



Project Report:
**"Study of Opportunities for Integration of
Persons Recognized as Refugees in the
Russian Federation"**

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ABSTRACT

Findings obtained from 20 interviews with migration experts (in Moscow and St. Petersburg) and 20 in-depth interviews with refugees (in Moscow and St. Petersburg) are used by the author to study the opportunities for integration of persons recognized as refugees in the Russian Federation, the role of various actors in such integration, and prospects for development of integration opportunities in the country.

List of abbreviations

HEI – higher education institution

ILO – International Labor Organization

CHI – compulsory health insurance

CIS - Commonwealth of Independent States

TV – television

FMS – the Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation

FL – federal law

PREFACE

Problem context

The problem of integration of refugees in Russia was among the main topics of research in the Russian academia in the 1990s. Although the situation has changed significantly since then, the number of research papers dedicated to the issue of refugee adaptation published in the past 12 years is very insignificant, with the majority focusing on narrow research aspects.¹ Furthermore, despite the increasingly disturbing international developments (military conflict in Syria, withdrawal of NATO troops from Afghanistan, general instability in the Middle East, and events in Ukraine), the majority of efforts towards admitting the existing refugees and preparing for the arrival of new influxes is more formal than practical, with no information campaigns, poorly developed refugee adaptation and integration mechanisms, and the issue of refugees itself slowly becoming secondary.

Meanwhile, international experience highlights the danger and severe humanitarian consequences of such a careless approach.

The problem of refugee integration should be considered in the context of the country's overall migrant integration policy, limited to basic services, such as free emergency medical care, free emergency childbirth, and free access to Russian schools for the children of migrants. The lack of serious integration programs and the absence of an all-encompassing approach to integration tend to alienate the refugees from the Russian society and does not allow them the opportunity to be of use to Russia.

Statement of intent

Purpose: to study the opportunities for integration of recognized refugees in the Russian Federation.

Objectives:

1. To define the meaning of the term "integration" and analyze the current migration situation in the context of asylum-seekers in the Russian Federation, as well as the opportunities for integration and

¹See, for example, *Forced migration: optimism of the young and pessimism of adults* by E K. Kirillova/*Russian youth: problems and solutions*. M., Social Forecasts Center, 2005. –pp. 362-369; *Refugee children: problems of social adaptation (sociological research experience)* by L. Arutyunyan, G. Mosesov and M. Oganessian)/Migration and Information. Edited by ZhA. Zayonchkovskaya. CIS Forced Migration Study Center, CIS and Baltics Independent Research Council on Migration. M., 2000. –pp. 104-121.

obstacles thereto.

2. To evaluate the access to legal integration for recognized refugees in the Russian Federation
3. To evaluate the access to social integration for recognized refugees in the Russian Federation
4. To evaluate the access to economic integration for recognized refugees in the Russian Federation

The proposed project justifies the need for modernization of the state asylum policy in the context of the general change of the migration policy toward migrants, as well as the role of various refugee integrating agencies and institutions.

To this end, it is necessary to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of Russia's refugee integration measures and prospects for their future development;
- Propose possible changes to Russia's refugee (including refugee children) integration measures;
- Establish mechanisms for the introduction of changes to Russia's refugee integration policy.

The author makes the following hypothesis, requiring verification within the scope of the current study:

1. Violations of the rights of refugees and asylum-seekers in the Russian Federation are often linked to the inadequate information provided to the government agencies, poorly informed about the rights of refugees and Temporary Asylum holders in the Russian Federation;

2. Refugees are not viewed by Russia as a valuable demographic resource in the context of its Migration Policy Concept;

3. Attempts at modernizing Russia's refugee integration policy are seriously hampered by the contradictions in Russian legislation and weak involvement of civil society in the refugee integration process.

Methodology and study limitations

Time and geographical constraints:

The study was conducted in Russia (Moscow and St. Petersburg) from 15 January to 30 March 2014.

Expert poll: experts in the field of migration and labor relations in the Russian Federation; employees of international, human rights and non-governmental organizations; government officials; researchers of migration; and diaspora representatives (12 in Moscow and 8 in St. Petersburg; see. Appendix 3) were interviewed for the study.

In-depth interviews: with refugees with successful and otherwise integration experience in Russia (12 in Moscow and 8 in St. Petersburg).

Figure 1. Project sampling algorithm



Language of the poll: Russian.

Study phases:

1. *methodology development and testing* (15 January 2014 – 30 January 2014)

Identification of the pool of experts for the study and areas of respondent search, preparation of the questionnaire. Conducting a secondary analysis of available data and documents pertaining to the problem and related issues; review of previous research materials, available statistical data, legislation and law enforcement practices; problem coverage in social and political debates and mass media. The findings of the analysis were used in the preparation of the study tools and concept for the study.

Given the expected data shortage and search-based nature of the Project, the entire process of primary data gathering and analysis within the Project was based on the principle of minimal data loss. This explains the choice of a flexible methodology based on a combination of in-depth and expert interviews.

The preparatory phase included 2 pilot interviews: 1 expert interview and 1 in-depth interview. The interview findings were then used to make final adjustments to the questionnaires used for the collection of primary data during the 2nd phase of the Project.

2. *Conducting field work (expert and in-depth interviews) (31 January 2014 – 15 March 2014)* The second phase involved the use of the following two key methods of primary data gathering:

1. *Semi-structured interviews with experts* (20 interviews, including 12 in Moscow and 8 in St. Petersburg).

The main purpose of the expert survey is to analyze how the problem at the centre of the study is understood by different expert groups (FMS officials, NGOs, academics, and diaspora members), to what extent they are concerned by the issue, what options for integration of refugees are available, and who is best suited to oversee this process.

The interview process involved the use of a special aid designed to help the interviewer to guide the discussion. All collected interviews were recorded on tape and transcribed into text.

2. *In-depth interviews (20 interviews), including:*

- 10 interviews with refugees and Temporary Asylum holders in the Russian Federation (6 in Moscow and 4 in St. Petersburg) with successful integration experience;
- 10 interviews with refugees and Temporary Asylum holders in the Russian Federation (6 in Moscow and 4 in St. Petersburg) with negative integration experience.

The purpose is to obtain narrative evidence and document existing practice, to identify the causes and consequences of the current situation with refugee integration, and to carry out a review of the current situation and its possible and desirable development scenarios.

All in-depth interviews were recorded on tape and transcribed into text. The interview process involved the use of a special aid designed to help the interviewer to guide the discussion. This was necessitated by the need not only to gather evidence but also to learn about the existing attitudes on the situation and possible scenarios for its development (to find out not only about the objective aspect of the issue but also about the subjective evaluations of, and opinions about, the situation). Since it was necessary to document and analyze the largest possible number of different manifestations of the problem being studied, we used the so-called theoretical sampling process, whereby representativeness

is achieved through the inclusion in the interviewee pool of respondents who comprehensively cover the problem from different angles.

3. Review of findings. Preparation of the final report and recommendations based on the study findings (16 March 2014 – 31 March 2014)

The primary data collected was analyzed and processed; recommendations for the integration of refugees in the Russian Federation were developed; direction for future activities of international, public, religious and non-governmental organizations were identified; and the future development potential of such work was evaluated.

1. Description of the Problem

1.1. Terms & definitions

The following terms and definitions are used in the study:

Refugees are persons who have "a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, are outside their country of nationality/ habitual residence and are... unwilling or unable to avail themselves of the protection of that country...." (UN Convention on the Status of Refugees, 1951).

Asylums-seekers are persons who have fled from their own country and seek asylum in another country and who have submitted an application for the granting of asylum or the right to be recognized as a bona fide refugee and to receive legal protection and material aid.

Stateless Persons are persons who are not considered as nationals by any state under the operation of its law.

(Art. 1 of the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons).

Internally Displaced Persons are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border.

Forced Migrants are citizens of the Russian Federation who have left the place of their residence as a result of violence or persecution directed against them or their family members, or as a result of real danger of being subjected to persecution on the basis of race, religion, nationality, language, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, which have become a pretext for launching hostile campaigns against a particular person or a group of persons, or massive breaches of the public order (Law "On Forced Migrants" as amended on Aug. 22, 2004).

Returnees are persons were of concern to UNHCR when they were outside the country of their origin, and who remain of concern of UNHCR following returning home, but for a limited period only.

Integration² is a process by which a foreign national is accepted into society, whether

²Handbook on Migration Terminology.IOM 2011

individually or as a group. The specific acceptance requirements applicable to host countries can vary considerably depending on the country; the responsibility for integration does not rest on one particular group, but rather on several parties: the immigrants themselves, governments, organizations, and citizens of the host country.

1.2 International asylum laws

A number of documents have been adopted at various levels internationally to define and regulate the problems of refugees (see Table 1).

Table 1. International asylum laws

United Nations documents	Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (1967)
Conclusions Adopted by the Executive Committee on the International Protection of Refugees	No 7 (XXVIII)-1977: Expulsion No 8 (XXVIII) - 1977: Determination of Refugee Status No 12 (XXIX) - 1978: Extra-Territorial Effect of Refugee Status No 15 (XXX) - 1979: Refugees Without an Asylum Country No 17 (XXXI) - 1980: Problems of Extradition Affecting Refugees No 18 (XXXI) - 1980: Voluntary Repatriation No 22 (XXXII) - 1981: Protection of Asylum-Seekers in Situations of Large-Scale Influx No 24 (XXXII) - 1981: Family Reunification No 30 (XXXIV) - 1983: The Problem of Manifestly Unfounded or Abusive Applications for Refugee Status or Asylum No 39 (XXXVI) - 1985: Refugee Women and International Protection No 40 (XXXVI) - 1985: Voluntary Repatriation No 44 (XXXVII) - 1986: Detention of Refugees and Asylum-Seekers No 47 (XXXVIII) - 1987: Refugee Children No 58 (XL) - 1989: Problem of Refugees and Asylum-Seekers Who Move in an Irregular Manner from a Country in Which They Had Already Found Protection No 59 (XL)- 1989: Refugee Children No 64 (XLI) - 1990: Refugee Women and International Protection No 69 (XLIII) - 1991: Cessation of Status No 72 (XLIV) - 1993: Personal Security of Refugees

	<p>No 73 (XLIV) - 1993: Refugee Protection and Sexual Violence</p> <p>No 75(XLV) - 1994: Internally Displaced Persons</p> <p>No 78 (XLVI) - 1995: Prevention and Reduction of Statelessness and the Protection of Stateless Persons</p> <p>No 80 (XLVII) - 1996: Comprehensive and Regional Approaches within a Protection Framework</p> <p>No 81 (XLVIII) - 1997: General</p> <p>No 84 (XLVIII) - 1997: Conclusion on Refugee Children and Adolescents</p> <p>No 85(XUX)- 1998: Conclusion on International Protection</p>
Regional and International documents in America	Cartagena Declaration on Refugees
Documents of the European Union	The 1990 Dublin Convention Determining the State Responsible for examining Applications for Asylum Lodged in One of the Member States of the European Union.Resolution of the Council of the European Union of 20 June 1995 on minimum guarantees for asylum procedures.Joint position of 4 March 1996 defined by the Council on the basis of Article K.3 of the Treaty on European Union on the harmonized application of the definition of the term "refugee" in Article 1 of the Geneva Convention of 28 July 1951 relating to the status of refugees.
Documents of the Council of Europe	European Agreement on the Abolition of Visas for RefugeesEuropean Agreement on Transfer of Responsibility for RefugeesRecommendation 773 (1976) on De Facto RefugeesRecommendation 817 (1977) on the Right of AsylumDeclaration on Territorial AsylumRecommendation No R (1981) 16 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the Harmonization of National Procedures Relating to AsylumRecommendation No R (1984) 1 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the Protection of Persons not Formally Recognized as RefugeesRecommendation No R (1994) 5 of the Committee of Ministers on Guidelines Concerning the Arrival of Asylum-Seeker at European Airports
Documents of the Commonwealth of Independent States	Agreement on Aid to Refugees and Forced Migrants of 24 September 1993Protocol to the Agreement on Aid to Refugees and Forced Migrants of 24 September 1993Regulations on an Inter-state Aid Fund forRefugees and Forced Migrants

	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Belarus, the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Government of the Russian Federation, and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan on Mutual Visa-Free Travel of Citizens of 30 November 2000
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Source: *Refugees and forced migrants: international legal instruments and the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan*. Collection of documents. Compiled by K V. Grigoriev, E P. ZimovinaEkozhn, 2004.

