

## **Peculiarities of Ukrainian Migrant's Adaptation in the Context of the Migration Policy of the Russian Federation**

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**Abstract:** The study analyzes trends and focuses of migration from Ukraine before and after the armed conflict of 2014-2015. Traditionally Russia is one of the main focuses of Ukrainians migration. For the recent years, in Russia there are a lot of disputes about the need for the migration policy intervention towards a selective approach. Experts and government servants declare the need for the involvement of highly qualified experts and ethnically close to the Russian population immigrants to Russia. Ukrainian migration stays within this idea. Most immigrants from this country are fluent in Russian have professional experience close to the Russian conditions and are ready to live and work in Russia, want to be Russian citizens. From these considerations, the Russian migration policy would have to give a “green light” to Ukrainian citizens. Indeed, after the outbreak of hostilities in the east of Ukraine and the flow of refugees to Russia many government agencies have opened some “doors” for Ukrainian citizens. Some approval document granting procedures were greatly simplified and the time periods for staying in Russia were extended. The Ukrainian diploma recognition procedures were also simplified that had a beneficial effect on Ukrainian migrants adaptation in the Russian labor market. The Russian migration policy of “the open doors” by the end of 2015 has just turned back the tide of procedure tightening against Ukrainian citizens. The project of reception of Ukrainian migrants is winded down. It is difficult to earn the status of a participant in the state-run program of resettlement to Russia, to get a part-time residence permit, registration certificate, to obtain citizenship, approval documents for job. On 1 November 2015 the preferred treatment for Ukrainian citizens for staying within Russia was revoked. Ukrainian citizens who stay within the Russian Federation until the end of the November should appeal to the department units to legalize their presence. Those who will not do it for a month will be deported. Unfortunately, this fact confirms that the Russian migration policy is still far cry from conceptual understanding the need for priority reception of Ukrainian migrants as an important labor and demographic resource for the development of Russia. Of course, Russia should review its migration policy as to Ukrainian citizens and using the current geopolitical situation, attract them as many as possible to its regions.

**Key words:** Emigration, migration policy, fellow citizens, Ukrainian citizens, federation

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Before the outbreak of the armed conflict in 2014 the migration situation in Ukraine by virtue of the special geographical location of the country was characterized by three peculiarities. Firstly, Ukraine was the host country of immigrants. Most migrants from the former Soviet Union, especially from central Asia, Transcaucasia and Moldova have been arriving there for time work and permanent place of residence. Secondly, Ukraine was the

transit country through which migrants from Asian and African countries went to countries of the European Union. Thirdly, Ukrainian citizens have been actively going abroad (to Russia, to countries of the European Union and the United States) for permanent place of residence and looking for short-time work during 25 years after the Soviet collapse. In fact, after the USSR collapse Ukraine has become a major migration donor for the Russian Federation and some foreign countries. As a result of active emigration from the country the number of

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Ukrainian communities has significantly increased in countries of reception of migrants. Thus, according to the organization for economic cooperation and development data, in 2013 in the Czech Republic, Poland and Russia Ukrainian citizens were the first largest group of foreign population, the second one in Estonia, the third one in Portugal, the fourth one in Hungary, the fifth one in Italy and the sixth in Slovakia. Especially time labor emigration has become the main migration flow from Ukraine before the armed conflict in 2014 which showed the adverse economic situation in the country and which became a means of adaptation of a considerable part of the Ukrainian population to new socio-economic conditions. Almost for many regions and households in Ukraine time labor emigration abroad and migrant worker remittance helped not only to overcome economic difficulties but even to provide the adequate standard of living and consumption have mostly stimulated the housing construction and consumer market.

Time labor migration has critically quick and often transformed into migration for permanent place of residence. After the Soviet Union collapse Ukrainian citizens have settled almost everywhere in Europe and their number in the USA and Canada, Australia and countries of Latin America has also significantly increased. They present a pretty good adaptive socio-demographic group. The data on the number of Ukrainians who obtained new citizenship are available only for some countries of the organization for economic cooperation and development. Russia that in 2013 granted Russian citizenship to about 17 thousand Ukrainians and Germany that in 2013 granted German citizenship to about 4.5 thousand Ukrainians were the absolute leaders. In 2012 Portugal granted citizenship to 3300 Ukrainians.

