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**“Migration management and its linkages with economic, social and environmental policies
to the benefit of stability and security in the OSCE region”**

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Key migration trends in the post-soviet region

Irina Ivakhnyuk

Lomonosov Moscow State University
Russian Federation

The majority of countries which were earlier the parts of the Soviet Union are presently the specific closely interrelated migration space that can be characterized as the Eurasian *migration system*. It includes both countries of origin and countries of destination that are connected by numerous and stable migration flows, and the share of *inter-regional migrations* is very high. Besides, CIS states participate in interstate cooperation in the field of migration management, and in the recent years this cooperation is becoming more constructive and well-defined. These are the reasons to make a separate presentation on migration trends in the post-soviet territory within the common topic on migration trends in the OSCE region.

Since 1991 over 20 million persons from former soviet republics changed the country of their permanent residence, and 90% of them moved within the post-soviet region. Between 1992 and 2007, Russia alone received more than 12 million immigrants from ex-USSR states while the number of registered labour migrants during the same period in Russia was about 4 million. Irregular labour migration in the region is about 10 million.

For the moment, the post-soviet countries can be classified as receiving states (Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine), sending states (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus), and transit states (Russia, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus), with some of them characterized by all three dimensions.

The reasons for close migration interaction of post-soviet countries are: (1) *community* of states rooted in historical, economic, cultural, and socio-psychological connections; (2) *complementarity* in terms of demographic trends and economic opportunities; (3) *coordination* of migration management provided by regional interstate cooperation mechanisms. Due to these reasons intra-regional migrations dominate in all the CIS states. Totally in CIS, 92% of immigrants are originating from other CIS states while only 8% arrive from other countries. As to emigrants, the corresponding figures are 72% and 28%.

At the same time, the Eurasian migration system is not homogeneous. The 'core' of the Eurasian system is represented by the countries that demonstrate the highest share of intra-regional migrations. These are Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Belarus, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. Ukraine and Moldova participate in intra-regional migration to the less extent as they have 30% (Moldova) to 40% (Ukraine) emigrants going to countries outside ex-USSR area. However, even in these two countries the majority of both immigrant and emigrant flows are related for post-soviet territory. All the above mentioned states have agreements on visa-free border-cross regime. Turkmenistan and Georgia have limited scale of migration outflow to CIS states due to political reasons. Baltic countries – Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia – were a part of Eurasian migration system before 2004, however, after they joined the European Union they are a part of European migration system rather than Eurasian one, but nevertheless they continue to be connected by migration flows with former soviet states.

During 17 years of post-soviet development, the ex-USSR states have experienced the period of large-scale forced migrations, mainly ethnic-based, and later – the period of voluntary migrations rooted in economic push and pull factors. At the present stage, temporary labour migration, both regular and irregular, is the dominating type of migration in the CIS region. Moreover, labour migration has gained the role of an important *factor of development* for both receiving and origin post-soviet countries.

While Russian labour market calls for additional labour force due to negative demographic trends, population of 'demographically young' republics of Central Asia and South Caucasus benefits from opportunities to work and earn in Russia/ Participation in temporary labour migration is a wide-spread practice in all the CIS states with no exception. In 'smaller' states – Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan – 20% to 40% of households have at least one family member working in another country. In 8 of 10 cases this country is Russia.

In the recent years, the significant growth of migrant remittances within the region is registered by statistics. In 2007, only recorded remittances from Russia were 18 billion USD; from Kazakhstan – 3 billion USD. In origin countries they constitute the significant percent of GDP: 36% in Tajikistan (1.25 billion USD), 36% in Moldova (1.20 billion USD), 28% in Kyrgyzstan (0.74 billion USD), 20% in Armenia (1.27 billion USD) (2007, World Bank data). Practically in all the origin states remittances exceed, in some cases manifold) the level of foreign direct investment (FDI) and official development assistance (ODA). In a number of countries the growth of total remittances inflow exceeds the growth of aggregated population cash incomes. For example, in Kyrgyzstan, the total inflow of remittances increased 17.3 times between 2000 and 2006, while total cash income of population increased 3.6 times. Correspondingly, the share of remittances in total cash incomes of population increased from 5.5% in 2000 to 27.6% in 2006. In Tajikistan, the growth of remittances not only exceeds the growth of cash income of population but the total amount of remittances transferred to the country in 2006 was higher than the aggregate cash income of population (World Bank data).