1.3. Russian legislation and established practice of granting asylum

In order to receive Refugee Status in the Russian Federation, a foreign national must satisfy the criteria of a "refugee" as contained in the Federal Law "On Refugees" in order to obtain asylum in Russia.

The existence of grounds for recognition as a refugee is determined in accordance with the Refugee Status determination procedure established by the Federal Law and carried out by the competent state authorities.

Where such grounds exist, the person is recognized as a refugee irrespective of his race, nationality, citizenship, religion, political opinion, or membership of a particular social group. Importantly, there is no time limitation for the duration of the Refugee Status.

Only persons whose status has been determined officially become subject to the measures aimed at their adaptation and integration.

The criteria for recognizing a person as a refugee established by the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees remain unchanged. The criteria for recognition of an asylum-seeker as a refugee contained in the Convention correspond to the definition of the term of a "refugee" found in the Federal Law "On Refugees."

A person is recognized as a refugee in the Russian federation if he is not a citizen of the Russian Federation and who due to well-founded fear of persecution to become a victim of persecution due to his/her race, religion, citizenship, ethnic origin or membership of particular social group or political opinion is outside of his country of habitual residence due to aforementioned events and cannot and will not return to his country due to such fear. However, there are many other circumstances under which a person is forced to leave his country or is unable to return to it. Such circumstances include, for example, armed conflicts, environmental disasters, etc.

Such persons are offered humanitarian protection by the states. In the Russian Federation, such humanitarian protection takes the form of temporary asylum.

There are not as many people who are victims of political persecution, qualifying them for Refugee Status, as compared to the number of those who have left their country as a result of humanitarian crises and armed conflicts and are in need of humanitarian protection.

The grounds and procedure for recognition as a refugee in Russia, as well as the economic, social, and legal guarantees for the protection of the rights and legitimate interests of refugees, are established by the Federal Law "On Refugees" and subject to decrees of the RF Government and FMS.

In order to ensure unimpeded access to the Refugee Status determination procedure of asylum seekers, FMS has implemented the Administrative Regulations³ governing the provision of a public service for administering Refugee Status determination procedure for applicants seeking Refugee Status and Temporary Asylum (approved by FMS decree No. 352 dated 19 August 2013, registered with the Ministry of Justice under No. 31098 on 19 August 2013).

The Administrative Regulations are designed to ensure the availability of, and easy access by applicants to, the information on the procedure for recognition as a refugee or granting of Temporary Asylum, scope of information provided to the applicants on the status of their refugee/temporary asylum applications. It also provides for a clear presentation of the information on all administrative procedures.

In line with the latest requirements for public information provided, asylum-seekers are ensured to obtain full information on the procedure for lodging Refugee Status applications and the procedure for refugee recognition can be accessed by asylum-seekers via the official website of FMS and official websites of its territorial bodies, as well as via the Unified Portal for Central and Local Government Services (functions).

Any foreign national wishing to obtain information that falls within the competence of FMS, including relating to the granting of asylum in Russia, is invited to visit the official website of FMS⁴ and its territorial bodies.

Persons recognized as refugees are eligible for simplified application process for obtaining the Russian citizenship. Foreign nationals and stateless persons can apply for Russian citizenship one year after being granted Refugee Status by using a fast-track procedure that allows them to bypass all

³<http://www.fms.gov.ru/documentation/867/details/37163/>

⁴<http://www.fms.gov.ru>

the procedures and formalities applicable to other categories of foreign nationals. Refugees are not required to obtain a residence permit prior to applying for citizenship, a measure designed to facilitate their easy integration into Russian society. The study has shown, however, that in practice it is very difficult to obtain Russian citizenship largely due to the challenges associated with finding a legal job or officially registering as an unemployed, given that both require a residence registration at the place of sojourn, which refugees typically do not have.

Russian Federation acceded to the 1951 UN Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees in 1992, and, on this basis, grants asylum to foreign citizens and stateless persons seeking asylum on its territory by:

- granting political asylum;
- recognizing as a refugee;
- granting of Temporary Asylum.

Pursuant to Article 63 of the Russian Constitution, Russia grants political asylum to foreign nationals in accordance with the generally recognized rules of international law.⁵

1.4. Evaluation of the current migration situation in the context of asylum-seekers in Russia⁶

Russia received and processed a total of 25,931 Refugee Status applications from the nationals of 87 countries in the period from 1997 to 1 July 2007, 8,683 or 33% of which were approved. Also, 5,637 applications for Temporary Asylum from the nationals of 59 countries were received during the period from 2001 to 1 July 2007; 2,446 or 43% of which were approved. According to the statistics, there has been a slight increase in the number of approvals in recent years: approx. 6,500 foreign nationals were granted Temporary Asylum, and approx. 600 persons obtained Refugee Status from 2009 to 2013.

Table 2. Total number of refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons, and stateless persons as of late 2012.

⁵ See Appendix 4 Procedures for granting of political asylum, refugee recognition, granting of temporary asylum in effect in the RF for more detail

⁶ http://www.fms.gov.ru/government_services/asylum/index.php

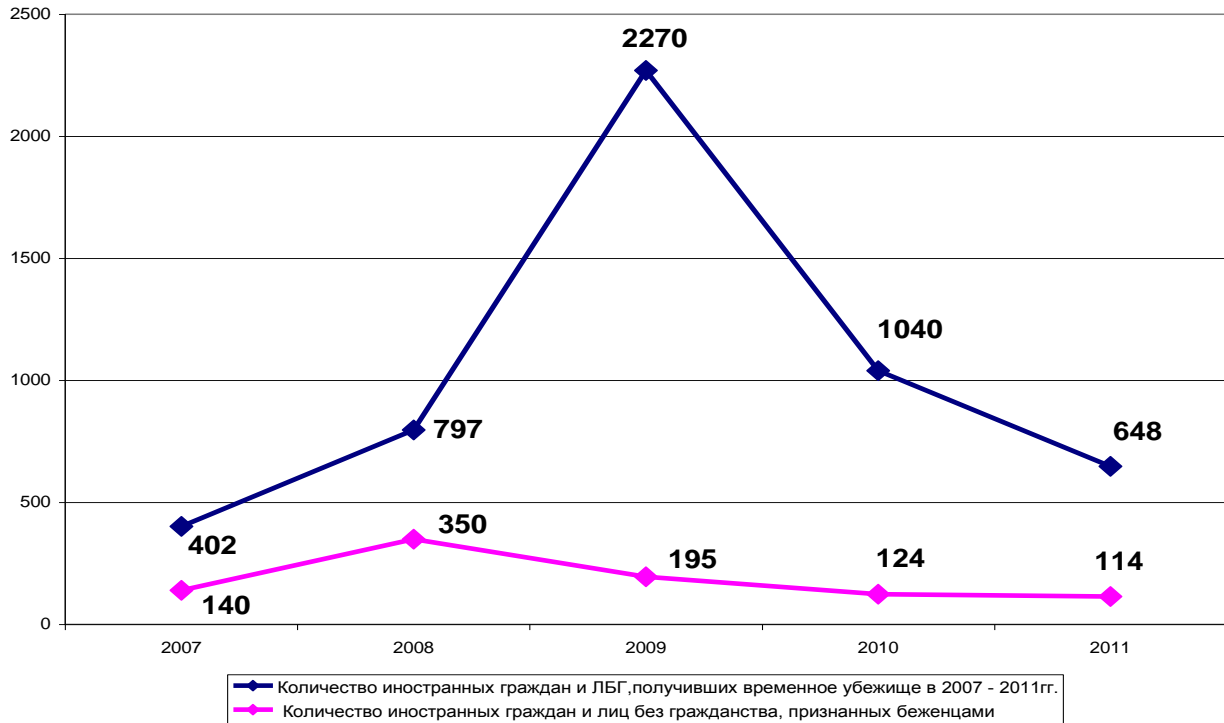
Category	Total
Refugees	15.4 mln. pers. are of concern to UNHCR
Asylum-seekers	937,000 pers.
Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)	28.8 mln. pers.
Stateless persons	3.34 mln. pers. in 72 countries. The total number of stateless persons in the world is estimated at over 10 million.

Source: UNHCR official website <http://unhcr.ru/index.php?id=15>

There has been no decrease over the past six years in the number of Refugee Status applications submitted to the Russian authorities by nationals of foreign countries. As the result of the conflict in Georgia and South Ossetia, the number of persons seeking asylum in Russia in 2009 increased sharply to 2,700 persons, and to 2,000 persons as a result of the humanitarian crisis in Syria in 2013. The current situation in Ukraine is also likely to result in the influx of asylum-seekers from this country.

Among persons applying for asylum in Russia are nationals of over 80 countries, including countries of Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Southeast Asia, etc. Although all these people differ by nationality, ethnic or social origins, education and religion, they all share a common desire to find protection from persecution to which they were subjected in their home country.

and pers.
 Fig. 2. Foreign nationals and stateless persons granted Temporary Asylum
 Refugee Status Status in 2007-2011,

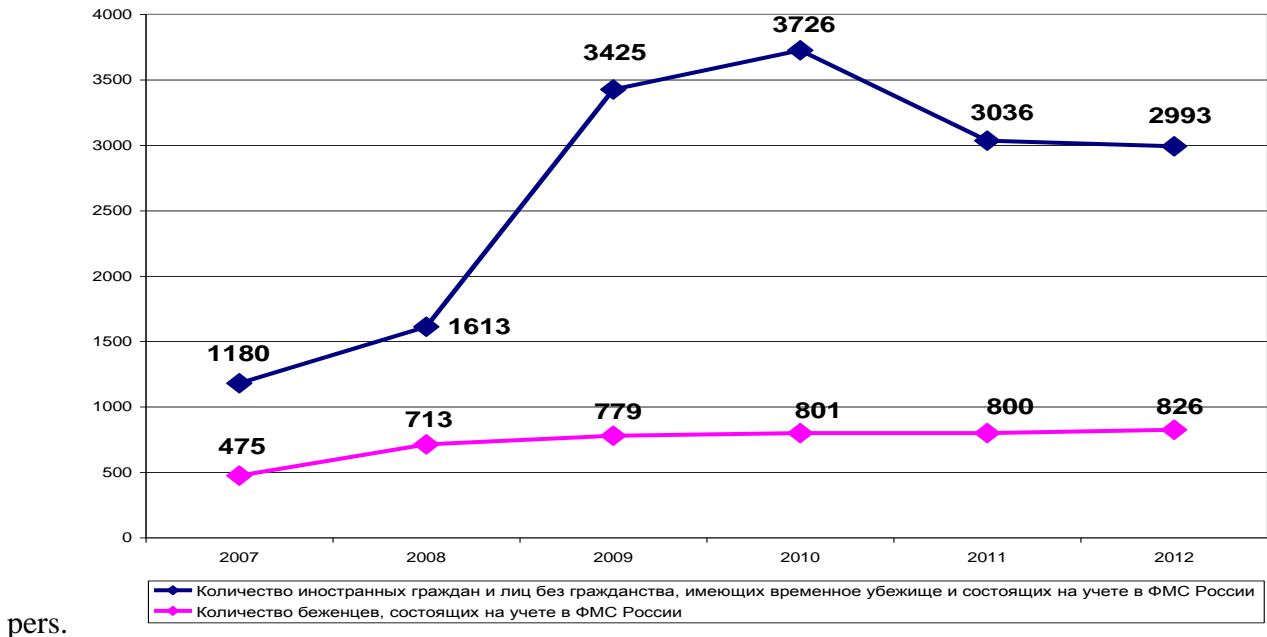


Foreign nationals and stateless persons granted Temporary Asylum in 2007-2011

Foreign nationals and stateless persons granted Refugee Status

Source: FMS data <http://www.fms.gov.ru/about/statistics/data/>

Fig. 3. Foreign nationals and stateless persons granted Temporary Asylum and Refugee Status and registered with FMS in 2007-2012,



