

Changes of Russia's Migration Policies and Human Rights of Labor Migrants

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

IOM	International Organization for Migration
CA	Central Asia
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
SU	Soviet Union
FMS	Federal Migration Service
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
WB	World Bank
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
RF	Russian Federation
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
FMP	Federal Migration Program
MPC	Migration Policy Centre
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
WHO	World Health Organization
VTЦИОМ	Russian Public Opinion Research Center (ВЦИОМ)

ABSTRACT

The current thesis combines a bibliographical survey and a case study. The bibliographical survey argues that Russian repressive immigration policies of the 2000's ended up with the flow of illegal labor migrants and created a hostile environment between native Russians and labor migrants, raising the issues of human rights of labor migrants. The case study picks up narratives of migrant workers from the Kyrgyzstan to Russia to partially embody the argument in the first part, and to offer a perspective for further study.

INTRODUCTION

In the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, newly independent states were left face-to-face with their economic and social woes. Russia, unlike other countries, benefited from the oil and gas reserves and experienced an economic growth (Gaddy & Ickes, 2001; World Bank (WB), 2016).

As a result, leading Russian economy attracted labor forces influx from less economically successful CIS countries, in particular, it became a destination point of labor migrants from Central Asian countries such as Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (Lazareva, 2007).

The steady decrease in the birth rate since 1991 (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2009) and the, simultaneously, increasing mortality (Gerber, 2000) urged Russian government to welcome bigger number of nationals from the CIS countries to settle in the country by loosening migration rules in 1997 (Laurelle, 2007).

According to various academic works on migration to Russia, migration patterns can be divided into two waves; the first wave started in 1991 and reached the peak in 1997 (Laurelle, 2007, p. 102) and it was mostly comprised of the Russian ethnic migrants moving back to their historic motherland with the purpose of long-time settlement in there. However, the next wave started in the middle of 90s and is comprised of migrants from Central Asian region's titular nationalities who moved to Russia in the capacity of labor migrants for the economic reason (Suharnikova, 2013).

Russian immigration policy also has been taking different patterns within last two decades. Right after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, it is characterized as the most liberal policy welcoming all Russian compatriots to their historical homeland (Suharnikova, 2013). However, the immigration policies changed 90 degrees in

response to the growing and unprecedented number of migrant's inflow and changed into repressive one in the 2000s. This period coincided with the rise of numbers of illegal workers (Tyuryukanova, 2005).

Unlike the first wave of migrants that consisted of ethnic Russian nationals, the second wave of migrants comprised of people of other nationalities who went to Russia in the capacity of labor workers. They have been the most vulnerable to different abuses and risks due to their illegal status (LeGendre, 2006).

Given the problem mentioned above, this thesis explores the situation of labor migration from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to Russian Federation from the viewpoint of their human rights protection. The first goal is to understand the main reasons for labor migration by tracing the trends over the past decades to the present. Next goal is to examine the social consequences of labor migration, in particular focusing the risks and challenges labor migrants have been facing in a hostile political and cultural environment. Main distinctive feature of this work is to see how the immigration policy of the Russian Federation has been changed in the course of last 25 years in regard to domestic and international terrorism and how those changes affect the labor migrant's security and human rights.

Research Questions

The research questions of this study are as follows:

- 1) What are major factors of migration into Russia from Post-Soviet countries?
- 2) How have the immigration policies been changing in response to domestic terrorism?
- 3) How have those changes affected the lives and well-being of labor migrants?

4) How do migrants reconstruct their experiences in Russia in the capacity of labor migrants?

Bibliographic Survey

This thesis combines a bibliographical survey and a case study. The bibliographical survey summarizes published statistical data on migration trends in the Russian Federation, and integrates two existing arguments for the better depiction of the current state. The first argument is the transformation of Russian immigration security into the repressive security policy, and the other is on the issues of the human rights of migrants, putting special focus on migrant workers from central Asia in the Russian Federation. It includes summarization of statistical data published by the United Nations, World Bank and International Organization for Migration. The study also involves such qualitative analysis of the primary and secondary sources as analysis of the Russian legislation concerning immigration policy. The Law on legal status of foreigners on the territory of the Russian Federation, State concept on migration policy of Russian Federation and other laws and legal acts directly or indirectly affecting well-being of labor migrants in Russia are analyzed in details. Theories of academicians, scholars' publications, concerning immigration are taken into account, while evaluating current situation in the targeted countries. Besides academic papers, publications of the specialized NGOs, international organizations (IOM and UNHCR) from within the region were put under the scrutiny as well.

For the purpose of this work, narratives from seven Kyrgyz citizens who had been labor migrant workers in Russia were collected and analyzed in the case study. The experienced reality depicted in the narratives partially backs up the discussion of

the bibliographical survey, and shows further insight. The methodology used in the case study is “narrative inquiry”. The details of narrative inquiry are discussed in the Chapter 3.

Organization and the structure of the thesis

In order to understand the main reasons that contributed to people’s movement to Russia, and to answer the question why Russia is chosen as a destination point for labor migrants, the first chapter analyses the migration patterns and trends to Russia after the dissolution of the Soviet Union by looking into the background changes in social, economic, and political situation after the break-up of the Soviet Union. It illustrates that unlike the first waves of immigrants to Russia, the second waves were comprised of people moving to Russia in the capacity of labor migrants. The next chapter looks at Russia’s transformation process of immigration policies and its connection to national security agenda over the past decades. It argues that the immigration security policies of Russia brought the reverse effect and resulted in the rise of illegal immigrants. The illegal status makes the labor migrants to be vulnerable to different risks and abuses. The theory of Galtung (1990) on cultural and structural violence is used in this chapter as a theoretical explanation of the argument of why labor workers fall the victims of various abuses in Russia. The last chapter includes the narratives analysis of seven Kyrgyz labor migrants that partially backs up the argument of the first two chapters and depicts the personal experiences of those individuals in Russia as well as provides a different perspectives for the further study.

Terminology used in paper

For the purpose of this thesis the following definitions are used:

The International Organization for Migration (further as IOM) defines **Migration** as “the movement of people who cross the borders of a foreign country, or within the same country. It includes any kind of people move regardless of its length, content or reason; it also includes movement of refugees, displaced persons and economic migrants” (International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2016).

Labour migration - “movement of persons from one State to another, or within their own country of residence, for the purpose of employment” (IOM, 2016).

Illegal migration or illegal migrant is used to define the workers who stay in Russia without proper documentation and without registration with the proper Russian authorities (IOM, 2016; United Nations (UN), 2016).

Legal entrance of migrants to Russian Federation - means an act of crossing through the border checkpoints with the proper valid documentation such as passport and the aim why the worker is crossing the border is clarified and the migration card is issued. (General Administration For Migration Issues of the Interior Ministry of Russia (GAMI), 2016)

Illegal entrance - “An act of crossing borders without complying with the necessary requirements for legal entry into the receiving State” (IOM, 2016)

National security is defined as a system where the state plays the main role pursuing the goal of ensuring its territorial integrity, preservation of the existing political regime and safety of the society and individuals (Williams, 2012).

CHAPTER 1: IMMIGRATION INFLOW FROM THE FORMER SOVIET COUNTRIES TO RUSSIAN FEDERATION

1.1 Historical background: changes of Social, Economic, and Political Backgrounds of Immigration in Former-Soviet Countries

In order to understand the main reasons that contributed to people movement to Russia, and why Russia is chosen as a destination point for labor migrants, this part analyses the migration patterns and trends to Russia after the dissolution of the Soviet Union to the present. The demographic challenges, labor shortage issues of Russia as well as the distribution of the labor migrants in Russia by employment industry are also discussed in the chapter in order to give a whole picture of both social and economic conditions.

The disintegration of USSR became the time of most chaotic and turbulent times for many CIS countries and accompanied with severe economic decline and political and military tensions over the resources in those newly emerged countries (Abazov, 1999, p. 210-252), namely Armenia, Azerbaijan and Tajikistan experienced numerous armed conflicts that un-stabilized political and social situation and resulted in the movement of many refugees and ethnic Russians to Russian Federation. (Tishkov & Zaionchkovskaya, 2003, p. 9-16) Therefore, the immigration trends of this period is viewed from the political and economic context as a natural consequences of the collapse of the USSR.

While the exact estimates on migration inflow to Russia varies, according to International Organization for Migration (2008) report: “*Russia is the second largest country of immigrants after the USA, with the approximate number of immigrants of 12 million*”. There are other estimations of academicians and scholars on migration inflows

to Russia in 1990-2000 indicate that Russia became a destination country to nearly 8 million labor workers from the post-soviet countries (Zaionchkovskaya, 2003). Among those migrants in Russia, almost 80% are non-registered, undocumented migrants (Ivakhnyuk, 2009, p.6). According to Russian Federal Migration Service (FMS, 2008) official statistics, the number of officially registered labor migrants in 2009 was 7.9 million.

Although the main characteristics of migrants moving into Russia are temporal and consists of labor migrants, the migration patterns from the post-soviet countries to Russia can be clearly classified into two main groups. First group is the ethnic native Russians or forced migrants going back to Russia, to their “homeland” (Lazareva, 2008). Ethnic Russian consisted of 80% of total immigration inflow to Russia in 1994.

Meanwhile, the next wave of migrant’s inflow to Russia has changed to labor migrants consisted of non-Slavic people that are other ethnicity labor migrants moved to Russia mainly for economic reasons, (IOM, 2008) with no intention of long-term residency in Russia but in the capacity of temporary workers. According to approximate estimations, in 1991-2000 Russia has received from 4 to 8 million labor migrants from the post-soviet countries, especially from Central Asia (Zaionchkovskaya, 2005).

The factors of such unprecedented movements of migrants can be explained first of all by the economic factors of both sending and recipient countries (Andrienko & Guriev, 2005). Since the export and import between Central Asian countries and Russia has been dramatically decreased, which resulted in poverty and unemployment in most Central Asian countries. In contrast to that, Russia has experienced a different development pace, from 1998 s; the Russian economy has shown sign of growth; the growing oil and gas prices contributed to an economic growth from 2000, which

reached its peak in 2004-2008. An industrial growth in Russia compared to other newly emerged countries created an ideal place of destination for the labor workers from Central Asia; thus, a high demand in the labor force in the field of construction, trade and transport industries created employment opportunities for hundreds and thousands of labor workers from Central Asia (Malyuchenko, 2013 p. 5-7).

1.2 Literature review on migration theories, theoretical framework to migration from Central Asia to Russian Federation

There are various theories of migration developed over the years that differ due to various reasons why people move, which in their turn affect the migration process in general in both receiving and sending countries. The most applicable theories to explain the character of migration trends to Russia from Central Asia are discussed below.

The earliest migration theory is considered to be the "*Laws of Migration*", developed in 1885 by Ernst Ravenstein. According to this theory, migration is based on the so-called push and pull process. Push in this process refers to the unfavorable conditions in the country of origin, namely heavy taxes, risky investment climate, suppressive legislation etc., which can "push" people to look for the better conditions in the neighboring countries or even further. At the same time more attractive conditions in the country of recipient have a pulling function in this process (Ravenstein, 1885, p.167-235.). This theory is clearly pertinent with Russia to explain the nature of general movement of people from post-soviet countries right after the dissolution of USSR in the 1990s.

Everett Lee (1966) revised Ravenstein's theory by giving more importance to the "push" factors of sending countries. According to his theory, personal factors and internal conditions in the country of origin are the most important in defining the

migration pattern. This theory is most applicable to explain the phenomenon in the case of Central Asian countries' economic and political situation that "pushed" labor migrants move to Russia. The main reasons that contributed to the people's decision to migrate were the unfavorable and deteriorating conditions in sending countries such as unemployment, political instability and social tensions in those countries which occurred right after the collapse of the USSR (Abazov, 1999; Zaionchkovskaia, 2003; Ilkhamov, 2006).

The network theory of De Haas (2010) points the role of social capital in migration processes. In his work "Migration System Formation and Decline: A theoretical inquiry into the self-perpetuating and self-undermining dynamics of migration processes", De Haas argues that network connections in the migrant recipient country is used as social capital people tend to use in order to gain the access to the foreign employment. Expansion of social networks helps reduce the costs and risks of people movement. Migrant communities or diaspora basically play an important role by creating safety nets and informal communities and therefore the probability of migration movements rises.

In the Central Asian case, this theory clearly works: millions of Central Asian labor migrants residing in Russia have already built informal connections and informal social networking that contributes more people to emigrate to Russia (Igushev, 2003; Ilkhamov, 2006). This theory is also partially backed up with the case study of Kyrgyz labor migrants who chose Russia, as a country of destination because of social networking already existed there.

As opposed to Lee's theory, Stouffer's (1940) Law of intervening opportunities puts more emphasis and gives more importance to the opportunities in the country of

destination. According to this model, the number of migrants is directly proportional to the number of opportunities in a particular country-recipient. Russian demographic challenges and acute need for foreign labor workers in the Russian labor market support the argument that pull factors such as employment opportunities in Russia attract labor migrants and is proportional to the demand of market and supply, thus created interdependent, complementary labor markets between Russia and Central Asian countries. (Lazareva, 2008; Zaionchkovskaya, 2007). This theory is suitable with Russian deteriorating demographic situation which cannot provide enough labor force and is dependent on foreign labor.

Based on the theoretical review presented above, this research will try to support the hypothesis that the less job opportunities Kyrgyz people find in their country, the more attractive migration to the neighboring countries will be; and the more expanding the social interconnections with Russia are, the clearer is their interest and more obvious is their choice.

The strength of this research is that the hypothesis will be evaluated against the primary sources, an interview of the labor migrants from Kyrgyz Republic. Nevertheless, the most important limitation is presented by the lack of statistic data on number of labor migrants arriving to Russia from Central Asia as well as difficulty to assess influence of family or friendship relationships on migration destination choice accurately. Therefore, the following research and, most importantly, the empirical data collected will be analyzed and the conclusion on whether the theory is supported by the evidence or not.

