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STATISTICS OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION IN THE CIS COUNTRIES*

(Provisional version)

1. Main features in the sphere of statistics of international migration in the CIS countries.

Comparability of international migration statistics is a permanent issue for researchers. Sometimes we need to take into account not only technology and methodology of data collection, but also political and economic considerations that influenced data collection schemes and procedures. Here one could find close connection between policies and migration measurement. International migration is a relatively new topic for the CIS countries, because till the end of 1980-ies in the USSR it was strictly limited. Within the last 15 years new independent states overcame deep geopolitical transformations which directly and dramatically influenced both internal and international migration process.

Former compatriots appeared to be foreigners, freedom for move and developing market economies stimulated new forms of migration and it became clear that old systems of data collection can not work effectively any more. It was necessary to work out new approaches to foreigners' and nationals' status regulation, especially in the field of registration. There was a keen need in new mechanisms and institutes of migration regulation as well as in an adequate legal base. In 1990-ies in all the CIS countries new institutions were established to manage and monitor new trends in migration process - national migration services, special departments within ministries of labour, ministries of foreign and / or internal affairs. Series of laws and other normative acts were issued to substantiate migration management and population registration.

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Before the decay of the USSR international migration in the country was not an issue. The main official data sources¹ – Census and annual statistics of migration flows (internal rather than international) based on registration of migrants in local police agencies, were partially available. Administrative statistics (police registration, border control, visa statistics) was not available and was never published. Until now in many countries of the region the situation remains the same – the main change deals with better access to data produced by national statistic institutes.

Since the beginning of 1990-ies new systems of data collection were established in almost all the countries of the region to register phenomena that did not exist (or was inconsiderable) before the decay of the USSR. The first changes in data collection were caused by necessity to register in a special way absolutely new and unfamiliar flows of forced and labour migrants. Later, in order to fill the gap in information about mobile population at the borders, several countries began to use migration or border cards as an additional source of data and in some countries this data are processed in a proper way and give adequate information. In migrant sending countries the role of household surveys increased, for instance, in Tajikistan household surveys are the main source of migrant flows' statistics now.

Nowadays all the countries have several systems of mobile population registration and control: border control data, data on refugees and asylum seekers, labour force statistics, statistics of foreign students and others, administrative data on flows based on personal registration. Traditional statistics is collected as well: Census information about foreign and foreign born population, and statistics of flows based on information from administrative sources.

The previous system of migration current data collection (in national statistics institutes) in some countries was modified simultaneously with changes in the administrative system of population registration (so called “propiska”). Although the basic principles of registration and migration data collection were not abolished, some new features appeared. More liberal terms of registration, more freedom for move (and more liberal legislation in general) – all these factors influenced the traditional system of registration. Since the middle of 1990-ies in many countries ministries of internal affairs began to apply two types of registration: in a place of stay and in a place of residence. Statistics of migration deals only with the second category of migrants.

This peculiarity was the main reason of unprecedented underestimation of long term migrants in the RF, as there was no time limit of “stay” and in fact thousands of migrants have lived in the place of destination for years, but were not included into statistics of migration (for the details see paragraph on the RF below). However up to the moment many countries of the region still register migrants in a manner very similar to the soviet one. National statistical institutes receive from police agencies paper statistical forms with information about migrants,

¹ Produced by the national statistics institute.

both foreigners and nationals (Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan², Tajikistan, Turkmenistan³, Armenia and Azerbaijan).

The major part of the former USSR and the CIS countries tried to search for new forms of population and migration registration, often with considerable support of international organizations or countries with highly developed registration systems. Moldova was the first state (among the CIS countries) to substitute the old system with a new one. Since 1998 it has been operating its population register which became the main source of data about international migration flows.

The Countries of Caucasus (Georgia, Armenia) plan to or have recently run population registers, and it is expected that very soon information on migration will be collected within this system of registration. Creation of population registers is also planned in some countries that still use old registration system –Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and the Russian Federation as well (it is planned that by 2010 Russia will have a population register). This work is done within the framework of national “E-Government” projects.

