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Integration and reintegration in CARIM-East countries

**Alexandru Stratan
Galina Savelyeva
Vera Kotelnik
Svetlana Zakharova**

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CARIM-East
Creating an Observatory of Migration East of Europe

Research Report
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Integration and reintegration in
CARIM - East countries

Alexandru Stratan
Galina Savelyeva
Vera Kotelnik
Svetlana Zakharova
Moldovan National Institute for Economic Research

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European University Institute
Badia Fiesolana
I – 50014 San Domenico di Fiesole (FI)
Italy

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CARIM-East – Creating an Observatory East of Europe

This project which is co-financed by the European Union is the first migration observatory focused on the Eastern Neighbourhood of the European Union and covers all countries of the Eastern Partnership initiative (Belarus, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan) and Russian Federation.

The project's two main themes are:

- (1) migration from the region to the European Union (EU) focusing in particular on countries of emigration and transit on the EU's eastern border; and
- (2) intraregional migration in the post-Soviet space.

The project started on 1 April 2011 as a joint initiative of the European University Institute (EUI), Florence, Italy (the lead institution), and the Centre of Migration Research (CMR) at the University of Warsaw, Poland (the partner institution).

CARIM researchers undertake comprehensive and policy-oriented analyses of very diverse aspects of human mobility and related labour market developments east of the EU and discuss their likely impacts on the fast evolving socio-economic fabric of the six Eastern Partners and Russia, as well as that of the European Union.

In particular, CARIM-East:

- builds a broad network of national experts from the region representing all principal disciplines focused on human migration, labour mobility and national development issues (e.g. demography, law, economics, sociology, political science).
- develops a comprehensive database to monitor migration stocks and flows in the region, relevant legislative developments and national policy initiatives;
- undertakes, jointly with researchers from the region, systematic and *ad hoc* studies of emerging migration issues at regional and national levels.
- provides opportunities for scholars from the region to participate in workshops organized by the EUI and CMR, including academic exchange opportunities for PhD candidates;
- provides forums for national and international experts to interact with policymakers and other stakeholders in the countries concerned.

Results of the above activities are made available for public consultation through the website of the project: <http://www.carim-east.eu/>

For more information:

CARIM-East

Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (EUI)

Convento

Via delle Fontanelle 19

50014 San Domenico di Fiesole

Italy

Tel: +39 055 46 85 817

Fax: + 39 055 46 85 770

Email: carim.east@eui.eu

Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies

<http://www.eui.eu/RSCAS/>

At present the issue of migrants' integration is a pressing one globally: according to numerous studies around 100 million people reside outside their countries of origin and this figure is on the rise [14, p.7]. The word "integration" comes from Latin "integratio" which means restoration or replenishment. For the purpose of the present article integration is understood as the inclusion of forced migrants from different countries into the local community of the country of residence (recipient country): i.e. into, *inter alia*, its economic system, social relations, cultural environment and traditions. Hence the process of migrants' integration comprises three areas: the economic, the social and the political.

One should note that practically all developed countries face the problem of migrant integration. In the early 1990s it became pressing for Russia and Belarus as a consequence of open ethnic conflicts, civil wars, the collapse of national economies and domestic labor markets in the former Soviet Union.

Integration takes place in the host country. On the one hand, it involves local authorities and employers, i.e. those who are supposed to fulfill certain tasks related to the integration of migrants into the local community. On the other hand, integration is a two-way process. Migrants ought to respect the recipient society (its traditions, cultural and ethnic values and language), while local populations can learn something from them (for instance, attitudes to children and elderly and family values).

Understanding the need to integrate migrants into the local community is conditioned by such factors, as problematic demographics, the need for labor resources to ensure sustainable socio-economic development in the region (area, city) and the absence of relevant normative acts and sufficient administrative resources to create a favorable climate for the adaptation of migrants. These are the main aspects that one should pay special attention to and that represent the basis for efficient integration.

