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# Migration policy of modern Russia: conditions for ensuring socio-political stability

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**Abstract.** In the article we analyze existing approaches to the implementation of the migration policy in the Russian Federation, highlight some conditions that have a destabilizing effect on its perception in society. Analyzing and introducing into scientific circulation some statistical data of federal executive authorities the authors talk about the existing points of the migration attraction and structure the international migration flows directed to Russia. The authors focus on the necessity of the certain changes related to the quantitative and qualitative indicators of international migration, believing that improving the efficiency of public authorities in this area will become a condition for ensuring socio-political stability with the deterioration of migration issues.

**Keywords:** migration policy, migration processes, international migration, political stability, post-Soviet space

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## Introduction

Migration processes are an integral element of the life of states, some of which receive migrants (recipients), while others become migration donors. More and more countries are getting involved in transnational migration processes, and there are almost no countries left that would not be affected by the problem of migration and its consequences. The United Nations records an increase in international migration at the beginning of the 21st century by more than 100 million people (from 173 million in 2000 up to 281 million by the beginning of 2021, even taking into account the significantly slowed down international migration in 2020 by the

COVID-19 pandemic<sup>1</sup>. The use of various approaches to understanding migration as a modern global political phenomenon affecting many aspects of public life stipulated the necessity of the adjustment of existing narratives for the formation of state migration policy related to the need to solve economic and demographic problems, while ensuring national security.

## Materials and methods

The materials for this research were taken from the works of the Russian and foreign scientists devoted to the migration issues, as well as from information and reference materials of international organizations and the authorities of the Russian Federation. The main method of this research has been system analysis method, which made it possible to analyze migration as a global socio-political phenomenon, as well as the impact of the implemented state migration policy to ensure socio-political stability. In addition, comparative, institutional and dialectical methods have been used during the research.

## Results

In 2015, at the peak of the migration crisis in Europe, there began discussions on the need to adopt a new document in the field of global migration. And in 2016, 193 UN Member States signed the Declaration on Refugees and Migrants in New York<sup>2</sup>. In the same year, the goal to ensure the adoption of the Migration Pact by the end of 2018 by the maximum number of states was set. In December 2018, an Intergovernmental Conference to adopt a Global Compact for safe, orderly, regular and legal migration was held<sup>3</sup>.

This document caused a lot of discussions in the international arena, some countries refused to ratify it at all, which can be explained by a certain political situation within states associated with migrant phobia and the problem of integrating a large number of migrants into the host society, their adaptation to new living conditions.

In modern Russia, the impact of migration as a socio-political phenomenon on political stability is due to a rather pragmatic understanding of the relevant processes from the point of view of business and part of the political elite that support the economic and demographic concept of migration.

In this paradigm, external migration becomes a mechanism to increase the proportion of the working-age population, a way to solve demographic problems [3].

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<sup>1</sup> UN. Key indicators of international migration for 2020. Available: [https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/imr2020\\_10\\_key\\_messages\\_ru\\_1.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/imr2020_10_key_messages_ru_1.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> UN. Key indicators of international migration for 2020. Available: [https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/imr2020\\_10\\_key\\_messages\\_ru\\_1.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/imr2020_10_key_messages_ru_1.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Official website of EU. Available: [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/54597/global-compact-for-safe-orderly-and-legal-migration\\_ru](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/54597/global-compact-for-safe-orderly-and-legal-migration_ru).

However, this approach does not take into account the risks of replacing the local population with external migrants, the risks of increasing the conflict potential based on the difference in cultures, mentality, as well as the formation of ethnic enclaves in large cities that have become the points of migration attraction.

Comparing the data of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia (migration registration of foreign citizens in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation) and the Federal State Statistics Service (population permanently registered in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation), it is possible to single out individual Russian regions with a critical share of external migrants, such as Moscow (27.5%), St. Petersburg and Leningrad region (21.5%), Moscow region (20.5%), Kaluga region (20.1%)<sup>4</sup>, etc.

Such migratory overabundance is reflected in the public perception of external migration, expressed in the approval of various restrictive measures to limit the influx of newcomers<sup>5</sup>.

In this regard, the opinion of M.Yu. Apanovich seems rather interesting, who, speaking about the political understanding of the term “migration”, focused on the transformation of the state-political reality in the context of the influence of the moving population on the receiving society [1].

From this perspective, the limitation of external migration, the regulation of this process are now increasingly considered in the context of ensuring national security, where the following areas of activity of government institutions and their interaction with civil society institutions can be distinguished:

- ensuring effective immigration control;
- formation of the tools for socio-cultural adaptation and integration of migrants in the territory of the Russian Federation.

As part of the institutional activities of the federal executive authorities of the Russian Federation competent in the field of migration (Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia, Federal Security Service of Russia, Ministry of Labor of Russia, Ministry of Economic Development of Russia, Federal Service for Labour and Employment Rostrud, FADN (The Federal Agency for Ethnic Affairs) of Russia), we should talk about developing the proposals related to the quantitative regulation of external migration, improving the measures taken on migration registration, toughening the responsibility for the organization and implementation of illegal migration. This approach seems obvious in order to reduce the potential for conflict at the points of migration attraction, for which individual regions in modern Russia are considered to be.

