

This return migration was due to two main factors. First, many people were eager to move to remote regions in order to earn high wages. Now, however, special compensation for isolation, difficult conditions, and severe climate is no longer available. Second, uncertainty has recently grown about whether their apartments in their places of origin will continue to be reserved for them and about whether they will receive privileges (such as higher old-age pensions) that a northern work record is supposed to give them. Suddenly everything is uncertain because each former Soviet republic has passed new laws governing such matters—but without coordinating them with the laws of the other former Soviet republics.

Population decreases in the areas of the Russian North became especially grave in 1992 (See Table 4).

Return migration has thus taken on massive proportions. It will undoubtedly have a damaging impact on the Russian economy and social life, and will jeopardize the further development of the Russian North, Siberia and the Far East. On the other hand, the European part of Russia and the Ural region, which are receiving these migrants, will suffer from a labour surplus and unemployment.

Table 4: Population Decrease in the Russia North in 1992

Region	Out-Migration	Increase since '91
Tumen	50,000	9,000
Magadan	38,000	20,000
Yakutia	34,000	6,000
Murmansk	29,000	13,000
Chukotka	22,000	13,000
Chitinsk	21,000	11,000
Khabarovsk	16,000	14,000
Amur	16,000	12,000

Source: State Statistics Committee of the Russian Federation.

Part II: Socioeconomic Consequences of the Reshaping of the Ethnic Map of the Former Soviet Union

3. Migration Exchange With the Countries of the "Near Abroad" and the Policy of de-Russification

Russia is now experiencing a positive migration balance with all the countries of the near abroad apart from Ukraine and Belarus (see Table 5). In addition to the arrival of people from the North, Siberia and the Far East, other migrants are coming from Central Asia, Transcaucasia and the Baltics. Among the migrants, the percentage of refugees is constantly growing. Estimates of the number of refugees on the territory of Russia as of January 1, 1993 vary from 363,000 (according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs) to 460,000 (according to the Federal Migration Service).

The ethnic composition of the migrant population in 1992 has been estimated by the State Statistics Committee of the Russian Federation to be 44 percent Russian, 18 percent Armenian, 8 percent Meskhetian Turkish, 7.9 percent Osetian and 2.5 percent Azeri.⁵

The main factors causing the various migration streams are all outgrowths of the collapse of the Soviet Union. They include: the socioeconomic crisis; the aggravation of ethnic relations; the activities of nationalist parties and groups; and the passage of discriminatory citizenship and language laws by the new states. According to a 1991 survey of 91,100 migrants to Russia, the aggravation of national relations was one of the most important factors on this list.⁶ Specifically, 70 percent of respondents from Azerbaijan, 64 percent from Tajikistan, 63 percent from Georgia, 50 percent from Armenia, 47 percent from Kyrgyzstan, 45 percent from Latvia and 36 percent from Moldova said that ethnic conflict was the most important reason they migrated.

Sixty-five percent of the respondents who cited the aggravation of ethnic relations as a reason for migrating

were Russians. Internal migrants in Russia who left their homes because of ethnic conflicts were mainly from Chechen-Ingushetia, Dagestan, Tuva and North Osetia; and fully 78 percent of them were of Russian background.

One can detect the indirect influence of ethnic strife on the decision to migrate even when respondents said they left mainly for other reasons. For example, among migrants from Latvia, a common reason for leaving was the need to change one's place of work. But 38 percent of the respondents from Latvia indicated that it was necessary to change work because of the new state-imposed demand for fluency in Latvian. Similar responses were given by 34 percent of respondents from Tajikistan, 25 percent from Kyrgyzstan, 23 percent from Uzbekistan, 33 percent from Lithuania, 31 percent from Estonia and 22 percent from Georgia. Forty-three percent of the respondents said they did not know the language of the titular national group⁷ in the former Soviet republic where they had resided and 17 percent said they had weak knowledge of the language. Among those who cited worsening ethnic relations as the main reason for migrating, the corresponding figures were 49 percent and 23 percent.

Given the worsening socioeconomic situation and the intensifying mobilization of national-political sentiment, we can expect a considerable rise in the migration of Russians from the former ex-Soviet republics and from the internal autonomous regions of Russia over the next four to five years. Experts estimate that due to linguistic discrimination and related causes, between 400,000 and 2,000,000 migrants will arrive in Russia annually over that period. This represents as much as a third of the migration potential of the Russian people residing in the territory of the former Soviet Union outside Russia.⁸ (A total of 25.3 million Russians now live in the near abroad.)

