MIGRATION

FEDERAL REPATRIATION PROGRAMME IN THE KALININGRAD REGION: AN ASSESSMENT OF RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

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This article presents the results of comprehensive research the migration situation in the region and the practices of migration management in the framework of risk theory within modern society studies. The key target group of the study are the migrants who have arrived to the region within the Federal Repatriation Programme. The work is based on numerous expert interviews of migration officials. The article analyses written queries to regional ministries on the assessment of local recruiting needs and the opportunities for the arrival and adaptation of compatriots. The authors discuss migration and economic statistics, and propose a forecast for human resources development with and without taking accounting for the migration. The article identifies both the opportunities relating to the implementation of the Federal Repatriation Programme in the Kaliningrad region in view of the current social and economic situation and the risks associated with the first stage of the programme implementation (2007—2013). Possible migration risks are considered from the perspective of cultural studies and management research.

Key words: migration, compatriots, migration programme, social risks, labour potential, migration regulation, migrant adaptation and integration

Why is this important?

In 2012, the first stage of the State Programme for Assistance to Voluntary Resettlement of Compatriots Living Abroad to the Russian Federation (State Programme) was completed in the Kaliningrad region. From 2007 to 2012 more than 18,000 voluntary migrants arrived in the region from 35 near-abroad and far-abroad countries, i. e. more than a quarter

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of who came to Russia under the Programme [17]. Despite the fact that the declared volumes of resettlement of compatriots from abroad over the years have not been met and, according to many experts, the State Programme has not achieved its goal, it should be admitted that some valuable experience in the long-term management of immigration flows was gained during its implementation at all administrative levels. New legal and institutional mechanisms are created in both the capital and other regions of the Russian Federation. Russia is gradually declaring not only the immigration trend in its policy but also makes the first practical steps to implement it. In general, our country had virtually no any experience in pursuing such a policy especially at the regional level in comparison with a number of countries that have implemented immigration programmes for a long time (USA, Canada and Australia). Moreover, according to most domestic demographers (Zh. Zayonchkovskaya [9] A. Visnievsky [11] and others), under compression of the labour potential that our country will be faced in the decades to come, the 'future Russian migration policies it first of all concern immigration' [9, p. 15]. According to Zh. Zayonchkovskaya, 'whether or not the country can avoid attracting the required number of immigrants, this is most critical for the pace of economic growth and consequently the standard of living, its pension, social stability, regional development proportions and finally the measures and integrity of the country' [9, p. 15]. In this context, it is important to perform a comprehensive analysis of the acquired experience in migration control, a study of the regional practices of adaptation of the compatriots arriving in Russia, identifying opportunities of the immigration programmes and occurrence of risks in their implementation.

This is precisely the problem — a detailed analysis of the current migration situation in the regions — which is in front of the developers of the second stage of the State Programme for Assistance to Voluntary Resettlement of Compatriots Living Abroad to the Russian Federation. In Russia's regions (to date relevant programmes are developed in 45 territorial entities of the Russian Federation), this work was carried out during 2013. The authors of this article, as experts were members of the Regional Working Group in charge of the preparation of the Programme for Resettlement of Compatriots to the Kaliningrad region (hereinafter the Programme). The guidelines for the preparation in the territorial entities of the Russian Federation of the second round of resettlement programmes proposed by the Ministry of Regional Development of the Russian Federation contained a significant analytical section. In contrast to 2006, a period when the first state programme for resettlement of compatriots, selected in 2013, methods and concepts had a more balanced and science-based approach. Regions were given the opportunity to show independence, to conduct a real assessment (without exaggeration or embellishment) of the possible areas for receiving compatriots. There was given the task to conduct a thorough 'analysis of social, economic, financial and other risks' and evaluate the readiness of areas to receive compatriots from abroad [14]. The guidelines state that 'if the conducted analysis shows that a region is not ready to implement the programme, in accordance with the recommendations, it remains eligible for suspension and deferral of the programme development' [14].