Migration and the return financial flows it generates play an important macro- and micro-economic role in the origin countries. Remittances are one of most important means for reducing poverty, rising incomes of population, improving housing, nutrition, schooling and health care; they are an alternative form of social security for population in the conditions when governmental social support is very limited. Remittances encourage growth of consumer market and thereby they favour development of national industries producing foodstuffs and consumer goods. Besides, remittances have a potential of investing in small and medium scale business.

Surveys in origin post-soviet countries show that in Uzbekistan, for example, every fifth-sixth business owner has gained his/her initial capital from labour migration to Russia, and each of

them create in average 20-30 work places for national workers. Therefore, as a result of international labour migration entrepreneurial activities in source countries gradually grow up, creating new jobs for return migrants and other citizens who do not participate in labour migration. Participation in international labour migration encourages internal mobility of population, restructures national labour market and increases its flexibility. These factors are of exceptional value for market-oriented transforming economies.

In the recent years, re-evaluation of the role of international labour migration for development of national economies and the region as a whole took place in the post-soviet space. It is clearly seen in the growing interest towards interstate cooperation in the field of migration, both in the frames of bilateral agreements and multilateral activities through regional structures. The new approach implies the search for more flexible and based on mutual compromise system of cooperation between origin and destination countries, which would exceed joint control over migration flows but *shape* these flows in the interests of participating sides.

The short history of international migration management in the post-soviet region says that in 1990s the efforts of new sovereign states were focused primarily on elaboration of national legislation, solving the problems of refugees and forced migrants, building of corresponding state structures and institutes, and development of cooperation with specialized international organizations. Regional cooperation in the frames of CIS was limited by coordinated attempts to elaborate the system of regional protection of refugees' rights and solving current tasks related to the novelty of cross-border population movements.

By the end of the 1990s the priority of CIS cooperation in the field of migration shifted to struggle against irregular migration, primarily within the frames of technical and border services cooperation. Since the early 2000s, the CIS states demonstrate growing interest towards development of the CIS common labour market that would make intra-regional migration an effective instrument for mutual development of national economies and the region as a whole. Coordination between government and non-government migration bodies of receiving and source countries within the frames of the *CIS Concept of cooperation in counteracting irregular migration* adopted in 2004 is focused on development and encouragement of regular forms of labour migration as an alternative to irregular migration, over-exploitation and human trafficking practices.

Large-scale irregular migration and unregistered employment of foreign workers are the continuing challenge for the CIS governments. Both receiving and origin countries of the region are concerned with negative effects of irregular migration in terms of participation of migrants in the shadow sector where their rights are neglected, growth of criminalisation of migrants and wide-spread human trafficking practices.

In the recent years, national migration policies and interstate dialogue in the frames of regional post-soviet organizations gained new character of constructive cooperation aimed at maximizing benefits and minimizing side-effects of international labour migration. This approach is resulting mainly from new understanding of the potential of labour migration as a substantial *resource* of economic development of both origin and receiving states.

Migration policies in Russia and Kazakhstan in respect of citizens of CIS states have become more liberal and constructive. The major means to combat irregular migration are regularization of labour migrants and simplification of work permits procedures, along with sanctions against employers who hire migrants illegally.

Noteworthy, origin countries pay more interest to shaping their migration policies and activate their cooperation with destination countries in managing migration. In the 1990s emigration for employment was seen in the context of forced migration and considered as a negative phenomenon. Spontaneous labour migration, clandestine channels of migrant remittances, lack of research on the role of labour migration for households in origin states – all these reasons were leading international labour migration away from attention of the States¹. Situation changed in the mid-2000s. Growth of remittances has influenced on reduce of poverty, decrease of social tension, encouragement of consumer demand, and improvement of financial macro-indicators. Recognition of the potential of international labour migration has pushed governments of origin countries to elaborate national strategies of labour exports (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan), sign bilateral agreements on labour migration with destination countries (Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan) or fill the existing agreements with new, more real contents (Armenia), sign direct agreements with enterprises and organizations in Russia that are interested in employing foreign workers (Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan), as well as development of official migration infrastructure – interstate migrant sites, ‘migration bridges’, state and private employment agencies, recruitment companies, and development of inter-government cooperation aimed at guaranteeing social and labour rights of migrants.

Coordinated migration management of one of priorities of the *Concept of Concerted Social Policies of the Member-States of the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC)* signed in April 2007. The Concept is aimed at elaboration of the common social space that includes free movement of people and common labour market, concerted system of social standards and indicators, harmonization of social insurance system, pension security based on agreed principles and approaches, generation of common educational space, etc.