The high migration potential of Russians in the former republics of the USSR is evident from a 1992 survey carried out by the Institute of Problems of Employment of the Russian Academy of Science, in which 1,948 Russian families from Vilnius, Dushanbe, Dagestan, Kiev, Kazan, Western Ukraine and Tashkent were interviewed. In Dushanbe, fully 81 percent of the respondents said they wish to leave. In Dagestan the figure was 63 percent, in Tashkent 59 percent, and in Western Ukraine 35 percent. The situation is more stable in Kazan, where 22 percent of the respondents said they wish to leave. In Kiev the figure was 20 percent and in Vilnius 14 percent. Eighty percent of the potential migrants from Dushanbe, Tashkent, Dagestan and Kazan said they wanted to go to Russia and no other country. Among potential migrants from

Lithuania the corresponding figure was 60 percent and from the Ukraine about 33 percent.⁹

The emigration potential of the Russians will not be fully realized because alongside the forces that drive people from the former republics are some that make them remain where they are. Many Russians have lived outside of Russia for many years and have adapted and assimilated there. Moreover, due to the crisis in the Russian economy and the impoverishment of the Russian population there is no guarantee that migration will be easy. Finally, potential migrants have very little hope that they will be legally protected and that the rights of forced migrants will be observed. Their fate could become easier if each state in the region reaches an international agreement providing the migrants with transportation, property compensation

and pensions. The Russians in the near abroad are justifiably outraged because Russia has abandoned them and does not protect them. In many of the new states American embassies opened up much earlier than Russian embassies.

In Russia itself life is very difficult for the refugees. The Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation has passed a law regarding refugees and forced migrants but it has not been implemented. Refugees are completely unprotected by law when local bureaucrats confront them.

Migrants also suffer from not being free to choose where they can settle. They are restricted by job opportunities, lack of housing and lack of a residence permit (*propiska*). Russians in the ex-Soviet republics live mainly in the big cities, very often in the capitals of the new countries. They are mainly professionals, academics and highly qualified workers. But the Russian government is trying to settle them in backward rural areas.

Thus, the former republics of the Soviet Union are practising a policy of open or hidden de-Russification. This escalates social tension. Such conditions require action on the part of the government of the Russian Federation to protect the rights of its citizens and institute a well-defined program for admitting forced migrants and refugees.

4. Migration inside Russia and the growth of regional separatism¹⁰

The further complication of the sociopolitical situation in various regions of Russia—notably Chechen-Ingushetia, Dagestan, Tuva, North Osetia and Tatarstan—could easily intensify migration and stimulate a policy of ethnic cleansing. Thus the expulsion of non-native people (mainly Russians) is a direct consequence of the sociopolitical crisis and at the same time the reason for its further intensification.

Some 11.8 million Russians live in the various autonomous republics located within Russia itself. Most of them live in Tatarstan and Bashkortostan. Smaller but significant numbers live in Yakutia-Sakha, Mordovia, and Karelia. Their social status is declining. They now have less opportunity to be admitted to administrative positions. Native people are far better represented even if their representation in the general population is quite small.

Interethnic relations in Russia today closely resemble the situation in the USSR on the eve of its fall. The ongoing crisis allows local elites to manipulate public opinion and create the image of independent "emirates" which are free to sell their raw materials. Nationalism and the instinct for self-preservation

Table 5: Net Migration Balance Between Russia and the other Republics of the Former USSR, 1989-92
(in thousands)

Republic	1989	1990	1991	1992
Ukraine	-30.0	-42.3	-99.1	-143.0
Belarus	-11.9	13.4	-12.9	-27.2
Moldava	5.2	3.7	5.3	9.9
Kazakhstan	35.3	42.0	17.5	89.5
Lithuania	-0.1	4.0	3.7	11.6
Latvia	1.2	3.6	6.4	23.2
Estonia	0.3	3.1	4.4	21.9
Baltic subtotal	1.4	10.7	14.5	56.7
Uzbekistan	49.3	69.1	38.3	86.3
Kyrgyzstan	3.4	20.5	15.9	49.8
Tajikistan	6.8	39.5	17.6	66.6
Turkmenistan	2.9	3.9	2.5	12.0
Central Asia subtotal	57.0	133.0	74.3	214.7
Azerbaijan	45.0	60.6	23.4	50.8
Armenia	12.2	4.0	-0.7	12.0
Georgia	15.9	18.0	28.7	46.3
Transcaucasus subtotal	73.1	82.6	51.4	109.1
Refugees not identified by state	0	24.2	88.7	31.6
Total	130.1	267.3	139.8	278.1

Source: State Statistics Committee of the Russian Federation

stimulate the ideology of ethnic superiority. Ethnic strangers are strongly rejected, and Russians are thus drawn into ethnic conflict. Between 1991 and 1992 the number of Russians who confronted national intolerance has grown dramatically, as indicated by the survey research summarized in Table 6.