The precise number of Ukrainian labor migrants abroad is unknown and there are not so many representative studies on the population estimate. The estimation method on the basis of calculations of the difference between the number of resident and enumerated population seems to be the most valid. According to the 2010 Ukrainian population census, about three million Ukrainian citizens have been worked abroad (at the moment of the census in fact they were out of the country). The methods of migrant workers estimate based on the survey results are also known. For example as estimations of Ukrainian sociologist I.M. Pribytkova show, the number of Ukrainian labor migrants is about 2.8 million people as in 12% of families a respondent or someone of his family was experienced with short-time work abroad. Considering close historical and socio-economic relationships, geographical and cultural affinity and also a visaless regime, the main flow of Ukrainian labor migrants was

traditionally directed to Russia. However, the “Western vector” of labor Ukrainians migration, directed to the European Union and the United States (especially to Italy, Portugal, Spain, Greece, Germany) has started to be step-by-step formed. In countries of Southern and Western Europe Ukrainian migrants have been mostly working in building industry, service industries, home economics. Many Ukrainian women were wanted as child nurses, babysitters, domestic assistants.

#### **MIGRATION FLOWS FROM UKRAINE AND UKRAINIAN MIGRANT'S ADAPTATION IN RUSSIA**

The Russian Federation is the main focus of Ukrainian citizen's international migration. According to the 2010 census data, in Russia there were full-time about 93 thousand Ukrainian citizens (considering foreign citizens who have been staying in the country for >6 month). However, the census in Russia did not consider many temporary migrants, especially, labor ones.

After the outbreak of the armed conflict in Ukraine in 2014, migration to the Russian federation has greatly enhanced and taken place on several channels. Firstly, time labor migration has been going on. According to the Russian federal migration service official data, in 2013 Ukrainian citizens have got 161,000 approval documents for job in the Russian Federation (36 000 patents and 125 thousand work permits).

Even before the outbreak of the armed conflict in 2014, the flow of temporary labor migrants from Ukraine to Russia began to increase. According to expert estimates of representatives of the Russian Federal Migration Service, in March 2014 in Moscow 15 thousand Ukrainian citizens applied for patents that was 10 times more than over the same period in 2013 (1.3 thousand people) and in Leningrad region this figure has increased almost by a factor of 30. The head of the Federal Migration Service K.O. Romodanovsky claimed that one third of Ukrainian migrants were war-bent immigrants from the south-eastern regions of Ukraine (Lugansk and Donetsk Regions). After the outbreak of the conflict and hostilities the number of labor migrants has critically increased and in 2014, 260 thousand patents and 146,000 work permits were issued. In 2014 Ukraine took the third position among countries which are the main suppliers of labor migrants in the Russian labor market relinquish to Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. According to the FMS data, in 2015 about 152 thousand Ukrainian citizens have got patents for job in the Russian Federation (Litvinova and Semenov, 2015). Since, 1 January 2015 in Russia there were new rules for in-move and residence, suggesting that all labor migrants from Ukraine and other countries with a visaless

regime should show their passport and migration card with the purpose of in-move for job, introduced. After that labor migrants are taken a test for knowledge of the Russian language and attended a medical examination and many other procedures. If the decision is positive, in ten working days a seeker receives on his mobile phone an invitation message to get a work patent. According to the FMS data, a cost of execution of a patent including tests and medical examinations is in Moscow about 15 thousand rubles and after that migrants pay income tax in an amount of 4 thousand rubles per month Litvinova and Semenov (2015). The expenses of labor migrants in Moscow Region are equal to 17 thousand rubles, in St. Petersburg and Leningrad Regions they are >20 thous. rub (Solopov and Opalev, 2015). However for Ukrainian migrants sometimes this amount becomes an economic barrier for access to the Russian labor market.

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates, in 2010 the number of Ukrainian labor migrants in Russia was about 500000. According to estimates of the head of the Russian Federal Migration Service O.K. Romodanovsky, in 2014 in the Russian Federation 3 million Ukrainian citizens who have been transferring to Ukraine about 25-30 billion US dollars have been working. According to official data of the central bank of Russia in 2013 the ordered amount to Ukraine was 4.1 billion US dollars. Such significant official data and expert estimate discrepancy is caused by the fact that many Ukrainian citizens have been working in Russia in very "flexible" conditions (on the basis of an oral agreement with an employer without getting a work permit or a patent). Since the outbreak of the armed conflict labor migrants' movement has become more complicated and many Ukrainian migrants have preferred to get approval documents in Russia and stay for long periods. Since, 2015 Ukrainian citizens could only get a patent in Russia. Besides, they have got some preferences in terms of time periods for the execution of documents in Russian. However, these preferences had a temporary nature and now they almost do not exist. In fact, labor migration has become a form of legalization in Russia of some Ukrainian migrants including displaced ones.