General understanding of the necessity to optimize labour migration in the region is reflected in a number of documents that are presently in the process of elaboration: the *CIS Convention on Legal Status of Migrant-Workers and Their Family-Members* and the *Agreement on Temporary Employment of Citizens of EurAsEC Member-States in the territory of EurAsEC Member-States*. Elaboration of such documents means understanding of international labour migration as a long-term factor of development of the region and mutual readiness of the countries of destination and origin to make the most out of its potential, in particular, by developing common regional labour market.

The above mentioned trends prove shift of accents in evaluating consequences of migration processes from conceptual approach ‘*migration – security*’ that has dominated until recently to more constructive approach ‘*migration – development*’. Priority of security concern is guaranteed by broader understanding of the term: security includes sustained economic development, demographic security, social and political stability that can be provided *inter alia* by poverty and unemployment reduction and enlarged economic opportunities for population.

Migration trends in the post-soviet territory are seriously influenced by migration policy of the key receiving country – Russia. In 2006, migration legislation in Russia was cardinally revised, in particular in respect of migrants from the CIS states that have visa-free entry regime with the Russian Federation². This means a new stage of the Russian migration policy, which is now aimed at widening legal channels for labour migrants as an alternative to irregular migration and encouragement of *legal* labour migration from countries that are historically allied to Russia. The procedure of registration for migrants from ‘non-visa’ CIS states is changed from

¹ Migration Trends in the Countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. 2001-2002 Review. International Organization for Migration, Geneva, 2002.

² Russia has agreements on visa-free entry with Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Ukraine.

permissive to informative. Getting temporary residence permissions and work permits for these category of migrants is simplified. Labour migrants from CIS states have got easier access to Russian labour market as the employer-driven work permit system is changed for migrant-driven one: after migrants get work permit they are free to find employer at the administrative territory where the work permit has been issued. Simultaneously, sanctions against employers who continue to hire foreign workers without registration have become more severe.

The new model of labour migration management in Russia has a potential to counteract irregular migration by widening legal channels for employment and strengthens connections between Russia and its preferred 'migration partners'. During 2007, the first year since the new legislation was put in force, over 1 million work permits were issued to citizens of 'non-visa' CIS states that is twice more than in 2006 and thrice more that in 2005.

Thus, the key migration trends in the post-soviet region in the mid-2000s can be summarized as follows:

- domination of economic push and factors of migration;
- growing 'migration interdependency' of countries of origin and destination based on demographic complementarity and economic disparities;
- transformation of national labour markets in origin and destination countries with making international labour migration their structural element;
- rapid growth of the scale of migrant remittances;
- understanding of the positive potential of international labour migration by the governments;
- trend to liberalization of migration policy of major receiving states – Russia and Kazakhstan;
- trend to reduction of irregular migration and unregistered employment of migrants;
- more active participation of governments of origin countries in migration management at national and international levels;
- building legal and institutional capacities to improve labour migration management within the frames of bilateral and multilateral agreements.

To realize the positive potential of international migration it is crucially important to develop interstate dialogue aimed to identify common interests and challenges in such areas as input of migration in development of participating states, formation of common labour market, securing migrants' rights, elaboration of migration infrastructure, and development on this basis of coordinated migration policies. The OSCE activities in this field, in particular through initiating regional consultative processes that act on regular basis and involve representatives of governments, business, civil society institutions and experts, could play an important positive role. The *OSCE/IOM/ILO Handbook for Effective Labour Migration Policies in Countries of Origin and Destination* (2006) is a valuable initiative that has supplied government bodies involved in migration issues with concrete methodology on which they can construct their practical activities. Further detail elaboration of handbooks and guides on concrete issues of migration, namely on securing migrants' rights, gender-sensitive approaches, encouragement of investment potential of remittances, integration of migrants, etc., could play important educating role for corresponding government structures in countries that have limited experience in international migration management.

ANNEX

Table 1.