1.3 Background characteristics of three most sending countries of Central Asia to Russia: “push factors” that contribute to labor workers move

Central Asia which consists of five former Soviet countries such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan was particularly hit hard by the dissolution of centrally planned economy and witnessed the mass outflow of people moving for Russia for economic reason in search of a better life (Laurelle, 2007 p. 103). According to the official statistics from Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation, the number of Central Asian migrants in Russia is growing from year to year, reaching up to 42% in comparison to 33% five years ago (GAMI, 2016). The main factors that contributed to a mass migrant movement from Central Asia to Russia is an economic decline in those countries. Thus, the intensity of migration from Central Asia to Russia depended on the economic factors and people moved from poverty trapped, job-scarce regions to place with better employment situation like Russia (Abazov, 1999; Laurelle, 2007). The brief background information on three Central Asian countries clearly showcases the main reasons why local population opts for labor migration. In other words, the following country profiles restate the push factors of the sending countries.

1.3.1 Kyrgyzstan - a brief country profile.

By looking into basic statistic information on Kyrgyzstan, one can understand what gave an impetus to the Kyrgyz nationals to leave their homes and look for the better job opportunities elsewhere. The Kyrgyz Republic is the second poorest country in the Central Asia, after Tajikistan. Since its independence, the state is facing increasing migration rates, heating 339 600 people in the following 5 years (IOM, 1996,

p. 67). Some researchers suggest that due to the fact that the migration processes are prone to political sensitivity, the real numbers of migrants cannot be obtained (Abazov, 1999, p. 237). However, according to the Slovo Kyrgyzstana (January 5, 1995) the number of Kyrgyz citizens who left their home country during the period of 1989-1994 hit 13.1% of the population – somewhat more than half a million.

In order to understand nature of the migration processes in Kyrgyzstan, it is vital to understand the ethnic composition and history of population of the country. During the late 1930s through 1960s, Kyrgyzstan experienced 3 waves of industrialization that resulted in highly and rapidly increasing the number of Russians in the country (Morkynin, 1999). In the course of 20 years their numbers doubled. Thus, representatives of those “implanted” nationalities were the first group to migrate when the Soviet system collapsed and the opportunity to go back to Russia became feasible.

The common Soviet history, family or business network, good command of the Russian language and shared cultural values, as well as bilateral cross-border agreements, can be counted as the key to the choice, people from Kyrgyzstan made in the aftermath of the disappearance of the Soviet Union. However the main reason that contributed to the flow of people from Kyrgyzstan to Russia is the economic decline, unemployment and poverty. In particular, most of the labor migrants from Kyrgyzstan to Russia are from less developed rural regions and south part of war torn regions where the living conditions are the hardest and the poverty is acute.

The political tensions between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in 1990 as well as the continuous popular appraisals and revolutions of 2000s followed by the change of the elite power also contributed to the deteriorating economic situation and political instability. Namely, the Osh conflict in summer of 1990 involved the large Kyrgyz and

Uzbek ethnic groups of Central Asia. Then, in the Uzgen, the conflict took place in 1990, with sporadic outbursts of criminality on other days as well (Asankanov, 1996; Cheterian, 2010).

Thus, though the main push factors are considered to be poverty and the economic instability, it is also true for this Central Asian country that historically formed ethnical consistency influenced the ever-increasing number of migrants willing to move to Russia considerably. Unlike Tajikistan, Kyrgyz economy and internal labor market are not stagnating and the GDP per capita (table #1) is much higher. Nevertheless, the continuing increase in the number of the Kyrgyz migrants arriving to Russia can be interpreted as a result of the close ties with the first wave of the migrants, which in its turn supports the Network theory of De Haas.

1.3.2 Tajikistan - a brief country profile.

Slightly different situation can be seen in Tajikistan, which was plunged into civil war almost right after it became independent of the Soviet Union in 1991. Though the civil war ended 6 years later, the economy of Tajikistan actually has never recovered, and poverty is widespread (Jones, Black, & Skeldon, 2007). As the result, Tajikistan is the poorest country in Central Asia with the lowest adult literacy rate and the most fast growing population (see table 1). The shrinking local labor market, economy stagnation and the tougher competition for scarce job opportunities pushed young males to look for more attractive wages in the foreign lands. As the migrants` endeavors paid off, the labor migration to Russia became a tendency, which led the country`s economy dependent on the migration remittances. The migration remittances from Russia alone consisted 42.7% of country`s GDP in 2014 (Putz, 2015).

Economic difficulties and deteriorating political situation are the main factors that push millions of Tajik people to move to Russia in the capacity of labor migrants. Although exact numbers of Tajik migrants in Russia are not available, the migration studies devoted to Central Asian migration indicate that the number of Tajik labor migrants in Russia consists of approximately 600,000, which is almost 10% of the whole population of Tajikistan. (Jones, Black, & Skeldon, 2007, p. 8). For one of the smallest Central Asian countries an outflow of their nationals of 10% might have long-lasting consequences and constant dependency on the recipient country, as almost half of the country`s budget comes from the incomes of the labor migrants.

Table 1: Human Development Indicators in Central Asia and selected other countries,

1991

	Urban population (%) in 1992	Population growth (p.a.)	Life expectancy at birth (yrs)	Adult literacy rate (%)	Real GDP per capita (PPPS)	UNDP Human Development Index
Kazakhstan	58	1.8	69	97.5	4490	0.774
Turkmenistan	45	2.8	66	97.7	3540	0.697
Kyrgyzstan	38	2.3	68	97	3683	0.685
Uzbekistan	40	2.9	69	97.2	2790	0.664
Tajikistan	31	3.1	70	96.7	2180	0.629

Note. Adapted from "Women And Gender Relations in Tajikistan" by J. Falkingham. (2010)

However, the growing number of the labor migrants from Tajikistan cannot be totally attributed to the higher birthrate or political instability after civil war in 1990s; the country`s scarce natural resources and the lack of internally developed industries were the prerequisites for the inability of the local economy to recover and support higher living standards of the population.

1.3.3 Uzbekistan - a brief country profile.

Unlike Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, Uzbekistan is a resource-rich country with the population of about 31 million (as recorded in the beginning of 2015), approximately half of which lives in urban areas. However, since the early 90s, Uzbekistan has also faced the economic decline and one of the most difficult challenges that country faced was lack of employment opportunities and a high disparity in living standards between rural and urban areas. Also high unemployment and low wages have resulted in a mass labor migration to Russia and Kazakhstan due to the demand for cheap labor forces particularly in construction sectors of Russia and Kazakhstan. Rough estimation of Uzbek labor migrants to Russia from 1990 to 2006 reached one million (Ilkhamov, 2006). With the Uzbek migrants being the second largest group of the foreign labor force in Russia, it is more obvious that the national natural resources are not always the guarantee for stability and do not always balance the other push factors. In this case, the push factors might have been political instability and the inability of the rural population, which is more than half, to adapt to the market economy, where collective farming is no longer a pattern. In addition to this, one has to mention that Uzbekistan is a country where family ties value the most and therefore, it is obvious that once the first wave of migrants settled in Russia, their family members or the close friends followed. And as the Uzbek traditions are famous for close ties of the extended family, the waves of the migrants arriving to Russia might be decreasing only if the local Uzbek economy provide ample opportunities for its nationals or the Russian labor market would no longer be attractive.

As a conclusion, though Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have different economic prerequisites and natural resources, they all ended up with certain level of

political instability and high rates of unemployment, resulting in common characteristics of the sending states with strong push factors. At the same time, shared history and some basic cultural values, as well as language, coupled with better economic condition and, therefore, more job opportunities in the neighboring Russia, played the role of the compelling pull factors that are to be examined in the later section of this Chapter.

1.4 Russian demographic challenges and labor migrants

There are a number of factors that make Russia an attractive place for labor migrants from the neighboring less developed states, including Central Asian countries. One of them is the aging society, which is the result of the decreasing birth rate in the country. Many academicians and policy experts suggest that the demographic challenges of Russia are acute and the population of Russia has actively been shrinking since 1992. The demographic forecast for 2050 indicates that the number of working age population will be reduced to 50% (Andrienko & Guriev, 2005). According to Andrienko & Guriev (2005) the population change in Russia is predicted to reach minus 17 percent between the years 2004 and 2025 in contrast to the positive population growth in Central Asia which will be reached to 89 percent by 2025. The United Nations also notes that Russia is unable to get by without foreign labor, particularly due to its demographic situation of an aging population and shrinking domestic workforce (UNDP, 2009, p. 96). In order to compensate this drop annual inflow of one million working age migrants is necessary and therefore the migration from Central Asian countries would be used as a solution to current challenges (Meilus, 2013; Schenk, 2010; Zaionchkovskaya, 2003).

Russian authorities also acknowledged the problems of demography and aging population. The Russian Federal Statistics Agency Rosstat indicates that the Russian population will be shrinking by 11 million people from 2008 to 2025. The biggest decline in the population will be between 2011 and 2017.

However, there are two groups among Russian officials, pro and anti-migrant; one is those who do not consider migration as necessarily beneficial to resolve the country's demographic challenges, but instead they considered migrants as a threat to internal security by linking them to criminality and domestic terrorism. This group of Russian authorities frequently described the foreign workers as economic threat by blaming them for \$8 billion lost taxes (Marat, 2009, p. 22).

While the other group consisted of those who favored labor migrants and considered them as useful tools to address the demographic issues of the country (United Nations in the Russian Federation, 2008).

Russian President Vladimir Putin in his speech in 2006 at the council of legislators (Putin, 2006), declared that temporary labor migration of non-Russians from Central Asia does not solve the country's demographic problems, instead he stressed on the realization of the immigration programs of invitation of ethnic Russian *compatriots* to immigrate to Russia as the key solutions to address the demographic challenges of the country. This was interpreted by some scholars and academicians as extremely nationalistic and discriminatory and xenophobic (Meilus, 2013 p. 16; Schenk, 2010 p. 109; Marat, 2009).

Meanwhile, Dmitrii Medvedev made a speech in favor of labor migrants three years later in 2009, and pointed that the foreign labor migrants would be the best solution to address the labor shortages as well as the country's demographic problems.

He stressed in his speech that the labor migrants from Central Asia are taking the positions that the Russian people are not willing to take in such industries as construction, trade and transportation. Also, he urged to “respect” the labor migrants since they are contributing to the economy of Russia and filling the gaps of labor shortages of the country (Medvedev, 2009).

1.4.1 Distribution of foreign workers in Russia by industry

The table below gives an estimate of labor migrants’ employment in Russia by sector (see table 2):

Table 2: Distribution of foreign workers (by types of economic activity)

	2005		2006	
	No.	%	No.	%
Total	702,500	100	1,014,013	100
Building	272,122	38.7	414,084	40.8
Industry and mining operations	48,725	6.9	72,245	7.1
Agriculture, hunting	33,438	4.8	72,646	7.2
transport, communication	32,972	4.7	46,990	4.7
Trade and services	213,933	30.5	270,944	26.7
Other types of economic activity	101,310	14.4	137,104	13.5

Note. Adapted from “Migration in the Russian Federation: A Country Profile 2008” by Chindea A. and Majkowska-Tomkin M., 2008. International Organization for Migration.

While the estimates of labor migrants distribution by the economic sector according to their legal status vary, according to the recent sociological survey and

report on labor migration in Russia conducted by Denisenko & Varshavskaya, the number of migrants legally working in Russian exceeds 2 million as of 2012, and apart from construction and building industries that make up the most of the foreign labor workers, many labor migrants from Central Asia are involved in the low skilled work spheres such as taxi/mini bus drivers, at markets as whole selling, working in cafes, dishwashing, and street cleaning since these works do not require the professional training, educational background or special skills (Denisenko & Varshavskaya, 2013). Meanwhile, some of the works of academicians suggest that the highest concentration of illegal labor migrants is in shadow economies of the country and consists of 40% to 60% of the whole numbers of foreign labor workers in the Russian Federation (Krassinets, 1998; Marat, 2009).

The Russian government showed no real political will to deal with the rise of xenophobia towards labor migrants, instead its self-contradicting and ambiguous approach to deal with the immigration hinders effective migration policy from being realized (Meilus, 2013).

It is clear that the Russian government is torn between the ever-decreasing population that leads to the acute labor shortage and all the consequences entailed and the challenges of the extensive labor migration from the Central Asian countries that might lead to popular discontent and illegal practices. Simultaneously, the deteriorating economic condition in the sending countries continue pushing more and more people to migrate and Russian labor market de facto is ready to accommodate low skilled workers for the sectors that cannot be filled with the Russian citizens. As the result, the dilemma exist rather de jure, while labor migration de facto is a non-stop process.

However, the migration processes should be regulated and the labor migrants

who are on the territory of the Russian Federation already should be taken care of. Therefore, it is vital to understand the Russian immigration policy evolution since the very collapse of the Soviet Union, to analyze how the practices were evolving and effecting the political decisions as well as how those adopted regulations were in their turn affected both the local population and the labor migrants. Such analysis is undertaken in the next Chapter.

**CHAPTER 2: MIGRATION TRENDS AND IMMIGRATION POLICY
TRANSFORMATION IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION IN THE LAST 25
YEARS**

2.1 Liberal migration policy stage in the 1990s: welcoming “compatriots” to Russia

The chapter looks at Russia’s transformation process of immigration policies and its connection to national security agenda over the past decades. It also lays down the theoretical framework on migration that are pertinent with migration patterns to Russia from the post-soviet countries. The main part of this section is devoted to look at how the immigration related changes affect the wellbeing of labor migrants in Russia.

In order to summarize the Russian migration policy evolution within the last 25 years, it is necessary to trace the implementations of legislation in immigration policies as well as to trace the immigration priorities and tendencies over a certain period in the past. According to different researchers and academicians, the development of the migration policy of the Russian Federation went through 3 basic stages (Meilus, 2013 p. 16; Tipaldou & Uba, 2014).

Stage one refers to a period of the 1990s right after the collapse of the USSR and it was mostly oriented on providing assistance to the forcibly displaced people, refugees and native Russians from the post-soviet countries. This period is considered to be the most liberal from the political viewpoint since it aimed to regulate the unexpected inflow of ethnic Russians back to their “homeland” (Meilus, 2013 p. 16; Alexseev, 2006) and Russian government engaged itself to settle the influx of migrants from post-soviet countries.