Foreign nationals and stateless persons granted Temporary Asylum and registered with FMS

Refugees registered with FMS

Source: FMS data <http://www.fms.gov.ru/about/statistics/data/>

Unfortunately, refugees are still not viewed in Russia as a demographic resource. Instead, they are treated similarly to all other migrants coming in Russia. However, the demographic situation in Russia is as such, that, given the current fertility and mortality rates, the level of natural population growth, which increased in 2009-2013, is likely to remain positive only for a limited period of time, and at levels close to zero⁷. Russia's opportunities for future population growth are linked to the long-term trends set out around the time of the WWII. All efforts undertaken aimed at boosting population growth and reducing mortality are important and necessary; but their effect will not be fast to see and will be limited in scope⁸, meaning that the country's population growth over

⁷http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/population/demo/progn1.htm

⁸The population of Russia 2009 Seventeenth Annual Demographic Report Exec. Editor A G. Visniewsky M., Pub. House Higher School of Economics, 2011

<http://demoscope.ru/weekly/2011/0479/biblio01.php>

the next decade will largely depend on migrants.

According to RosStat⁹, Russia can achieve a steady population growth in the run up to 2030 only by increasing the number of arriving migrants from 303,000 in 2012 to 530,000 persons, increasing life expectancy at birth to 78 years, and the total fertility rate to 1,959 by 2030. With an average annual migration growth of more than 300,000 pers., but less than 350,000 pers., and a slower increase in life expectancy and fertility, the total population of Russia will, after a period of stabilization, begin to decline in the 2020s. If, however, the annual migration growth is less than 300,000 pers., the population decline will resume already in the coming years.

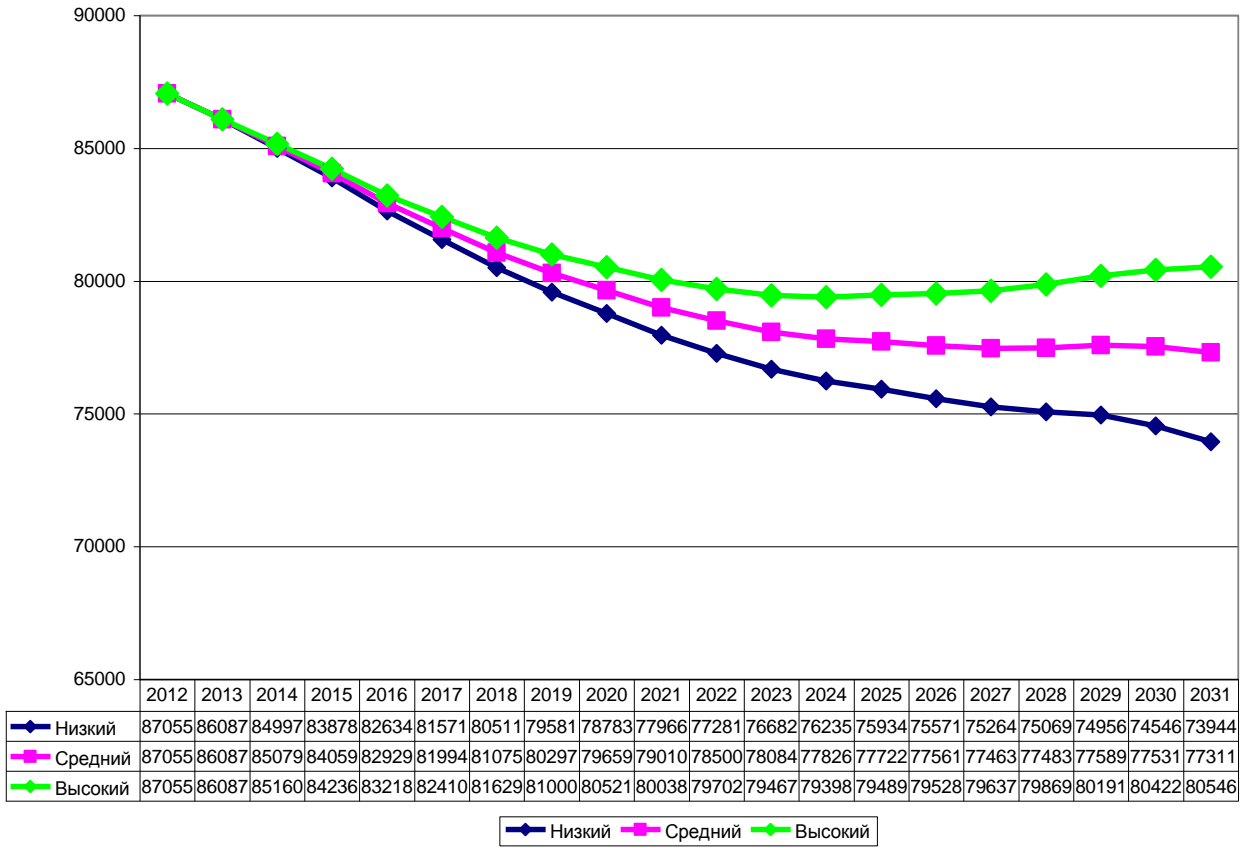
Another problem facing Russia is the population aging and consequent decline in the number of persons of working age. According to RosStat's median estimate, the size of the country's working-age population will decrease in 2012-2031 from 87,055,000 pers. to 77,311,000 pers, i.e. by 9,744,000 persons¹⁰. This will result in an increased burden placed by the retired people on the working-age population, higher social expenditures by the state, and rising labor shortages that will become more acute with every passing year.

Fig. 4. RosStat's low, medium and high scenarios for 2012-2031 decline in Russia's working-age population

⁹http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/population/demo/progn7.htm;

http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/population/demo/progn1.htm; The population of Russia 2010-2011 Eighteenth-Nineteenth Annual Demographic Report, Exec. Editor A.G. Visniewsky M., Pub. House Higher School of Economics, 2013, p. 19.

¹⁰http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/population/demo/progn3.htm



Low Medium High

Source: RosStat's data http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/population/demo/progn3.htm

In this situation, refugees, similar to the migrant workers, represent an important, but largely ignored in the country's migration policy, demographic resource.

2. Integration of Refugees and Persons Granted Temporary Asylum

2.1. The concept of integration of refugees and Temporary Asylum holders and opportunities for such integration existing in Russia

One of the main objectives of the Concept of State Migration Policy of the Russian Federation for the period until 2025¹¹ is to facilitate the adaptation and integration of migrants and to promote constructive interaction between migrants and the host community.

As mentioned above, **integration**¹² is a process by which foreign nationals are accepted into society, whether individually or as a group. The specific acceptance requirements applicable to host countries can vary considerably depending on the country; the responsibility for integration does not rest only on one particular group, but rather on several parties: the immigrants themselves, governments, organizations, and citizens of the host country.

Interviewed experts defined the integration of foreign nationals (or stateless persons) officially recognized as refugees in Russia differently. Here are some of the opinions expressed.

The process of their inclusion in the main domains of life of the host society: work, home and leisure. It is an objective necessity of refugee's entry into our society, adoption of common standards and traditions, language learning, and pursuit of socio-cultural adaptation.

From an interview with FMS staff

I would define complete integrated living as: the right to work, to learn, to enjoy the benefits, and to bear responsibilities. But it has to be part of an evenly-balanced package that includes both benefits and responsibilities. And, of course, you need to feel like a human being, to feel your dignity.

From an interview with a lawyer specializing in refugee work, Moscow

Experts believe, and this was confirmed during interviews with refugees, that various differences in language, culture, etc. do not have a significant impact on integration. The key condition here is the person's own desire. Integration is hardest for people who do not wish to remain in Russia. They do not make any efforts to integrate as they wish to be resettled to a third country. They are very difficult to work with because they are not interested in integration, are not responsive, and make no efforts to integrate.

The study has shown that in practice the status of refugee in Russia entitles a foreigner only to

¹¹<http://document.kremlin.ru/page.aspx?1100948>

¹²Handbook on Migration Terminology. IOM 2011

the right of the legal stay. Although the status implies many opportunities for integration, such as access to employment, free-of-charge school education and free admission to Russian universities, establishment of disability benefits, access to community medical institutions at the place of residence and other social benefits, access to these is often difficult.

Refugees should be regarded as future Russian citizens, given that most of them clearly see their future in Russia. Unfortunately, some of the refugees who did not originally view Russia as a transit country have stopped seeing it as their future home as they are unable to create the conditions for a dignified life here, while the state created opportunities for the integration are minimal and insufficient. This is the overwhelming conclusion the interviewers arrived at when interviewing refugees for the study.

The main indicator of comprehensive integration of a refugee into Russian society is the acquisition of Russian citizenship.

The Federal Law "On Citizenship of the Russian Federation" stipulates that refugees, unlike other categories of foreign nationals, are entitled to apply for Russian citizenship a year after being granted Refugee Status. As seen from the table below, Russian citizenship was granted in 2004-2013 to a total of 144 refugees, the vast majority of whom came from Afghanistan.

Table 3. Total number of foreign national and stateless persons recognized as refugees and granted Russian citizenship in 2004-2013, pers.

Countries	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
Total	2	25	18	28	8	11	16	22	6	4	140
Afghanistan		25	17	28	8	10	11	7	3	2	111
Bangladesh								2			2
Greece	2					1	4	13	1	2	23
Iran							1				1
Tajikistan			1								1
Uzbekistan									2		2

Source: FMS official data

In Russia, just as in any other country, integration is easiest for foreign nationals, who speak the language spoken by the majority of the host country's population, whose race and nationality are similar to those of the main population, who have relatives residing in that country, who graduated from its educational institutions, etc.

The study has shown that although successful integration largely depends on the person's own desire, there are situations where, due to the existence of multiple barriers and despite all efforts exerted, integration is impossible.

Refugees are entitled to apply for Russian citizenship using the simplified procedure a year after being granted Refugee Status, as stipulated in the Russian law on citizenship. In practice, however, it is very complicated. According to the interviewed experts, there exist an unofficial policy designed to limit refugees' opportunities for acquisition of Russian citizenship, or for legal integration into Russian society if acquisition of citizenship is not an option.