Permanent migration in post-soviet countries, 2006, thousands

	Immigration			Emigration			Net migration
	total	including from CIS states	from other states	total	including to CIS states	to other states	
Azerbaijan	2.2	2.2	0.0	2.6	2.6	0.0	-0.4
Armenia	1.1	0.8	0.3	7.0	5.7	1.3	-5.9
Belarus	14.1	12.4	1.7	8.5	6.2	2.3	+5.6
Georgia (2004)	...	...	...	...	...	...	-26.9
Kazakhstan	66.7	56.6	10.1	33.7	30.3	3.4	+33.0
Kyrgyzstan	3.4	3.3	0.1	34.4	33.8	0.6	-31.0
Moldova (1996)	12.1	11.9	0.2	24.9	22.6	2.3	-12.8
Russia	186.4	177.7	8.7	54.1	35.3	18.8	+132.3
Tajikistan	1.0	1.0	0.0	8.3	8.3	0.0	-7.3
Turkmenistan (1999)	4.0	3.6	0.4	13.5	12.9	0.6	-9.5
Uzbekistan (1998)	5.3	4.9	0.4	62.3	54.1	8.2	-57.0
Ukraine	44.3	34.0	10.3	30.0	21.3	8.7	+14.3

Source: Labour Market in the Countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Statistical Abstract. Moscow: Interstate Statistical Committee of the CIS, 2007.

Table 2.

Selected macro-economic indicators in the post-soviet countries, 2006

	GDP* млн.USD	GNI* на душу USD	Labour resources, thousands	EAP, thousands	Unemploy ment %	Average monthly wages USD
Azerbaijan	53,278	5,960	5,706	4,277	1.3	120
Armenia	14,683	5,880	2,115	1,181	31.6***	178
Belarus	94,718	8,810	6,228	4,466	1.4	265
Georgia	17,776	3,690	...	2,024**	12.6	113
Kazakhstan	150,511	7,780	10,013	8,029	7.3***	313
Kyrgyzstan	9,415	1,980	3,067	2,285	18.0***	86
Moldova	9,109	2,880	1,869	1,357	8.1***	130
Russia	1,868,980	11,620	92,400	72,500	7.2	443
Tajikistan	10,689	1,410	4,048	2,185	40.0***	37
Turkmenistan	20,738	...	...	...	60.0	...
Uzbekistan	58,165	2,240	14,447**	10,224**	23****	...
Ukraine	290,654	7,510	30,600	22,200	6.2	208

* GDP = GDP PPP; GNI = GNI PPP)

** EAP = economically active population

*** Data for 2005

**** Including underemployment

Sources: Data of the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (www.gks.com) and the World Bank (www.worldbank.org). Data on unemployment – International Labour Organisation and Central Intelligence Service (CIA World Factbook); on Uzbekistan – data of the Ministry of Labour.

Table 3.

Foreign Labour Force in Russia, 2000-2007
(number of issued work permits)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Total	213.3	283.7	359.5	377.9	460.4	702.5	1,014.0	1,717.1
including:								
from CIS states:	106.4	148.6	204.6	186.5	221.2	343.7	537.7	1,152.8
Azerbaijan	3.3	4.4	15.0	6.0	9.8	17.3	28.3	57.6
Armenia	5.5	8.5	12.6	10.0	17.0	26.2	39.8	73.4
Belarus	5.2	4.9	6.8	3.2	3.8	4.3	4.9	4.7
Georgia	2.9	3.6	7.6	4.0	4.2	4.1	4.9	7.6
Kazakhstan	0.9	1.7	6.4	4.8	8.0	16.2	33.0	109.6
Kyrgyzstan	11.9	13.3	40.7	21.5	22.7	30.6	51.0	93.7
Moldova	6.2	10.0	16.8	13.6	23.3	52.6	98.7	250.2
Tajikistan	0.2	0.1	7.0	0.2	0.3	1.5	0.7	2.1
Turkmenistan	6.1	10.1	15.5	14.6	24.1	49.0	105.1	344.6
Uzbekistan	64.1	91.9	61.0	102.6	108.6	141.8	171.3	209.3
from non-CIS states:	106.9	135.1	154.9	197.4	238.5	358.8	476.3	563.8
China	26.2	38.6	38.7	72.8	94.1	160.6	210.8	228.8
North Korea	8.7	9.9	12.7	13.2	14.7	20.1	27.7	32.6
Vietnam	13.3	20.1	26.7	35.2	41.8	55.6	69.1	79.8
Turkey	17.8	20.9	15.4	37.9	48.0	73.7	101.4	131.2

Sources: Population and migration in the Russian Federation. Statistical Yearbook. Moscow: Rosstat; Monitoring of regular international labour migration in Russia in 2004-2005. Moscow: Federal Migration Service, 2006; Monitoring of regular international labour migration in Russia in 2004-2005. Moscow: Federal Migration Service, 2007.

