

**IMMIGRATION OF COMPATRIOTS TO RUSSIA: POTENTIAL
AND STATE POLICY**

At present time, the Russian Federation is confronted with the negative demographic situation which involves the population decline, the decrease of the part of able-bodied citizens, and the ageing population.

The stimulation of migration is one of the ways of improvement of the negative demographic situation in the Russian Federation. The experience of some European countries shows possible problems and risks that are likely to appear when insufficiently considered migration policy is used.

The compatriots are considered the most favourable migrants, because they know language, culture, traditions and they accommodate better than other migrants do.

Who is a compatriot? The Federal statute #99 says that compatriot is:

- the citizens of the Russian Federation constantly living outside the Russian Federation;
- the persons consisted in citizenship of the USSR, living in the states, of former republics of the USSR, who received citizenship of these states or have become by persons without citizenship;
- natives (emigrants) of the Russian state, the Russian republic, RSFSR, the USSR and the Russian Federation, who had the corresponding civil accessory and have become citizens of the foreign state or who have stay permit or have become persons without citizenship;
- descendants of the persons belonging to the above-stated groups, except for descendants of persons of the title nations of the foreign states.

Break-up of the USSR was accompanied by the mass migrations. In 1990-2004 net migration of Russians was 3365 thousand people. They made up the bulk of the migration flow. Main quantity of Russians was 727 thousand (63.4%) in 1994.

Share of Russians in migration flow from CIS and Baltic States to Russian Federation.

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Total, thousand people	923	1146	841	631	583	495	367	350	186	177	121	112	170	186
Russians, thousand people	595	727	511	365	345	290	202	190	108	97	63,1	63	90	83
Share of Russians, %	64.4	63.4	60.7	57.8	59.2	58.6	55.0	54.3	58.0	54.7	54.8	56.2	52.9	44.6

Now more than 17 million of Russian people live in CIS and Baltic States. The part of this population forms the migratory potential, which Russia can receive for medium-term outlook.

Russian population in CIS and Baltic states.

State	Date of population census	Russian population, thousands people	Russian population, %
Azerbaijan	1999	142	1.6
Armenia	2001	15	0.5
Belarus	1999	1142	11.6
Georgia	2002	68	1.4
Kazakhstan	1999	4480	29.4
Kyrgyzstan	1999	603	11.7
Moldova	2004	201	5.9
Tadjikistan	2000	68	0.9
Turkmenistan	1995	299	6
Uzbekistan (data Statistical department)	2004	1092	4
Ukraine	2001	8334	17.9
Lithuania	2001	220	6.3
Latvia	2000	720	31.7
Estonia	2000	406	30.6
Total	-	17790	-

Sufficiently large Russian Diaspora resides in Kazakhstan. Research studies show that about 1 million or 20% of Russians may remove to Russia.

Migratory potential of Russians from Central Asia may make up 500 thousand people. Main part of this quantity account for Uzbekistan. Widespread investigations of aim to migration have not been carried out in the countries of Transcaucasia. At the same time it is necessary to acknowledge that overwhelming majority of mobile Russians has already removed and residuary potential doesn't exceed 100-150 thousand people. For example, there are 70 thousand Russians in Georgia and 140 thousand in Azerbaijan. But population of Dagestani ethnic groups numbers about 700 thousand.

Our next-door neighbour, Ukraine is of considerable interest to us, because more than 8 million Russian people live here and near 1 million may remove to Russian Federation. Migratory potential from Moldova may make up about 100 thousand.

There are over 1.1 million Russians in Belarus. But the dynamics of the develop of the economy and of the migration flows shows that we can't expect large-scale migration Russian population from Belarus.

Despite proactive protesting behaviour of Russian-speaking people in Baltic States, Russians didn't aspire to emigrate even in 1990s. In recent years the departure of them has practically ended because of good socio-economic situation and we can hardly expect a large-scale migration flow from Baltic States to Russia.

Thus, overall migratory potential Russians and Russian ethnic groups is estimated no more than 3-4 million people in medium-term outlook.

Several factors promote the compatriots' return. First of all, it is unstable political and economic situation in some countries of CIS, like Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Uzbekistan, Georgia and Ukraine.

Secondly, it is the rights abuses of Russian-speaking people. They suffer such abuses as the interdiction of using of the Russian language, the closing of Russian schools, especially in Baltic States.

Thirdly, it is the low socio-economic status of Russians and Russian-speaking people. Data of Gallup poll indicates that more than 60 percent of Russian-speaking people living in CIS are dissatisfied with their welfare standards. For example, in Georgia 80 percent of compatriots live in dire need in poverty-stricken areas.

The fourth factor is the acceleration of Russian economy growth. National government and many experts forecast the economic growth, the increase of investment, the wage-push, and the improvement of the living standards. The Russian Federation is on the verge of inviting compatriots from the former republics of the Soviet Union.

The matter of vital importance is considered the decree “On the measures to aiding voluntary return of compatriots living abroad to Russian Federation” signed by the President in 2006. Also a corresponding governmental scheme has been carried out for the purpose of stimulating the voluntary resettlement of compatriots in the Russian Federation on the ground of increasing appeal of its subjects; for the purpose of compensating the population decline on the basis of attracting immigrants to have permanent residence in Russia. Also more than 40 legislative acts regulating the programme have been accepted.

According governmental programme the federal government provide compatriots with:

- citizenship,
- public assistance,
- payment for passage and baggage delivery,
- extraordinary grant.

The local authorities must help compatriots with placing in a job.

It is supposed to remove compatriots to economically and geopolitically important regions in the Russian Federation. According to the scheme the whole part of the Russian Federation was divided into three categories (“A”, “B”, “C”) with corresponding size of a moneyed assistance, which is to be given to the compatriots by the government.

The regions “A” must have a national border and population decline in the last three years. The compatriots who are to move to these regions will receive 60000 rubles and 20000 rubles for each member of the family. Only one member of the family may receive status of compatriots.

The regions “B” and “C” are determined by several economic indexes, such as unemployment rate, level of investment, share of region in gross domestic product and number of migrants. The compatriots removing to regions “B” will receive 40000 rubles and 15000 rubles for each member of the family.

The regions of Russian Federation are working out their own programmes of resettlement of compatriots. The government has selected 12 regions. They are the Krasnoyarsk Territory, the Primorsky Krai, the Khabarovsk Territory, Province of Amur, Province of Irkutsk, Province of Kaliningrad, Province of Kaluga, Province of Lipetsk, Province of Novosibirsk, Province of Tambov, Province of Tver and Province of Tyumen. These regions are supposed to take part in the first stage of resettlement. The scheme suggests removing about 670 thousand people to these 12 regions. After the first stage of resettlement of compatriots the rest of the Russian regions will be involved into the programme.

However, this programme has some weak points. First of all, federal government doesn't provide people with habitation. The resulting document of the programme emphasizes that compatriots must have all public assistance as Russian citizenry, except for favourable accordance of habitation. The local authorities, however, can give temporary habitation if such opportunity exists.

Secondly, it is necessary to make special programmes for Russian-speaking young people and families with many children, because they are the most favourable migrants due to ageing Russian population.

Thirdly, it is necessary to make special programmes for stimulating business initiative of compatriots. It will help them to accommodate better and develop Russian regions.