However, up to the moment Russia, Byelorussia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan still maintains internal passport system with slightly changed registration procedure and migration data collection. In Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan internal passports were replaced by ID cards, however data collection in case of migration to a new place of residence was not modified considerably.

Censuses of population upgraded the questionnaires in order to observe new trends and phenomena in the sphere of migration: census programs (round 2000) in many countries of the former USSR included questions about temporary stay abroad (for nationals) or in the country (for foreigners), about refugee status, etc. Census is considered to be the main source of data for migrants stock estimation. However citizenship is a preferable criterion, as the major part of foreign born population moved before the decay of the USSR, so these people were citizens of the same country and could not be international migrants.(Annex 1).

Some data that was hardly available before, became accessible and national statistical agencies started to publish annual reports. Technological development and computerization opened new possibilities for data collection, input, processing and exchange.

² ? . ? ? ????????, ? . ? ??????. ?????????? ?????????????? ????????? ????????? ?????????? ? ?????????? ?????????? ?????????? ? .19. ?????????? ?????????? ??? ???/ ?????????? ?? ?????????? ?????????? (? ?????, 21-23 ????? 2005 ????)

³ Production of current migration statistics? in Turkmenistan. Submitted by the National Institute of Statistics and Forecasting of Turkmenistan. Working Paper No.2/Add.9 Conference of European statisticians Joint ECE-EUROSTAT Work Session on Migration Statistics organized in cooperation with the UN Statistics Division. (Geneva, 21-23 May 2001)

2. National statistical institutes and data on migration flows⁴.

As it has been mentioned above traditionally in the CIS countries National statistics institutes are considered to be main producers of official statistics on international migration. Data on migration is published in demographic yearbooks and as a rule it is available for users. National statistics institutes of the CIS countries without population registers receive individual data on paper carriers from police authorities. Special statistical forms are filled in for a person if he or she is registered in a place of (permanent) residence.

Paper carriers of primary information that are used in Ukraine differ from those used in the other CIS countries. As a rule, to register a migrant police officer has to fill in special forms to be left in police for administrative purposes, and a special statistical form is to be sent to statistical bodies. In Ukraine it was decided to employ the same form that is used in police for residents' registration (or deregistration) for statistical purposes as well. On the one hand it improved the coverage, as it appeared that police officers prefer to copy the same form rather than to fill in a special statistical coupon with a longer list of questions. On the other hand it reduced the number of variables available for statisticians, as police registration form contains only general information about a migrant.

As a rule a foreigner must have a residence permit to be registered as a resident. Only in Kazakhstan legislation allows a foreigner who intends to stay in the place of destination for 6 months and more to get registration in a place of residence without residence permit. Definitions of place of residence in the CIS countries do not differ much but sometimes they seem to be inadequate. Except for Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Moldova, place of residence status does not imply any concrete duration criterion. The necessity of a more precise definition is not discussed, although it is quite clear that this issue is very important⁵.

⁴ Acknowledgements for consultations on this paragraph should be done to Nina Cesnokova (Moldova), Liubov Stelmakh and Olga Ostapchuk (Ukraine), Erbolat Mussabek (Kazakhstan).

⁵ The registration of Population with Usual Residence: Evidence from the THESIM Project. UNECE/Eurostat Seminar on Migration Statistics Organized in cooperation with UNFPA

(Geneva, 21-23 March 2005)

Table 1. Definition of place of residence for migrants registration (CIS selected countries)⁶