Table 4.

Remittances inflow and outflow in the post-soviet states, million USD

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007*
Inflow to:								
Azerbaijan	57	104	181	171	227	693	812	993
Armenia	87	94	131	686	813	940	1175	1273
Belarus	139	149	141	222	256	370	334	334
Georgia	274	181	231	235	303	346	485	533
Kazakhstan	122	171	205	147	165	178	188	188
Kyrgyzstan	9	11	37	78	189	322	739	739
Moldova	179	243	324	487	705	920	1182	1200
Russia	1275	1403	1359	1453	2495	2918	3091	4000
Tajikistan	...	...	79	146	252	466	1019	1250
Turkmenistan	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Uzbekistan	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1400**
Ukraine	33	141	209	330	411	595	829	944
Outflow from:								
Russia	1409	1101	1823	2226	3233	5188	6989	11438
Kazakhstan	356	440	487	594	802	1354	2000	3037

* Estimate of the World Bank.

** Estimate of experts of the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC) (Ehe EurAsEC Economic Review, 2007, N:3, p. 50)

Sources: IMF Balance of Payments Statistics, August 2007; World Bank, World Development Indicators Database, April 2008.

Table 5.

**Estimates of international labour migrants and their share in Russia,
beginning of 2000s***

	Number of labour migrants abroad, thousands	Number of labour migrants in Russia, thousands	Approximate share of labour migrants in Russia, %
Armenia	800-900	650	65-80
Azerbaijan	600-700	550-650	80
Georgia	250-300	200	60-70
Kyrgyzstan	400-450	350-400	70-80
Moldova	500	250-300	50-60
Tajikistan	600-700	550-650	85-90
Ukraine	2,000-2,500	1,000-1,500	50-60
Uzbekistan	600-700	550-600	90

* Based on national governments estimates in origin countries.

Source: Overview of the migration systems in CIS countries. ICMPD, Vienna, 2005

Table 6.

The role of migrant remittances in selected CIS countries, 2006

Country	Migrant remittances *	Foreign direct investments (FDI)**	Official development aid (ODA)**	Exports of goods and services
<i>in million USD</i>				
Azerbaijan	812	- 584	206	13,862
Armenia	1,175	543	213	1,408
Georgia	485	1,060	361	2,554
Kyrgyzstan	739	182	311	1,099
Moldova	1,182	242	228	1,546
Tajikistan	1,019	339	240	646
Uzbekistan	...	164	149	6,528
<i>in per cent of GDP</i>				
Azerbaijan	6.0	-2.9	1.1	70
Armenia	18.3	8.5	3.3	22
Georgia	6.4	13.8	4.7	33
Kyrgyzstan	27.8	6.5	11.1	39
Moldova	36.2	7.3	6.9	46
Tajikistan	36.2	12.0	8.6	23
Uzbekistan	...	1.0	0.9	38

