large rise in emigration to European Russia.

As a result of these demographic, economic and migration changes the population of Siberia and the Far East have experienced a rapid decline at the rate of about 200,000-300,000 people per year during the last two decades. According to official reports, about 30 mid-size cities in Siberia and the Far East lost up to 25-30 percent of their population

between 1991 and 2001, including the cities of Pevek, Igarka, Severo-Kurilsk and Anadyr. Even large industrial centers, such as Magadan, Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskii, Vorkuta and Murmansk, lost up to 20 percent of their population during the same period. Some field reports indicate that hundreds of villages and small towns have been abandoned or have lost up to 50-60 percent of their population. Perhaps the most spectacular is the reported case of the Susumanskiy Raion in the Magadan Oblast, where population dwindled from about 50,000 to less than 14,000 between 1991 and 2007 (a population loss of about 70 percent). Only some of Siberia's largest industrial urban centers, such as Novossibirsk Omsk, Krasnodar and Tomsk, managed to stabilize their population.

If the current trends continue, most of the provinces in Russia's Siberia and Far East would lose about half of their population by 2025. Natural hazards combined with neglect of the economic and social needs of the various groups of the population in Siberia and the Far East may lead to displacement of millions of people within the next decade or two. The marginalization of the region and under-investment in the human and social capital may lead, in turn, to dwindling standards of living, social and healthcare services and human entitlements for those who are left behind, especially pensioners and disabled people. The situation is particularly alarming with the increase of tuberculosis (TB) among inmates in Siberia's prison system and among the general population, which might become a very serious problem given the deteriorating healthcare system in the region. According to the official reports about 160,000 people in Russia are infected with TB,<sup>107</sup> and every year doctors register between 10,000 and 20,000 new cases of the disease, many of them in Asian Russia.

The Russian government has attempted to address the demographic problems; between 2001 and 2008 it introduced various social initiatives and invested billions of Russian rubles into the region's economy, temporarily reversing some demographic and migration trends. Yet, many experts believe that more should be done to provide social and economic support to the people living in difficult climate conditions, especially in remote locations such as the Magadan Oblast.

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<sup>107</sup> [http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/global\\_health/id/tuberculosis/countries/eande/russia\\_profile.html](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_health/id/tuberculosis/countries/eande/russia_profile.html)

### ***Box 3. Impact of Climate Change and Water Shortages***

Since the 1990s the population in five Central Asian Republics – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan – has begun to experience the impact of global warming and water shortages. These countries are home to about 55 million people (2008 estimate), up from about 7-9 million (1909), and it is expected that the population might double within the next 25-35 years, if the reproductive rates of the 1990s remain unchanged. The region's population density is about 13 people per square kilometer. However, this picture is deceptive, as large areas in the deserts and high mountains are very sparsely populated and increasing number of people abandon areas affected by the climate change and environmental degradation for economically developed urban centers and areas. Therefore, most of the people are concentrated in a few overcrowded metropolitan centers – Almaty, Bishkek, Dushanbe, Khujand, Namangan, Tashkent and some others – and in the region's fertile oases and valleys – such as the Ferghana Valley, Chui Valley and Zeravshan – where population density is about 600-800 people per square kilometer or higher.

People in many densely populated areas face drinking and irrigation water shortages, as water resources in Central Asia are very limited and come mainly from two major rivers and their tributaries, the Amu Darya and Syr Darya. These rivers, in turn, receive water from the high mountain glaciers in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The problem is that during the last two decades the water reserves in the region have been negatively affected by three factors. The first is climate change and consequent rapid shrinking of mountains glaciers; since the 1950s Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have lost about 1,000 of their glaciers, or about one-third of their fresh water reserves. The second is mismanagement of the water distribution system. The Soviet-era-built water supply infrastructure has received inadequate funding, has not been properly maintained or repaired in the post-1991 era, and the national governments in the region have failed to establish an effective cooperation mechanism for region-wide water management. Since 1991, the water system has been divided between newly independent states, which implemented different and sometimes conflicting water management strategies



and approaches. For example, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan need most of the water for generating electricity at their hydroelectric power stations during the cold winter months, as they can ill-afford to buy gas and heating oil in the international market. In the meantime, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan need most of the water during hot summer months for irrigation purposes; on several occasions these three republics experienced water shortage in the summer as Kyrgyzstan's and Tajikistan's water reservoirs were short of water. The third factor is wasteful water usage in intensive agriculture – producing cotton, rice and vegetables – and in melon-growing, worsened by outdated agricultural technologies, excessive water consumption for industrial and public need and absence of water preservation strategies.

Since the 1980s and 1990s many areas in the lower basin of the Amu Darya River the situation with water supply and water quality worsened. These problems became especially acute in the areas affected by the drying of the Aral Sea, one of the largest lakes in the region,<sup>108</sup> where access to safe drinking water hundreds of thousands of people declined significantly.<sup>109</sup> During the summer practically all large urban centers around the region regularly experience low water pressure in the drinking water distribution system and, on many occasions, the rationing of water supply to few hours a day in many apartment buildings and houses. For example, for many years the residents of Dushanbe have lacked access to clean drinking water, as the city's water distribution system is falling apart and dangerously contaminated by pesticides and other pollutants. In the late 1990s severe drought affected several provinces in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, leading to food and water shortages.

The region continues to lose productive irrigated land at the rate of 3-5 percent a year to salinization and declining productivity, putting between 20,000 and 50,000 people a year out of work. In turn, environmental degradation leads to increasing extreme poverty which forces many people to migrate to the cities or outside of their home countries. If the current trend in wasteful water consumption continues, and if Central Asian governments fail to establish effective cooperative water management mechanisms, water and irrigated agricultural land shortages would be the major future drivers of migration in Central Asia.

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<sup>108</sup> [http://www.unesco.org/courier/2000\\_01/uk/planete/txt1.htm](http://www.unesco.org/courier/2000_01/uk/planete/txt1.htm)

<sup>109</sup> Ian Small, *et al.* 'Safe Water for the Aral Sea Area: Could it get Any Worse?' *European Journal of Public Health*, 2003, 13. Pp. 87-89.  
<http://eurpub.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/reprint/13/1/87?ikey=JhjeFavV5vyYY&keytype=ref&siteid=eurpub>