Policy in the field of migrants' integration is a relatively new task for practically all CARIM-East countries. Integration has an impact upon demography, including the composition and structure of the country's population, namely gender ratio, mortality, marriage structure, birth rate, ageing etc. While integrating into society migrants become a part of the same, which affects the demographic security of the recipient country. As was noted above, integration is a twofold process, i.e. it is linked both to the adaptation of migrants and the adaptation of the recipient society [16]. If one takes Russia as an example of a recipient country, then, in the first half of the 1990s, its actions were primarily directed towards assistance to refugees and forced migrants from the former USSR republics, most of whom were ethnic Russians in need of economic, social and household integration: assistance in getting housing, jobs, and legal status. In the late 1990s and the early 2000s the situation changed: forced migration gradually gave way to large-scale labor migration from practically all CIS countries and this, of course, required a drastic change in policy. The absence of migrants' integration policy increases their social exclusion and segregation. This absence makes them vulnerable to different forms of rights violations, labor and other types of exploitation, even extreme forms of violence, such as forced labor and human trafficking: all of these, it should be noted, are to be found in CARIM-East countries.

An analysis carried out by CARIM-East experts – the Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration – lists the following main reasons affecting and hindering the efficient integration and adaptation of migrants:

- lack of coordination in policies of *donor and recipient countries*;
- significant differences in normative regulation of migration in different countries;
- imperfect mechanisms for the implementation of the normative framework, administrative barriers for migrant's legalization, employment, rights observation, social protection of migrants and their families;
- the involvement of unregulated (shadow) intermediaries in migrants' employment, which results in slavery, the exploitation of women and children;

- lack of reliable information about migrants, absence of methodology to keep track of labor migration, lack of information about money transfers, professional qualifications, knowledge of the recipient country's language etc.

One should also note another aspect that highlights why governments ought to focus on the integration of migrants and why integration is important. There are two main positive factors:

1. for *recipient countries* (receiving labor migrants), such as Russia and Belarus:
 - compensation of the workforce deficit for sustainable socio-economic development;
 - population growth (stabilization), including through assimilation;
 - opportunity to ensure geopolitical security of the country.
2. for *donor countries* (Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Armenia):
 - reduction of social tension and unemployment level, increased income for families left behind thanks to remittances;
 - new jobs in business, increased employment and development of national economies as a result;
 - acquisition or expansion of professional skills during employment in a foreign country;
 - learning the language of the recipient country, acquisition of new cultural values and traditions, including family relations and child-rearing practices.

Practically all countries facing the task of migrants' integration try to comprehend, at least to some extent, the reasons and consequences of that process. Nevertheless, the absence of the unified statistical database in the field of migration makes it impossible to carry out a profound comparative analysis of the above-mentioned processes, including integration in the country of arrival and reintegration in the home country. For instance, data for seven CARIM-East countries were collected through single-time observations in different years and over different periods of time (2005-2011) and they vary by sample size and in terms of the number of persons surveyed. Despite the fact that the data cannot be compared, one can still identify some common features specific to labor migrants' integration.

Table 1. Characteristics intrinsic to the socio-economic integration of migrants in the country of stay