Method of research

A review of the potential of the new Programme and risks associated with implementation in the Kaliningrad region was preceded by studying the socio-economic situation in the region which made it possible to identify the factors the influence of which may pose a certain challenge for the region's sustainable development in the near future. A detailed analysis of the regional economy, society, demographic processes included the statistical methods, predictive modelling and multiple expert evaluations. For example, in identifying the social and economic environment factors the experts were representatives of the regional ministries and federal agency officials in the region in particular the Federal Migration Service for the Kaliningrad region, executive authorities and local government bodies in municipalities. The identified risks are addressed in two ways, from the point of view of their manifestation for the regional society without regard to the resettlement programme and with regard to its implementation; that is also through the assessment of individual risks of the major subjects of the analysis, the programme participants and their families. The assumed risks were determined depending on the influence of certain groups of factors. Numerous interviews with the first wave of immigrants arriving in the region in 2007—2012 and the results of opinion polls provided the basis for risk assessment. Employees of the Department of the Federal Migration Service for the Kaliningrad region worked as the experts dealing directly with resettlers, the staff of the Migration Centre specially created for compatriots. The article presents the outcome of the research providing grounds for the elaboration of the Programme, its key activities and recommendations for the implementation thereof.

The work of foreign and domestic scientists designed to study the risks and uncertainties provided the methodological basis for the study. Now there are several basic approaches to the risk assessment in sociology at the present stage, i. e. risk society, culture-related, management-related, system-related and interfacial (edgework).

In a sense, the *'risk society'* theory by U. Beck can be regarded as a classical approach [2; 19] whose representatives believe that the risks are not only of the objective nature but can also be socially constructed; the current discourse in the contemporary society about risks not only enhances the real risks but can problematise and generate them. Thus the modern society has to deal with both new objective risks (nuclear energy, the global economic crisis and climate change) and the social risk design mechanisms. From the point of view of this approach, migration risks can also be regarded as one of the specific risks of modernity associated with the globalisation of migration processes against the background of the transformation of the nation states. In this context, it is clear that the specified social and political transformations have generated the corresponding discourse, fairly stable.

Risks are considered from the point of view of *culturological* approach at a slightly different angle [22]. Risk appears rather as a socially transformed and objective fact here, the real-life threats are converted to the risks under the influence of the social and cultural framework and thus are subject to significant dynamics depending on the specific social and cultural context. Given this fact, we can expect that the same phenomenon will be interpreted differently in different social and cultural environments. In particular, in different societies and different periods, the intense immigration can be seen or not seen as a risk, and the objective facts can be interpreted through the prism of the stable stereotypes.

The *managerial* approach emphasises the priority of the new control methods in the conceptualisation and problematisation of risks in modern societies [16; 21]. According to the proponents of this approach, certain events and phenomena can become a risk only when they are exposed to a specific technology; they start to be considered as negative events with the foreseen probability meaning that they are calculated and regulated. By noting the growing interest of the authorities at all levels to the regulation of migration flows for the management of demographic and economic risks, we can admit that migration risks may well be subject to calculation and correction. In our case, the very adoption of the Programme regulating potential risks of the resettlement of compatriots is a clear demonstration of the management approach to the risk design and management.

The *system-based* approach by N. Luhmann and his colleagues [23] considers the risk rather as an attribute of the societies, which become more complicated, where the issues relating to responsibility for the undesirable social phenomena that different social actors try to share come to the fore. From that perspective, the problem of migration risks may arise, e. g. with the aim of shifting the responsibility for the negative socio-political and economic dynamics to the social group of migrants and related public institutions.

Finally, the *interfacial* or boundary approach assumes that the subjective perception of actual risks is always socially conditioned by [24], and — that is critical — taking into account these or other risks is voluntary. Different social groups may consciously be built around certain risks admitting only those participants who are able to effectively manage the risks. In the case of migratory risk we could, for example, consider migrants as a specific social group prone to voluntary taking the risks of the socio-cultural and economic adaptation. However, this approach is unlikely to be of any informative value in the research.

In our work, we are making an attempt to consider the migration risks from different methodological perspectives since it is obvious that the migration growth risk problem is complex. To the maximum extent we are interested in the culturological and managerial perspectives, namely how the migration risks associated with the implementation of the compatriot resettlement programme are conceptualised in the region's socio-cultural environment, how they are calculated and regulated, and what actual phenomena and probabilities underlie this group of migration risks.

How big are the risks?

The problem of public grievances against the presence of migrants has become a significant topic in the Russian modern social and cultural discourse. However, fortunately the notorious 'clogging up' is not to hear often in the Kaliningrad region. The border status of the region is used as a deterrent and primarily the migratory nature of the formation of its population since the early years of settlement in the region as well as in the active internal education and labour migration in the 1960—1980's and (especially) the migration of the 1990's. [6]. The flows of permanent migrants and immigrants have not run out until now. The average annual migration gain remained stable at 3,000—4,000 persons. The latest census figures indicate a further complication of the national composition of the region's population. Processing answers from censuses to the question of national identity revealed that the population of the region in 2002 consisted of representatives of 132 ethnic nationalities. In the main list of the 2010 national census 148 peoples and ethnic groups were listed (there were 109 nationalities at the time of the 1989 census).