The second flow of Ukrainians in Russia is forced migration. The influx of Ukrainian refugees has become massive in 2014-2015 and some Russian regions (especially boundary regions near Ukraine) have accepted a considerable number of Ukrainian refugees. According to the head of the Federal migration service, on September 2014 >180 thousand people have applied for the refugee status and temporary shelter to Russia and >110 thousand citizens of Ukraine have got the status. By July 2015 in Russia there were already about 1,038,000

refugees from Ukraine. And in 369 temporary shelters there were only 21 thousand people of this number and the rest were settled individually or supported by local authorities, relatives and friends (Kozlov, 2015). According to the FMS data, on November 2015 within the Russian Federation there were about 2.6 million Ukrainian citizens. Since, April 2014, 404 thousand Ukrainians have applied to the FMS for the temporary shelter or refugee status, 265 thousand Ukrainians have applied for a part-time place of residence. On 29 October 2015 the government draft decree, according to which additionally 736 million rubles of the federal budget should be devoted to social welfare provision of the necessary facilities for Ukrainian refugees living in temporary shelters since 1 October to 31 December 2015 was published (Litvinova and Semenov, 2015). Many Ukrainians have become increasingly interested in the possibility of acquiring Russian citizenship in a summary procedure.

In 2015 the migration policy of Russia has started to operate against Ukrainian citizens without considering them as a priority group of migrants. The third flow is Ukrainian's resettlement under the program of fellow citizens' return to Russia. It primarily seemed that this channel has become the most convenient and fastest way of Ukrainian's legalization in Russia. For example, every day in Summer and Autumn of 2014 >500 Ukrainian citizens have filed a petition on participation in the government program of voluntary fellow citizens' resettlement from abroad to the Federal Migration Service. Ukrainian migrants have even given a new lease of life into the program of fellow citizens' return to Russia, increasing its figures. And Ukrainians have gone even in the most remote regions of Russia (Siberia, Far East, Ural) amid hopes to get there the status and Russian citizenship faster. Primarily, almost all Ukrainian citizens who have applied to the FMS have given the status of a participant in the government program. However, in recent times, for cramp reasons and within this program, Ukrainians have often been refused to grant the status of a participant of the government resettlement program.

The reason for that is the FMS corruption and in some Russian regions authorities' misunderstanding of the importance of Ukrainian migration. The fourth flow is educational migration of Ukrainian students to Russian education institutions. The number of Ukrainian students in 2013-2014 was about 6000. The number of Ukrainian students in Russia over the last ten years has almost not increased because there were no special programs and grants to attract Ukrainian students. In 2014-2015 many education universities supported by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation and sometimes on its own initiative have taken special

measures to accept Ukrainian students. In particular, higher education institutions in Rostov, Belgorod and other regions have admitted a considerable number of Ukrainians. Unfortunately, there are still no mechanisms for part-time place of residence for Ukrainian students in Russia after their graduation. Meanwhile, in Russia Ukrainian students could present excellent labor and demographic potential.

#### **RUSSIAN MIGRATION POLICY RESPONSE TO MIGRATION FROM UKRAINE**

For the recent years, in Russia there are a lot of disputes about the need for the migration policy intervention towards a selective approach. Experts and government servants declare the need for the involvement of highly qualified experts and ethnically close to the Russian population immigrants to Russia. Ukrainian migration stays within this idea. Most immigrants from this country are fluent in Russian have professional experience close to the Russian conditions and are ready to live and work in Russia, want to be Russian citizens. The head of the Russian Federal Migration Service K.O. Romadanovsky in one of his public speaking said: "Ukrainian migrants are great demographic support for Russia". Ukrainian migrants do not need serious adaptation and integration build-up. They are fluent in the Russian language". Moreover, most Ukrainian citizens who have already moved to Russia or want to go there are ethnic Russians. From these considerations, the Russian migration policy would have to give a "green light" to Ukrainian citizens to Russia.