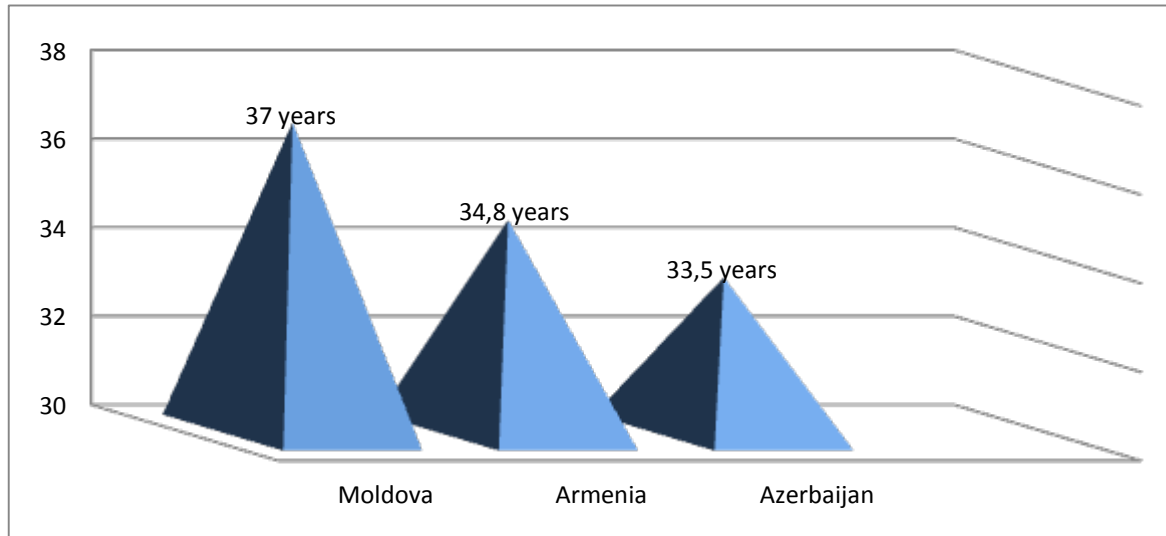
Problems	Countries				
	Moldova	Armenia	Georgia	Azerbaijan	Ukraine
Problems with employer	+			+	+
Lack of access to migration services	+	+		+	
Problems with local authorities	+		+	+	
Labor conditions (sanitary and hygienic)	+		+		+
Language problem	+		+		
Housing problems	+		+		
Hard working conditions			+		+
Impossibility of getting medical care – 33.3%	+				
Employment problems			+		
Impossibility of working in one's profession		+			
High prices for acquisition of housing or rent thereof		+			
Difficulty of obtaining citizenship and residence permit		+			
Discriminatory wages			+		
Hard working conditions					+
Overtime, unpaid work					+
Almost 29% stay abroad without official status					+
23.1% did not have a right to any social benefits under the contract					+
Actual work was different from what had been promised (11.5%)					+

Source: data are generalized on the basis of research publications No. [4], [6], [15] [19], [12] in references

This table lists typical difficulties that migrants coming from different donor countries face in the course of integration. A more profound structural and qualitative analysis of migrants suggests that men predominate: for instance, their share among migrants from Moldova is 62.0%, from Ukraine – 66.0% and from Armenia – 78.0%. As for Ukraine, the share of women is higher in long-term labor migration: 48.9% of migrants are women and 51.1% are men.

As a rule most migrants are from rural areas (for instance, in Moldova and Azerbaijan the share of migrants from rural areas is two-thirds). The average age of migrants is 33-37 years. Figure 2 offers the age composition of migrants from Azerbaijan, Armenia and Moldova.

Figure 1. Average age of migrants, years



Source: No. [4], [6], [19] of References

In Moldova migration involves a wide range of age groups, including 20-55 year-olds and older, nevertheless young people predominate in the age composition of migrants. One can see a similar picture in Azerbaijan: mostly young people aged 20-35 go abroad to work and those who are 36-50 years old go abroad to work less often. There are no data on the age composition of migrants for other countries.

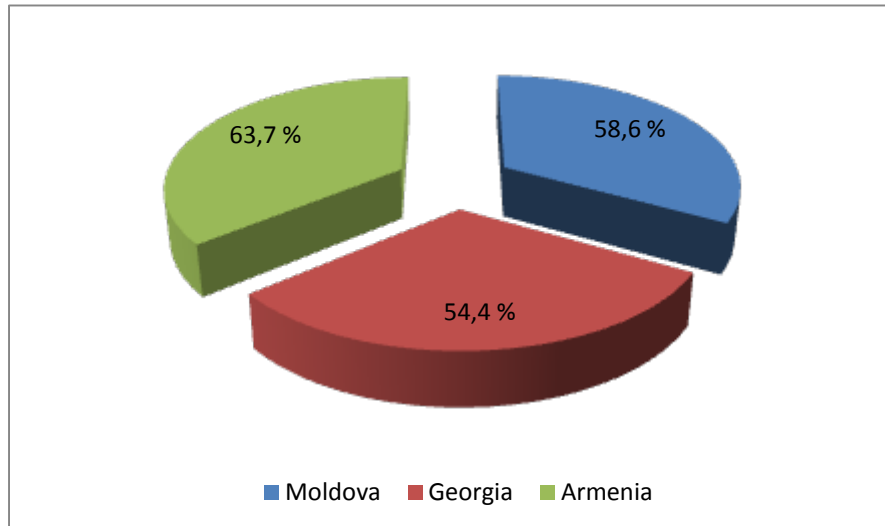
Migrants' level of education is as follows: share of migrants from Georgia with higher and secondary specialized education is 57.6%, from Azerbaijan 50%, and from Armenia and Moldova 37.1%. As for Ukraine, the share of migrants with higher education is 1.6 times higher than other categories combined, and the number of persons with basic or incomplete higher education is 1.2 times higher than in the aggregate of external labor migrants. The data are not given for all countries, as for some there is simply no information.