As the basis for the formation of the migration policy, the Russian government signed the international documents on refugees, namely The 1951 Convention on

refugees and the Additional Protocol on refugees of 1967 in 1991. In accordance with the procedures of implementation of international norms into the national legislation, Russian Government also issued a Decree #135 “On providing assistance to refugees and forcibly displaced people” (March 3, 1992), without the requirement of “*propiska*” to the above-mentioned groups of people.

Also, Russian Government adopted the State Program “Migration” (May 18, 1992), where the first principles of migration policy were stated. The new Program stipulated the most important right of the migrants to move freely and choose place of living and jobs. Moreover, intolerance to the discrimination based on race, sex, religion, citizenship, belonging to social groups or political beliefs was pronounced and the program also put down the guarantees of the equal treatment with the citizens of the hosting country. Besides, necessity of the interstate coordination to provide assistance to this group of population (refugees, displaced people, migrants) was recognized for the first time.

2.1.1 The legislative basis for the immigration policy in Russia.

The substantial part of the legislative basis for the immigration policy in Russia consists of the main law of the country – the Constitution of the Russian Federation (December 12, 1993), the law on refugees that was adopted in 1993 and Law on citizenship (1991, November Law N 1948-1). Besides the Laws, the legislative control of the migration processes is based on legal regulations of the Government (*podzakonnye akty*) and the internal policies of the state bodies dealing with immigration.

The norms of the Law on Citizenship were adopted immediately in the aftermath

of the Soviet Union collapse and still close ties between the former soviet republics resulted in quite liberal requirements to the acquisition of the Russian citizenship by those residing on the territories of the 15 countries. According to the Law on Citizenship, the citizens of former Soviet Union countries could obtain the Russian citizenship via simplified procedure meaning that an application could be sent directly from the applicant`s home country without necessarily being on the territory of the Russian Federation. (Zhukawa, 2006).

However, in reality, the Law on Citizenship proved to be ineffective and overly bureaucratic since it required a lot of necessary documents to grant the citizenship to the immigrants from the post-soviet countries (Meilus, 2013, p. 17). The most part of those who fled to Russia in the capacity of refugees as well as internally displaced people had no proper documentation and thus failed to get the Russian citizenship.

Some scholars (Ivakhnyuk Irina 2009) argue that the bureaucratic stipulations in the Law were not intentional but rather circumstantial, and unpreparedness of the Russian government to control and regulate the migration influx can be explained by several factors: political and economic instability of Russia in 1991-1995 due to the collapse of the Soviet Union, lack of experience in the field of migration and no state capacity to implement long term migration policies at that time. Thus, due to lack of clear controlling mechanisms, inconsistency of migration regulating laws, especially the discrepancy of Law on Citizenship and no clearly distinguished differences between the returning Russians, refugees, and labor migrants from Central Asian countries, over three million people ended up staying in Russia without any status as of 2000 (Meilus, 2013).

An unprecedented amount of immigrants from the post-soviet countries

including both legally staying and illegally staying in Russia raised serious concern among Russian society as well as officials over the possible economic, political and social impact of it on Russia. The aim, objectives, priorities of migration policies were reconsidered and reoriented into a war against illegal immigration (Latsis, 2002; Igushev, 2003).

As a conclusion, the seemingly liberal immigration legislation in the 1990s proved to be the result of the Russian government's anxiety and lack of experience on the part of the immigration regulation and resulted in creating more constraints and in making assimilation of the labor migrants and refugees impossible. As the consequence, the number of the labor migrants staying in the country illegally increased and raised a lot of concerns and negative reaction of the local population. Therefore, the next stage in the development of the migration regulation was rather restrictive and reflected the realities of that period.

2.2 Repressive migration policy: ethnic nationalism and security issues

The next stage in the process of immigration policies evolution of Russia can be considered as repressive one. In the 2000s under the national security agenda of the fight with internal and international terrorism (Rukavishnikov, 2002) Russian government reconsidered the immigration policies as a serious policy matter and reoriented it into the war against illegal immigration as the main source of the internal instabilities and threat to the national security (Latsis, 2002; Igushev, 2003).

These immigration policies were driven by ethnic nationalism, which was expressed as institutional and social xenophobia (Schenk, 2010). Some academicians (Meilus, 2013) argue that the lack of coherent migration policy of that period

deliberately created plan of “ideological patriotism” by president Putin in order to gain the public support as an element for modernizing Russia as an election campaign. This “patriotism” however resulted in extreme xenophobia towards foreigners. (Laurelle, 2009, p. 8). But obvious need for migrant workers to fill the gap in Russian labor market shortages did not fit with the government's nationalistic sentiment. According to Schenk (2010), the immigration policies of Russia has linked to national security and nationalism that totally undermined the demographic reality of Russia and denied the fact that labor migrants can be used as a solution to fill in the shortage of labor markets in Russia.

The changes in migration policies also have a direct influence from the events such as internal terrorism and international terrorism (Meilus, 2013 p. 16; Schenk, 2010 p. 109). In 1999 numerous domestic terrorism attacks occurred in the territories of Russian Federation, namely there were series of apartment bombings in several cities of Russia that resulted in the death of 1000 civilians (The Fifth Estate, 1999).

The series of bombings, occurred in the Russian cities, exacerbated the Russian people, ethnic Russian population fear of threat of foreigners, Muslims and all ethnic minorities and led to the outbreak of anti-immigration hysteria in media segregating and condemning the “enemies” (Kjölstad, 2009).

In parallel with these events, the Federal Law (N 115-FZ) dated July, 25 2002 “On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the Russian Federation” was given force in 2002 (Suharnikova, 2013). According to the law N 115-FZ the labor migrants who just entered Russian Federation were classified as “temporary staying foreigners”. The temporary staying foreigner’s allowed period of lengths of staying in the territory of Russia was 90 days upon arrival date. Within this 90 days, the foreigner has to find an

employment and has to get the proper work permit and his status changes from “*temporary staying foreigner*” to “*temporary staying resident*”.

Additionally, according to the law, temporary staying foreigners, needed to register with the City Department of Interior of the Russian Federation within *three days* upon arrival to the Russian Federation. The documents necessary for the registration were either labor agreement issued by the prospective employers or written rental contract between the landlord and the foreigner. Moreover, all foreigners had to have a proof of employment, tax payment receipts and lease agreement copies in order to get an employment.

In reality, for labor migrants, it was very difficult to get both labor agreements and rental contract within 3 days. Employers are not willing to employ the foreign labor migrants and landlords did not provide any written agreement, especially to foreigners, in order to evade the taxes (Schaible, 2003). Since many landlords did not provide lease agreement easily in order to avoid the tax, many labor migrants had no choice but to get the work without proper documentation, which made them vulnerable to different abuses from the hands of employers, police and general public. For many labor workers, these restrictions left almost no chance to register legally and work in the country legally (Meilus, 2013). Most of the labor workers got engaged in the shadow economy. Through 2000 to 2005 numerous labor migrants from Central Asian were simply employed in such areas as construction and trade without any registration with the Russian authorities.

Instead of expected decrease in the number of illegal immigrants the result was reverse; the number of illegal immigrants in Russia have been dramatically increasing year by year as a result of repressive and restrictive immigration policies. It also

provoked a growth of corruption in the immigration industry (Meilus, 2013, p. 23).

Security concerns became almost inseparable from the immigration issues and became so interconnected in the minds of average citizens that one can find it necessary to look into those notions in more details in order to understand the nature and tendency of the Russian immigration policy development.

2.2.1 National security, Russian nationalism and immigration interconnection.

In 2004, another terrorist act hit Russia, the group of criminals took the Beslan school children as hostages and the siege has resulted in the death of 385 people including mostly children. In response to that, the Russian authorities took another number of decisions to fight the separatists and extremists and connected them to “international terrorism”. In the light of these events, the struggle against illegal immigration also took center stage as a source of internal crime and terrorism (Mukomel, 2006, p.4-5).

As another step to fight against “international terrorism” and extremists the Russian government adopted a Federal Law on countering extremist activities in 2002 (Federal Law On Countering Extremist Activities, 2008). This Law enabled the police enforcement to make random street document checkups, unexpected raids to “suspicious” people’s homes to disclose, suppress and prevent all the forms of “extremist activities” (Human Rights Watch, 2007).

However, according to Sevortian (2009), the definition and interpretation of “extremist activities” were not clearly defined and were really broad, and therefore, the Russian government was criticized by many organizations concerned with human rights

for having a harsh manner in implementing the law and for justifying a legal platform for lawful acts against foreigners and human right organizations.

In addition to already existing stereotypes of illegal migrants as the potential threat and the source of terrorism, the numerous deadly attacks in the 2000s firmed popular phobia and justified stricter policies against basic rights and freedoms of the migrants. The legislative norms of that period reflected the willingness of the Government to exercise tighter control over the immigration flow. The overwhelming control was exercised not only against individual migrants, but also over any organization protecting their rights and the civil society in general.

2.2.2 Russian authorities' crackdown on civil society NGOs and human rights organizations.

The role of international organizations and human rights organizations concerned with the human rights of labor migrants in Russia is very important to intervene the situation and help to ease the situation of labor migrants in Russia. In this section the relationship between the Russian government and the human rights organizations is discussed in more details in order to understand how the tighter control policies affected such organizations.

Russia has been criticized by the human rights activists concerned with the human right issues for not affording the civil society to have the freedom of expression, freedom of movement, and especially for not letting the NGOs and human right organizations concerned to operate freely on its territory. Different forms of restrictions and repression have been done by Russian government under the flag of “national security” agenda. The government's harsh attitude on civil society has been widely

discussed by media all over the world since those organizations existence is vital for vulnerable groups to different risks and discrimination, including labor migrants in a foreign country (Human Rights Watch, 2014).

The government's crackdowns included the internet restrictions, random sudden police checkups and persecution of human activists, coupled with laws. In 2012 the law was adopted, which requires all the NGOs receiving funds from international organizations to register as "foreign agents". In addition to this, from June 2014 empowered the State to label organizations as "foreign agents" without the consent of those organizations. In May 2015 a new law was adopted and signed, which lets the police authorities to label those organizations as "undesirable," if they are receiving the funds from the international organizations (Child Rights International Network (CRIN), 2015)

Inability of the government to differentiate between the "foreign funds" and "foreign interests" resulted in common perception of the NGOs with foreign donors as popular enemies. Crack down on the civil society entities striped the labor migrants of the last chance on social protection from the state abuse and made the human rights violation problem even more acute.

2.2.3 Violence towards labor migrants through religion, ethnicity and identity

As it is shown in the previous section, the violence towards labor migrants was an unavoidable consequence of the state policy in the 2000s. Direct and indirect acts of violence that occurred during that period in Russia can be analyzed through the prism of the Galtung's theory of "Cultural Violence", which he proposed in 1990. This is the

continuation of his first theory of “structural violence” that he introduced in 1969. Cultural violence means any violence which is direct or indirect based on someone’s ideology, religion, race or language. This violence is built into a culture and justifies any violence in a society by creating “Us” and “Them”. Structural violence is expressed in a way that it changes people’s mindset in the long run and justifies, condemns, represses and marginalizes certain group of people. Galtung describes cultural and structural violence as direct and indirect (Galtung, 1990). Indirect violence is expressed via the media, social phobia of certain groups of people, the expressions of Russian authorities etc., while the direct violence is expressed in case of Central Asian labors being the subject of ethnic based violence and crimes.

The hostile political and social environment created for years made the labor migrants to be the most unwanted group of people and exacerbated the human rights and human security of them in Russia. According to Schenk (2010):

“Both institutional and societal xenophobia work together to create an environment that demands restrictive immigration policies, despite the economic and demographic need for migrant labor”. In other words, restrictive immigration policies are created as a result of institutional and societal xenophobia and undermines the role of labor migrants. The society is perceptive to governmental rhetoric and media. Institutional and societal xenophobia is a result of governmental nationalistic sentiment and rhetoric which is expressed through media and policies. In the meantime societal xenophobia includes the activity of nationalistic groups and attacks on foreigner (Schenk, 2010, p. 113-116)

2.2.4 Ethnic hostility: expansion of xenophobia and ethnic based criminality.

The hostile environment towards foreigners that was discussed in the previous section has been constructed for years and led to the rise of xenophobia and racism in Russia. This kind of hostile environment particularly exacerbated the situation of labor migrants in terms of their human security. In this section the ethnic based criminality against foreigners in Russia and Russian public perception of foreign labor migrants as the result of the existing xenophobia, are discussed.

According to Sova Center in Moscow, the number of ethnic based criminality has been increasing from 2004 to 2008. People from Central Asia and Chechnya are found to be the most victims of hatred crimes (see tables 3, 4).

Table 3: Consolidated Statistics of Racist and Neo-Nazi Attacks in 2005-2006 (by the season)

	2005			2006		
	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims
Winter (December/January+ February/no date[1])	6 (3/4/1)	70 (14/53/3)	76 (17/57/4)	7 (3/4/0)	98 (52/41/5)	105 (55/45/5)
Spring	5	117	122	14	73	87
Summer	6	62	68	-	-	-
Autumn	15	99	124	-	-	-
Year total	32	386	418	-	-	-

Note. Adapted from "Hate Crime in Russia: Statistics" 2006. SOVA Center

Table 4: Consolidated Statistics of Racist and Neo-Nazi Attacks in 2005 and 2006
(by the object of attack)

Year	2005		January - May 2006	
	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Killed	Beaten, wounded
Including:	32	386	18	119
Dark-skinned people	3	37	2	15
People from Central Asia	9	28	4	7
People from the Caucasus	9	49	7	22
People from the Middle East and North Africa	0	11	0	2
People from Asia-Pacific Region (China, Viet-Nam, Mongolia, etc.)	2	59	1	15
Other people of "non-Slav appearance"	1	59	3	14
Members of youth subcultures and leftist youth	3	124	1	32
Others, or not known	5	19	0	12

Note. Adapted from "Hate Crime in Russia: Statistics" 2006. SOVA Center

It is clear from the above mentioned statistics that the racist attacks are escalating and people from Central Asia and Caucasus combined together constitute one of the most violence-targeted groups. The prerequisites for open violence resulting in deadly attacks lie in the public perception of otherness of the non-Slavic nations as posing threat. As it is pointed out in this section and is discussed in more details in the next, flourishing xenophobia has the roots in the public opinion on foreigners that was constructed through years.