While preserving the dominant and growing number of the Russians (82 %) the 2010 population census shows a decrease in the number of Ukrainians and Lithuanians compared to 1989 by 2 times, Belarusians by 2.5 times; the share of the Armenians and Germans increased by 5 times, Uzbeks and Koreans by 4 times, Tajiks by 2.5 times [10; 13]. The ethnic composition becomes more colourful thus certainly complicating the young and underdeveloped Kaliningrad society and imposing the responsibility on the regional authorities for the implementation of the policy in the field of inter-ethnic relations.

According to immigrants themselves, it is the multi-ethnic composition of the region's residents, a large number of the migrants alike more tolerant concerning the public attitude towards immigrants, which has become one of the reasons for choosing Kaliningrad as a place of residence by the compatriots from post-Soviet countries. Do the risks of aggravation of the inter-ethnic relations in connection with the implementation of the compatriot resettlement programme grow if the region? Is there a danger of xenophobia surge?

Despite the fact that the resettlement programme has not recorded immigrants in the region by ethnicity, nor have the Russian statistics as a whole (since 2008), it is nevertheless clear that the vast majority of immigrants are ethnic Russian. One of the most important motivations of arrival is the ability to speak and teach their children in Russia in Russian. This is evidenced by the numerous interviews with migrants. Ethnic Russians living in the countries of the former Soviet Union can not be reconciled to the lack of prospects for education in Russian for their children, and for them to choose Russian regions means primarily the future for their children. The lack of economic prospects in view of the low wages has also become a major factor in the decision to emigrate. The situation in the countries of

origin became extremely sensitive for people with a high standard of educa-
tion and professionalism, who do not see any opportunities for full realisa-
tion of their personal potential there. Among the reasons that led them to
take the decision to move, settlers also name the political instability. The
majority of the respondents were motivated to select the Kaliningrad region
due to the fact that their relatives and friends live there who support migrants
in finding a job and arranging housing. For many migrants choosing a region
for living is the choice of stability and calm life, and the geographical
proximity to European countries plays an important role too.

Thus, the predominant ethnic composition of immigrants and motivation
for move in no way increase the risk of inter-ethnic tension. On the contrary,
they are a kind of catalyst for sooner adaptation of immigrants in the new
society. The performed studies of the adaptive behaviour of immigrants
(interviewed were 60 families of different national composition, level of
education and the reasons for the move) according to the concept of J. Berry
[20] led to the conclusion that most of the respondents integration and
assimilation were the leading adaptation strategies at the time of the survey
[4]. Representatives of 24 families of various nationalities have chosen the
integration strategy which focuses on the preservation of some of the cultural
traditions of the old social and cultural environments and the desire to
become part of a larger community. 22 families expressed willingness to
abandon their socio-cultural identity and move into a new larger community.
Representatives of this group are willing to assimilate, and they are open to
adopt new cultural norms, traditions promoted by the host society.
Assimilation was chosen mainly by migrants who consider themselves
ethnic Russians. These respondents seek to merge with the culture, which
they consider themselves a part of, as soon as possible. Separation strategy,
characterized by preservation of the traditional lifestyle (lack of participation
in society), that is the leading independent existence, held 10 families of the
respondents. By the ethnic composition those are mixed families oriented
towards joining their diasporas in the region. The orientation towards
marginalisation characterised by a sense of alienation and loss of identity
was recorded as a result of a survey for 4 families of the mixed ethnic
composition.

The survey shows that the immigrants arriving in the region choose an
adaptive behaviour strategy seek to be included fast enough in the new social
groups, cultural exchange and adaptation to the new social environment. For
the immigrants who have chosen the strategy of adaptation mediated by the
action of the diaspora[1], the search for adaptive mechanisms carries some risk
for the regional society. It is possible that the formation of the so-called
'diasporic identity' capable of 'carrying a potential of conflict of loyalties

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[1] The demographical conceptual dictionary edited by L.L. Rybakovsky defines di-
aspora as a 'stable group of people of the same ethnic origin living in another ethnic
environment outside their historic homeland (or outside the area of settlement of
their people) with social institutes for the development of the national community'
[3, p. 88].