Therefore, qualitative analysis demonstrates that men predominate among migrants, primarily men departing from rural areas. If one takes into account age composition, the main category is people younger than 35. Persons with specialized secondary education predominate among migrants from Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova, and persons with higher education predominate among migrants from Ukraine. This has a negative impact upon the demographic situation in the countries in question and destabilizes their socio-economic development, by affecting the competitiveness of national labor markets among other things.

As an analysis of available data on migrants' employment opportunities demonstrates, in practice the problem of employment is resolved by migrants on their own, practically without the involvement of official agencies (both public and private companies officially involved in employment). For instance, 39.4% of migrants from Ukraine have a labor contract, 31.4% have a right to social insurance, the same

is true for only 16.9% of migrants from Moldova and 2.8% from Armenia. One should also note another feature common to all migrants: preliminary agreements regarding future employment are almost exclusively verbal, but employment without any preliminary agreements is predominant. Below in Figure 3 one can see the share of migrants from Armenia, Georgia and Moldova (there are no data for other countries), employed in the country of stay on the basis of verbal contracts.

Figure 2. Share of verbal employment agreements



Source: [4], [6], [14] References

The final result of migrant's labor activity is reflected in his or her earnings. At the same time if one keeps in mind that the main motivation for migration is the improvement of material standing (migrant's and his/her family's), then analysis of migration productivity in terms of income presents the following picture: the average income of migrants from Georgia was \$803, and \$709 from Armenia. Such incomes were not only 3.3 times higher than the same indicator for Armenia in 2007 (i.e. \$217), but were also 1.6 times higher than the average monthly salary in Russia (around 11 thousand roubles, or \$440 in 2007).

Nevertheless, the financial crisis did affect the position of migrants and average term of stay abroad during that period went down from 3.4 to 2.0 years for migrants from Armenia, 2.1 years for migrants from Moldova and over a year for migrants from Ukraine. Naturally, this affects integration and adaptation: one has to deal with the loss of existing jobs and the search for new work and income, with the loss and recovery of social package, housing, decline in family's material standing etc. On the other hand, recipient country loses its qualified workforce, and migrants' adaptation into the socio-economic and cultural environment is interrupted.

The identification of motives, methods of job search, visa regime conditions in recipient countries, employment process and labor organization, as well as identification of problems that migrants face in the countries of stay will be examined in terms of Moldova. One should note that a statistical study of migration and integration of migrants in the country was carried out by the National Statistics Bureau of Moldova in 2008. The results obtained were used to evaluate migrants' integration in the countries of residence and the possibility of their return and employment in the home country. These results were also used to develop and improve government policies in the field of migration. Table 2 lists indicators suggested for the assessment of Moldovan migrants' integration in the EU member states, including Italy, and in Russia: these countries are the most attractive for migrants and most Moldovan migrants work there.