2.2.5 Negative public perception of ethnic minorities in Russian Federation: public opinion surveys.

Human right organizations concerned with the human rights issues conducted several opinion poll surveys designed to find out the perception and attitude of Russian public towards the people of other nationalities, ethnicities and minorities in Russia (see table 5). In 2005, the Russian Public Opinion Research Center, the governmental institution under the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, conducted the opinion poll among native Russians on their attitude towards the other ethnicities residing in Russia. This project was the part of Immigration and Emigration of the Russian Federation Project.

According to this survey Caucasians are in the top list of minorities that Russian people “fear of”.

Table 5: Public opinion overview

<i>Please name the nations, representatives of which makes you feel irritation, hostility (open questions, any number of responds)</i>			
	2005	2006	2009
<i>Caucasians (Azerbaijanis, Armenians, Georgians, Ingush, Dagestani, Chechens, etc.)</i>	23	29	29
<i>Central Asians (Tajiks, Uzbeks, Kazakhs)</i>	4	2	6
<i>Balts (Latvians, Lithuanians, Estonians)</i>	3	2	3
<i>Chinese</i>	2	2	3
<i>Americans</i>	1	1	3
<i>Arabs, muslims</i>	2	0	1
<i>No such nations</i>	34	41	55
<i>Others</i>	0	0	3
<i>Difficult to answer</i>	30	20	8

Note. Adapted from “Press release #1282”, 2009. VCIOM

2.3 Liberal-restrictive migration policy in 2005: the reality of labor migrants from Central Asia

In 2005, the chosen path of immigration repressive policy proved ineffective. As it was shown in the previous sections, it resulted in the growth of illegal immigrants, hostile public opinion and rising criminality against those arriving from Central Asian countries. At the same time, the demographic challenges of Russian Federation have still been an acute issue. The changes aiming to start liberalization of immigration policy, taking into consideration of unsystematic and ineffective policies of the 2000s, took place after 2007 with many new regulations adopted in different migration related areas (Schenk, 2010).

According to Meilus (2013), there are numerous reasons why the government of Russia has started the major immigration reforms. One is increasing construction boom that urged for the foreign labor force, the other reason is that the gaps in the current migration laws were obvious and needed to be reformed, and finally the demographic issues forced the Russian government to reconsider the immigration policies (Meilus, 2013, p. 24).

As a result, the Russian government made the amendments to the Law of 2002 in 2007. According to new amendments, the period for staying for foreign visitors in Russia was extended to 180 days, compared to 90 days in 2002.

Also several attempts to simplify the procedures for issuing the work permit and registration with the Russian authorities were taken place. For example, labor migrants could apply for work permits in the offices of FMS but not from particular employers,

which meant the protection from being dependent on one particular employer and being able to change the employers and work for different employers with the given work permit (General Administration for Migration Issues of the Interior Ministry of Russia (GAMI), 2016).

However, new procedures for work permits and liberalization of migration policies, while laudable on paper, prove complicated in terms of implementation and application. First of all, although the period for registration with FMS upon arrival to Russia was changed from 3 days to 7 days, this short period still created significant obstacle to get the proper document necessary for the registration. Especially the medical exam which is to be carried out within 30 day but costs around 500 USD is extremely expensive for migrants, and language test result documents, brought required, are not applicable to all labor migrants. For the majority of labor migrants these requirement are challenging and impossible to meet, due to expensive and overly bureaucratic procedures.

The positive reforms in migration legislation in 2006 and 2007 allowed many workers coming to Russia to use simplified ways to obtain residency registration and work permits (GAMI, 2015). However, some academicians argue that those efforts to enforce the law to work properly have reminded only loud on papers, and in reality, FMS did not cooperate fully with other related state agencies to enforce the new reforms (Meilus, 2013).

This stage in the immigration policy of Russia is seen as “*liberal-restrictive*” due to the double standard approach to the immigration problems (Tipaldou, & Uba, 2014).

On the other hand, the Russian government cut the quota for work for foreign

labors and as a result 6 million in 2007 were reduced to 3.38 million in 2008 (GAMI, 2007), while at the same time contradicting policies such as introducing various governmental programs for attraction of short and long-term foreign labor migration were introduced, which includes the simplified conditions of entry, residence and employment of foreign labor workers (Migration Policy Centre (MPC), 2013).

Meanwhile in 2010, the licensing of labor migrants was announced by the government and as a result around 516,000 migrant's status were legalized in January-July 2011. Also, implementation of different programs attracting and granting the educated and skilled migrants to the territories of Russia from Central Asian countries has been implemented. Finally, in June 2012, the new Concept of the State Migration Policy of the Russian Federation for the Period to 2025 was adopted by the decree of the President of the Russian Federation (General Administration for Migration Issues of the Interior Ministry of Russia, 2015).

Despite all the attempts of liberalization for the migration policies, current Russian policies are described as ambiguous towards labor migrants, ineffective and self-contradictory. Moreover, human Rights Watch indicates that since the government does nothing to protect the rights of labor migrants, in contrast, there are many cases when the migrant workers have been humiliated and physically abused at the hand of police (HRW, 2009, p. 3).

Labor migrants are reluctant to appeal to the government about their rights due to various obstacles such as being afraid of disclosing of their own statutes. Simply they do not trust the governmental structures and instead they prefer to use the services of intermediaries, unofficial channels or direct employers (Meilus, 2013).

All the above mentioned has a very destructive influence and devastating effects

on the labor migrants' lives, which are expressed in terms of societal and racial discrimination, refusal of housing, abuse at the hand of employers, and police enforcement discriminative checkups and risks of being the target of nationalistic groups or skinheads. Thus, the situation of labor migrants in terms of their human rights and security is still an acute issue in Russia (Laurelle, 2007).

Based on the analysis of the legislative regulation of the migration processes in Russia, one may conclude that its development has undergone several stages starting with permissive and seemingly liberal to restrictive and abusive. It was shown that legislation had opposite effect on the real practices and the laws otherwise favorable to migrants did not have desirable outcomes. Furthermore, as the Government decided to tighten the policies in the wake of worldwide fight against terrorism, and as the result of some deadly attacks on Russian territory, the situation for the labor migrants deteriorated even further. As the result, formation of the popular stereotypes was affected by the events and government policies, which immediately took form of increased criminal behavior towards Central Asian migrants.

The analysis of the impact of such hostile environment on labor migrants is shown in the case study of seven Kyrgyz labor migrants in the next chapter, which partially backs up the discussions in the previous chapters in terms of human rights violations of migrants in Russia and provides a perspective for further study.

CHAPTER 3: CASE STUDY OF MIGRANT WORKERS FROM KYRGYZ REPUBLIC TO RUSSIA

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, current situation and theoretical backgrounds of migration to Russia from post-soviet countries, discussed in previous chapters, are considered from the perspectives of actual experiences of individuals. The experienced reality depicted in the narratives of Kyrgyz nationals who have been in Russia in the capacity of labor migrants partially backs up the discussion of the bibliographical survey. At the same time, the narratives also give new qualitative insight to existing discussions.

3.2 Method of the case study

Although there is multitude of qualitative research tools, the case study in this chapter uses narrative inquiry to incorporate the perspectives of the labor workers in Russian Federation. A narrative is concisely defined as “the stories people tell” (Patterson & Monroe, 1998). According to Webster & Mertova (2007), narrative inquiry is “set in human stories of experience” and it “provides researchers with a rich framework through which they can investigate the ways humans experience in the world depicted through their stories”. Narrative inquiry recently has been used in the study of migration. Tyner (2002) suggests that mainly researchers used to observe the migration trends from outside factors, however, narratives in terms of life experience of respondents explain the behavioral movements of migrants from inside. Data collection in this approach is conducted in the form of dialogues between the researcher and the respondents, as well as field notes, interview transcripts, storytelling, and audio and video recordings.

As an advantage of this method, it provides inside view into the phenomenon, through the tones, intonation of the respondents it reproduces the experiences of individuals and provides inside views into the personal goals and strategies of migrants (Watkins, 1999). While the weakness of this approach is that the stories told or texts provided by the respondents are very subjective and cannot be objectively assessed as a qualitative data (Meesenburg & Dolberg, 2011).

In this case study, semi-structured interview was conducted to trigger narratives from the participants. The semi structured interview was conducted with seven Kyrgyz people who used to work in Russia in the capacity of labor migrants. These seven respondents who agreed to participate in the interview were found through social networking such as Facebook. The interview was taken one-to-one interaction with each respondent in the unofficial atmosphere. Before the beginning of an interview, an informed consent has been taken orally from each interviewee and they were told that it was possible to refuse to continue an interview at any time without any consequences. The questions asked in the interviews were as follows:

1. Why did you decide to leave Kyrgyzstan? What was the main reason?
2. Why did you decide to go to Russia? Why not Kazakhstan or farther abroad?
3. Which part of Russia did you choose? Why?
4. Was the assimilation process difficult? What was the most difficult and why?
5. Do you have relatives in Russia?
6. How did you find job in Russia? What kind of job?
7. Have you ever had problems in obtaining legal documents in Russia (work permit, patent, etc)

8. Have you ever asked for help of Kyrgyz diaspora or local NGOs?
9. Have your rights been abused in Russia? If yes, when and how?
10. What do you think can be done to improve the situation for Kyrgyz migrants in Russia?
11. Have you ever been discriminated on the ethnic basis?
12. Do you plan to return to Russia?
13. Do you plan to move to Russia for permanent residence? If no, why?

The main purpose of the interview was to trigger the narratives from the respondents and to find out how did they feel in Russia, whether their human rights have been discriminated, and most importantly to find out the reason why they choose Russia as a country of destination. The interview was conducted in Russian, and since some participants did not agree that the interview was audio-recorded, the narratives are basically recorded as notes and reconstructed by the interviewer. This methodological process is referred to as texts being “smoothed” (Polkinghorne, 1995).

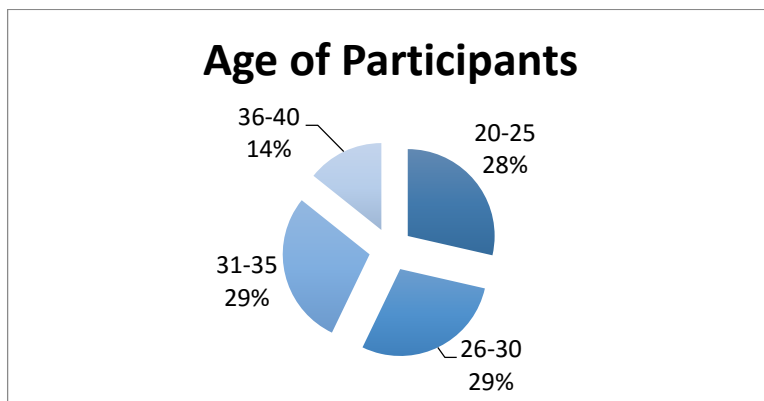
Brief Profiles of Respondents

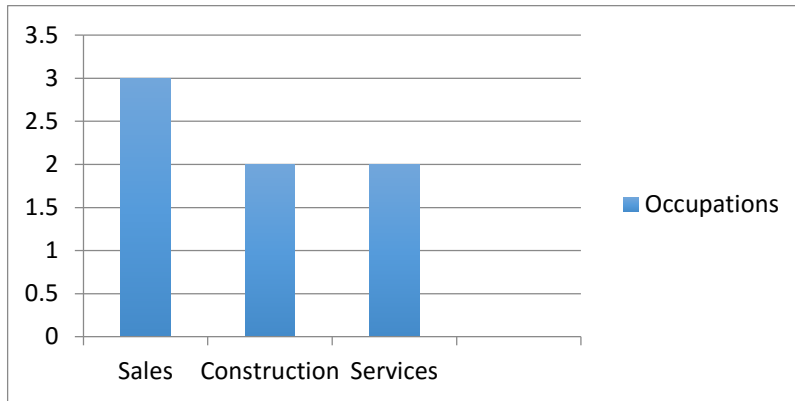
7 former and current Kyrgyz labor migrants took part in the interview. As shown below most of them are males and all of them are in their 20s and 30s. The majority is married and has children to support, while the rest mentioned their parents and younger siblings as the family they feel responsible for. It is clear that the better wages are the predominant motivation for all of the participants, as places of their work in Russia did not suppose any skillset improvement or learning something new. Though the fields of their occupation differ, all of them were and are working as low skilled labor.

Based on the period of stay of each of the participant, one may conclude that

they all went through the period of aggressive immigration policies, discussed in the Chapter 2 and were potential victims of the cultural violence spread those days in Russia. It is also clear that once crossed the border in the pursue of the better economic conditions, each of them stayed in Russia for more than 2 years, while the majority stayed over 3 years. Nevertheless, as the further more detailed analysis of the interview revealed almost all of them made a decision not to stay, but rather come back to their home country.

Participant	Age	Sex	Marital status	Period of stay	Place of work
1	22	M	Single	2015-2016	Loader in the shop, cooking personnel in Japanese restaurant
2	30	M	Married	2010-2013	Compressor operator on a concrete mixing plant
3	32	M	Married	2009-2014	Seller in the shop
4	32	M	Single	2006-2008	Laborer at a construction site
5	30	F	Married	2011-2013	Seller in the shop
6	24	F	Single	2014-2015	Cashier at the supermarket, cleaner in university
7	37	F	Married	2013-2015	Hairdresser





3.3 Analysis

The narratives are analyzed according to push and pull migration theory (Lee, 1966) as well as Galtung’s (1990) theory of social violence to answer research questions, concerning the reasons why Kyrgyz people opt to migrate and why they choose Russia as their destination country. Beside looking into motivation and classifying the unveiled factors into “push” or “pull” categories, the analysis reveals the tendency of migrants’ human rights violation in Russia.