Russian Federation	Nationals: <i>place of residence – a place where a person permanently of usually resides being an owner, or under the condition of tenancy contract, etc. – (house, flat, hostel, sheltered housing etc.)</i> Foreigners: <i>place of residence of a foreigner or a stateless person in the RF – is a dwelling space at the address of which the person is registered according to this Law “</i>
Ukraine	Both nationals and foreigners – <i>place of residence is an administrative territorial unit where a person lives for 6 months and more within a year. (Foreigners have to get a residence permit (permanent or temporary)).</i> <i>One more definition – Place of residence is a place where a person permanently or predominantly lives as an owner or under the terms of tenancy contract , etc. (house, flat, hostel, sheltered housing etc.)</i>
Kazakhstan	For nationals “place of residence” is not defined (in available sources), but as a rule implies stay for 6 months and more. For foreigners registration in a place of residence implies stay for more than 6 months.
Moldova	<i>Place of permanent residence is a place where a person lives permanently. As a rule 6 months criteria is applied. (Temporary residents are registered in MOI)</i>
Byelorussia	Both for nationals and foreigners with residence permits - <i>Place of residence is a place where a person permanently or predominantly lives as an owner or under the terms of tenancy contract , etc. (house, flat, hostel, sheltered housing etc.)</i>
Kyrgyzstan	<i>Place of permanent residence is a place where a person lives permanently.</i>

Statistical forms collected in the local registration authorities (as a rule – within a Ministry of Interior, in Kazakhstan – Ministry of Justice) are to be sent to regional statistics bureaus for processing. The major part of the CIS countries’ NSIs do not produce information about composition of foreign migrants by citizenship. The Russian Federation began to process this data only since 2002. In major part of the CIS countries (except for the Russian Federation) the coverage of immigration flows seems to be satisfactory.

Emigration in the CIS countries is counted much worse than immigration. Primary form is filled in only if a potential migrant applies for deregistration. Researchers have noticed that if there is no exit limitations (like exit visa) people often do not declare their emigration. It happens both with foreigners and nationals. That is why statistics in the countries of

⁶ Source: Legislation of the former USSR countries in the sphere of registration. OSCE conference on reform of registration system . Issyk-Kul, July 2005. CD

international migrants it was necessary to cross the border of the state, some more conditions existed for internal migrants (for instance -it should not be residence mobility within one city or move from one village to another within the borders of the same administrative district¹⁰. New Rules of registration (1995) defined two types of registration – a) in the place of residence and b) in the place of stay. The latter initially implied temporary stay for not longer than 180 days. However, very soon (one year later) Constitutional Court abolished all time limitations for temporary registration. What was the result from the viewpoint of statistics? According to the same Rules of registration primary statistical form must be filled in only for migrants who are registered in a place of residence. If a migrant is registered in the place of stay - independently of its duration- primary statistical form must not be filled in. Therefore all long-term migrants which did not have residence permit quite legally stayed in the RF for years but were not included into statistical observation. Therefore, almost all labour and educational migrants are not “counted” because the majority of them are registered in the place of stay, . Composition of flows by reasons for move (that is published in Rosstat yearbooks) is very far from the real one.

