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Contemporary Migration Processes in Russia

I. Orlova, Y. Streltsova and E. Skvortsova

Introduction

The enormous social, economic and political changes experienced in Russia in the 1990s have made migration a much more pressing issue than it was in previous decades. The rate and directions of migration have changed. New forms of migration have emerged: forced migration, repatriation of deported peoples and environmental migration. And the scale of migration has increased.

The growing socioeconomic crisis in many former republics of the USSR has resulted in palpable social tension. Limitations have been placed on the economic, social, cultural and political rights of national minorities and of people not native to given areas. Moreover, the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the former socialist countries has brought home thousands of servicemen and their families. Migration flows caused by these factors have negatively influenced the country's economy. Settling these immigrants is a problem that demands billions of roubles and other resources. Even more serious is the question of how

adaptable the immigrants are to the new conditions of their existence.

International migration is a relatively new factor in Russia. In the last few years about 100,000 people have left Russia annually for countries outside the former USSR. Most emigrants are in the labour force. The country is thus losing many thousands of quali-

fied workers and professionals. This brain drain is undermining the intellectual and labour potential of the country.

This report provides an overview of contemporary migration processes in Russia, paying particular attention to each of the issues noted above.

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Contemporary Migration Processes in Russia

Abstract

This article, abridged from the Russian original, was published by the Institute of Socio-Political Studies of the Russian Academy of Science, Moscow, in 1993. Irena Orlova, Y. Streltsova and E. Skvortsova work in the Department of Sociology of Migration at the Institute. Dr. Orlova is the Head of the Department. The article was translated by A. Benifand and R. Kovaleva, York University, and edited by R. Brym, Professor of Sociology, University of Toronto.

The article examines the contribution of migration to Russian population dynamics, inter-regional migration flows, the growth of regional and ethnic separatism, human rights problems associated with migration, refugee issues, and the "brain drain" from Russia. It is based on official demographic statistics and a wide range of sociological surveys. It focuses mainly on the period 1990-93 and contains a brief postscript bringing the analysis up to date.

Processus contemporains de migration en Russie

Résumé

Cet article est une version abrégée d'un texte qui a été publié en russe par l'Institut d'études socio-politiques de l'Académie russe des sciences à Moscou en 1993. I. Orlova, Y. Streltsova et E. Skvortsova sont membres du Département de sociologie des migrations à l'Institut. Dr. Orlova est directrice du Département. L'article a été traduit par A. Benifand et R. Kovaleva de l'Université York. La traduction a été dirigée par le professeur R. Brym du Département de sociologie de l'Université de Toronto.

L'article examine l'effet des migrations sur la dynamique démographique en Russie, les flux migratoires interrégionaux, la croissance des mouvements séparatistes régionaux et ethniques, les problèmes des droits de la personne qui sont liés aux migrations, la situation des réfugiés et les problèmes résultant de l'émigration des intellectuels russes. L'analyse est fondée sur des statistiques démographiques officielles et plusieurs études sociologiques. Elle traite surtout de la période 1990-1993. Le postscriptum décrit les développements récents.

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The 1995 Social Summit (in Denmark) should endorse the emerging concept of human security as the basis upon which national development strategies, international cooperation and global governance should be organized. ... Human security is relevant to people everywhere, in rich nations and in poor. Its reach is now global.

The UN Human Development Report 1994, in this issue (page 18)