Role played by government organizations

When applying for Refugee Status, it often happens that different territorial bodies of FMS request the submission of different documents, ignoring the legally prescribed exhaustive list of documents required. The FMS employees are permitted to accept documents only when the complete set of documents is made available to them. The problem, however, is that FMS officials never issue any written explanations of what is missing or wrong with the documents that have been rejected, recording instead only the fact of the applicant's visit and his name in the logbook. Having no written explanation as to what is amiss with the documents offered for submission makes legal appeals of non-acceptance of the documents virtually impossible. The practical solution to this problem found by the legal representatives involves appealing the non-acceptance of the documents to the court immediately after the unsuccessful attempt to submit the documents, for which an appeal letter is prepared at the time of the initial visit in case the court submission is required. In such a way it would be possible to prove that a complete set of documents as required by the law was indeed offered and not accepted by the FMS, or ensure the official recording of all identified inaccuracies, if any, which, and not any other errors, will need to be eliminated in the future resubmission. This procedure makes diminishes the

possibility of identification of new inadequacies of the documents package at the next submission attempt. Sometimes officials request the applicants to provide documents not listed in the list of required documents and then use their non-availability as a pretext for not accepting the entire package of documents.

Interviewed legal experts also mentioned situations where documents were accepted only after a direct appeal to the Ombudsman's Office, who then contacted the relevant territorial body of the FMS, which then accepted the documents for consideration but only after a three-four months wait. Even in this case, however, that worked for a limited number of applicants, it was not possible to reconcile all the difficulties. Therefore, the mechanism that involves the need to repeatedly contact the Ombudsman's Office cannot, undoubtedly, be considered a viable solution.

Today they find one incorrectly written word, tomorrow another. The next time you are asked to bring documents that are not even on the list. We just cannot overcome all the difficulties. We did everything we could, including going to court, but nothing helped. In one situation, we described the whole process of documents rejection and that it was not recorded anywhere, to which FMS replied that not all documents were provided. So we took the whole set to the court, but they refused to check what was missing and what was not. The whole thing is a nightmare. And even if your documents have been accepted, you are likely to spend an eternity waiting for the final decision. The review process takes years, or the documents are returned all the way to the FMS territorial body, where they were submitted in the first place.

From an expert interview, Moscow.

One of the reasons for rejection of Refugee Status or Temporary Asylum applications is membership in an extremist organization. Interviewed experts cited instances where a country, say, Uzbekistan, listed one organization as extremist, and Russia would also put all members of this organization on its own terrorist list, rejecting any Refugee Status applications from them. This happens in spite of the fact that both Uzbekistan and Russia have their separate lists of extremist organizations.¹³ The Russian authorities add an organization to the list of terrorist groups if they consider it to be as such, but this is not done automatically, should another CIS country add an organization to its own list of terrorist groups. However, often times, recognition of a group as an extremist by one of the CIS countries leads to it being blacklisted by Russia as well. In any case, each

¹³Russia's list of extremist organizations - <http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/docs/2007/11/d11927>

asylum application is reviewed on an individual basis, and even membership in such an organization is not enough to guarantee rejection. Still, in practice, according to experts, a certain degree of bias does exist. Everything is checked on an individual basis, and even a formal membership in any organization is not considered sufficient to warrant a rejection. Officials must probe the person's actual actions as a member of a given organization rather than focus solely on formal membership. If, on the other hand, the person is at risk of torture, officials can resort to the use of other protection mechanisms, such as Temporary Asylum, which places such person under the protection of the Geneva Convention, and Russia, as its signatory, must protect the applicant from torture.

There is one other circumstance concerning citizens of Uzbekistan that identified in the course of the study. In situations where Russia refuses to extradite Uzbek nationals seeking asylum in Russia back to Uzbekistan, it may also deny their request for transfer to a third country that is willing to grant them asylum. This is done on the basis of a bilateral agreement between Russia and Uzbekistan.¹⁴ Furthermore, Uzbek nationals wishing to travel outside Russia need to have a special stamp in their passport. This situation means that Russia becomes a trap for political refugees from Uzbekistan.

Role played by religious organizations

There are no systemic support programs for refugees offered by religious organizations at the moment. But even if there were, their use for integration purposes is debatable. While on the one hand assistance provided by religious organizations seems like a good thing, e.g. the Russian Orthodox Church supports refugees by collecting and distributing clothing and organizing Russian language classes for migrants, which are also attended by refugees; the Union of Muslims of Saratov Region has organized various initiatives aimed at providing humanitarian assistance to refugees along with special events and cultural trips. At the moment, assistance provided by religious organizations tends to be localized. There are also positive examples of church-run programs for migrants in other CIS

¹⁴Bilateral agreement between Russia and Uzbekistan of Nov. 30, 2000 (http://ufms-ural.ru/storage/files/Soglashenie_mezhdu_Rossiej_i_Uzbekistanom_o_vzaimnyh_poezdkah_grazhdan.doc) requiring Russia to apply Uzbekistan's border-crossing regulations to Uzbek nationals exiting Russian territory, while Uzbekistan undertakes to do likewise. See also Marking the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Proceedings of the conference of non-governmental organizations, 10 December 2008 HRC Memorial M. - 2009. p. 24

countries, such as Ukraine, where IOM worked closely with the church upper hierarchy.¹⁵

Today this work represents a positive process. However, if we try to visualize how it may develop in the future, it is not difficult to imagine that there will be some sort of social contract whereby the state will be able to transfer to religious organizations some of its mandatory functions and responsibilities. If, however, it were to involve providing accommodating to asylum-seekers in a certain region, not all applicants would find it acceptable. As long as this kind assistance remains voluntary and auxiliary, used by each asylum-seeker at its own discretion and not included in the minimal list of services mandatorily provided by the state, it can be an acceptable and positive development. However, the minimum mandatory services must be provided to asylum-seekers from neutral sources. This is a mandatory function of the state and the one that each refugee or a Temporary Asylumholder must inevitably avail himself of.

Much also depends on the form of the service provision. If, for example, the provision is conditioned upon church or mosque prayer service attendance, then this service is not suitable for everyone and can be positioned only as optional. If, on the other hand, the service is provided by a neutral party, e.g. through a fund operated by a church or mosque, which will be engaged in the provision of assistance, it shall be more acceptable for most people, although in the end a lot will depend on the way the assistance is provided.

Role played by international organizations

International organizations typically have solid opportunities to develop and implement various refugee protection measures. However, international organizations, by virtue of their status, cannot be directly involved in protecting the rights of refugees in Russia, meaning that they have to act through a network of partner organizations, whose role is important, albeit limited. UNHCR works in Russia with various organizations: the Alliance of the Heads of Russia's Regional Media Outlets (ARS Press); Children's Fund of North Ossetia-Alania; Civic Assistance Committee; Danish Refugee Council; Faith, Hope, Love; Russian Cinematographers Guild; Human Rights Institute; Health & Life Fund; Human Rights Center Memorial; Foundation Nizam; St. Petersburg Center for International Cooperation of the

¹⁵Conference "Involvement of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Combating Trafficking in Human Beings" Mar. 1, 2006. http://pravoslavnye.org.ua/2006/03/01032006_kiev_sostoyalas_konferentsiya_uchastie_ukrainskoy_pравoslavnoy_tserkvi_v_protivodeystvii_torgovli_lyudmi/

Red Cross; St. Petersburg branch of the Russian Red Cross; Russian Justice Initiative; and Vesta.

Role played by migrant communities

Experts believe that work through migrant communities and NGOs to deliver assistance to refugees and migrants, can be quite effective. They also note that the authority exercised by the elders in the countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia is often much greater than that of any public authority. Nevertheless, the work with refugees that is currently being carried out by communities is not systemic. The fact that migrant-based diasporas took a relatively long time to develop explains their potential and opportunities for consolidation¹⁶ as a means of solving such problems as protection of refugees in Russia. However, as is the case with all recently arrived migrants, they are hampered by their overall focus on working with their long-time members and dedication to cultural and educational work, rather than on the creation of integration and adaptation services, which are largely viewed by migrant communities as an opportunity to make extra money on their compatriots. Only a small number of migrant communities have evolved toward the establishment under their auspices of NGOs specializing in the provision of free assistance to migrants, including refugees.

Role played by NGOs

Experts repeatedly said that FMS can potentially assign some of its functions to NGOs, which are already doing a good job in helping refugees (e.g. Civic Assistance, Memorial, etc.).

A list of such functions may include integration and adaptation of refugees:

- special social work with refugee children (educational and adaptation programs) and refugee women (retraining and further trainings and adaptation programs);
- legal assistance to refugees, whose rights have been violated (including by police and in case of violence committed on racial or religious grounds, including the involvement of a lawyer to represent their interests during legal proceedings and in court, and work in prisons);
- social assistance to refugees (collecting clothing, distribution of food packages, providing

¹⁶For example, experts representing NGOs specializing in supporting Tajik migrants interviewed during the study cited numerous facts of consolidation of Tajik migrants in solving socially significant problems in their home country (repairing the roof of a school, helping a particularly needy family at home, etc.).

assistance to victims of violence, including in shelters and with the use of public financing)¹⁷;

- awareness campaigns (including in the human rights area);
- information campaigns (including for decision-makers, law enforcements officials, school personnel, politicians and bureaucrats. see Sec. 3.3), and others.

It should be noted separately that NGOs already work with a very difficult in terms of integration category of refugee children, and are successful at engaging volunteers in this work.¹⁸

NGO activities can be integrated into support programs for both refugees and migrants residing in Russia, which is a common practice in both Russia and other countries and the one that has proven its effectiveness and efficiency.

That said, some preparatory work is needed here to ensure that all NGOs involved in supporting asylum-seekers meet the minimum standards for the provision of such services. After all, organizations like Civic Assistance, which are known for provision of refugee-related services of the highest standard, are only active in some regions. The responsibility for monitoring compliance by NGOs with the minimum standards established by the state and their performance of the functions assigned to them must lie with the government. This work, which is already being successfully carried out in some places, may yet become a common practice in the future.

FMS' internal problems

Although the study has shown that FMS sometimes experiences shortages of technical personnel such as translators of rare languages, this problem can be solved not through additional personnel, but through redistribution of the budget resources and solution of bureaucratic issues.

The document acceptance procedure can be made more effective and less traumatic for applicants. According to the experts surveyed, FMS' document management process is inadequate, obsolete and inefficient, while its employees will benefit from workplace rotation needed to enhance the diversity of their activities and deal with routine.

Those of FMS employees who are responsible for reception duties tend to be very tired mentally. There is no rotation. There are very serious elements, people tend to ignore. Everything needs to be hand written and filled in with a pen by reception employees, including questionnaires, surveys,

¹⁷ An excellent example of such activities is the work of the state public institution Moscow social rehabilitation center for minors Altufievo. Visit their official site at <http://priyaltufevo.ru/http://priyaltufevo.ru/>

¹⁸ See the Moscow Center for Adaptation of Refugee Children at <http://refugee.ru/tsentr-daptatsii/http://refugee.ru/tsentr-adaptatsii/>. A similar center also exists in St. Petersburg.

meaning that while listening to very similar stories day after day and write, write, write. This kind of routine affects one's psyche, at least judging by frequent inappropriate expressions and aggressive, sometimes very aggressive, attitudes. I reckon if the whole thing was somehow simplified, and if they could do everything on the computer, life would be easier for everyone.

From an expert interview, Moscow

Experts talked about the observed instances of migrant phobia experienced by the FMS personnel and the need to take preventive action and limit its spread to the rest of the FMS staff.

I am acting on behalf of refugees and experience tension and hostile atmosphere when I come to represent the interests of these persons and reproach from the receiving party we address. It does exist, and we must not keep quiet about it. I doubt anyone thinks of Russian citizens at that moment, instead a strong element of migrant phobia prevails. I feel it myself. It is something that people in this job do experience, and it's getting worse with each passing day.