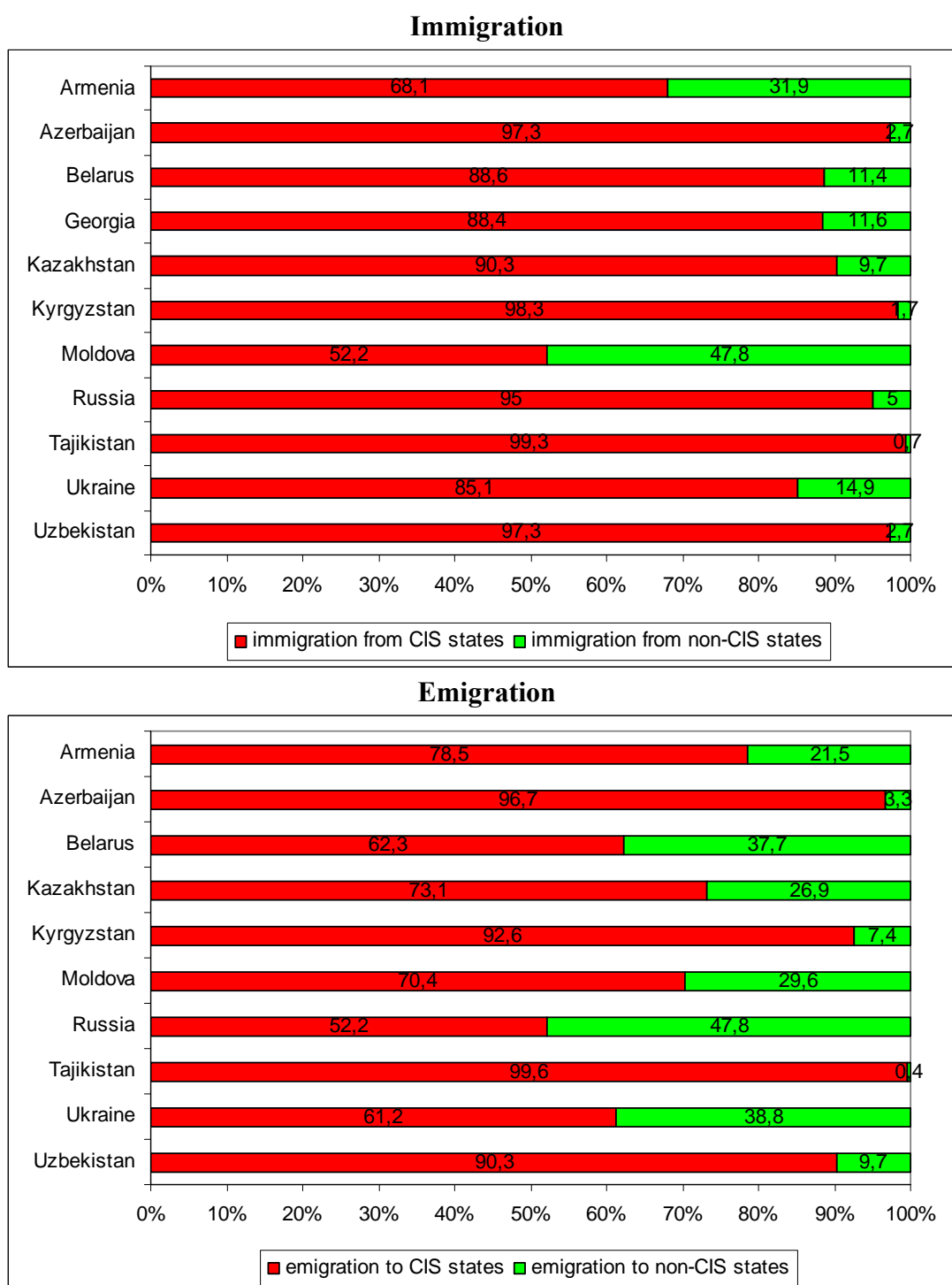
* IMF data

** World Bank data

Source: IMF Balance of Payments Statistics, August 2007; World Bank, World Development Indicators Database, April 2008.

Figure 1.

Share of intra-regional migration in the CIS region
(aggregated data for 2000-2006)



Notes:

* based on national statistics of the CIS states

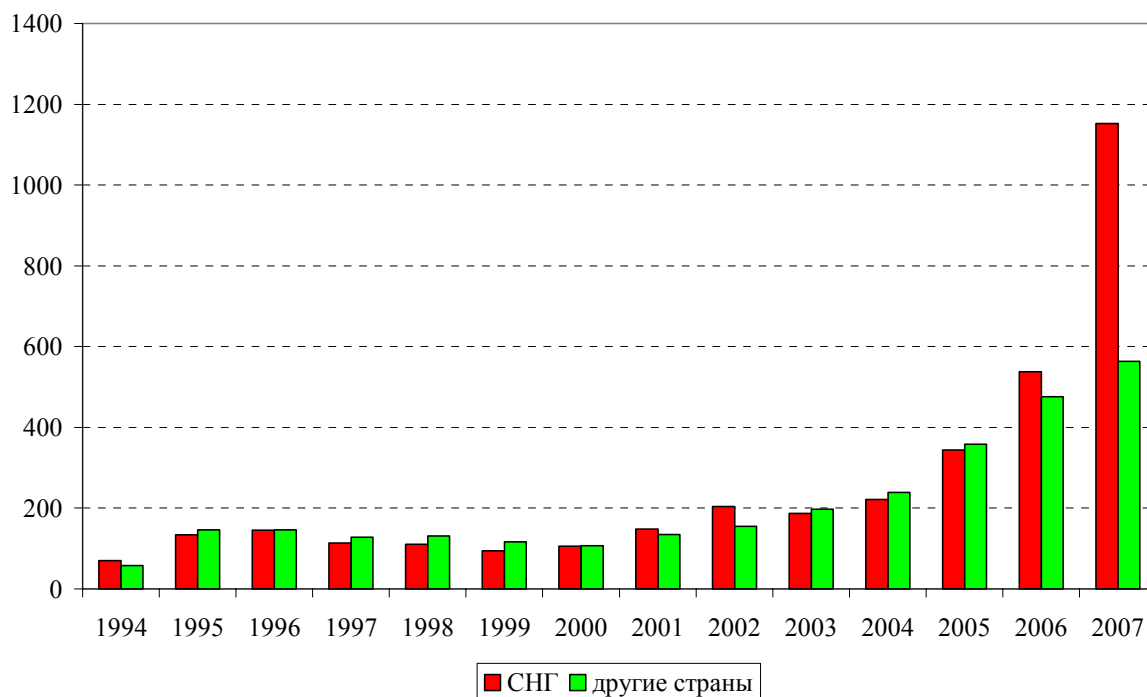
** data on immigration to Georgia is based on the 2002 National Population Census (long-term migrants, 2000-2001). Data on emigration from Georgia is absent