Indeed, after the outbreak of hostilities in the east of Ukraine and the flow of refugees to Russia many government agencies have opened some "doors" for Ukrainian citizens. According to the Russian Federation regulation, since, 1 January 2014 the authorized deadline of part-time residence in Russia for foreigners who have arrived in Russia without visas, including for citizens of Ukraine that is equal to 90 days within 180 days was set. Since, July 2014 to 1 August 2015 for Ukrainian citizens there was a temporary privileged migration regime which allowed to stay permanently within the Russian Federation without special approval documents over this period. Suddenly at the end of July 2015 the Head of the Russian Federal Migration Service K.O. Romadanovsky has claimed that in Russia Ukrainian citizens had 120 days to choose the status (Migration in the Post-Crisis World, 2012). This deadline expires on 1 December 2015 and after this date allowances will be kept only for war-bent refugees from the South-Eastern regions of Ukraine (Donetsk and Lugansk Regions) (Litvinova and Semenov,

2015). The Main State Expert Center of Education Validation has begun the process of Ukrainian diploma recognition on a simplified and accelerated scheme. The legal basis for foreign education recognition is the Federal Law No. 273 "On Education in the Russian Federation" which has come in force on 1 September 2013. Special requirements for documents which are filed for the education and qualification document examination and procedural peculiarities are fixed in the corresponding administrative regulations approved by order of the Minister of Education of the Russian Federation. As usual foreign diploma recognition occupies no <45 days, the procedure required presentation of a significant set of certificates and documents (The Inferfaks Agency, 2014).

But, the situation with Ukrainian refugees has forced Russian government agencies to review and simplify the approach to diploma recognition. Only in 2014 one thousand Ukrainian citizens of Donetsk and Lugansk Regions have applied to the "The Main Expert Center". Even though education received in Ukraine falls within such intergovernmental agreements on the mutual recognition of documents on education as the Tashkent Agreement (15 May 1992) and the Intergovernmental Agreement (26 May 2000). Documents issued during the term of these agreements in Russia are automatically recognized. These agreements claim the period from 15 May 1992 to 26 May 2000. From 1 April to 31 December 2014 in new geopolitical circumstances "The Main Expert Center" has considered 1263 documents on education in a simplified and accelerated procedure. It must be admitted that these measures of rapid federal agencies' and local authorities' response in the Russian Federation have contributed to Ukrainian migrants' adaptation in the Russian society.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Unfortunately, the immigration policy measures did not have a systemic nature and its logical continuation when it came to promoting Ukrainian citizens' integration to the Russian society. Thus, many refugees who have arrived in Russia and now live in temporary shelters with large families, do not have money for translation and notarization of their documents. As a result, they cannot apply for obtaining a permission to stay in Russia and groundless refusals to Ukrainians to grant the status of participants of the government program of fellow citizens' return restrict the people's access to Russian citizenship and hamper their integration into the Russian society. Russia only loses, elbowing people who connect with it their own future and want to be its citizens aside.

On 1 November 2015 the preferred treatment for Ukrainian citizens for staying within Russia was revoked. Ukrainian citizens who stay within the Russian Federation until the end of the November should appeal to the department units to legalize their presence. Those who will not do it for a month will be deported. Up to now Ukrainian citizens enjoy a privileged regime of residence in Russia. That means that at the end of 90 days after in-move they must leave the country and cross the state border again as other immigrants from the Commonwealth of Independent States and other visaless countries who do not have a permit for part-time residence, do. Ukrainian citizens who got the refugee status or a permit for part-time residence had the right to work for a year without a labor patent. According to the deputy Head of the Federal Migration Service of Russia V. Yakovenko, >600 thousand Ukrainian migrants violate the regime of residence (Litvinova and Semenov, 2015). It appears that these migrants will be deported from Russia. The Russian migration policy of “the open doors” by the end of 2015 has just turned back the tide of procedure tightening against Ukrainian citizens. The project of reception of Ukrainian migrants is winded down. It is difficult to earn the status of a participant in the state-run program of resettlement to Russia, to get a part-time residence permit, registration certificate, to obtain citizenship, approval documents for job.

Unfortunately, this fact confirms that the Russian migration policy is still far cry from conceptual understanding the need for priority reception of Ukrainian migrants as an important labor and demographic resource for the development of Russia. Of course, Russia should review its migration policy as to Ukrainian citizens and, using the current geopolitical situation, attract them as many as possible to its regions.

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