From an interview with a lawyer specializing in refugee work, Moscow

Although many of the surveyed experts have been dealing with migration problems since the 1990's, when the Migration Service was a civic organization, then functioned as part the Ministry of Interior and now is civic again, very few have registered any serious change in either its modus operandi or treatment of applicants. That said, the organization's more open information policy, which it has been pursuing in recent years, and its engagement with journalists and migration experts largely remain in the shadow and were noted only by a limited number of experts surveyed. Experts have compared FMS' current work with refugees to its handling of Russian citizens who fled the Chechen Republic, with whom “nobody wished to deal”. And although FMS is an entirely modernized entity now, all its activities are based on the assumption that the majority of the applicants will never be granted Refugee Status, while those who have been granted Refugee Status or Temporary Asylum cannot exercise their legal rights or their status may be revoked.

It is like playing some kind of game. We come and we go, after being rejected. Everybody knows the outcome in advance. The grounds for refusal are never given. We read the ruling, hoping to the very end it's in our favor. In the end: rejection. It's also quite common for the bulk of the ruling text to be in favor of a positive outcome, only to end in rejection after an apparent change of heart. In this case, they don't even bother to replace the text with a new one, opting instead to change the ending only. Nor do they bother to verify the circumstances and arguments produced by the applicant. Instead, they just copy the wording from one final ruling and insert it into another, changing only the name of the applicant. If you read the last 50 court rulings, you will stop reading at the twentieth decision, knowing what will follow.

With the existing procedure, which makes integration of refugees or foreign nationals Temporary Asylum holders all but impossible, the number of unresolved problems is simply overwhelming. In order to apply for citizenship, a refugee must present an official document from his employer, but he cannot get an official job without an official registration at the place of residence. This vicious circle can be broken if refugees were allowed to register as unemployed with a job center. In this case, they would get a certificate from the job center confirming their entitlement to unemployment benefits, which can then be presented to the migration authorities as proof of income. This circumstance is expected to be taken into account during the drafting of amendments to the existing legislation.

Shady practices related to asylum

The study has revealed the following illicit schemes aimed at organizing and aiding shady practices related to asylum:

- people smugglers, as a result of whose activities refugees, who originally intended to travel illegally to another country remain in Russia;
- intermediaries, trading Russian visas, thereby creating an attractive in terms of costs and waiting time alternative for refugees facing the choice of the country of destination;
- illegal intermediaries, who charge people for help in obtaining Refugee Status, Temporary Asylum or Russian citizenship.

The study has revealed a specific reason for the arrival in Russia of a large number of refugees, the majority of whom are transiting: a Russian visa is cheaper than visas to most other countries, and can purchase a tourist visa for Russia from an intermediary.

I heard from our customers and visitors that it is easier to get a visa for Russia. The reasons for this are unclear: it is either due to lower cost or availability of middlemen option for money.

From an expert interview, Moscow

There is also the business of illicit smuggling firms that make money by deceiving their customers, and as a result of whose activities many transiting refugees end up being stuck in Russia for many years.

Many said they thought they were somewhere in Europe, perhaps in Stockholm or another city, after being deceived by smugglers.

From an expert interview, Moscow

Interviewed respondents and experts acknowledged the existence of informal channels that allow people to obtain Refugee Status or Temporary Asylum, or even Russian citizenship.

I hear about it from people... especially when people refuse legal assistance, which is now common. People come in and say, "we were told not to go with you," which means they are encouraged to submit documents on their own; or, "the official told me he can help," which means they were advised by someone not to use the services of lawyers in exchange for his assistance in obtaining the status, for which, obviously, they need to pay. I don't know how to explain it... But we keep hearing about it. Yes, we hear about it from people directly, and there's even a pricelist.

From an expert interview, Moscow

Since all evidence of corruption revealed during the study was indirect, we can only conclude that the current situation is the expected consequence of the limited number of applicants who may eventually qualify for Refugee Status or Temporary Asylum. Shortage begets profiteering.

2.2. Evaluation of access to legal integration for recognized refugees in Russia

Documents play a key role in the refugee integration process. The legal framework for obtaining these documents must be clearly written.

The study has exposed the need for changes in the regulations to be coordinated with the framework legislation. Interaction between agencies can even be established with the help of an explanatory letter, which would eliminate all questions and misunderstandings, although a change in the law would even be better and more reliable. Unfortunately, it is a long overdue problem that has been left neglected for too long.

The most typical and striking example of coordination breakdown within FMS is a situation, described by experts, where a person coming to file an asylum application ends up being apprehended by migrations officials summoned by the FMS staff and then taken to court for a decision on his possible expulsion.

one gets an impression that people do not even want to mention this problem anymore. It is almost uncouth to mention it. At least, that is my impression. Whenever you try to ask question, you get no answers in response.

The state must think about the wellbeing of citizens living on its territory, including thousands of people staying here. It amazes me when I see when the state is trying to ignore the person who has been living on Russian territory already for 20 years. If the state thinks how to improve things, then it should definitely find out who these people are and why they are here in order to take certain actions. Today we have a situation where, on the one hand, the whole thing is uncontrollable, while on the other, the people who are willing to do things, who obtain Refugee Status and who want to work are not allowed to do that. They could also do something for the benefit of this country, but they are not given any opportunity to work legally. If they were allowed an opportunity to work, they could bring a lot of good for the country.

From an expert interview, Moscow

Interviewed experts are united in their opinion that the solution to the current situation depends less on the law and more on its implementation. Unfortunately, most of the current problems that occur when dealing with foreigners have less to do with the country's laws and more with personnel shortages and performance of some employees. It is important to make a clear distinction here. On the other hand, it is necessary to improve legal framework, while on the other, to regularly train and professionally develop the staff, in order to improve the performance of the government agencies working with refugees..

Although many of the proposed amendments to the law on refugees, according to the experts polled, are positive, the experts were allowed to comment on its substance, but the draft law was not subject of broad expert and public discussion. Also, many of the positive and useful things contained in the last version of the document published in December 2013 eventually disappeared during the subsequent redrafting. Thus, the well-balanced and highly detailed version of the law discussed by experts in late 2013 which contained a detailed description of the procedures: the authority of various state bodies, the duration of each step of the procedure, all the rights and responsibilities of all the parties involved. The 2014 version lost many of the details that constitute the essence of the procedure and were designed to simplify it. The most positive aspect noted by experts is that the procedure becomes simpler due to the use of a one-for-all approach: there will be no preliminary review, only the main adjudication of the application, and it will not be split into the Refugee Status and Temporary Asylum application adjudication procedures. Instead, it will be done within a single procedure.

The new procedure makes everything simpler, and allows applicants to get the final decision sooner. Experts believe, however, that in real life the process will not be as good as it looks on paper. Today the percentage of positive decisions is very low and the situation is unlikely to change any time soon. Applicants, who deserved protection but were rejected could stay in the legal procedure for a long time, whereas now they will lose this opportunity. That, though, is less of a question of law and more of its implementation.

2.3. Assessment of access to social integration for recognized refugees in Russia

In accordance with the Federal Law "On Refugees," persons recognized as refugees have the same rights to social protection, including social security, as citizens of the Russian Federation. Unlike other categories of foreign nationals, refugees are entitled to medical and pharmaceutical care to the same extent and under the same conditions as the nationals of Russia. In addition, similarly to Russian nationals, refugees are entitled to assistance in enrolling for vocational training.

Difficulties with exiting and entering Russia

Refugees entering and exiting the Russian Federation are issued with a travel document with an embedded chip containing data needed for their identification abroad. This document is intended to increase refugees' mobility and simplify their integration, including in another country, by allowing them to study, receive treatment, conduct business, etc. abroad. Despite all the aforementioned social integration opportunities, the study has revealed serious real life difficulties experienced by refugees and persons who have been granted Temporary Asylum.

For example, it is difficult to travel to another country with this document because police are not familiar with it. In the end, you have to wait for them to make a phone call to check with their superiors, and only then they let you through. We always have to wait to confirm that we can travel abroad and return. The same is true for visas. In order to get one, your document needs to be valid for at least 6 months, whereas the document itself is renewed every year, with the renewal procedure lasting 1 month. The international passport is issued based on the refugee's ID card, and it takes 3 months to renew it. When it's valid for less than 6 months, you won't get a visa. To make things worse, embassies of other countries are also not familiar with that document, including in Asia, but also in Western and Eastern Europe.

From an interview with a refugee, Moscow

Difficulties experienced by large families

It is very difficult for refugee families with many children to obtain social benefits that are

guaranteed in Russia to mothers with many children.

So, for example, the Moscow Department of Social Protection takes the view that government benefits to families with children in the Russian Federation are provided on the basis of the Federal Law of May 19, 1995 No. 81 "On State Benefits for Citizens with Children." Article 1 of this law stipulates that it also applies to refugees.

Despite this, refugee families regularly experience difficulties.

We have a written reply from a school saying that our child will receive a school meal only when some other child fails to show up, because ostensibly we don't have a certificate of mother of many children, and without it they cannot put the child on the list of children entitled to free meals. This is an official letter sent to a refugee family by one school in Moscow. We then went on to appeal against the decision to deny us the right to receive this certificate, which, incidentally, was taken also on the ground that we didn't have a residence certificate.

From an interview with a lawyer specializing in refugee work, Moscow

The rulings of the Constitutional Court determining the fact of residence, can be utilized in resolving these situations as well. However, the same procedure must be undertaken each time, which makes it an arduous task, hampered by a lengthy procedure, high costs of the lawyers and limited number of pro bono legal representatives. As for this particular case, even if you explain the situation to the school officials, the child will still not be included in the list of pupils entitled to free meals without the state certificate of mother of many children.

Although the procedure for the provision of social opportunities is stipulated in the Law on Refugees, it is absent from other regulations, such as the Law on Employment. Thus, for example, the provision of social assistance is subject to regional laws of the constituent territories of the Russian Federation. In Moscow, the requirement for the provision of social assistance includes proof of residence, meaning that the rights of refugees are not implicitly included. A similar situation exists in the Moscow region and other regions of Russia. Officials, in response to requests from lawyers working with refugees, take the view that they are not entitled to interpret the federal law "On Refugees," and therefore must provide social support services only to those with proof of residence endorsed by the local registration authority (i.e. a residence certificate). Since refugees are typically not registered at their place of residence, they are not legally entitled, from the point of view of social welfare agencies, to municipal benefits or compensations.

In this situation, the need for a change of law is clear, and experts have high hopes for the new law on refugees that is currently being drafted.

It is no use, all efforts are futile. We struggled so much with these cases on social assistance and recognition of the status of unemployed.

From an interview with a lawyer specializing in refugee work, Moscow

In the current situation of uncertainty, the only solution is for agencies to coordinate their actions and enter into special written arrangements with each other, as permitted by law.

Admission to colleges and universities

Even when a foreign national is a holder of Refugee Status and has taken the Unified State Exam on Russian territory, it is not easy for him to gain access to government-funded places in Russian higher education institutions (HEI). Interviewed legal experts said that officials' replies to their formal requests contain no definitive answer to the question of whether refugees can apply for government-funded places in HEIs. And although the Ministry of Education and Science issued additional clarifications regarding refugees' right to take such places, it is very difficult to achieve in real life.

When admitting refugees or their children to HEIs, officials often cite the Rules Governing the Admission of Citizens to Educational Institutions of Higher Vocational Education, arguing that the law establishes no additional requirements for the allocation to foreign nationals and stateless persons of government-funded places in Russian HEIs on a competitive basis in line with the all other Russian citizens.