Table 2. Integration of migrants from Moldova in the EU and Russia

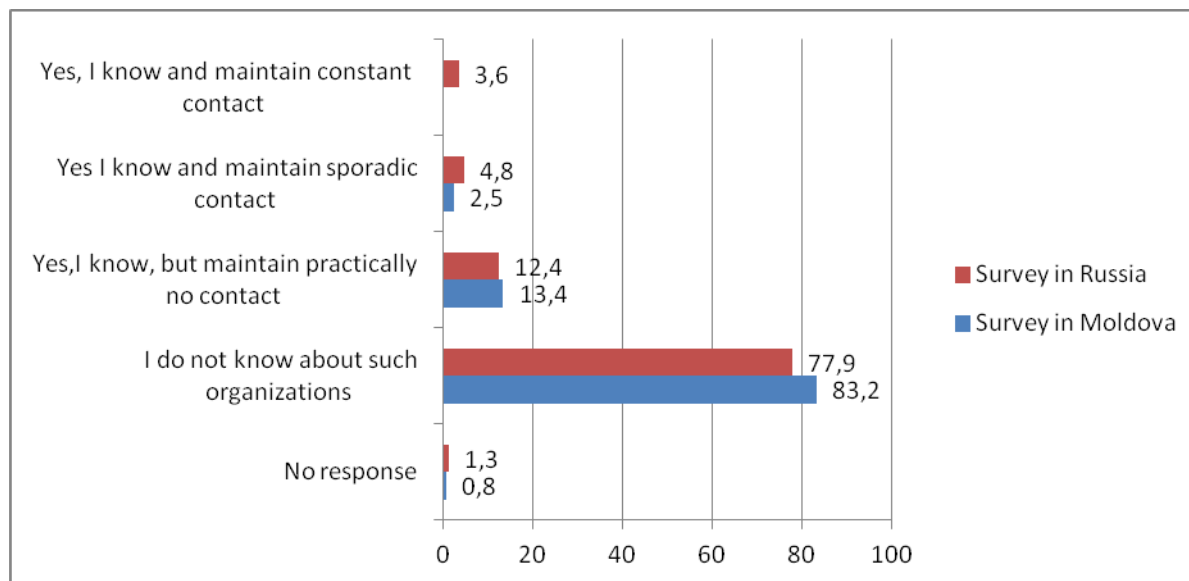
INDICATORS	TOTAL	RUSSIA	EU	ITALY
READINESS for migration				
1. Share of migrants having no language problems	79.2	96.4	36.6	37.6
2. Share of migrants who prepared for migration on their own	21.8	24.6	11.0	11.4
3. Share of migrants who concluded contracts with employers	23.6	25.4	15.0	15.4
LEGAL INTEGRATION of migrants				
4. Share of migrants who adopted the citizenship of the recipient country	1.2	1.1	1.5	1.9
5. Share of migrants who obtained residence permit and employment permit	17.7	14.0	25.7	23.3
6. Share of illegal migrants having temporary registration or residence permit	40.5	57.7	19.7	21.7
CONDITIONS OF STAY				
7. Share of migrants who got in trouble with local authorities	9.8	11.5	5.7	4.4
8. Average time spent abroad	1.9	1.6	2.8	2.9
9. Share of migrants having jobs abroad	97.7	97.1	98.9	99.5
10. Share of labor migrants who have basic social benefits	3.9	2.9	6.9	5.3
11. Share of migrants with children in Moldova	18.7	19.1	19.3	20.4
INTEGRATION WITH EMPLOYER				
12. Share of migrants who were disappointed with their jobs	48.8	48.3	53.4	47.5
13. Share of migrants who had to do a different kind of work	14.7	16.6	10.2	9.9
OPPORTUNITY TO MIGRATE IN THE FUTURE				
14. Number of migrants who stayed abroad or who plan to do so	2.2	1.2	3.5	2.5

Source: No. [1] of References

As one can see from Table 2, in Russia labor migrants from Moldova have a chance to better adapt and integrate, as there is no language barrier and as there are temporary registration and residence permit options, as well as employment opportunities.

At the same time rising labor migration flows from Moldova to the EU and Russia brought about a new phenomenon – the emergence and strengthening of Moldovan migrants abroad. At present there are 71 non-governmental Moldovan organizations in 23 countries, they unite representatives of the Moldovan diaspora and they are registered in accordance with the valid legislation of host countries. Figure 4 offers the data on awareness of Moldovan migrants about Moldovan organizations in Russia.

Figure 3. Awareness of migrants about Moldovan organizations in Russia



Source: No. [5] of References

So most Moldovan migrants temporarily residing and working in Russia know unfortunately nothing about Moldovan organizations in this country and only 3.6% of them maintain constant contact with such organizations. As a result relatives and friends form the main circle of trust for migrants in Russia.

Below one can find some data on the integration of migrants in Belarus and Russia. Available data differ from the data analyzed earlier, so one cannot carry out a general comparative analysis of all CARIM-East countries.