3.3.1 Main factors of Kyrgyz labor migration to Russia.

In this section, narratives of the participants are analyzed in terms of push and pull factors that are discussed in Chapter 2. Push and pull factors of migration are depicted along economic driven migration, family ties and social networking, and shared language.

Economic driven migration. As perceived and reconstructed by experiences, economic reasons as driving force for migration were depicted from all the participants. For example, participant #1 said that: “*Financial situation in my family was difficult, only me and my mother used to work at that moment...*”. Later he added that no matter

what kind of hardship he went through as long as his job in Russia helped him to support his family in Kyrgyzstan. Two other interviewees also mentioned “earning money” as their main reason to come to Russia. In connection to this they have also emphasized that lack of job opportunities in home country influenced their decision.

Participant #4 was no exception and said: “Like most of my compatriots, I went to Russia to work.” Later he added: “For example, if you want to earn money to buy flat, then here it is almost impossible. It takes a lot of time. Average wages in Russia are much higher. And I heard a lot of stories about our guys, who returned from Russia, and could afford to buy an apartment in the city”

The reasons of the other 2 interviewees were almost absolutely identical to the previous pointing at earnings and job-hunting as their main motivations when moving to Russia.

Though the last participant has slightly different educational background, she stressed out low wages even for those with tertiary education as her impetus to move. For example, she said: “. *At that time the average salary was between 3000 to 5000 soms. My salary at that time was 6000 soms, while some of my acquaintances could buy apartments in Kyrgyzstan after working in Russia.*

The narratives of seven participants quoted above, all claiming that economic reasons as motivation to move, are qualitatively consistent with Ravenstein’s theory (1976) which puts economic incentives above all. The geographical origin of these participants is the poorer regions of Kyrgyzstan. Most of them were attracted by the opportunity to earn more money in Russia than they ever could in their own country. Most of the respondents had to leave their families in order to be able to support them.

Unemployment and insufficient wages in the home country were mentioned by all of the interviewees as the main cause for their migration. Those economic situations

became crucial part of the “push factors” for the migrants. However, it is worthy of attention that some of the participants attempted to gain “flow” in Russia to gain “stock” in Kyrgyz. Participants # 4 and 7 in particular were mentioning buying apartments after working in Russia as strong motivation. *“If you want to earn money to buy a flat, then here [note: in Kyrgyzstan] it is almost impossible. It takes a lot of time. Average wages in Russia are much higher. And I heard a lot of stories about our guys, who returned from Russia, and could afford to buy an apartment in the city”, said participant #4, while interviewee #7 mentioned about “some of my acquaintances could buy apartments in Kyrgyzstan after working in Russia”.*

What is depicted from the narratives above indicates that those participants decided to work in a foreign country to seek a better life *in their home country*. “To buy apartments in Kyrgyzstan” is an act of investment to their homeland. In this regard, for some immigrant workers, working abroad can mean seeking a better *domestic* opportunity.

The push and pull theory allows for factors to overlap and emphasizes the fact that migration happens when multiple components are in place, while the importance each of them differs from case to case. In the case of the participants in this study, the geographical proximity of Russia and comparatively low migration costs seem to make up the majority of the pull factors. Participant #2 said that “Russia is closer” when answering the question why he chose this particular country. Likewise, participant #4 added to the same reason of proximity, affordability of moving to Russia in comparison to other foreign countries.

The participants claim relative low-cost of moving to Russia as destination. From the narrative of participant #2, it is suggested that he did not recognize Russia as a “foreign

country”, at least in terms of moving expenses.

Family ties and social networking: Narratives of Participants #1, 3, 5, 6 and 7 indicate that they already had family members, friends, relatives or just acquaintances in Russia in the capacity of labor migrants so it can be assumed that their choice of Russia as a country of destination was not spontaneous but it was based on the experiences of their relatives or friends who were helping them to find a job and assimilate in Russia.

The network theory of De Haas (2010) is clearly at work in this case; the theory indicates that the social networking in the migrant recipient country is used as a tool to gain the knowledge and to ensure to minimize the risks of movement. It also argues that although shared language, geographical proximity and common cultural values are crucial, once the certain number of migrants have moved to a particular country, they influence the decision of the potential migrants to follow their footsteps regardless of their original motivations.

As it can be seen from the narratives, none of the respondents, except one, went to Russia without support or prior advice from their relatives, friends or acquaintances. It was either help in finding a job or accommodation. In most cases it was a decisive factor in choosing a city to settle. Therefore, it proves that though some farther countries can be more economically attractive with stronger “pull” factors, the prior experiences of the countrymen play crucial role in decision making process, which is consistent with the Haas assumptions on migrants to opt for minimal risks.

It also contradicts the Stouffer`s (1940) Law of intervening opportunities, arguing that the main factor for the destination choice is the number of opportunities. Following this theory, Kyrgyz migrants would either choose more developed countries with richer choices of employment or would move to the rural areas in Russia, where

the government is creating all necessary incentives to attract labor force. However, the narratives of all participants do not prove this to be a viable theory, which describes Kyrgyz-Russian migration processes.

The following statements of the interviewees illustrate that social ties facilitate migration processes and affect the future migrant's choices:

Participant #1. "As I already mentioned above, my sister lived in Moscow. It also was one of the reasons why choose Moscow"

Participant #3. "Saint Petersburg. Because my elder brother lived and studied there"

Participant #5. "Moscow. Because it's a capital city"

Participant #7. "I have chosen Moscow because my sister lived there"

It is clear from statistic data that Russian regions with the most labor migrants are Moscow, Saint Petersburg, and Southern regions like Krasnodar and Stavropol, which are the most attractive destinations to labor migrants from Central Asia due to the industrial development in those areas that create the employment opportunities (Laurelle, 2007, p. 107). Or, the main Kyrgyz community is considered to be based in Ekaterinburg city and mostly employed in trade (Laurelle, 2007, p. 108). However, it is depicted from the narratives that the fundamental motivation for potential migrants to choose a certain destination is not because there is a general accumulation of the same ethnic group, but it is based on personal relationships with relatives or friends.

Shared language: Russian is the official language of The Federation of Russia, but it is also one of the official languages of the Kyrgyz Republic. Many of the participants can communicate in Russian, and think that the language ability is one of the factors that allowed them to work in the country. 3 out of 7 participant pointed at fluency in Russian as an advantage. For example, *participant #1 said: "And the fact that*

I speak Russian played an important role for my decision”, while participant #4 stated: “We used to be one big country before. Once there I could speak Russian, which also influenced my decision”

During Soviet Union period, all systems, economic, educational, medical etc. were centralized and Russia was the center of all key developments. Moreover, the current economic situations in Former-Soviet states, especially in Central Asian countries resulting in high rates of unemployment, solidified the impression of Russia being a better place and pushed younger generations to look for better job opportunities outside of their countries of origin. As it was vividly expressed by the interviewees (participants #1, 2, 4 and 5 in particular) one of the key factor in choosing the place to move to, was shared language.

Countries all over the world set language proficiency requirements as the cornerstone of their migration systems. In this sense, Russian, as a common language, does not only lay basis for all Russian-speaking people to share their cultural values and transfer of knowledge, but plays very technical role in case of migrants – communication. Good command of the local language is crucial in finding a better job, having better living conditions and attaining smoother assimilation in the local society. Therefore, shared language gives Kyrgyz citizens a lion share of advantage and at the same time constitutes a considerable pull factor for choosing Russia as a destination country. An opposite example is also shown. As an example, *participant #1 noted that “those migrants who speak Russian badly are checked the most”, while talking about discrimination against labor migrants. The participant #4 also supported this fact by saying: “I knew a lot of Kyrgyz guys who have had tough period at the beginning in Russia. Mainly because they do not speak Russian language”.*

Although Russian is one of the official language in Kyrgyz Republic, there are many Kyrgyz who cannot speak the language due to regional or educational backgrounds. The participants here, mentioning about those people who worked in Russia without Russian language ability, seem to recognize themselves as privileged in terms of language ability which may bring a chance of success in migration.

3.3.2 Cultural and structural violence.

In this section, narratives of the participants are analyzed in terms of cultural and structural violence in the destination of migration that is discussed in Chapter 2. Cultural and structural violence that the participants encountered, witnessed, or heard, are depicted. The main points are cultural and ethnic issues, legal status of migrant workers, and violation of their labor rights.

Cultural and Ethnic issues: While many of the participants mentioned that they had the same linguistic background with the destination country, differences of cultural values are also pointed out. For example, *participant #1 explored extensively on his relatives` unwillingness to let him go to Russia because: “they knew about situation in Russia and about the attitude of Russians to so-called ‘visitors’ ... Of course there is a difference in culture and values.”* Two other participants mentioned different cultural values and religion saying: *“Though we share some history, it is still different country, different race, different cultural values and most importantly there is hatred against all migrants, especially non-European looking”.*

Despite the shared history and language, one should not underestimate the importance and influence of almost three decades of Kyrgyz independency since 1991 dissolution of the USSR. Since then each post-Soviet country had its own cultural

programs, directed to revival of the national mentality and pride and supported development of the languages of the titular nationalities.

Though unlike most of the Central Asian countries, Kyrgyzstan kept the Russian language in the status of official, the younger generation born in 1990s does not share common memories and cultural values of the Soviet Union and therefore, might be less tolerant to each other. As the result, though the Russian language helps to communicate, it does not guarantee cultural tolerance, which goes in line with the Galtung's explanation of the origin of the cultural violence when absence of cultural tolerance leads to imposing one's culture on the others, which in its turn is a manifestation of cultural violence (Galtung, 1990, p. 291).

Legal status of migrants: Russia exempts short-stay visa for most of CIS countries including Kyrgyz Republic. Yet, migrant workers from those countries need official working permit to engage in any kind of job, and the process to obtain the permit is so complicated that many of them end up with illegal status. In the narratives, conflicts related to the legal status are vividly depicted.

Participant #1 shares his experience with getting legal documentation: *“ I had neither work permit, nor the patent. In fact, nobody asked. There was just no need for that. In my memory, those migrants who speak Russian badly are checked the most. Police did not check me. A story shared by the participant #6 echoes the previous one: “I had a lot of difficulties in getting legal documents (medical book, work permission, patent etc.) in the very beginning, as getting them required a lot of money that I did not have. That is why I had no choice but to work illegally as a janitor in the University and later, as a cashier in the supermarket.”* Participant #2 goes further describing his unfortunate experience in dealing with the police: *“The Human Resources Department of our*

company took care of all paper work, like registration and the work permit. Once police checked my documents right on the street. As I had no passport with myself, I was brought in a police station. I was sitting there for several hours before I was released.” Similar case was shared by the last participant, who remembered that once “there was a group of migrants leaving the supermarket and the security requested us to show our bags to check whether we stole anything.”

Four out of seven interviewees reconstructed their experiences of unequal treatment and discrimination based on their citizenship and legal status. These incidents exemplify the transformation from cultural violence to a higher stage of violence towards certain cultural group – structural. One of the types of such violence is marginalization (Galtung, 1990, p. 294), which corresponds to the treatment the interviewees witnessed or were subjected to.

Violation of labor rights: marginalized groups of migrants that are treated differently, therefore, are doomed to be outsiders in the host country. Another manifestation of cultural violence is labor exploitation that is also present in 3 out of 7 cases of the interviewees. For example, participant #4 after working on the construction site was *“paid only for three months. Most of the workers were from Central Asia and we were hired informally without any labor agreements or work permits. This was kind of a “payment” for giving us opportunity to work”*. Participant #6 talks about even more outrageous discrimination, saying that while working in a supermarket as a cashier *“there was an audit check of cash, if there was any shortage it was taken from our salaries. This was not fair but I could do nothing to protest because I had no work proper documents.”* More about police injustice was discovered from the interview with the participant #7, who said that: *“Though I had all necessary permissions, they had the*

right to keep me for 2 days and they did so. They were creating stories and was trying to force me to sign those, when I refused I was almost bitten.”

The narratives above express the fact that regardless of the legal status of the workers they could have been the victims of subject of document checkups or taken to the police. The statements above make it clear that structural violence leads to excessive form of exploitation and in some cases, direct labor exploitation. The violation of the migrant’s labor rights became possible due to the prejudices, routine discrimination existing in the society, as well as the result of unawareness of the Kyrgyz migrants of their rights.

3.3.3 Different Perspectives.

As shown in the narrative data, experiences of the Kyrgyz migrant workers to Russia at large reflect theoretical discussions on migration. The narrative data, however, seem to offer some different perspectives, which need consideration in future studies.

Positive reconstruction of experiences: While some participants narrated cases of difficult assimilation processes, discrimination, and human rights issues, some say they had no such problems. Three out of seven stated that their *“rights were not violated, and I did not feel any discrimination towards myself”* or *“assimilation was not difficult at all.... I have never asked Kyrgyz diaspora in Russia for any help, as there was no necessity. My rights were never abused”*.

How to deal with the claims that they had no difficulty in assimilation is still unclear. It is either that they really did not have difficulty, or that they had certain difficulties but did not form into narrative for some reason. If the former is the case, another theme emerges: the factors need to be specified, qualitatively or quantitatively,

i.e. period of migration, educational backgrounds, and even how they look in terms of their physical appearances. On the other hand, it is still possible that the participants did not want to openly speak about their own difficulty in assimilation. For instance, an example of strong sense of duty and role can be seen in the following narrative of the participant #4: *“For a man any physical work is acceptable. A man must earn his daily bread. I have never addressed our diaspora, because I thought they could not help me any ways”*.

What is evident here is a self-restraint that a man should accept what is going on, and should not rely on others. There is a strong sense of gender role which may stop making any complaints. The claims that the participants did not have any difficulty might be created out of this sense of role or responsibility. This also needs to be further studied.

Migrants’ Suggestion for Improvement of Migration Policies: Some participants seem to be making suggestions to Russian authorities on improvement of migration policies. For instance, two interviewees expressed their hope in getting help with documentation by saying: *“if there is any help in the beginning with paperwork or some Russian language courses organized, would be helpful”* or *“Some help with initial documentation would be valuable”*. Others mentioned such things that being more informed on migrants` rights and laws concerning their status *“would be helpful and if there were courses or trainings on the rights of the migrants, where new comers could get basic information on their rights and duties and all laws that are affecting our status in Russia”*. Participant #6 went even further suggesting *“it will be useful to prolong the temporary registration for foreigners like us for 2-3 months”*.