According to the aforementioned interpretation, the children of a recognized refugee, whether with or without foreign citizenship, who have graduated from a general education institution in Russia are entitled to enroll in an HEI under the conditions set forth in the Rules Governing the Admission of Citizens to Educational Institutions of Higher Vocational Education, approved by the Ministry of Education and Science decree of December 28, 2011 No. 2895.¹⁹

¹⁹ Rules Governing the Admission of Citizens to Educational Institutions of Higher Vocational Education
Russian Gazeta 27 January 2012 Federal issue No. 5690 <http://www.rg.ru/2012/01/27/poryadok-dok.html>

The Rules set out the procedure for the admission of foreign nationals and stateless persons applying for government-funded places at HEIs (subpar. 1 of par. 1 of the Rules). The Rules Governing the Admission of Foreign Nationals are incorporated into the annual admission rules as a separate section (subpart 3 of par. 1 of the Rules). Each HEI must draft and approve its own annual admission rules to the extent not inconsistent with the laws of the Russian Federation, the admission procedure established by the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia, and the admission rules established by the HEI founder and enshrined in its Charter (subpar 2 of par. 24 of the Rules). Admission of foreign nationals to HEIs for bachelor's, associate's, and master's programs must be made in accordance with the procedure established by the Russian Ministry of Education and Science as well as international treaties and intergovernmental agreements of the Russian Federation through the allocation of government-funded spaces (including within the quota set by the Government of the Russian Federation) and under the contracts regulating the payment of tuition fees by individuals and (or) legal entities (par. 82 of the Rules).

Allocation of government-funded spaces to foreign nationals at HEIs is carried out as follows (par. 83 of the Rules):

83.1. Within the quota set by the Government of the Russian Federation and in accordance with the RF Government decree dated August 25, 2008 No. 638 "On co-operation with foreign countries in the field of education"²⁰ – at federal state educational institutions of higher vocational education by the assignment of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation.

83.2. In accordance with the Agreement on Granting Equal Rights to Citizens of States Parties to the Treaty on the Deepening of Integration in Economic and Humanitarian Fields of March 29, 1996 Seeking Admission to Educational Institutions, approved by the RF Government decree dated June 22, 1999 No. 662;²¹ the Agreement on Co-operation in the Field of Education, Tashkent, 15 May 1992;²² the Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of Georgia on Co-operation in the Field of Culture, Science and Education, approved by RF

²⁰ Corpus of Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation, 2008, No. 35, p. 4034; 2010, No. 38, p. 4825

²¹ Corpus of Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation, 1999, No. 27, p. 3364

²² Bulletin of international agreements, 1994, No. 6, p. 9

Government decree dated February 2, 1994 No. 43;²³; and other international treaties of the Russian Federation – at the public HEIs.

83.3. On the basis of a certificate of participation in the State Program on Rendering of Assistance to Voluntary Repatriation to the Russian Federation of Compatriots Living Abroad who have become participants of the State Program on Rendering of Assistance to Voluntary Repatriation to the Russian Federation of Compatriots Living Abroad, approved by the Presidential decree of 22 June 2006 No. 637²⁴ – at the state and municipal educational institutions of higher vocational education.

Subparagraph d) of paragraph 1 of Article 12 of the Federal Law of 31 May 2002 No. 62 "On Citizenship of the Russian Federation" stipulates that a child acquires the citizenship of the Russian Federation if, at the time of the child's birth, both of his parents, or his single parent, residing on the territory of the Russian Federation are/is foreign national(s) or stateless person(s), provided that the child was born on the territory of the Russian Federation and the state whose nationality his parents or single parent hold/s refuses to grant its citizenship to the child. These are the conditions under which refugee children born on the territory of the Russian Federation are entitled to apply for government-funded places at HEIs on a competitive basis on the grounds set forth in the Rules for Russian citizens.

At the same time, *there is also a procedure for admission of refugees and refugee children to HEIs*. Pursuant to subparagraph 11 of paragraph 1 of Article 8 of the Federal Law of 19 February 1993 No. 4528-1 "On Refugees," persons who have been granted Refugee Status and the accompanying members of their families are entitled to receive assistance in the placement of the children of the persons who have been granted Refugee Status at state or municipal pre-school and educational institutions, educational institutions of elementary vocational education, as well as in their transfer to educational institutions of secondary *and higher vocational education, on equal terms with the citizens of the Russian Federation*, in accordance with the said Federal Law, other federal laws and regulations of the Russian Federation, the laws and regulations of the constituent territories of the Russian Federation, except as otherwise provided for by international treaties Russian Federation is a party to.

Pursuant to subparagraph 2 of paragraph 8 of Article 17 of the Law on Refugees, the federal

²³ Collected Acts of the President and the Government of the Russian Federation, 1994, No. 6, p. 465

²⁴ Corpus of Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation, 2006, No. 26, p. 2820; 2009, No. 11, p. 1278; No. 27, p. 3341; 2010, No. 3, p. 275

executive body responsible for drafting and implementation of public policy and legal regulations in the field of education must provide in the prescribed manner to the federal executive body authorized to exercise control and supervision in the field of migration and to its territorial bodies the information on the existing possibilities for, and conditions of, their transfer to the institutions of higher education.

The responsibility for the provision of assistance in receiving vocational training on equal terms with the citizens of the Russian Federation to persons who have been granted Refugee Status in Russia, as guaranteed by the Law on Refugees, rests with the Federal Executive Authority for Labor and Social Development (subpar. 1 of par. 7 of Art. 17 of the Law on Refugees).

Therefore, refugees are entitled to apply for government-funded places at HEIs. Yet, in order to gain access to such education, it is often necessary for them to defend their rights with the help of professional lawyers. Experts mentioned that refugees' applications for government-funded places are frequently not accepted without an explanation of the motifs by the Admission Boards. Instead, they are advised to apply for non-scholarship spots. In response to formal requests from lawyers, such institution officials send replies containing no real answer.

Their applications for government-funded places are not accepted from the refugees. We have faced such situations numerously. We tried to call the Admission Board to find out why, but they could not explain. They said, "No, but they are welcome to apply for regular spots." HEIs try to avoid conversations on this topic in order to refrain from explanations. We then wrote requests regarding specific persons, but once again got no definitive answers. There is a difficulty here. Plus, not only refugees' applications are not accepted, but also those of all foreigners. Whenever they see a foreigner, they just turn them away.

From an interview with a lawyer specializing in refugee work, Moscow

Pension benefits

Proving eligibility for pension benefits, including disability pension, is also a tough task for any refugee. By law, a foreign national with Refugee Status is allowed to receive a disability benefit, as confirmed to legal practitioners by the Ministry of Health. In practice, once again, the process is fraught with difficulties.

As I see it, the most important thing is to have desire and understanding of the problem. This is because many simply do not know that they can apply and what they will get. Awareness-building campaigns are needed here. If they do apply, I see no problem. If they are registered as disabled and really suffer, then they need to apply for it and file documents, although here might be a problem. You

see, many of them do not know and do not understand what they need to do. The legalization process, which begins from the moment you're granted your ID or Refugee Status, is very long. And then, they are so used to being rebuffed all the time that they, especially those who are suffering, just do not want to go through it again. And if we are talking about older people, they tend to get help from their children.

Pursuant to paragraph 3 of Article 2 of the Federal Law of Dec. 17, 2001 No. 173-FL "On Labor Pensions in the Russian Federation" and paragraph 1 of Article 3 of the Federal Law of Dec. 15, 2001 No. 166-FL "On State Pensions in the Russian Federation," foreign citizens and stateless persons permanently residing in the Russian Federation are entitled to a pension on equal terms with the citizens of the Russian Federation, except as otherwise provided by federal law or international treaty signed by the Russian Federation. Pursuant to subparagraph 10 of paragraph 1 of Article 8 of the Federal Law of Feb. 19, 1993 No. 4528-1 "On Refugees," persons who have been granted Refugee Status and their accompanying family members are entitled to the same rights to social protection, including social security, as citizens of the Russian Federation, in accordance with the said Federal Law, other federal laws and regulations of the Russian Federation, the laws and regulations of the constituent territories of the Russian Federation, except as otherwise provided for by the legislation of the Russian Federation and international treaties of the Russian Federation.

According to the Federal Law "On Refugees," refugees' stay in the Russian Federation can only be temporary (sub-paragraphs 3 and 4 of paragraph 1 of Article 1 of the said Law), since, pursuant to paragraph 9 of Article 7 of the said Law, a person is recognized as a refugee for a period of up to three years. Should the circumstances on the basis of which the Refugee Status was granted in the country whose nationality the refugee holds remain unchanged, the duration of such Refugee Status is extended. Therefore, refugees continue to reserve all the rights granted to them until the expiration of their Refugee Status, in particular the right to social protection, including social security, provided to them on equal terms with the citizens of the Russian Federation.

The right to compulsory health insurance

The procedure allowing refugees to register with the community clinics has been simplified. However, the right to compulsory health insurance of persons whose Refugee Status applications are still under review remains restricted.

The issue of health care for refugees was very difficult, but was eventually successfully resolved, including, which is particularly important, for persons with Temporary Asylum.

We went to court, and the Supreme Court ruled that the matter was being looked into. The Supreme Court, contrary to its typical practice, kept delaying its decision regarding the date of the hearing. Besides us, the hearing was attended by other concerned parties, including the Federal Migration Service, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, and the Federal Compulsory Medical Insurance Fund. We felt that the Ministry of Health was making changes to the regulation that stipulated that the right to compulsory insurance be guaranteed to persons covered by the Law on Refugees. At that time, refugees had that right, while persons with Temporary Asylum did not. I think that delay was due to the changes being made to the document. In the end, the Supreme Court ruled neither in our favor nor anyone else's because the issue was already settled. But it was not settled definitively yet, because for it to become law the document had to be registered and published. I remember waiting for that moment, wondering what we're going to do if it does not get published. Most probable, we'd have appealed. But it was published.

From an interview with a lawyer specializing in refugee work, Moscow

Temporary Asylumholders are entitled to compulsory health insurance (CHI), albeit not from the moment they submit their application but from the date they are granted this status. Refugees, on the other hand, are entitled to CHI from the moment they submit their Refugee Status application.

When visiting community hospitals, they do get registered and provided with services. And although they occasionally get asked for proof of residence, the problem is usually solved when the chief doctor gets involved – they just cannot deny people who have valid health insurance.

From an interview with a lawyer specializing in refugee work, Moscow

2.4. Assessment of access to economic integration for recognized refugees in Russia

A key prerequisite for successful economic integration of refugees into the host society is the existence of employment opportunities (if they are able to work) or adequate social security (if they are incapacitated).

Most employers tend to be unaware of their right to employ refugees without obtaining a permit to engage foreign labor; but even when they do, this is never official employment. Unfortunately, job centers do not do much to inform employers of that right, even though they could, build the employers' awareness during for example job fairs. In fact, job fairs present excellent

outreach and awareness-building opportunities that are just ignored. Equally unsatisfactory is the work in this area that is carried out by company managers. As a rule, refugees at first try to find a job on their own prior to contacting the job center, which provides only information-based services, i.e. offers several job referrals. If a refugee cannot find a job, the job center must register him as unemployed, arrange for the payment of unemployment benefits to him, and continue to assist him with finding a job. Although the Law on Refugees grants refugees the same rights to work as to the citizens of the Russian Federation, it is just not possible for them to take advantage of that right when dealing with government agencies. The job center requires refugees to provide residency registration as required by the law on employment, which stipulates that persons must be registered unemployed at the place of their residence. However, refugees cannot legally register at the place of their residence given their status as persons temporarily residing on the territory of the Russian Federation, which allowsthem to obtain only temporary registration at the place of their stay. There is clearly a conflict of laws here, when the Law on Employment is at odds with the Law on Refugees on key provisions. Of course, in light of its international commitments, Russia should adopt appropriate regulations that will ensure enforcement of the law and make sure that refugees are recognized as unemployed at the place of their stay. Interviewed legal experts said that they often have to take such cases to court.