(towards the historic homeland and host country)' [8]. The risk of further diasporisation of the regional society requires continuous monitoring of its manifestations and localisation. An equally important objective is to determine the migration capacity of an area, a kind of indicator of the region's possibilities for a comprehensive economic and social integration of immigrants. It would be useful to study the point-based system experience in evaluating potential immigrants, particularly in Canada. The experience of China in engaging the scientific staff out of compatriots (and not only) would be quite helpful.

Formation of migrant communities[2], a kind of migration networks connected not on an ethnic but territorial basis, another phenomenon in the development of the regional society. The mechanism designed to establish immigrant networking is quite understandable. For the migrants who arrived in the region there is a significant degree of uncertainty in both purely everyday matters and behavioural aspects of their new life at the early stages of their presence in the new society. The reasons are the lack of completeness of information and inactive contacts in new social groups. Uncertainty can be replaced with a more certain life occurs in the familiar environment of the same immigrants. To what extent the migration networks, which are being actively established in the region, influence the social climate is a topic that requires further research and weighted estimates.

The vast majority of newcomers are planning to stay in the region for a long time and build up the vital strategies for comprehensive adaptation, i. e. the purchase of their own housing, employment with decent wages, taking a mortgage, career development, obtaining additional education and improving the qualification status. According to the Federal Migration Service, 53 persons out of the more than 18,000 that arrived in the region as migrants returned back or moved to other regions[3]. Most immigrants expect to gain a foothold in the region despite the fact that they are experiencing problems associated with the execution of citizenship, such as housing construction and search for jobs with decent earnings.

Although the internal readiness of immigrants to adapt is high, the real adaptation, e. g. labour adaptation and housing arrangements are facing difficulties. The risks here are partly due to the imperfection of the institutional arrangements of the Programme. For example, the risk of unemployment often depends on registration at the place of residence, absence in the early stages of the Russian citizenship. Employers often refuse to provide immigrants with employment if they do not have the Russian citizenship. The lack of registration at the place of residence becomes an obstacle to obtaining loans, the registration of real estate purchase-and-sale transactions, placement of children in pre-school institutions etc. In the labour adaptation,

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[2] The Modern Dictionary of the Russian Language by T.F. Yefremova defines fraternity as the association of fellow-countrymen representing the same area and/or country who live in another area and/or country.

[3] The data of the Kaliningrad region's public institution 'Migration Centre' as of 1 January 2013.

there is also a risk that immigrants will not meet the skills and professionalism requirements set by Russian employers. If for some professions it is possible to acquire or fill up the necessary skills during refresher courses and retraining, the problem of qualification compliance is particularly acute as far as the activities associated with new technologies and innovative production are concerned. We believe that employers should be more actively engaged in mitigating such risks in the future. At the early stages of approving candidates as future participants in the regional resettlement programmes it makes sense to not only maintain a database of vacancies but develop in cooperation with employers a peculiar kind of packages of professional competencies and requirements for potential candidates with regard to specific jobs for all job seekers including potential migrants. It is sensible from the very beginning to work more actively abroad with our compatriots who wish to come to Russia, namely for the employers who may provide them with guarantees in the case they are interested in a particular employee. According to the Agency for Employment of the Kaliningrad Region, the actual situation in the labour market is quite favourable to do so. Today more than 11,000 vacancies are recorded in the region, and the number of the unemployed persons registered does not exceed 1.3 % of the economically active population [15].

The Programme's Potential

Reducing the number of working-age population is among the demographic factors giving rise to implementing immigration in the region programmes. According to the calculations of Professor of the I. Kant Baltic Federal University G. M. Fedorov, by 2020 the able-bodied population of the region will be reduced by 9.5 %, from 590,000 to 534,000. The demographic burden on the working population will be increased. By 2020, according to G. M. Fedorov, it will amount to 747 per 1,000 people of the working age (for reference: in 2012 the demographic load was 607 people). Due to the fact that the small groups of population born in the 1990s will reach the working age soon, in the near future there will be a reduction in the number of school leavers thus causing problems in attracting people to educational institution (and therefore financing them) and reduced number of professionals in the regional labour market.