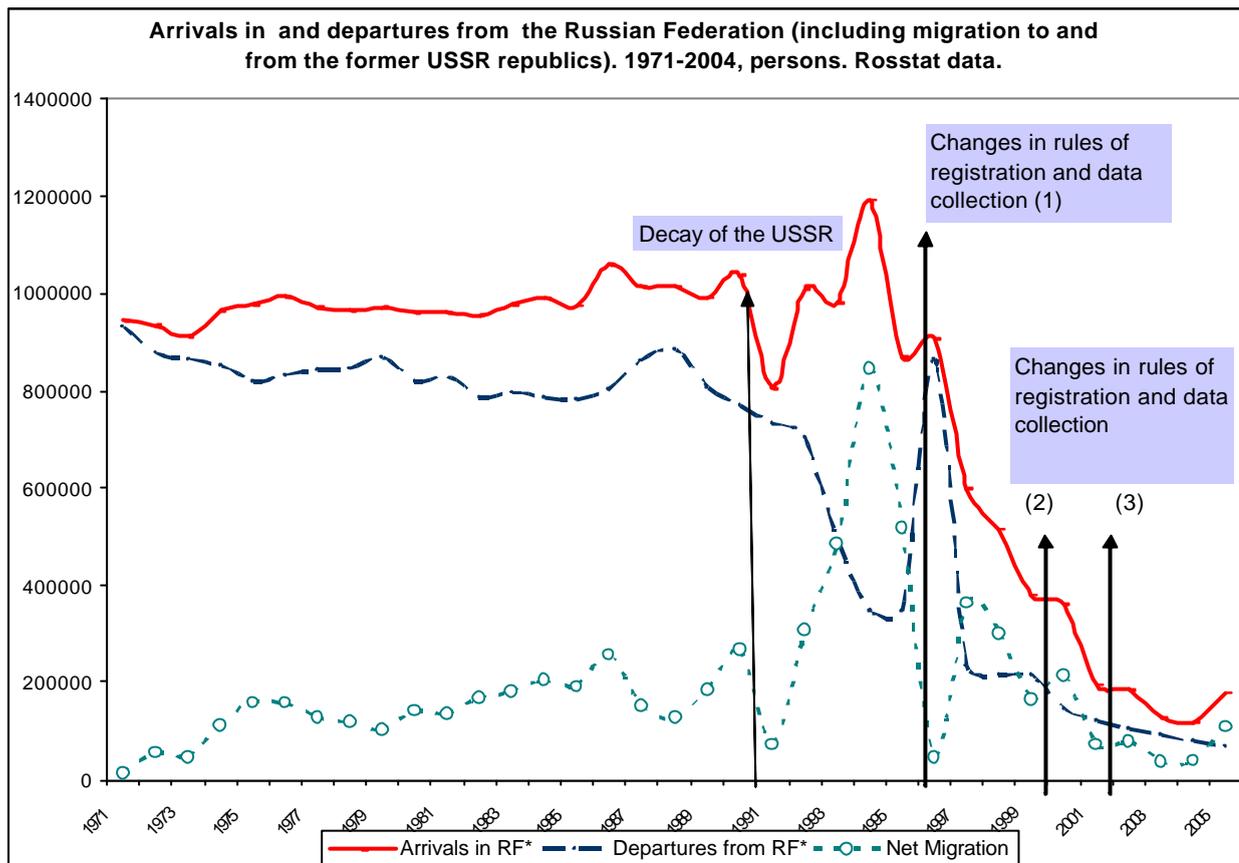
In 2002 the new federal Law on status of foreigners in the RF defined basic principles of establishment of the Foreign Population Data Bank (i.e.- register of foreigners). Unfortunately nothing was written about necessity to collect primary information for the needs of Rosstat. It means that since 2002 there is no any legal act prescribing either to fill in the primary statistical form for foreigners registered in Russia, or to send any other statistical data on migration flows from the Federal Migration Service to Rosstat¹¹. Theoretically since that moment no statistical forms for foreigners who arrive in or leave from Russia should have been filled in and forwarded to Rosstat. In practice, in some regions people responsible for registration continued to collect primary data for Rosstat due to the tradition or another considerations; in the other regions, they stopped collecting data for Rosstat as soon as they understood that they need not do any additional work any more. For example, according to Rosstat data in 2002 and 2003 there were absolutely no (zero) foreigners among those who arrived in Moscow (total inflow from abroad - 10,6 and 7,6 thousand respectively). In 2004 there were only 704 foreigners of about 6.5 thousand of international in-migrants¹². Moscow is one of the most attractive regions for foreign migrants and such low figures arouse suspicion. In the same years several thousands of foreigners got residence permits in Moscow. Similar situation was observed in many other regions of the RF. Official data show that about 15 % of in-migrants are foreigners, all the rest – are the RF nationals (see Annex 2). There is one more suspicion: nobody can be sure that these nationals do not include people that were granted Russian citizenship and according to the rules came to police to be registered as Russian citizens.

¹⁰ Till 1996 a person should have been registered in the new place of residence (and deregistered in the previous) if he or she intended to stay in the place of destination for more than 45 days¹⁰, for foreigners this time limit made 3 months. In both cases these migrants were included into statistical observation.

¹¹ Therefore, theoretically Rosstat should receive data on foreigner migrants only if they are refugees or foreign workers; as it was mentioned above, this information is obtained from special systems of data collection in Federal migration service.

¹² Source: Population and migration in the RF in 2003, 2004/ Statistical Yearbook, Rosstat, Moscow, 2004, 2005.