*** Lack of data on Turkmenistan

Source: The figure is based on data from: O.Tchoudinovskikh, Comparability of international migration statistics and data exchange in the CIS states. Paper for the Regional Conference on Migration Statistics, United Nations Statistical Commission and Economic Commission for Europe Conference of European Statisticians. Geneva, 4-6 December 2007.

Figure 2.

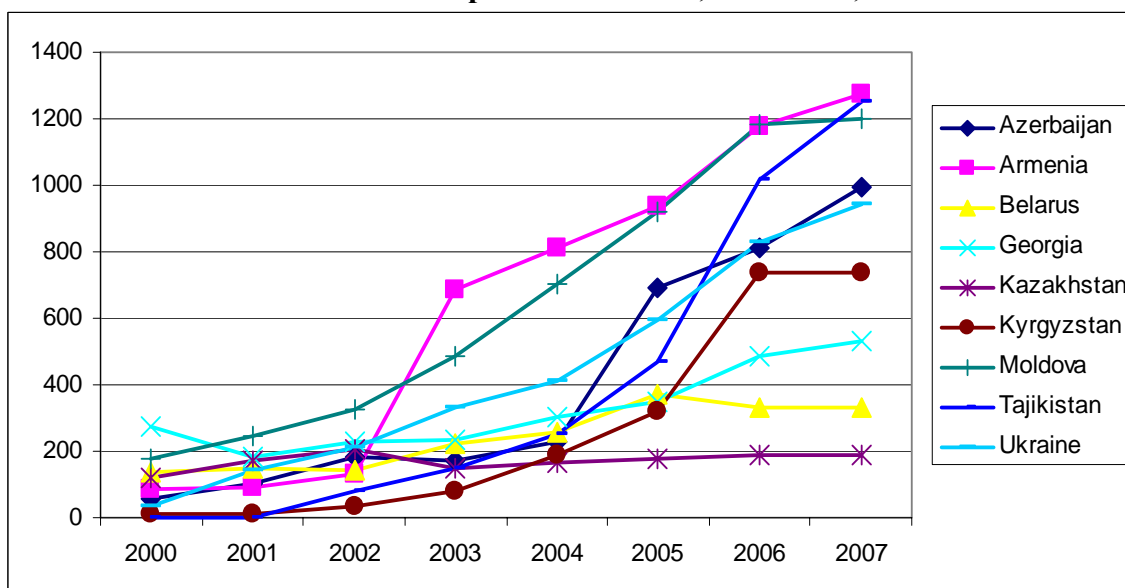
Foreign Labour Force in Russia, 1994-2007, thousands



Sources: Population and migration in the Russian Federation. Statistical Yearbook. Moscow: Rosstat; Monitoring of regular international labour migration in Russia in 2004-2005. Moscow: Federal Migration Service, 2006; Monitoring of regular international labour migration in Russia in 2004-2005. Moscow: Federal Migration Service, 2007.

Figure 3.