As was noted earlier, Belarus is a workforce recipient country (and lately has become a donor country as well). The main sources of data for the population of Belarus are censuses carried out in 1989, 1999 and 2009. At present representatives of over 13 nationalities reside in Belarus, though the share of Belarusians remains high and stands at 80%. The role of migrants in demography is also demonstrated by the fact that the population of the country would be much smaller, if emigrants were excluded – by 60,000 a year on average. Analysis of the population size and of migration in 2001-2011 demonstrated that the annual population growth rate by way of immigration varied from 0.4 to 0.8% over that period. “Education” is among key motives for arrival in the country. In the 2010/2011 academic year 10,700 students from the following foreign countries were enrolled in the public higher education institutions of the country: Turkmenistan 47%; Russia 17%; China 12%; Azerbaijan 2.7%; Sri Lanka 2.5%; Lebanon, Ukraine and Iran 1.5% each and; Syria 1.2%; with the remaining 13% from 70 other countries. Employment, housing, family and marriage opportunities are explored during the period of education, national and cultural traditions are learnt. Integration is also brought through studies at higher education institutions. Nevertheless, after getting a degree most migrants do not leave

the country and use their knowledge in Belarus working for offices of companies from their countries. Professionals make up over one half of the population employed. Trade is a predominant industry for migrants, followed by healthcare, education and production.

Russia deserves special attention when integration is analyzed, as it ranks first in the post-Soviet space in terms of the number of migrants accepted. After the collapse of the Soviet Union Russian policy in the field of international migration was aimed at creating a set of completely new laws and an institutional framework. In the 1990s large-scale flow of migrants from former USSR republics was directed towards the country, but there was practically no policy in the field of migrants' integration: though special attention started to be paid to the issue of rendering assistance to Russians abroad. However, in August 1994 the Russian Government adopted its first Regulation "On measures to support compatriots abroad", which was in fact aimed at putting a stop to compatriots' resettlement to Russia, as in 1994 that number stood at 1.1 million. Integration policies, including the integration of resettling compatriots, were ignored, and the migration flow was temporarily reduced.

In 2006 the State Program for Assistance for the Voluntary Resettlement of Compatriots from Abroad was adopted, but it did not bring back optimism regarding resettlement. Nevertheless, this Program set a goal of relocating around 300,000 to Russia every year, 2007-2012. However, according to official data for 2007-2011, only 55,000 resettled in Russia as members of the program, while the overall immigration influx was 1.3 million over that period.

Any analysis of the practical implementation of policies with regards to former compatriots both in the 1990s and in the 2000s must boil down to one conclusion: they are incoherent and inconsistent. This claim is proved by the fact that since 31 January 2001 there is no facilitated procedure for obtaining Russian citizenship by persons who found themselves in other USSR republics after the collapse of the Soviet Union. New crucial legal acts were adopted dealing with citizenship: the Law on Citizenship of the Russian Federation and the Law on Legal Status of Foreign Citizens. When it comes to Russian citizenship acquisition, these laws equalize persons who have Russian roots and left Russia at some point (in the late 1980s, for instance) and, indeed, any other foreigners entering Russia.

The above-mentioned measures contributed to integration policies being ignored and resulted in reduced tolerance, more ethnic tension and then alienation of migrants and their self-isolation in Russian society: in some cases it lead to open conflicts between migrants and the local population.

Taking into account the mass influx of migrants into Russia, including migrants from historically close states of the "new abroad", the state policy aiming at their integration is an integral component of any migration policy, which is stipulated in the new Russian State Migration Policy Concept until 2025 (adopted in 2012). It includes the creation of the relevant infrastructure. Having adopted this Concept, Russia started its transition from the administrative and legal regulation of migration to the creation of the relevant infrastructure for integration and the adaptation of labor migrants. The Russian Federal Migration Service also faces the task of developing and testing specific programs to ensure the integration of migrants into Russian society. The Agency for the Facilitation of Migrants' Integration was established for that.

In the course of migration policy implementation, including the integration of migrants into Russian society, a crucial role is played by migrant communities and diasporas. The Russian diaspora is considered one of the most numerous in the world: 48 million persons as of early 2010. This diaspora primarily relies on those who stayed in the countries of the "new" abroad (26 million) and those who emigrated to the West (22 million). Most Russians and Russian-speakers in the "new" abroad are concentrated in Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Uzbekistan, accounting initially for over 81% of the Russian population there.