The courts reject our claims, arguing that a refugee must have a residence registration in order to be registered as unemployed. They just turn a blind eye on this very obvious problem. We appealed to the Constitutional Court and it ruled in November 2013 that registration at the place of residence was not mandatory. While the place of the person's registration can be established as a legal fact in court, this means that you must first go to the job center to get a rejection letter and then go to court to prove that the refugee is residing exactly where he is residing. Now imagine a situation where people are forced to remain on the territory of Russia and do not have their own dwelling. In this case, the situation becomes very difficult.

From an interview with a lawyer specializing in refugee work, Moscow

In its November 2013 ruling, the Constitutional Court pointed out that the fact of residence can be established, meaning that it is necessary to prove that the refugee is residing at a specific address. However, many of them do not have a residence registration because landlords refuse to register them when they lease their property to them. Experts mentioned times when the fact of residence could be proven on the basis of testimonial evidence, which was regarded as positive proof. Over time, all these judgments were deemed to be illegal and all passports issued on the basis of such evidence were

revoked. After that, the Supreme Court issued a special directive regarding the establishment of the fact of residence, which is now taken very seriously by all courts. Today it is documents, rather than the testimony of two individuals, that are accepted as evidence. However, when a person comes to court, he may not have a residence registration. Although the court first tries to establish why a residence registration is missing, it understands that this problem is not unique, given that landlords are often reluctant to register tenants. The system in place is designed in such a way as to make it impossible for refugees to be recognized as unemployed.

According to the Federal Law "On Refugees," persons with Refugee Status are entitled to accept paid jobs or engage in business. However, the issue of refugee employment is not fully addressed in the Russian legislation. As a general rule, foreign nationals wishing to find employment on the territory of the Russian Federation are required to have a work permit. The law provides for no exemption to that rule for foreign nationals with Refugee Status. This conflict of laws impedes the economic integration of refugees.

With a view to resolving the conflict between the provisions of the Federal Law "On Refugees" and Federal Law "On Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the Russian Federation," the Government of the Russian Federation has submitted to the State Duma of the Russian Federation a draft federal law titled "On Amendments to Article 13 of the Federal Law 'On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the Russian Federation'," prepared by the Federal Migration Service. The bill proposes to make it unnecessary for foreign nationals who have been granted Refugee Status or Temporary Asylum to obtain a work permit in order to be employed in Russia.

The passage of this bill will make it easier for foreign nationals who have been granted Refugee Status or Temporary Asylum to find legal employment and will accelerate their social integration in Russia. Unfortunately, the bill has not been passed yet, and not all experts are optimistic about its passage or entry into force.

3. Outlook

3.1. Countries likely to contribute to the flow of refugees to Russia

The task of predicting which countries are likely to contribute to the flow of refugee to Russia in the coming years is very difficult. It often happens that even in stable countries the situation may change so much that its residents will be forced to change their plans and daily routine in order to flee abroad en mass. Examples of such developments are the recent events in Georgia, Syria and Ukraine.

Many potential conflicts in the CIS countries that were "frozen" rather than resolved back in the days of the USSR may become "hot" again both as a result of changing relationships between the CIS countries and through active involvement of external to the CIS forces.

The changing nature of conflicts around the world has led to an endless stream of moving migrants, while human rights violations, armed conflicts, gender persecution, weak economic and social development and inadequate involvement of government agencies in overcoming these problems continue to give rise to forced migration.

According to the interviewed experts, Russia is well prepared for a sudden influx of refugees.

The existing and new laws contain a separate procedure that can be enacted in the event of a mass and unexpected arrival of refugees: the government lets everyone in and initiates a special procedure, the so-called temporary protection measure, which is very different from either Temporary Asylum or Refugee Status. In a situation like this, the government will adopt a special resolution and implement special procedures.

From an expert interview, Moscow

The experience of the 2008 Russo-Georgian crisis provides some examples of such practices.

When Ossetia experienced a similar situation relating to a mass exodus of refugees, there was no specific government resolution authorizing the granting of temporary protection. Instead, employees of various government agencies in the Russian regions were sent to North Ossetia-Alania to help with the issuance of Temporary Asylum. In other words, whenever there is a crisis, the government can send the required personnel from different regions to the places of mass concentration of refugees in need of protection procedure.

From an expert interview, Moscow

Should the country experience an influx of hundreds of thousands of people, all of them will be allowed in and granted Temporary Asylum for the duration of the conflict, say, for one year. One year later, the government will assess the situation to see how things are. For a situation like this, hiring additional personnel is not necessary, instead a contingency plan is required to be in place. One part of such plan

could involve setting up refugee camps jointly with the Ministry of Emergencies, which, in turn, involves conducting joint training activities, especially at the border areas. Such trainings usually last three days and include setting up a tent camp, organizing food preparation and provision of basic services.

From an expert interview, Moscow

3.2. Prospects for improving Russia's asylum legislation

FMS has developed a draft law "On asylum in the Russian Federation." It was done after the practice of implementation of the Federal Law "On Refugees" showed that it was necessary not only to elaborate certain provisions of the law but also to significantly alter them.

The new draft law "On Asylum in the Russian Federation" is focused on the implementation of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, to which Russia is a signatory. It also takes into account the recommendations of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The draft law meets all the key parameters specified in these international instruments.

The Draft Federal Law "On asylum in the Russian Federation" was prepared in accordance with paragraph 5 of the Action Plan for implementation in the course of 2012-2015 (1st phase) of the implementation of the Concept of the State Migration Policy of the Russian Federation by 2025.

One important novelty contained in the draft law is that it defines the types of asylum granted in Russia and establishes clear criteria for granting of Refugee Status and Temporary Asylum.

The draft law provides for the granting of four types of asylum:

Refugee Status;

Temporary Asylum;

political asylum;

temporary protection.

It establishes that in the future all asylum applications must come from persons located inside Russia only, meaning that all foreign nationals wishing to apply for asylum must first come to Russia and then submit their applications to the territorial body of the FMS. The new requirement is designed to address the problem of the impossibility of guaranteeing international protection to applicants located outside Russia, as well as the challenges associated with verifying the accuracy of the

information provided in support of the applications submitted by applicants located on the territory of a third country.

The draft law provides for the combining of the procedures for Refugee Status and Temporary Asylum, which will reduce the time needed to determine the legal status of the asylum-seeker by an average of three months.

Although the draft law does not specify the duration of Refugee Status, it establishes the obligation of refugees to re-register at least once every six months in order to verify the existence of the grounds for the loss or withdrawal of Refugee Status.

The category of persons who may be eligible for political asylum, the criteria they must comply with, and the procedure for granting political asylum are determined by the President of the Russian Federation. The Government of the Russian Federation is responsible for establishing the procedure for granting and withdrawal of temporary protection. Therefore, these decisions will be taken at the highest level.

Temporary protection, according to the draft, will be given to foreign nationals in the event of their emergency mass arrival on the territory of the Russian Federation as a result of internal or international armed conflict, large-scale human rights violations, generalized violence or events seriously disturbing public order in the country of their nationality or former habitual residence.

If, after the expiry of the term of temporary protection, the foreign national is unable to return to his country, or has not been accepted by a safe third country, his case will be examined on an individual basis in order to determine if he qualifies for asylum in Russia.

The draft law provides for the creation of temporary accommodation centers operated by FMS for persons who have been granted Refugee Status or Temporary Asylum in Russia and the accompanying members of their families.

The law will define the rights and obligations of foreign nationals depending on the type of asylum granted, as well as the procedure for, and conditions of, reunification of refugees or persons granted Temporary Asylum with the members of their families who arrived in Russia.

According to interviewed experts, the Citizenship Directorate, whose Asylum Section was responsible for the drafting of the new law, employs highly qualified specialists who have inside knowledge of the situation and who work, study and verify particular refugee cases on a daily basis.

Their expertise is sufficient to prepare good and important changes. However, it often happens that the draft gets subsequently modified based on some opaque from the public's perspective procedures and considerations, resulting in a very different final version of the document. A good example of such approach is the draft of the law, the modifications to which were not made based on expert opinions and recommendations.

So far the public debate of the draft has been limited to a formal procedure, where the draft is publically available on the FMS website for two months to generate feedback. However, given how few people are aware of it, there is hardly any public debate on the issue. And although independent experts are able to contribute their suggestions, it is mostly a one-way process. The draft does not become subject of an open discussion within a working group or at expert meetings, although, according to experts, it would have been the right, positive and useful approach to follow. Such a working group could be formed from among the members of the drafting team. However, as long as this is not the case, all final decisions will continue to be taken under opaque conditions.

Today there exists a viable and promising procedure involving a review of a new piece of legislation for possible presence of corruption elements by the experts of the Ministry of Justice. . Following such review, experts issue recommendations to the authors of the legislation, who, in turn, must prepare formal replies, specifying which of their suggestions will be taken into considerations and in what form. While this is hardly a proper discussion, it is a very promising element of such procedure.

Promoting and expanding a dialogue between Russia's decision makers, its expert migration community and the public is very important not only for the task of addressing the problems of asylum but also for the drafting and amending legislation in general. It is a matter of state's engagement with the civil society and the public and about receiving feedback. There are many positive examples of community-based feedback, including abroad, and it seems appropriate to promote this practice in Russia. And although today it exists only in a minimal and raw form, experts see the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the proposed law in advance and submit comments as a step in the right direction. If, on the other hand, we adopt an integrated approach, we can modernize our legislation drafting mechanism and make it more effective.

3.3. Information campaigns

The rhetoric of refugees is almost completely absent in the mass media. This situation makes the task of disseminating information on the rights of refugees very difficult, thereby reducing the level of public awareness of the problems faced by them. The public, law enforcement and government institutions are poorly informed about the daily violations of the rights of refugees. As a rule, issues related to refugees are only reported when they become newsworthy, as in the recent case involving Edward Snowden.²⁵ Today the prospect of having accurate and up-to-date information collected in the course of continuous monitoring and constant study of problems of the refugees remains confined to the future. But even if there were more news and information on this topic, it is overoptimistic to expect the media to quickly change its approach to the coverage of refugees.

Printed brochures and dissemination of information through the media outlets traditionally used in mass information campaigns for campaigns targeting decision makers and those who can provide services to refugees is unlikely to be effective, given that we are dealing with a very different target audience here.

For social workers, such information campaigns can be conducted through the involvement of training and advanced training centers, where, according to the curriculum, the reception staff would be required to undergo refresher training. According to experts, such practice already exists. Thus, St. Petersburg IOM organizes special training sessions for the city's welfare services, which include informative lectures on migrants, migration law, victims of human trafficking and domestic violence.

Such campaigns first and foremost must aim at changing the attitude of the social workers as many of them are not ready to work with the refugee and migrants, in general.

When planning awareness-raising campaigns for public servants, it should be remembered that, in addition to building awareness, it is necessary to update the working standards of these services. The introduction of prescribed performance standards and service provision formats will allow civil servants to know exactly what they can offer to refugees and asylum-seekers.

The same mechanisms can be used in relation to school staff, who also undergo advanced trainings. Since schools have their own transnational ethnic relations standards, it is necessary to ensure that they include guidelines on refugee engagement. Law enforcement officials, especially

²⁵RI News <http://ria.ru/world/20140214/994831174.html#ixzz2wgda02i5>

district police officers, may also be mandated to undergo trainings.

Experts cited IOM's experience in Prague, where work is done on the level of the city districts. The city management there takes into account specific aspects of work with foreigners, develops special programs and guidelines for social and municipal employees designed to facilitate engagement with different nationalities living in the area.