It has become the general feeling of the people of Russia that their national interests are not taken into account. For example, in a recent survey, 45 percent of Cherkessk's inhabitants, 37 percent of Ufa's, 35 percent of Ulan-Ude's and 31 percent of Yakutsk's population agreed that their national interests are either fully or partially ignored. It is important to note in this connection that among representatives of the titular nationalities this opinion is one-and-a-half to two times more widespread than among ethnic minorities.

The desire to protect one's national interests creates the sociopsychological preconditions for a policy of national revanchism. During the last few years one can discern a marked upsurge of the priority of the nation's rights over the rights of the individual. This feeling is especially strong in the regions where national tension is escalating. For example, among the Cherkess and Karachaev people, 30 percent of those surveyed approved of the idea of the priority of the nation's rights over the rights of the individual. Relatedly, in 1992 members of the native ethnic groups of the internal Russian republics were appointed to leading positions twice as frequently as in 1991.

In general, ethnic background has started to play an extremely important role regarding the selection of candidates for leading administrative jobs, prestigious positions, and for the allocation of financial and material benefits. This encourages a highly negative attitude toward migrants. Actions of the Russian Federation to stabilize ethnic relations are held in very low regard. Forty-five percent of respondents stated that such actions are late, hasty, lacking in thought, and, indeed, are sometimes the source of conflict. As a logical extension of separatist tendencies that add pressure to migration, many inhabitants of Russia hold that independent autonomous regions are not really part of the country (see Table 7).

Due to the worsening economic crisis and the spread of ethnocentric ideology, a serious difference in understanding the essential features of national and state institutions is rising to the surface. This difference often turns into heated arguments when constitutional principles are discussed. In general, the spread of ethnocentrism and separatism ruins the society and demoralizes people who are attempting to consolidate it. The idea that the power of the titular ethnic group needs to be augmented leads to deep conflict among

various ethnic groups, jeopardizes ethnic relations, stimulates migration and increases xenophobia. It can eventually create the danger of eliminating Russia as a historical subject. The strategic concept of "one nation, one state" must be recognized as one without a future. Otherwise we will witness a chain reaction in which each ethnic group proclaims its territorial independence and the country is broken into ethnic segments. This concerns even Russians living inside Russia who do not enjoy self-government. It is absolutely necessary today that a new national-territorial approach be worked out—a sort of "Union of Peoples" or "Federation of Lands." This will provide equal rights to citizens and members of all ethnic communities and territories, and satisfy their national and cultural demands.

Table 6 Russians who Confront Ethnic Prejudice and Hostility in their Daily Lives (in percent)

	Stavropol		Orenburg		Moscow	
	1991	1992	1991	1992	1991	1992
National prejudice	19	38	18	42	17	35
Hostility [†]	36	54	17	29	35	40

[†]Hostility to people of other nationalities and to migrants.

Source: Surveys conducted by the Centre of Sociology of Interethnic Relations, Institute of Sociopolitical Research, Russian Academy of Science.

Table 7: What does Russia Represent Territorially? (in percent)

Region	Russia is the territory of...			
	A	B	C	D
Ulan-Ude				
Russians	24	48	9	22
others	12	44	28	16
Orenburg				
Russians	14	55	17	15
others	13	50	18	19
Ufa				
Russians	18	58	8	15
others	11	46	20	20
Petro-zavodsk				
Russians	11	68	7	13
others	10	63	10	7
Cherkessk				
Russians	39	51	4	16
others	19	48	14	19
Yakutsk				
Russians	18	61	8	12
others	16	41	34	10
Stavropol				
Russians	13	60	16	11
others	24	43	18	15

Notes: A ... the USSR; B ... the Russian Federation; C ... the Russian Federation minus the autonomous regions; D Hard to answer.

Source: Survey research of the Centre of Sociology of Interethnic Relations, Institute for Sociopolitical Research, Russian Academy of Science