The suggestions include improvement for paperwork, reform of foreigner’s

registration system, and even institutionalization of social welfare for migrant workers such as offer of guidance for labor related law, housing, and language training, which potentially involves huge national budget. The claims on one hand back up the discussion in Chapter 2 that, despite all the attempt to liberalize policies, the Russian government shows no political will to make them successfully implemented.

From the viewpoint of the Russian government, the participants' claims may sound too demanding, but on the other hand, from these narratives, the following is also observed: (1) the participants see themselves as actors of their rights: (2) the participants are aware, consciously or unconsciously, that they contribute to the destination country as labor force, and consequently make legitimate claims. It is not certain how these claims are related to individual experiences or views on labor migration. What clear here is that Russian government perception of labor migrants and migrant's notion of themselves may be completely different, however migrant's idea about their contribution to Russian economy can be seen as clearly positive.

Migrants' Initiative. Migration is often explained as a variable of macro-economics, politics, policies, and other major conditions, both international and domestic. In this sense, migrants are seen as passive existence who are created and moved by external big powers. The narrative of the participant #1 reflects this view: *"I would not leave the homeland without serious reason. But the financial situation in my family was difficult, only my mother and me used to work at that moment, and the father did not work because of health reasons. Therefore, I have decided to go to Russia and went to Russia after graduating high school"*. The participant emphasizes his decision to become a labor migrant was not based on his free will. His word, "I would not leave the homeland without serious reason," explains everything.

However, another contrasting narrative shows that immigrants are not just passive existence who has no other choice. *Participant #4 wanted to try something new: “All my life I lived in Kyrgyzstan and have never been abroad. So when there was an opportunity to work in another country, so I decided to go”*.

Migration, whether forced by external conditions or chosen by inner motivation, is a form of self-realization. The two contrasting narratives seem to show the need to look at migration from multiple perspectives.

CONCLUSION

The development of the migration policy of the Russian Federation went through 3 basic stages. Stage one refers to a period right after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Russia's migration policy of this period was mostly oriented on providing assistance to the forcibly displaced people as consequences of the collapse of the Soviet Union (Suharnikova, 2013).

The bibliographic survey on social, political and economic backgrounds of the both sending countries and Russia in the first chapter of this work assumes that the high unemployment and rising poverty coupled with political instability comprised a solid set of push factors for people to move. While Russia's demographic challenge that resulted in shortage of the work force in the country created good conditions for labor migrants to choose Russia as a destination point (Ivaknyuk, 2009).

The main findings of chapter one from the perspective of sending countries are the economic stagnation, political tensions in the post-soviet countries as a consequences of Soviet Union disintegration, which resulted in peoples' move from post-soviet countries to Russia. Unlike the first wave of migrants in 1990s, majority of the second wave were labor migrants. It was also established that the shared culture, language and no VISA requirements were one of the main reasons that contributed to the peoples' flow.

From the perspective of Russia it was found that Russian economic situation in the 2000s was better compared to other newly emerged countries. At the same time, Russia's aging society and labor shortages naturally created work opportunities for labor migrants from Central Asia.

The discussion in the chapter 2 traced the immigration policies evolution of Russia within the last decades. At the same time the literature review on notion of human rights of labor migrants was incorporated into the section. The immigration policies of Russia were dramatically changing over years from liberal right after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, into restrictive and repressive one in the early 2000s (Meilus, 2010). The changes in the policies were stipulated by the composition of the waves of migrants at a certain period. For example, as the first flow of migrants was mostly comprised of ethnic Russians coming back to their historic motherland, the regulation of that wave was rather liberal (Laurelle, 2007).

While the next stage of immigration policy of Russia came with the new decade and was more restricting and concentrated on reduction of the consequences of the illegal migration (Tyuryukanova, 2005). However, on the contrary to the expected reduction in numbers of illegal immigrants, the numbers of illegal labor migrants increased unprecedentedly during this period. Thus the policy stage of second period proved itself ineffective and short termed. The nationalistic and xenophobic rhetoric of Russia's government and national security issues were the main directions that influenced the immigration policies shape of the second stage (Schenk, 2010).

The analysis in the chapter 2 made it clear that the Russian immigration policy changed into restrictive and repressive one in response to international and internal terrorism, as mentioned above, Russian migration policies were characterized as xenophobic and nationalistic. Russian authorities attitude to labor migrants as a tool to address the county's demographic challenges is inconsistent and contradicting. Hostile attitude towards labor migrants from Central Asia laid basis for stereotypes and prejudices in the Russian society, which in its turn led to systematic violation of the

human rights of migrants. The role of international organizations concerned with the human rights is totally undermined by the Russian government. The current migration related policies have serious lapses and limitations. Despite all the attempts to liberalize the policies still Russian government shows no political will to make them successfully implemented.

Simultaneously, marginalization of the Asian looking migrants led to profound discrimination based on their appearance, cultural values and religion. Number of terroristic attacks in Russia solidified the public perception of “us” against “them”, and thus laid basis for justification of unfavorable treatment and hostile attitude towards foreigners (Laurelle, 2007).

Moreover, the Russian government does not allow human right organizations concerned with the human rights issues to operate freely, and especially those connected with international organizations are seen as undermining the national security of Russia and being repressed (Human Rights Watch, 2007).

The case study in Chapter 3 depicted perceived experience and the reality of seven labor migrants by analyzing the narratives. The findings partially back up the arguments in the first two chapters. The findings of this chapter support both parts of the thesis hypothesis, which are: connection between economic situation in the sending country, Kyrgyzstan, and the willingness of its citizens to migrate; and the connection between the country of choice for labor migration and extensive social connections. Based on the narratives of the interview participants, it was established that economic reasons were the major driving force for migration for 100% of respondents. At the same time, though geographical proximity of Russia, comparatively low migration costs as well as language ability were mentioned by the interviewees as important factors why

they chose Russia as their migration destination, the decisive role in their decision making was played by the fact that they have already had family members or friends living or working in Russia, who helped them to either settle upon their arrival or find a job even prior to their coming to the country.

The further analysis of the narratives discovered that though Kyrgyz and Russia partly share the same historical backgrounds, they have different cultures and ethnic groups, and some respondents feel hatred. As legal status of immigrants is not easily secured, they are marginalized and subject to hardships such as checkups from police, and more seriously, violation of labor rights.

The case study also suggests perspectives, which were not sufficiently incorporated in the literatures and need to be further studied qualitatively and quantitatively. The following points emerged as such perspectives. First of all, narratives include specific suggestions for what the Russian government has to do to improve migration policies. This may reflect that the participants see themselves as actors of their rights, and the participants might be aware that they contribute to the destination country as labor force. This gives a question of how migrants see themselves in the eye of the destination country.

Secondly, while theories tend to regard migration as macro-economic or political phenomenon and migrants as passive existence, the narratives also suggest an aspect that the choice of moving abroad can be actively chosen as a way of self-realization. This aspect needs to be studied further.

Meanwhile, by the end of 2005 there were new tendencies in the migration regulations in Russia that showed a change in approach to the immigration processes, taking into account the past experience. However, at the same time the policy towards

labor migrants was characterized as ambiguous and double standardized (Meilus, 2013 p. 16; Alexseev, 2006). Many academicians argue that being not able to secure the successful implementation of laws and migration related regulations due to the corrupt and bribed system, the government was undermining the role of labor migrants as useful solution to address the labor force shortage and demographic challenges (Meilus, 2013).

Thus Russian authorities should address the issues of labor migrants and issues regarding the legalization of labor migrants in Russia by assessing its real labor market situation. Russian authorities should also condemn any types of xenophobia and hatred based on ethnicity not only on the papers but also in actual implementations.

The Russian officials should be accountable for protection of the human rights and human security of the labor migrants. The labor migrants in Russia should be treated equally regardless of their work status, ethnic belongings and country of origin.

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APPENDIX A:
INTERVIEW DATA IN RUSSIAN

1. Почему вы решили покинуть Кыргызстан? Что было главной причиной?
2. Почему вы решили ехать в Россию? Почему не в Казахстан или дальше зарубежье?
3. Какую часть России вы выбрали? Почему?
4. Был ли процесс ассимиляции трудным? Что было самым трудным и почему?
5. Есть ли у вас родственники в России?
6. Как вы нашли работу в России? Какую работу?
7. Были ли у Вас проблемы с получением юридических документов в России (разрешение на работу, патент, и т.д.)
8. Вы когда-нибудь обращались за помощью к Кыргызской диаспоре или к местным НПО?
9. Были ли ваши права нарушены в России? Если да, то когда и как?
10. Как вы думаете, что может быть сделано, чтобы улучшить ситуацию для кыргызских мигрантов в России?
11. Вы когда-нибудь подвергались дискриминации на этнической почве?
12. Планируете ли вы вернуться в Россию?
13. Планируете ли вы переехать в Россию на постоянное место жительства? Почему да или почему нет?

Нурдинов Токтобек Раимбекович

Дата рождения: 5 августа 1994 г.р.

Национальность: Кыргыз

Семейное положение: Холост

Состав семьи: 5 человек в семье, Папа – пенсионер, мама работает в ЖБИ

Место рождения: г. Балыкчы

Образование: Учится заочно в техникуме г. Балыкчы

Период пребывания в России: 10.2015-02.2016

Дата интервью: 28.02.2016

Контактный телефон: +996772983092

После окончания 11 класса уехал в Россию

1. Почему вы решили покинуть Кыргызстан? Что было главной причиной?

Решение покинуть Кыргызстан не было спонтанным, я долго решался стоит ли ехать в Россию на заработки. Мой отец был против того чтобы я ехал в Россию, да и вся моя семья была против. Потому что знали о ситуации в России, об отношении русских к так называемым «приезжим». Я бы не покинул родину без серьезных на то причин. Но финансовая ситуация в семье была тяжелой, поскольку только я и мама работали, а отец не работал по состоянию здоровья. Поэтому я решился и поехал в Россию после окончания школы.

2. Почему вы решили ехать в Россию? Почему не в Казахстан или дальше зарубежье?

Я выбрал Россию, потому что там жила моя сестра. И вообще в России находятся сотни тысяч кыргызстанцев. Ну и конечно тот факт что в России говорят по русски, поскольку русский язык для меня как второй родной язык

3. Какую часть России вы выбрали? Почему?

Как я уже говорил в Москве живет сестра, это и было основной причиной

4. Был ли процесс ассимиляции трудным? Что было самым трудным и почему?

Процесс ассимиляции не был трудным. Конечно есть разница в культуре и ценностях. Но самое главное это то что я владею русским языком. Это очень сильно мне помогло в процессе ассимиляции. И еще тот факт что я жил с сестрой мне очень помог. Она уже давно живет и работает в России. Через общение с ней я много понял о жизни и быте в России, особенно в Москве. Многим другим приходится очень тяжело в первое время пребывания в России. Ведь нет никаких гарантий найти работу. А без работы, невозможно оплачивать за аренду квартиры и другие расходы. Вообще жить в Москве очень дорого

5. Есть ли у вас родственники в России?

Сестра в Москве

6. Как вы нашли работу в России? Какую работу?

Первая моя работа была работа грузчиком в магазине «Связной». Эту работу мне помогла найти сестра. Но меня не устраивала заработная

плата, поэтому мне приходилось искать работу параллельно. Через некоторое время мне удалось найти вторую работу. Я устроился в японский ресторан поваром-сушистом. В то время было очень тяжело. Приходилось работать на двух работах и времени свободного не оставалось даже элементарно чтобы прийти домой и приготовить себе покушать. Не было сил даже поговорить с сестрой. Я приходил домой и сразу ложился спать. На утро все начиналось все с начала. Не было прогулок по городу. Не было времени посмотреть достопримечательности Москвы. Но я ни о чем не жалею. Потому что я понимал что нахожусь здесь в первую очередь ради зарабатывания денег и помощи своей семье в Кыргызстане

7. Были ли у Вас проблемы с получением юридических документов в России (разрешение на работу, патент, и т.д.)

За все время моего пребывания в России у меня не было ни разрешения на работу, ни патента. Я понимал что это не правильно и что у меня могут быть проблемы. Но еще я знал что эти документы в основном спрашивают у людей, которые плохо владеют русским языком. Поэтому у меня никогда не спрашивали. У меня не было необходимости в получении разрешения на работу. Еще мне помог тот факт что я похож внешне на татар или чуваша.

8. Вы когда-нибудь обращались за помощью к Кыргызской диаспоре или к местным НПО?

Я никогда не обращался за помощью к кыргызской диаспоре. Я не знал об их существовании

9. Были ли ваши права нарушены в России? Если да, то когда и как?

Мои права не нарушались. Если не нарушать закон и вести себя спокойно, особенно в Москве, то не будет никаких проблем. Но я знал что гулять по улицам Москвы в позднее время не безопасно

10. Как вы думаете, что может быть сделано, чтобы улучшить ситуацию для кыргызских мигрантов в России?

Возможно юридическая помощь в оформлении документов. Курсы и тесты русского языка

11. Вы когда-нибудь подвергались дискриминации на этнической почве?

Не подвергался, как я уже говорил ранее я внешне похож на представителя Татарстана или Чувашии. Я думаю мне это помогло избежать подобных дискриминаций

12. Планируете ли вы вернуться в Россию?

Я не планирую возвращаться в Россию. Сейчас работать в России стало не выгодно из-за низкого курса рубля по отношению к доллару США

13. Планируете ли вы переехать в Россию на постоянное место жительства?

Почему да или почему нет?

Безусловно в России можно заработать хорошие деньги, но это очень тяжело как физически так и морально. Еще находясь долгое время вдали от дома я скучал по друзьям и семье. Очень важен вопрос гражданства. Если я смогу получить гражданство России, то возможно смогу уехать в Россию на ПМЖ

Нарбаев Узбек Тыныбекович

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Состав семьи: Жена, дочь. Отец родом из Ат-Баши, мать с Тюпа

Место рождения: Кыргызстан, г. Балыкчы

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Работал в г. Балыкчы, на водоканале слесарем АВР (Аварийно Восстановительных Работ)

1. Почему вы решили покинуть Кыргызстан? Что было главной причиной?