Chart 1.



Source- Rosstat data.

Therefore the decline in migration inflow that could be observed on the chart 1 is caused by changes in rules of migration data collection and not only by some objective factors. Total number of immigrants since the middle of 1990s should be at least two times higher than official statistics shows.

3. Administrative systems of migration registration and potential data sources.

Annex 3 presents potential sources of statistics of international migration divided by category of migrants and authorities responsible for migrants registration. Some of data is available, but the major part is not. There is a certain lack in residence permits, citizenship acquisition and visa statistics.

As a rule labour migration data show only the “visible part of an iceberg”. Migrants receiving countries underestimate irregular foreign workers, sending countries – can not estimate precisely how many nationals have left to work abroad. The major part of emigrants find job themselves and official data of recruiting agencies in the countries of origin can not include them into statistics. In the RF only about 50 thousands workers are employed abroad annually, the major part of them are sailors recruited by foreign shipping companies. Comparability of data is also problematic as there is statistics of work permits and statistics of workers that were

employed during the year. Besides, as a rule countries make no difference in issuance of first and next work permits, as there is no procedure of permit prolongation.

Border statistics data became partially available quite recently and not everywhere. The main problem with this data is as follows: policy makers are not used to interpret them in a proper way and very often the residual between entries and exits is considered to be “illegal net migration”. Such point of view is traditional to some of the RF policy makers and their Ukrainian colleagues as well¹³. The basic problem of administrative systems of migrants registration and data collection is an obvious reluctance of these bodies to publish data or to produce adequate statistics.

Under the condition of very limited access to the major part of data, information on refugees seems to be the most reliable, well collected and available.

Big volumes of unregistered migrants forced several countries of the region to establish systems of migration cards collection. Ukraine, Russia, Moldova and Tajikistan use this data source, however, due to the lack of equipment and skilled personnel only part of the primary forms could be processed (in the RF till recently approximately half of the cards). Increase in interest towards migration cards statistics seems to be excessive. It is caused by the necessity to fill the gap in normal data under the condition of inefficiency of regular systems of migrants registration.

Migration cards in Tajikistan are used not only for foreigners who enter the country, but for nationals who leave for abroad as well. A foreigner receives the card at the moment of entry and returns it back to an officer of boarder service at the moment of exit. Data is collected and processed in the Migration service of Tajikistan. As official statistics collected by the national statistics service seems to be not reliable, since January 1, 2004 a new system of data collection was established to observe emigration of nationals. The cards for nationals are filled in at the moment of exit by the border service officers, data input and processing is done by the State Migration Service (Ministry of Labour and Social Protection). Aggregated data should be communicated to the national statistics Committee.

Regularization campaigns could also be an additional source of data on international migrants, however only Kazakhstan has recently conducted such campaign that involved about 90 thousand illegal migrants (while total amount is estimated as 350-400 thousand). The data should be processed soon.

There is one more factor that could influence the process of capacity building in migration statistics collection. National migration authorities in the CIS countries seem to be rather unstable administrative bodies. Structural and staff changes very often happen to these bodies. *Since 1992 Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation has changed its structure and administrative status 9 times. Migration authority in Moldova was established in the early 1990-ies, when active population of the country began to migrate abroad to find a job. In 2003 different responsibilities were combined within one Governmental body – National Bureau for Migration. NBM was responsible almost for all spheres of immigration and emigration control in the country. In the middle of 2006 another reform abolished the Bureau and its*

¹³ See: http://www.scnm.gov.ua/control/uk/publish/article?art_id=46308&cat_id=46235

functions were distributed between different authorities. Nowadays the major part of its functions is accepted by the Ministry of Interior (Residence permits, refugees and asylum seekers, repatriates, visas issued inside the country (except diplomatic). Functions of foreign labour force regulation are transmitted to the Ministry of Economics (Labour dept.), etc. National Bureau for migration had its own database on foreigners of various categories in the country. It is difficult to imagine how this database could be divided between new bodies, responsible for quite different functions. Statistics produced in the basis of newly established authorities is not available. The former Migration Bureau had a joint database on foreigners, so now it is unclear how the involved ministries will share it. According to Moldavian expert's opinion this period of uncertainty may last for several years.

