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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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