В первую очередь на заработки. В Кыргызстане после окончания университета долго не мог найти работу. Потом нашел работу по специальности. Устроился работать в Балыкчы, в водоканале слесарем АВР (Аварийно Восстановительных Работ). В принципе все устраивало, но когда родился ребенок, тех денег что я зарабатывал уже не хватало. Поэтому решил поехать в Россию. Тогда уже несколько моих знакомых работали в России. После общения с ними твердо решил ехать

2. Почему вы решили ехать в Россию? Почему не в Казахстан или дальше зарубежье?

Поскольку Россия ближе к нам. Билеты в Россию относительно дешевые. В Казахстане уже бывал, там ситуация не намного лучше чем у нас. В дальнее зарубежье лететь дорого. И еще нужно знание иностранных языков. Поэтому выбрал Россию

3. Какую часть России вы выбрали? Почему?

Я выбрал Югра, Ханты-Мансийский округ, г. Сургут, потому что там жили и работали мои знакомые. Они и пригласили меня работать.

4. Был ли процесс ассимиляции трудным? Что было самым трудным и почему?

Процесс ассимиляции не был трудным поскольку у нас был свой круг общения. С местными ребятами тоже общались конечно. Но в основном со своими.

5. Есть ли у вас родственники в России?

В России родственников нет

6. Как вы нашли работу в России? Какую работу?

Я работал в строительной компании. Мы строили торговый центр. Я был компрессорщиком в БСУ (бетоносмесительная установка).Эту работу мне нашли знакомые. Место приготовили, т.е. уже в Кыргызстане знал куда пойду и на какую работу

7. Были ли у Вас проблемы с получением юридических документов в России (разрешение на работу, патент, и т.д.)

Мне на один год сделали прописку и разрешение на работу. Компания,

в которой я работал собрала нас всех и отвезли и сделали документы.

Отдел кадров

8. Вы когда-нибудь обращались за помощью к Кыргызской диаспоре или к местным НПО?

Я никогда не обращался к ним за помощью. Потому что в этом не было необходимости

9. Были ли ваши права нарушены в России? Если да, то когда и как?

Если вас поймают без разрешения на работу, вы будете депортированы. Однажды я был остановлен полицией на улице и доставлен в участок. Но поскольку все мои документы были в порядке меня вскоре отпустили

10. Как вы думаете, что может быть сделано, чтобы улучшить ситуацию для кыргызских мигрантов в России?

Юридическая помощь в оформлении документов. Помощь с жильем

11. Вы когда-нибудь подвергались дискриминации на этнической почве?

Нет

12. Планируете ли вы вернуться в Россию?

Не планирую

13. Планируете ли вы переехать в Россию на постоянное место жительства?

Почему да или почему нет?

Я не планирую переезжать в Россию. Только если на высокооплачиваемую работу и на время. И самое главное Кыргызстан это моя Родина

Чериков Азамат Осмонбаевич

Дата рождения: 11 апреля 1984 г.р.

Национальность: Кыргыз

Семейное положение: Женат

Состав семьи: Жена, 2 дочери. Отец из Нарына, мать Чуйская

Место рождения: Кыргызстан, г. Балыкчы

Образование: Высшее (КГУСТА г. Бишкек)

Дата интервью:

Контактный телефон:

После окончания университета сразу уехал в Россию в 2008 году

1. Почему вы решили покинуть Кыргызстан? Что было главной причиной?

Работы в Кыргызстане не было. Поехал в Россию в поисках работы

2. Почему вы решили ехать в Россию? Почему не в Казахстан или дальше зарубежье?

В России учился старший брат в военной академии. После окончания со старшим братом вернулись в КГ

3. Какую часть России вы выбрали? Почему?

В Санкт Петербург. Старший брат

4. Был ли процесс ассимиляции трудным? Что было самым трудным и почему?

Процесс ассимиляции не был трудным

5. Есть ли у вас родственники в России?

Сейчас нет. В момент поездки в Россию был старший брат

6. Как вы нашли работу в России? Какую работу?

Работу нашел брат. Работник торгового зала

7. Были ли у Вас проблемы с получением юридических документов в России (разрешение на работу, патент, и т.д.)

Нет, не было проблем

8. Вы когда-нибудь обращались за помощью к Кыргызской диаспоре или к местным НПО?

Нет

9. Были ли ваши права нарушены в России? Если да, то когда и как?

Нет

10. Как вы думаете, что может быть сделано, чтобы улучшить ситуацию для кыргызских мигрантов в России?

Не знаю

11. Вы когда-нибудь подвергались дискриминации на этнической почве?

Нет

12. Планируете ли вы вернуться в Россию?

Не планирую

13. Планируете ли вы переехать в Россию на постоянное место жительства?

Почему да или почему нет?

Нет. Потому что Кыргызстан это родина

Иманбеков Адилет

Дата рождения: 1984 г.р.

Национальность: Кыргыз

Семейное положение: Женат

Состав семьи: Мать, отец, я и три сестры. Отец работает водителем на заводе, мать ранее работала диспетчером в автотранспортном предприятии, сейчас на пенсии

Место рождения: Кыргызстан, г. Балыкчы

Образование: Высшее

Дата интервью: 05.03.2016

Контактный телефон: +996700302012

1. Почему вы решили покинуть Кыргызстан? Что было главной причиной?

Как и большинство моих соотечественников я поехал в Россию на заработки. Конечно же можно найти работу в Кыргызстане и спокойно работать. Но порой этого не достаточно. Например если ты хочешь заработать на жилье, то сделать это здесь практически невозможно. Это займет очень много времени. А в России намного выше средний уровень заработной платы. И еще я слышал много историй про наших ребят, которые вернулись с России и могли позволить себе купить квартиру в городе. Я хотел попробовать что-то новое. Я всю жизнь прожил в Кыргызстане и никогда не был за границей. И вот когда появилась возможность поработать в другой стране я решил ехать

2. Почему вы решили ехать в Россию? Почему не в Казахстан или дальше

зарубежье?

Многие люди уже поработали в России и могли поделиться со мной опытом. Этот путь уже прошли очень много людей с нашей страны. Чтобы полететь в Россию, нет необходимости оформлять визу. В общем я выбрал Россию, потому что это самый доступный вариант. Мы ведь раньше были одной большой страной. Еще там говорят по русски, что тоже повлияло на мое решение. А что касается Казахстана, то у меня никогда не было желания работать в Казахстане. Я считаю что в Казахстане ситуация такая как и у нас.

3. Какую часть России вы выбрали? Почему?

Я выбрал город Петропавловск-Камчатский, поскольку там жил и работал мой земляк с Балыкчы.

4. Был ли процесс ассимиляции трудным? Что было самым трудным и почему?

Я человек общительный и легко нахожу общий язык с людьми. Но это мой личный опыт. Я знал много кыргызских ребят кому приходилось тяжело первое время. Поскольку они плохо владели русским языком. Но мы кыргызы старались держаться вместе, помогать друг другу чем можем, давать советы в трудных ситуациях. Я думаю это очень важно. В другой стране, с другой культурой и вероисповеданием людям приходится тяжело. Для меня конкретно, процесс ассимиляции не был трудным

5. Есть ли у вас родственники в России?

В России родственников нет

6. Как вы нашли работу в России? Какую работу?

Я работал в строительной компании, мой соотечественник помог найти работу. Первое время я был разнорабочим на стройке. Работа была тяжелая, но я справлялся. Работали каждый день с утра и до поздней ночи. В принципе когда я собирался ехать в Россию, то я ожидал нечто подобное. Но в жизни все оказалось намного сложнее. Я был не один и я видел что остальные ребята тоже много работают и никто не жаловался. Для мужчины любая физическая работа приемлема. Мужчина должен зарабатывать свой кусок хлеба

7. Были ли у Вас проблемы с получением юридических документов в России (разрешение на работу, патент, и т.д.)

Я первое время работал без документов. Также как и большинство ребят на стройке

8. Вы когда-нибудь обращались за помощью к Кыргызской диаспоре или к местным НПО?

Никогда не обращался, потому что думал они не смогут мне помочь

9. Были ли ваши права нарушены в России? Если да, то когда и как?

Когда я работал в «Донстрой» (местная строительная фирма), в которой я проработал 7 месяцев, но заплатили мне только за два. Все работники – среди которых были Туркмены, Таджики и Узбеки – были наняты без соответствующих документов. Многие вынуждены были работать два или три месяца бесплатно за «возможность» работать. Это была своеобразная взятка за трудоустройство

10. Как вы думаете, что может быть сделано, чтобы улучшить ситуацию для

кыргызских мигрантов в России?

Помощь в оформлении документов

11. Вы когда-нибудь подвергались дискриминации на этнической почве?

Нет, не подвергался

12. Планируете ли вы вернуться в Россию?

Не планирую

13. Планируете ли вы переехать в Россию на постоянное место жительства?

Почему да или почему нет?

Нет, я считаю что я должен жить в Кыргызстане. Поскольку этой моя родина, здесь моя семья, мои друзья, мой дом наконец.

Таирова Асель Асылбековна

Дата рождения: 1986 г.р.

Национальность: Кыргызка

Семейное положение: Замужем

Состав семьи: Замужем, имею дочь (3 года)

Место рождения: Кыргызстан, Баткенская обл., г. Сулюкта

Образование: Высшее, КГУСТА, ПСК 2003-2008

Дата интервью: 05.03.2016

Контактный телефон: +996555511525

1. Почему вы решили покинуть Кыргызстан? Что было главной причиной?

В поисках работы

2. Почему вы решили ехать в Россию? Почему не в Казахстан или дальше зарубежье?

В России были родственники, знание языка

3. Какую часть России вы выбрали? Почему?

Москва

4. Был ли процесс ассимиляции трудным? Что было самым трудным и почему?

Процесс ассимиляции не был трудным

5. Есть ли у вас родственники в России?

Сестра

6. Как вы нашли работу в России? Какую работу?

Сестра нашла

7. Были ли у Вас проблемы с получением юридических документов в России (разрешение на работу, патент, и т.д.)

Нет не было

8. Вы когда-нибудь обращались за помощью к Кыргызской диаспоре или к местным НПО?

Не обращалась

9. Были ли ваши права нарушены в России? Если да, то когда и как?

Нет

10. Как вы думаете, что может быть сделано, чтобы улучшить ситуацию для кыргызских мигрантов в России?

Организация курсов (обучающих) по правам мигранта, правила и

законы России

11. Вы когда-нибудь подвергались дискриминации на этнической почве?

Нет

12. Планируете ли вы вернуться в Россию?

Не собираюсь

13. Планируете ли вы переехать в Россию на постоянное место жительства?

Почему да или почему нет?

Да

Алымбекова Упол

Дата рождения: 1992 г.р.

Национальность: Кыргызка

Семейное положение: Не замужем

Место рождения: Кыргызстан, г. Бишкек

Образование: Высшее

Дата интервью: 10.03.2016

Контактный телефон: +996558887868

1. Почему вы решили покинуть Кыргызстан? Что было главной причиной?

Я Алымбекова Упол в 2011 году училась на 3-курсе в КГТУ. В начале лето решила поехать в Россию подработать. Главной причиной было безработица и у нас в городе меньше шансов было найти работу студентам с хорошей заработной платой

2. Почему вы решили ехать в Россию? Почему не в Казахстан или дальше

зарубежье?

Я решила поехать именно в Россию потому, что там у меня находятся знакомые и друзья, а в Казахстане я никого не знаю.

3. Какую часть России вы выбрали? Почему?

Москва

4. Был ли процесс ассимиляции трудным? Что было самым трудным и почему?

Трудность была с документами, на них требовались очень крупная сумма денег, которых у меня не было

5. Есть ли у вас родственники в России?

Да

6. Как вы нашли работу в России? Какую работу?

Чтобы устроиться на работу надо было сначала сделать документы (мед. книжку, разрешение, патент). И поэтому я подрабатывала убирала в университете. Потом меня пригласили без оформления поработать временно кассиром

7. Были ли у Вас проблемы с получением юридических документов в России (разрешение на работу, патент, и т.д.)

Да проблемы были с деньгами и со временем

8. Вы когда-нибудь обращались за помощью к Кыргызской диаспоре или к местным НПО?

Нет

9. Были ли ваши права нарушены в России? Если да, то когда и как?

Если собираетесь ехать в чужую страну работать, надо знать их

законы, правила, соблюдать их и проконсультироваться у юристов что бы знать свои права

10. Как вы думаете, что может быть сделано, чтобы улучшить ситуацию для кыргызских мигрантов в России?

Продлить временную регистрацию надолго, т.е. На месяца 2 -3

11. Вы когда-нибудь подвергались дискриминации на этнической почве?

Да подвергалась. Как вначале я ответила, вначале работала без документов в супермаркете кассиром. Когда проходила ревизия, в случае обнаружения недостачи, эту сумму снимали с сотрудников, т.е. с нас.

12. Планируете ли вы вернуться в Россию?

Пока не планирую

13. Планируете ли вы переехать в Россию на постоянное место жительства?

Почему да или почему нет?

Нет не планирую туда переезжать. Здесь у меня родные, друзья и хорошая работа

Оторбаева Венера Тайыповна

Дата рождения: 28.02.1979

Национальность: Кыргызка

Семейное положение: Замужем

Состав семьи: Отец, мать, брат

Место рождения: Кыргызстан, г. Чолпон-Ата

Образование: Высшее

Дата интервью: 05.03.2015

Контактный телефон: +996553335335, +996312403095

1. Почему вы решили покинуть Кыргызстан? Что было главной причиной?

Я решила покинуть Кыргызстан потому что, с одной стороны было интересно, а с другой тут очень маленькие заработки, если работаешь на зарплату. Средняя зарплата в то время была 3000-5000 сом.

Например, я работала кассиром в ломбарде и получала 6000 сом.