Hence, if one compares labor migration, one can notice that in practically all CARIM-East countries labor migration is difficult to manage and migration is turning from temporary to permanent. This only enhances the interest of all countries towards the joint coordination of those processes. And here

naturally another common feature comes up: CARIM-East governments pursue policies of bringing their citizens back and ensuring the socio-economic integration of migrants in the home country, i.e. another extremely important task is on the governments' agenda: the *reintegration* of migrants.

Analysis of the situation in the field of reintegration and its manifestations in different countries demonstrates that the following factors encourage or affect the return of migrants: the need to improve material standing of families; professional experience in a certain field; being far from one's family for a long time; and the experience of living in a different ethno-cultural environment. All this is manifested through integration (return) to the home country, including the accomplishment of one's hopes and desires, such as:

- Desire to have one's own business in the home country (every fifth person surveyed);
- Feeling nostalgic about one's home country and its traditions;
- Desire to reunite with family and children;
- Worsening of health, absence of social package;
- Unemployment in the country of residence (impossibility of finding a job);
- Language problems in the country of residence.

Data of surveys in all analyzed countries show that practically all migrants are willing to return to the home country, but the following main conditions need to be provided:

- A well-paid job;
- Money needed to start a business;
- A job that would bring income equal to income earned abroad;
- Accumulated sum of money needed to improve housing, including money needed to buy an apartment;
- A prestigious job;
- In some cases – any job.

Migrants from Azerbaijan are an exception; according to the survey conducted in Moscow in 2005 [20], Azerbaijanis are oriented towards permanent residence and integration in Russia.

The issue of employment after return to the home country is the most crucial one for migrants. Thus, according to the survey, migrants list the following key difficulties in this area:

- Low wages;
- The impossibility of finding a job;
- The absence of beneficial financial mechanisms for starting and developing one's own business;
- Existing administrative and bureaucratic barriers;
- Corruption;
- Incompatibility of professions acquired abroad to the market needs in the home country, and in some cases loss of qualification;
- Age, state of health;
- Not speaking foreign languages;
- Conditions offered by employer when hiring (irregular working hours).

The presence of the above-mentioned difficulties in many cases contributes to the rise in long-term labor migration. This migration acts as a barrier in the reintegration of migrants, encouraging them to leave in search of jobs.

Conclusions. An integration policy ought to give a “signal” to immigration mechanisms about how well integration is proceeding and what changes should be introduced into the policy of accepting migrants for their more successful integration. That is why studying the global experience of migrants’ integration and generalizing its results in both legal and practical aspects will give an opportunity to organize integration in a more efficient way relying on the following key principles:

- impermissibility of any form of discrimination, including gender-based;
- observation of rights and freedoms;
- transparency, the availability of information in the field of state integration policy;
- the development of interaction between public bodies, local authorities and society in the implementation of integration policy;
- choice of a model for integration of migrants, including differentiated approach to development of the normative framework in the field of migrants’ integration depending on objectives and periods of stay, socio-demographic and other specific characteristics of migrants.

Taking into account the importance of integration for socio-economic development, including the reintegration of migrants who came back to the home country, national policy-makers ought to be more efficient, flexible and oriented towards:

- Information and legal support of migrants in the country of residence;
- Development of international joint programs for the legalization of migrants;
- Conclusion of intergovernmental treaties envisaging labor and social guarantees, ensuring education of children from migrant families;
- Cooperation of migration services;
- Interaction with diasporas, including assistance to migrants in socio-economic matters;
- Development of special national programs aimed at returning and reintegrating migrants into social, economic and political life.

Furthermore, for the sake of migration regulation, it would be timely and advisable to develop and create a unified statistical database in the field of workforce migration both at the level of a single country and at the interstate level. An international one-time survey dealing with integration and reintegration of labor migrants could also play a positive role in this context.

Naturally, only a positive synergy of all factors mentioned above can ensure the success of socio-cultural adaptation in a different ethnic environment and subsequently establish the foundation for the preservation of social and ethnic peace and prosperity in multinational communities.

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