Against the general reduction in the number of working-age population, the region is experiencing an acute shortage of human resources. A variety of blue-collar jobs are in demand especially healthcare workers, engineers, technicians and teachers. The lack of health professionals at the beginning of 2013 was 676 people, the shortage of teachers and teaching staff of pre-school educational institutions was 175, and 70 professionals are currently needed in the agricultural sector [17]. The region's universities require highly qualified professionals in the field of science and education. In particular, according to the development programme of the I. Kant Baltic Federal University, in the next few years it is planned to recruit highly qualified specialists from among the Candidate of Sciences and especially

Doctors of Sciences. According to the developers, implementation of the programme in the region may reduce the shortage of HR in the above areas. According to the Federal Migration Service of Russia in the Kaliningrad region, most immigrants in 2007—2012 are persons of the active working age, 70 % of the immigrants are from 18 to 55 years old. The number of junior and senior schoolchildren (under 17 years old) is 20 %.

It is impossible to solve the HR replacement problem in the social sector, i. e. medicine and healthcare, education and science through the temporary labour migration. Although this mechanism is widely used in the region after the economic downturn in 2009 the demand for labour among employers gradually recovered and reached 14,500, i. e. the number of permits to engage foreign labour issued in 2013. Temporary labour migration is an effective measure addressing staff shortages especially for short-term investment projects. However, the public opinion survey conducted at the end of 2012 shows that the attitude towards labour migrants among the Kaliningrad inhabitants is ambiguous [1]. About two thirds of the residents of the region's capital are in favour of tighter controls over labour migration and reduced number of temporary migrant workers in the region, of which about a third consider this category of employees as the root of many social problems.

The complications associated with adaptation of the temporary labour migrants are due to their poor knowledge of Russian and inadequate occupational skills. In addition, the patent employment of migrant workers introduced in 2010 does not necessarily require the passage of a medical examination designed to identify diseases that pose a danger to others thus raising concerns in the host community in terms of health safety for the local population. The current problems associated with the involvement in the region of foreign labour increases the risks of the uncontrolled stay of illegal migrants in the region thus creates pre-conditions for the social tension and prevents safety. Regular migration of compatriots, who are required to confirm the level of qualifications and educational status, can become an alternative to temporary migrant workers.

Speaking about the Programme's potential, its humanitarian mission should not be left unmentioned. With regard to 'our people abroad' [7] implementation of the Programme primarily concerns the creation of conditions for compatriots who have expressed the need to move to Russia because of the circumstances. The fundamental engine of that need is a sense of common historical homeland, the remembered feeling of belonging to a common geographical space among most of them and the 'Russian world' identification space[4]. In the social and human dimension the adoption by immigrants of a decision to move to Russia, which is very responsible for them and their families, is largely supported by their deep historical memory. Externally it is manifested in the preservation of language, culture and traditions, inter-

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[4] The concept of the 'Russian world as a network structure of larger and smaller communities, which think and speak in Russian', and the 'Russian capital' as a 'set of the cultural, intellectual, human and institutional potentials' was introduced in science by P.G. Schedrovitsky [18].

nally in memory of a once unified state space, the events associated with it, the common roots, victories and overcomings [5]. Today's geopolitical challenges make the issues associated with the support to our compatriots including the resettlement programme even more relevant.

As a conclusion

The resolution of the Kaliningrad Regional Government dated 26 September 2013 the targeted regional programme 'Providing Assistance to the Voluntary Resettlement to the Russian Federation of Compatriots Living Abroad in 2013—2017' was approved. A review of the risk and opportunity relationship in the implementation of the Programme of the Kaliningrad region revealed made it possible to give a positive opinion regarding its follow-up. Risks will be reduced through the activities developed under the programme. For example, it will include measures to support the information and media coverage of the immigrant adaptation experience. Labour adaptation will be ensured through targeted monitoring of the regional labour market, delivery of training, retraining and advanced training to participants in the Programme, the promotion of self-employment. It is also planned to develop an educational programme to teach immigrants the Russian language, the basics of the Russian culture and the Russian state structure and law.

In pursuing the migration policy in the region it is important to provide a clear division of tasks and problems in the temporary and constant labour migration. 'Different categories of migrants', according to the correct remark of A. G. Vishnevsky, 'require different policies' [12]. With regard to the immigrants who come to the region forever, plan to start a family, raise children and become citizens of the Russian Federation, there should be further developed a set of measures to full adapt and integrate them into the regional society. Immigration programmes, in our view, should be carried out through improvement of the entire HR policy in the region, in the implementation of which educational institutions, employment agencies and employers should be actively involved. Understanding by the society of human resource problems and needs and finding solutions to those problems including with the involvement of migrants will reduce the manifestation of social tension among the working-age population. Major local employers should be more actively engaged in justifying the need for human resources and HR capabilities of the Programme. However, addressing the pragmatic issue of supplying more professionals to the region, we should not forget about the humanitarian mission of the Programme.

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