Некоторые кыргызстанцы приезжали из России и покупали квартиру в Бишкеке. Вот и я решила накопить на жилье

2. Почему вы решили ехать в Россию? Почему не в Казахстан или дальше зарубежье?

Я решила ехать в Россию потому что, там были мои знакомые

3. Какую часть России вы выбрали? Почему?

Я выбрала Москву, потому что там живет двоюродная сестра

4. Был ли процесс ассимиляции трудным? Что было самым трудным и почему?

Да процесс ассимиляции был трудным. Другая раса, другие ценности и самое главное это ненависть москвичей ко всем приезжим, особенно другой расы

5. Есть ли у вас родственники в России?

Да, у меня есть родственники в России

6. Как вы нашли работу в России? Какую работу?

Я купила газету «Работа» и звонила искала работу парикмахера

7. Были ли у Вас проблемы с получением юридических документов в России (разрешение на работу, патент, и т.д.)

В Москве есть платные конторы, которые помогают получить необходимые документы. Поэтому проблем особенных не было. Если только проблемы с деньгами. Потому что раньше разрешение на работу стоило от 30 000 до 40 000 рублей

8. Вы когда-нибудь обращались за помощью к Кыргызской диаспоре или к местным НПО?

Не было надобности обращаться

9. Были ли ваши права нарушены в России? Если да, то когда и как?

Один раз арестовали УФМСники и заперли в здании УФМС. Хотя все документы были в порядке они имели право задержать мигранта до двух суток. Когда я должна была писать объяснительную, они сами придумывали всякие истории и заставляли нас подписать. После того как я отказалась подписывать, они просто начали орать на меня и материть. Говорили, да мы знаем вас, не обманывайте, дальше мат. А когда я спросила, зачем тогда спрашивать, если они знают, они меня чуть не побили. А тех, которые плохо знали русский язык, допрашивали без переводчика и заставляли подписывать их. А один раз толпа вышла из супермаркета, охрана попросила нас показать содержимое сумки, т.к. мы выходили без покупок. Они не посмели русских обыскать, а меня обыскали. Таких случаев много

10. Как вы думаете, что может быть сделано, чтобы улучшить ситуацию для кыргызских мигрантов в России?

Надо хотя бы создать сайт, где можно был бы спросить что делать в конкретных ситуациях. Потому что зачастую и не знаешь что делать, а знакомые советуют иногда бесполезные решения, а ты не знаешь это проверить

11. Вы когда-нибудь подвергались дискриминации на этнической почве?

Да, постоянно подвергалась. Когда звонишь по телефону, говорят чтобы приходи на собеседование, а когда приходишь, говорят что не могут взять на работу, т.к. им нужны люди со славянской внешностью. И в основном дискриминации на этнической почве подвергаются люди необразованные, недалекие. Например повара, директора магазина и салонов, потому что у них развитие на этом кругу останавливалось. Они всю жизнь только и работают, не ездят в другие более развитые страны. Они думают, что если у человека кожа светлая, то жизнь удалась. А те работодатели, клиенты, которые много читают, общаются с разными людьми из разных стран, наоборот относятся с уважением, интересуются твоей культурой.

12. Планируете ли вы вернуться в Россию?

Я устала постоянно доказывать москвичам, что я тоже достойный человек и заслуживаю достойного отношения. И устала от злых людей, которые бросают своих родителей и думают только о себе. Хочу жить в Кыргызстане, где добро и человечность не пустые слова. Поэтому несмотря на нищету и безработицу, возвратилась в родной Бишкек и не собираюсь больше в Россию

13. Планируете ли вы переехать в Россию на постоянное место жительства?

Почему да или почему нет?

Я не планирую переезжать в Россию на постоянное место жительства. Во первых климат суровый, во вторых негативное отношение людей к нашей расе. Там да, можно жить сытно, но когда ты окружен депрессивными людьми, которые только и думают как бы сделать ремонт в квартире и сделать ботокс, ты тоже начинаешь меняться в худшую сторону. И постоянно видеть стареющих женщин с надутыми губами и мечтающих соблазнить молодых парней в душе скребутся кошки. Лучше жить у нас, где женщина видит свои морщины и не плачет. А дети и внуки целуют ее морщины и постоянно навещают и делают подарки. Наши люди более адекватные и принимают себя такими какие есть и не комплексуют

APPENDIX B:
INTERVIEW DATA ENGLISH TRANSCRIPTS

Participant #1

Nurdinov Toktobek Raimbekovich, born on August 5, 1994 in Balykchy, single, has 5 people in his family, including a retired father.

“I studied in Balykchy technical institute, I took distance courses. My decision to leave Kyrgyzstan was not spontaneous. I was thinking for a long time whether to go to Russia or not. My father was against that I go to Russia and all my family members were against. Because they knew about a situation in Russia and about the attitude of Russians to so-called "visitors". I would not leave the homeland without serious reason. But the financial situation in my family was difficult, only me and my mother used to work at that moment, and the father did not work because of health reasons. Therefore, I have decided to go to Russia and went to Russia after graduating high school. I have chosen Russia mainly because my sister lived there. And in general in Russia there are hundreds of thousands of Kyrgyz people. And the fact that I speak Russian played an important role for my decision. I was there from 2012 to 2015, and later from 2015 October to 2016 February. Process of assimilation was not difficult. Of course there is a difference in culture and values. But the most important is that I can speak Russian language. It has helped me very much with assimilation process. And the fact that I lived there with my sister helped me as well. She lived and worked in Russia for a long time. Through communication with her I have learned much about life in Russia, especially in Moscow. Many other labor migrants have very tough period of time in the very beginning in Russia. There are no guarantees to find work. And without work, it is

impossible to pay for rent of the apartment and other expenses. it is very expensive to live in Moscow. My first work was as a loader in “Svyaznoy” shop. My sister helped to find this work. But the salary was not good therefore I had to look for another job. After a while I managed to find the second job in the Japanese restaurant as a sushi chef. It was very hard time for me. It was necessary to work at two places and there was even no free time left to come home and to cook something to eat. After work there was no strength even to talk to my sister. I was just coming home and going to bed directly. In the morning all was starting from the beginning. I had no time to walks around the city. There was no time to see the sights of Moscow. But I am not sorry about anything. Because I understood that I am here first of all for the sake of earning money and to help my family in Kyrgyzstan. However, I had neither work permit, nor the patent. In fact, nobody asked. There was just no need for that. In my memory, those migrants who speak Russian badly are checked the most. Police did not check me. During my stay, I did not have a necessity to contact Kyrgyz diaspora, my rights were not violated, and I did not feel any discrimination towards myself. But if there is any help in the beginning with paperwork or some Russian language courses organized, would be helpful. Of course, in Russia you can earn good money, but it is very difficult both physically and mentally. And spending a long time away from home is tough, I miss my friends and family. For me it is very important to know if I can obtain Russian citizenship. If I can get Russian citizenship, it may be possible to go to Russia for permanent residence”

Participant #2

“I worked in a water utility as the mechanic of AVR (Emergency recovery operations) in Kyrgyzstan. As most of us, I went to Russia for better salary. Why Russia? Well, it is closer. I have already been to Kazakhstan and going to foreign countries is too

expensive. I have some acquaintances that invited me to work in Ugra, Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Area, Surgut. The process of assimilation was not difficult because we had our own social circle. We communicated with local people of course. But generally with each other. I worked at a construction company. We were building shopping center. I worked as a compressor operator on a concrete mixing machine. My friends have found this work for me, working place was prepared, so I already knew where I will work before leaving Kyrgyzstan. The Human Resources Department of our company took care of all paper work, like registration and the work permit. Once police checked my documents right on the street. As I had no passport with myself, I was brought in a police station. I was sitting there for several hours before I was released. If there is help with housing and legal paperwork it would be great. No, I do not plan to settle in Russia, it is just for work. Kyrgyzstan is my motherland.”

Participant #3

“I am married and have 2 children. My father is from Naryn region and my mother is from Chui region. I have graduated from the KGUSTA that is in Bishkek and after graduation in 2008 I directly went to Russia, as there was not job opportunities in Kyrgyzstan for me. So, I have decided to try my luck in Russia. At that time my elder brother was studying in the Russian Military Academy. I chose Saint Petersburg as my destination mostly because of the brother and assimilation was not difficult at all. He helped me to find a job as a sales person. I have never asked Kyrgyz diaspora in Russia for any help, as there was no necessity. My rights were never abused. I am not planning to stay in Russia permanently as I belong to Kyrgyzstan, my homeland”

Participant #4

“My father is a driver in a small factory, and my mother is retired, but used to work as

dispatcher in a transportation company. I have three sisters. Like most of my compatriots, I went to Russia to work. Of course you can find a job in Kyrgyzstan, and work stably but I felt like this is not enough. For example, if you want to earn money to buy flat, then here it is almost impossible. It takes a lot of time. Average wages in Russia are much higher. And I heard a lot of stories about our guys, who returned from Russia, and could afford to buy an apartment in the city. I wanted to try something new. All my life I lived in Kyrgyzstan and have never been abroad. So when there was an opportunity to work in another country, so I decided to go. Many people have worked in Russia and shared their experience with me. This path has already passed by lot of people in our country. In order to fly to Russia, there is no need to apply for the visa. In general, I choose Russia because it is the most affordable option. We used to be one big country before. Once there I could speak Russian, which is also influenced my decision. As for Kazakhstan, I have never had a desire to work in Kazakhstan. I am a sociable person and easily find common language with people. But this is my personal experience. I knew a lot of Kyrgyz guys who have had tough period at the beginning in Russia. Mainly because they do not speak Russian language. Kyrgyz people tried to stick together and help each other, or to give advice in difficult situations. I think this is very important. In another country, with different culture and faith. For me specifically, the process of assimilation was not difficult though. A friend of mine helped me to find a decent job in Russia, as I did not have any relatives there. Adaptation was not difficult, as we do not really have much of cultural differences and we share the same language and history. I have worked for a construction company, my friend helped to find a job. The first time I was a laborer at a construction site. The work was hard, I worked every day from morning until late night. Basically, when I was thinking about working in

Russia, I was expecting something like that. But it was much more difficult in reality. I was not alone because I saw that the other guys who were working as much as I did and even harder and no one complained. For a man any physical work is acceptable. A man must earn his daily bread. I have never addressed our diaspora, because I thought they could not help me any ways. I worked for half a year in the construction site, but I was paid only for three months. Most of the workers were from Central Asia and we were hired informally without any labor agreements or work permits. This was kind of a “payment” for giving us opportunity to work. Some help with initial documentation would be valuable. I do not plan to stay in Russia permanently”

Participant #5

“I graduated from the KGUSTA in 2008 and decided to look for a job in Russia. I have plenty of relatives there, and of course the fact that we share the same language played crucial role when I was making my decision. I went to Moscow, where my sister lives. She helped me with settling down and that is why I did not feel any difficulties. I have never asked our Diaspora for any help, as there was no necessity. My rights were never violated. However, I think it would be helpful if there were courses or trainings on the rights of the migrants, where new-comers could get basic information on their rights and duties and all laws that are affecting our status in Russia. I do plan to settle in Russia and apply for permanent residency.”

Participant # 6

“In summer 2011, when I was a student of the Kyrgyz National Technical University, I decided to go to Russia for work. The main reason why I could not stay in Kyrgyzstan is because the salary for the students is not sufficient and the rate of unemployment is quite high, I just could not find a proper job. I have some friends in Russia and that was

the main reason I chose Moscow. I had a lot of difficulties in getting legal documents (medical book, work permission, patent etc.) in the very beginning, as getting them required a lot of money that I did not have.

That is why I had no choice but to work illegally as a janitor in the University and later, as a cashier in the supermarket. I think it would help a lot of migrants if the temporary registration would be prolonged to 2-3 months. I, personally, was unfairly treated when I was working in the supermarket. If you are going to work abroad, it is necessary to know the laws of host country, to observe them and to consult lawyers to know your rights. As I have mentioned at the beginning, I worked without documents in a supermarket as a cashier. And when there was an audit check of cash, if there was any shortage it was taken from our salaries. This was not fair but I could do nothing to protest because I had no work proper documents. I think it will be useful to prolong the temporary registration for foreigners like us for 2-3 months. Currently it's only for 30 days. I do not plan to settle and move to Russia permanently. I have my family and my friends in Kyrgyzstan”

Participant #7

“Though I have tertiary education, the salary in Kyrgyzstan is insufficient. At that time the average salary was between 3000 to 5000 soms. My salary at that time was 6000 soms, while some of my acquaintances could buy apartments in Kyrgyzstan after working in Russia. So, I have decided to find a better job there as well. I have chosen Moscow, mostly, because I have a sister there. Nevertheless, the assimilation process was quite difficult. Though we share some history, it is still different country, different race, different cultural values and most importantly there hatred against all migrants, especially non-European looking. In fact, if you have money, there are no problems

with getting all necessary documentation. They have special companies that would help you to get them. If you do not have money, then it is more difficult for you to find a proper job and, therefore, adapt. The Immigration officers once arrested me and I was locked in the building of the Federal Migration Bureau. Though I had all necessary permissions, they had the right to keep me for 2 days and they did so. They were creating stories and was trying to force me to sign those, when I refused I was almost bitten. Those of us who could not speak proper Russian were in more troubles, as the immigration officers did not invite an interpreter for them and forced them to sign whatever papers they needed. There was one more incident that made me feel discriminated. There was a group of migrants leaving the supermarket and the security requested us to show our bags to check whether we stole anything. It was humiliating as no Russians were questioned, just us. There are a lot of such examples. One more, when I was looking for a job, I was invited for interview several times, but after they saw me being Asian looking, they refused to talk as they were in need of European looking employees. I do understand that those who discriminate on the basis of race are not very smart themselves. There are also very friendly people, who are interested in different cultures or who traveled extensively. To be honest, I am tired of proving to Moscow people that I am worth of talking to and deserve their attention. I am tired of angry people who are thinking of themselves only. I want to live in Kyrgyzstan, where despite poverty and unemployment we have kind society with respect to elderly. I do not plan to settle in Russia. First of all the climate is too cold. Secondly, people there are not friendly towards those from Central Asia.”