4. Concluding remarks.

CIS Countries, except Moldova and Georgia, have much in common in the sphere of migrants registration and data collection – both within national statistics institutes or administrative bodies. The same similarity could be found if we speak about the main problems dealing with statistics of international migration. Lack of coordination between authorities responsible for data collection prevents from effective and timely production of diversified statistics of international migration; frequently changing legislation in the sphere of registration, non-stop reforms within national migration authorities interferes with capacity building in statistics of international migration. National statistics institutes sometimes find themselves in subordinate situation and do not get enough information from administrative bodies. Budgetary limitations and low skill abilities of personnel prevent from more intensive computerization of data collection and timely processing of information within administrative systems. Access to administrative data and publication of these statistics – are the most burning questions in the CIS countries. Although more data is published (in comparison with the Soviet period), there is still an obvious deficit of information that is necessary for adequate analysis and decision making. As a rule migration authorities do not publish even general data – for example- it is almost impossible to find official information on issued residence permits. Visa statistics and data on apprehensions at the borders are not available at all. It means that data exists but is not available for impartial and independent analysis. Analytical capabilities of national administrative authorities sometimes are not very strong. Incorrect interpretation of data (if even the latest was collected in a proper way) leads to false priorities in migration policies, increases risks of inefficient costs of such policies and misinforms public opinion.

In any case we must recognize that different systems of migration statistics have been created and various data on international migration have been collected in the CIS countries since the early 1990-ies. Therefore we could argue with a distinguished researcher who wrote in 2000 that "...a number of countries (including major countries, such as China and the former USSR) have no statistics whatsoever", and that "they are mostly low-immigration communist countries..."¹⁴ By that moment all the former USSR countries had their own migration systems, had more or less effectively organized border control, national migration authorities to regulate new types of migration, new types of data and new or revised schemes of data collection. Of course, data collection and regulating authorities might not have been very effective, but they worked within the frameworks of their abilities and tried to find a solution

¹⁴ Tapinos George. Can one really talk of the globalization of migration flows? In Globalization, migration and development. OECD, 2000.

of problems under the conditions of financial, managerial and skilled staff limitations. Nowadays the process seems to be in progress; taking into account obvious drawbacks, it should be supposed that countries of the post-soviet space inevitably would continue modification of national systems of migration data collection and processing. It is quite clear that this way can not be short and easy, however there is no choice for us if we want migration be manageable and predictable.

Statisticians of developed countries are looking for methods to harmonize national systems of data collection in order to make statistics of international migration more comparable. In the case of the CIS countries situation seems to be a little bit more complicated because of the reasons mentioned above. However, in spite of those problems and a certain “centrifugal” trend in national and international policies in the CIS countries, there are still strong economic considerations to manage migration process and labour market development in the area of the CIS countries; and this is one more argument to revise national systems of international migration statistics collection, to discuss common problems and to look for solutions that could be advantageous for everybody.

5. Annexes.

Annex 1. Place of birth and citizenship of population in selected CIS countries.

		Population (pers.)	Born in the country	Born out of the country	Nationals	Foreigners and stateless	No answer about citizenship
Armenia	Abs.	3213001	2927306	285695	3185455	27546	
	%	100,0%	91,1%	8,9%	99,1%	0,9%	
Ukraine	Abs.	48240902	43084662	5156240	47950004	169122	
	%	100,0%	89,3%	10,7%	99,4%	0,4%	
Byelorussia	Abs.	10045237	8886422	1158815	9934539	107756	2942
	%	100%	88,5%	11,5%	98,9%	1,1%	0,03%
Kazakhstan	Abs.	14953126	12839761	2113173	14867921	85205	
	%	100,0%	85,9%	14,1%	99,4%	0,6%	
Russian Federation	Abs.	145166731	131608720	13558011	142442404	1025413	1269023
	%	100%	90,6%	9,3%	98,1%	1,0%	0,9%
Moldova		3383332	3201818	181514¹⁵	3371082	11860	390
		100%	94,6%	5,4%	99,6%	0,4%	

Source - National Censuses (Round 2000) data

¹⁵ including 580 persons that did not specify place of birth

Annex 2. Composition of international migration flows in Russia by citizenship of migrants. Rosstat data.