As part of the second area, implemented by the authorities in cooperation with civil society institutions, we have the right to talk about the formation of qualitative criteria for external migration, which will allow potential migrants to more easily adapt to work in Russia

<sup>4</sup> Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia. Selected indicators of the migration situation in the Russian Federation for January-December 2021 with the distribution by country and region. Available: <https://xn--b1aew.xn--p1ai/dejatelnost/statistics/migracionnaya/item/28104344/>.

<sup>5</sup> Xenophobia and migrants. Available: <https://www.levada.ru/2022/01/24/ksenofobiya-i-migranty/>.

and integrate into Russian society, i.e. knowledge of the Russian language, possession of a profession in demand, high qualification, integration potential.

The implementation of these areas will significantly reformat the paradigm of the migration policy of modern Russia towards the priority of the interests to ensure national security and domestic political stability over the quantitative, economic and demographic indicators.

## Discussion

The peculiarities of the migration processes in the post-Soviet space are defined by the transformation of the once internal migration within one state into international migration processes, in which modern Russia has become the main center of migration attraction of foreign labor. Russian researchers, such as V.A.Volokh [6], S.V.Ryazantsev [5] and others single out the so-called “Eurasian migration corridor” that has developed between Russia and the Central Asian states.

The intensification of migration movements taken place in the post-Soviet space required the states to develop new approaches to the implementation of state migration policy, and the formation of their own state-civic and ethno-religious identities in the post-Soviet republics actualized the need to find approaches to the compromise coexistence of the host society and the external migrants in the receiving state.

The migration regime of the Russian Federation distinguishes three categories of states for which there are different approaches related to the level of migration preferences. The first group includes the Member States of the Eurasian Economic Union, such as Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan that enjoy the maximum level of preferences within the framework of the single economic space. The second group should include other CIS states that are not the members of the Eurasian Economic Union, such as Azerbaijan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine with which Russia has a visa-free entry procedure, including the labour activity. The third group includes states with a visa procedure for migration interaction.

Let's consider special migration indicators of the states of the post-Soviet space in 2019 and 2021, consciously not considering the indicators of 2020, within which the migration movements were significantly limited due to the strict measures to counter the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Table 1.** Foreign labor migrants in the Russian Federation in 2019 and 2021 (according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia)

State	The number of citizens of a foreign state put on the migration registration in the Russian Federation	Declared purpose of entry into the Russian Federation "Labour"	The number of citizens of a foreign state put on the migration registration in the Russian Federation	Declared purpose of entry into the Russian Federation "Labour"
2019 <sup>6</sup>		2021 <sup>7</sup>		
Total	13 863 521	5 478 249	13 392 897	9 530 934
CIS member states that are not members of the Eurasian Economic Union				
1 Azerbaijan	465 615	194 929	477 160	275 280
2 Tajikistan	1 585 146	1 179 423	3 076 781	2 439 198
3 Uzbekistan	2 584 207	2 107 302	4 961 301	4 519 618
4 Ukraine	1 133 957	435 528	711 511	240 590
5 Moldova	340 183	174 150	209 884	104 582
Member States of the Eurasian Economic Union				
1 Armenia	331 115	210 460	578 789	389 809
2 Belarus	29 444	1 607	466 034	174 500
3 Kazakhstan	560 067	136 208	562 738	163 938
4 Kyrgyzstan	583 717	453 702	1 063 928	884 133

From the materials of the table, we can observe a significant (almost two-fold) increase in the share of labour migrants in migration flows directed to the Russian Federation, including the proportional growth trend in the share of labour migrants from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. The formation of tolerant relations between Russians and external migrants from the post-Soviet states, actively attracted to the Russian labour market, is one of the main tasks of the migration policy of modern Russia, where at present there is practically no adaptation and integration infrastructure, like the courses of the Russian language, history and culture, adaptation centers and advisory services, which has a significant impact on the conditions to ensure domestic political stability.

6 Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia. Selected indicators of the migration situation in the Russian Federation for January – December 2019 with distribution by country and region. Available: <https://xn--b1aew.xn--p1ai/Deljatelnost/statistics/migracionnaya/item/19365693/>.

7 Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia. Selected indicators of the migration situation in the Russian Federation for January – December 2021 with distribution by country and region. Available: <https://xn--b1aew.xn--p1ai/dejatelnost/statistics/migracionnaya/item/28104344/>.

## Conclusions

The migration system of the state, being one of the components of the public administration system, also becomes dependent on the political decisions made, which in the managerial level are responsible for the formation and subsequent application of the criteria for demanded migration in the receiving state and the migration attractiveness of the receiving state in the state of origin of the migrants [4].

Modern recipient states are forced to find a kind of migration compromise, according to which the economic need for external migrants will be consistent with ensuring the interests of national security within the framework of such formal criteria of the migration system (migration regime, legislation), as well as informal social criteria as migration narratives due to ethnic and cultural and religious differences between the host society and migrants.

The specificity of the Russian Federation in this case is that the main flow of external migration is made up of labour migrants from the post-Soviet space, who do not always consider our country in the context of a new permanent place of residence, and therefore are not fully interested in the integration into the Russian society. The peculiarities of the quantitative and qualitative composition of external migration to Russia from the states of the post-Soviet space, primarily from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, as well as their concentration at certain points of migration attraction, form the risks for domestic political stability.

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## Contribution of the authors

The authors contributed equally to this article.

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