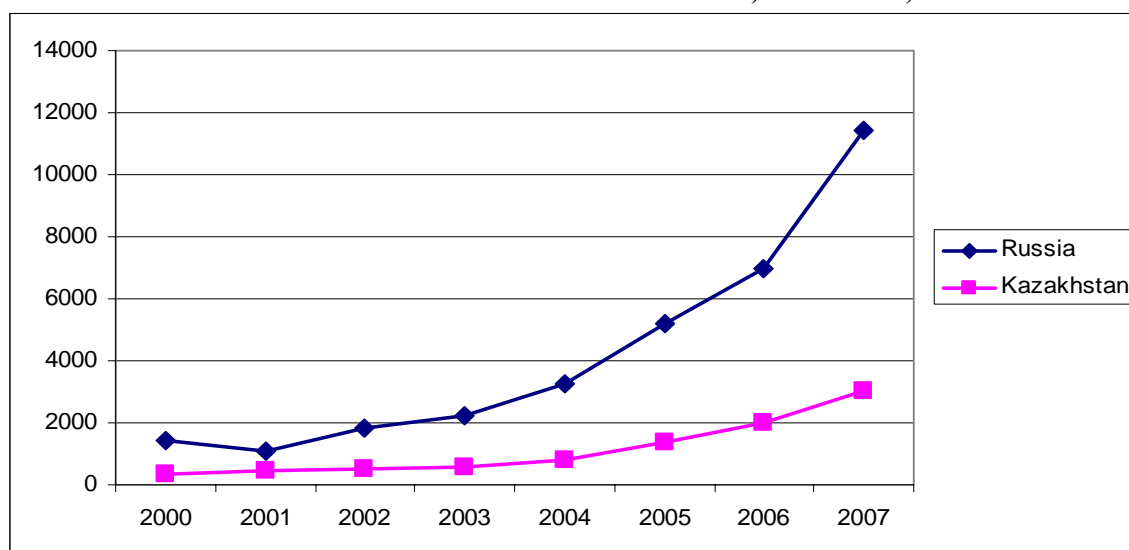
Remittances inflow in the post-soviet states, 2000-2007, million USD



Sources: IMF Balance of Payments Statistics, August 2007; World Bank, World Development Indicators Database, April 2008.

Figure 4.

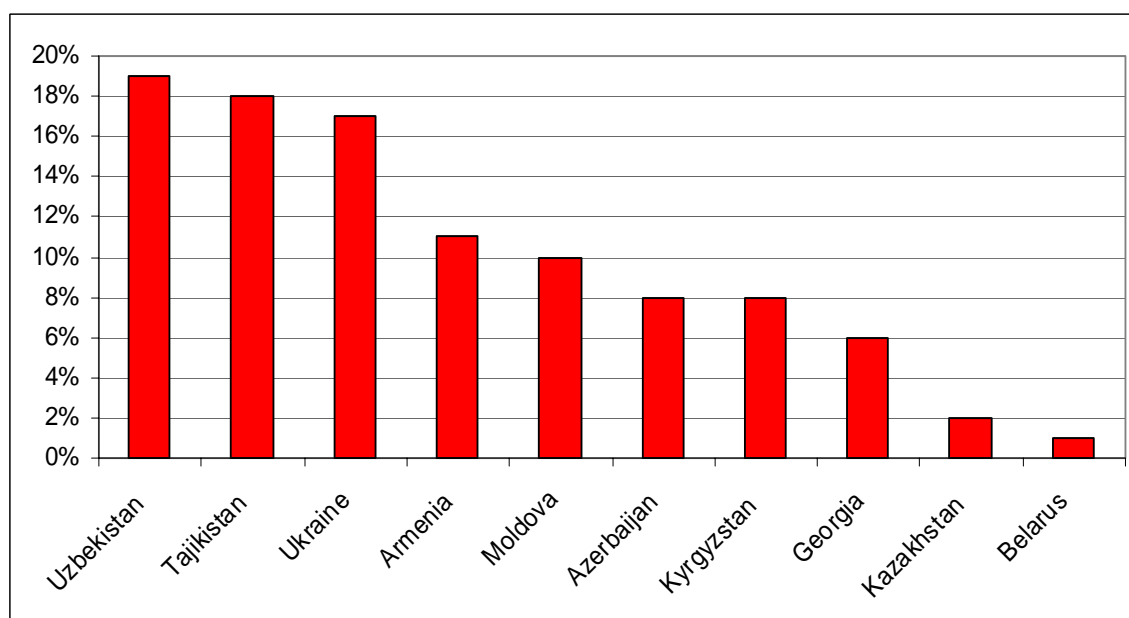
Remittances outflow from Russia and Kazakhstan, 2000-2007, million USD



Источники: IMF Balance of Payments Statistics, August 2007;
World Bank, World Development Indicators Database, April 2008.

Figure 5.

Structure of remittances sent from Russia to CIS states by countries, 2006, %



Source: The EurAsEC Economic Review, 2007, N: 3, p. 17-18.