	Persons				%				
		2002	2003	2004	2005	2002	2003	2004	2005
Arrivals	Foreigners	18287	20377	12834	14584	9,9	15,8	10,8	8,2%
	Nationals	166325	108767	106323	162646	90,1	84,2	89,2	91,8%
	Total	184612	129144	119157	177230	100	100	100	100,0%
Departures	Foreigners	5953	4047	3225	2978	5,6	4,3	4	4,3%
	Nationals	100732	89971	76570	66820	94,4	95,7	96	95,7%
	Total	106685	94018	79795	69798	100	100	100	100,0%
Net migration	Foreigners	12334	16330	9609	11606	15,8	46,5	24,4	10,8%
	Nationals	65593	18796	29753	95826	84,2	53,5	75,6	89,2%
	Total	77927	35126	39362	107432	100	100	100	100,0%

Annex 3 Potential and actual data sources on different categories of migrants and responsible authorities in selected CIS countries.

Concerns	Russia	Moldova ¹⁶		Ukraine ¹⁷	Kazakhstan ¹⁸
		Till 2006	Since 2006		
Nationals employed abroad (aid in job search, licenses for recruiting agencies)	Federal migration service (Ministry of Interior)	National Migration Bureau	Ministry of Economics (Labour Department)	Ministry of labour and social policy- dept. of employment	Committee for Migration (Ministry of Labour).
Work permits issuance Labour migrants control in the country	Federal migration service (Ministry of Interior)	National Migration Bureau	Ministry of Economics (Labour Department)	Republic Centre for employment (Ministry of labour and social policy)	Committee for Migration (Ministry of Labour).
Residence permits	Federal migration service (Ministry of Interior)	National Migration Bureau	Ministry of Interior	State Department for affairs of citizenship, immigration and physical persons registration (Ministry of Interior)	Migration police department (Ministry of Interior): residence permits, visa (application done in the country)
Refugees and asylum seekers	Federal migration service (Ministry of Interior)	National Migration Bureau	Ministry of Interior	State Committee of Ukraine for Nationalities and Migration (SCNM))	Committee for Migration (Ministry of Labour).
Repatriates (and Diaspora) affairs	Federal migration service (Ministry of Interior) Program of compatriots voluntary resettlement	National Migration Bureau	Ministry of Interior	State Committee of Ukraine for Nationalities and Migration (SCNM))	Committee for Migration (Ministry of Labour). (Program of Oralmans resettlement)
Visas issued inside the country (except diplomatic)	Federal migration service (Ministry of Interior)	National Migration Bureau	Ministry of Interior	State Department for affairs of citizenship, immigration and physical persons registration (Ministry of Interior)	Migration police department (Ministry of Interior)
Visas issued outside the country	Ministry of foreign affairs	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Ministry of Foreign affairs
Registration of nationals in Consulates abroad	Ministry of foreign affairs	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Ministry of Foreign affairs
Registration of migrants (foreigners and nationals) in a place of residence or place of stay	Federal migration service (Ministry of Interior)	Ministry of Information Development (National Register Department)	Ministry of Information Development (National Register Department)	State Department for affairs of citizenship, immigration and physical persons registration (Ministry of Interior)	Nationals: Ministry of Justice (Agency of the RK for Informatization and Communication) Foreigners –Ministry of Interior.
Border control	Federal Border Service	Border Service	Border Service	Border Service	Border Service
Migration cards system	Federal migration service (Ministry of Interior)	Border Service	Border Service	Border service (collection) Ministry of Interior (processing)	Border service

¹⁶ Information verified by Valeriu Mosneaga (Moldova).

¹⁷ Information verified by Olena Malinovskaya (Ukraine)

¹⁸ Information verified by E.Musabek (Kazakhstan)