As for the practice of organizing information campaigns, it is necessary to promote engagement between government agencies and NGOs.

Information campaigns conducted solely by government institutions also tend to be effective, because such institutions have appropriate administrative resources and authority. It is essential that every information campaign should involve the media, not just any media but only respectable outlets: central television channels that command authority. If an information campaign is prepared by an NGO, it can reach all decision makers and civil servants working with the public through specially prepared trainings, which is what some NGOs have been doing for years. It is important to combine all the advantages that NGOs and government agencies have. The ideal option would be for the request for an information campaign to originate from a government agency, while an NGO would carry out its practical implementation, by combining the potential of government agencies with its own practical experience.

The IOM ran a very good project in the Czech Republic on adaptation and integration of not only refugees but families in general. It is basically about two families, a Czech family and a family of migrants, coming together to meet and get personally acquainted over a Sunday lunch. Naturally, it was organized through an NGO, because no government organization would do that on a non-working day – after all, this is their day off. The approach helped establish a direct contact between the families, since attitudes are often based on ignorance. By learning about the person's, or his family's circumstances and meeting them on a daily basis, you can destroy xenophobia.

From an expert interview, Moscow

It is especially important to note that in addition to information work, co-operation between government agencies and NGOs can be established, and will be very effective, when they both become involved in organizing the provision of direct assistance to refugees. A good example of such co-operation is the organization of shelters for refugees who found themselves, before or after arriving in

Russia, in a stressful life situation. NGOs could potentially organize such shelters in all million-plus cities. Assistance provided by religious organizations may also be very useful; provided, however, as already mentioned, their services do not involve the performance, say, of religious rites in shelters, because in this case they may not be suitable for everyone and, therefore, can only be used as an auxiliary resource. Another promising idea that may be implemented over time is the organization of special hostels for refugees who are in the process of looking for a job and have not found a suitable accommodation yet. In this case, they would be able to stay there for, say, no more than 1 year and simultaneously attend, if necessary, Russian language and adaptation classes.

One important point is that we don't have any temporary accommodation facilities that can be used for direct assistance, the one that's required right now... In Moscow, there's only Lublino, which serves the needs of both foreigners and homeless people. That's it. And nothing else. All others just check residence permits at the place of registration. In St. Petersburg, on the other hand, there are NGOs that work both with people at the place of their residence and with homeless people. We asked them about possible engagement of foreign national, but they didn't even know what to say.

From an expert interview, Moscow

In conclusion, it seems important to mention the need to utilize the opportunities presented by social media and play-based techniques in organizing outreach activities. A good start in this context is a game called "Against All Odds,"²⁶ which needs to be popularized through social networks.²⁷

Fig. 5 Homepage of the online game "Against all odds", developed by the UNHCR regional office in the Baltic States and Scandinavia.

The prospect of using such games in addition to a well-organized information campaign, along with extensive advertising efforts in the social media and the Internet, seems promising.

²⁶ A children's video game on the subject of refugees developed by UN newsru.com 10 November 2007

<http://www.newsru.com/world/10nov2007/ihg.html>

²⁷ Available at <http://www.voprekivsemu.com/>

4. Policy Options

Lack of development and modernisation of the policy on integration of refugees, which Russia has been hosting on its territory on a massive scale since the 1990s, may be considered the main reason for the long-standing negative effects of refugees reception in Russia. Experience of work with refugees gained by NGOs, international and religious organizations appear to be scarcely needed. The possibility of future steady flow of new refugees is not deemed to be a cause for the deployment of integration programs and reconsideration of the attitude towards refugees as to a migrant group, valuable for Russia in the context of a demographic crisis. In our opinion, the refugee integration policy can and must be modernised.

Options of policy updates proposed by the author stipulate for the consideration of several key factors, whose roles will change in the course of development of refugee integration programs.

Three options are possible:

1. To leave the presently implemented policy on refugee integration unchanged ;
2. To correct identified oversights and deficiencies of the current;
- 3.

To modernise the action strategy in relation to refugees as part of formation of new humanistic relations to them within the framework of the migration policy.

Based on our research, these sets of refugee-related problems, which have emerged long ago or in recent years, cannot be settled without changing the existing action policy, thus, the author believes that continuing work under option (1) is not promising.

Table 3. Options of the Refugee Integration Policy development in the RF

	Zero option “leave as it is” (1)	Partial option (2)	Full option (3)
RF government	Formal compliance with the Refugee	Deployment of refugee integration	Viewing refugees as potential new RF

	Convention; low number of refugees who have obtained Refugee Status; low number of refugees who have acquired RF citizenship	programs; simplification of the Refugee Status determination procedure; implementation of measures to simplify the procedure of acquiring citizenship (residence permit) for refugees who have lived in the RF for more than 5 years and for their family members	citizens, valuable demographic resource. Active involvement of NGO, mass media, religious organizations in the refugee integration, control and monitoring of their work.
Mass Media	Deliberate ignoring of the refugee problem; absence of differentiated approach to refugees as to a separate migrant group	Enhanced coverage of refugee-related issues; regular TV and radio programs about refugees.	Constant cooperation with non-commercial organizations, FMS, migrant communities and international organizations, recurrent publications related to work conducted by all responsible and concerned parties
Migrant Communities	Unsystematic assistance to refugees	Cooperation with mass media, assistance in monitoring of the refugee integration conditions	Regular cooperation with mass media and NGO in relation to refugee integration, development of volunteer initiatives
Religious organizations	Random assistance, weak involvement.	Strengthening informational and moral support in refugee integration. Deployment of special projects.	Interaction of different confessions with social services in Russia. Provisioning social services to refugees not stipulated by the mandatory minimum

			scope.
International Organisations	Occasional, but gradually decreasing involvement in work with refugees. Forwarding the initiative to state authorities, cooperation with state authorities and NGO.	Jointly with concerned parties, participation in occasional monitoring of refugees' problems; consulting in relation to international experience of elaboration of refugee integration programs	Coordinated and international cooperation platform for settling refugee integration problems
Non-Governmental Organizations	NGO which assist refugee integration have limited resources for the development of their programs, but conduct active work.	Expanding opportunities for integration-related work by means of state competitive grants; enhancement of NGO financing mechanisms	Legislative recognition of NGO involvement into refugee integration program

If we take two remaining policy options stipulating changes, in both cases these should involve comprehensive approach with a range of refugee-related state policy measures which will help to control integration situation in Russia and to actively make refugees involved in the Russian society, as well as to promote campaign for humanistic attitude towards them. Evidently, “partial” option (2) is preferred for sustained development, since policy changes must not be abrupt, and there should be an opportunity for their adjustment as the changes take place. The final goal of this policy should be the transition to “full” option (3), updating the refugee integration policy in order to create a new system of refugee reception and integration measures, and to receive the fullest possible control over observance of refugees’ human rights, including the protection of their social and economic rights. Under both options the refugee admitting and integration policy should be brought into compliance with the state policy of formation of a new humanistic outlook on migration processes.

Refugees in relation to which work and policy should be differentiated:

- Refugee lacking knowledge of Russian;

- Femalerefugees;
- Familiesofrefugeeswithminorchildren;
- Refugeesolderthantheworkingage;
- Minorrefugeeswithoutparents.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Refugees in Russia have to settle problems of two main types: obtaining status and further exercising the rights granted by this status. The research demonstrated that work with refugees is arranged in a way as if they are not future citizens but applicants facing artificial impediments to passing formal integration procedures, which is indirectly indicative of undesirability of refugee staying at the RF territory.

1. Refugees should be treated as potential citizens of the Russian Federation, since most of them definitely see themselves in Russia in the future. Unfortunately, some of them, initially not being “transitional”, stop connecting their future with Russia due to inability to ensure decent living conditions for themselves, and lack of the government offered opportunities for integration. This was clearly shown by refugee interviewing during the study. The research also demonstrated that many aspects of integration depend on the willingness of the person himself, but there are situations when multiple impediments, in spite of all efforts, which make integration impossible.

2. Practically, Refugee Status only guarantees legitimacy of the foreigner’s stay on the RF territory. Although the status implies vast integration opportunities, access to employment, free school education for children and admittance to Russian higher education institutions on state-funded basis, establishment of disability, registration at a polyclinic according to the place of residence, access to other social benefits is often hindered.

3. Refugees face difficulties even at the stage of submitting documents when applying for Refugee Status. The research demonstrated that territorial bodies of the FMS of Russia widely practise imposition of new requirements to asylum-seekers at each attempt to submit documents, despite the fact that exhaustive list of requirements is established by the legislation.

4. Minimal mandatory services shall be provided to asylum-seekers from external sources. Also, much depends on the form of the service being provided. If the provisioning of the service is accompanied by a certain additional condition, for example, set by a religious organization (one has to go to a church or mosque, pray), then this service will not fit all, and it may be positioned as an additional one. But if the service is provided neutrally, for instance, through a fund under a church or mosque engaged in rendering assistance, this would be quite acceptable.

5. Mass media scarcely dwell on refugee-related topics. Such state of affairs extremely hinders dissemination of information about the refugee rights, decreases public awareness of their problems, and Russian society, police and governmental institutions are poorly informed of day-to-day violations of the refugees' rights.

6. Migrant communities and diasporas generally focus on work with their "old" members, culture-related work and awareness building, rather than creating integration and adaptation services, which are of interest for the communities only as the means of making money off their countrymen. Just a small part of migrant communities evolved into NGOs under their own authority, rendering free assistance to migrants, including refugees.

7. FMS of Russia may delegate some of its functions to NGOs, which are successfully rendering assistance to refugees even now (special social work with refugees' children and female refugees; legal assistance to refugees if their rights are violated; social aid for refugees; awareness-building projects; holding informational campaigns, etc.). Assistance to refugees rendered by NGOs is a common practice in Russia as well as in other countries, which has proven its effectiveness and workability. The government has to monitor minimal standards which are determined by it and are to be complied with, and monitor implementation of functions delegated by NGOs to the government. Ultimately this may become a common practice, some aspects of which are actually implemented even today.

8. Visits of refugees to the FMS can be made more efficient and less injuring for the applicants. To the opinion of interviewed experts, FMS documents circulation is imperfect and needs technical upgrade as well as labour management improvement, introduction of rotation of employees' work duties for the purposes of diversification of their activities and overcoming burnout.

9. Negative examples revealed in the research and related to migrant-phobia of lower-level personnel of the FMS of Russia dictate the necessity of enhanced preventive measures against migrant-phobia among entry-level employees of the FMS of Russia.

10. The research revealed the following shadow practices and aiding schemes related to granting of asylum:

- Illegal carriers, due to activities of which refugees, initially intended to leave illegally for another country, stay in Russia;

- Agents actually selling Russian visas and thus creating preferred, in terms of price and waiting time, channel for entry to Russia for refugees choosing the destination country;
- Illegal agents assisting in obtaining Refugee Status, Temporary Asylum, or citizenship of Russia for a fee.

11. It is necessary to introduce amendments to legislative acts of various authorities interacting with refugees, and these amendments are to be brought into compliance with the principal law. Interaction among authorities could be rapidly arranged through an explanatory letter which would remove all questions and misunderstandings, and subsequent amendment to the law would finally eliminate all inconsistencies. The procedure of granting integration opportunities is determined by the Law On Refugees, but it is not included into special laws, such as Law On Employment in the Russian Federation, etc.

12. Unfortunately, problems in work with foreigners often are not connected with the legislation but arise due to a shortage of personnel and inefficient work of individual employees. It is important to distinguish these two aspects. On the one hand, legislation is to be enhanced, and on the other, it is necessary to constantly conduct personnel training, upgrade professional skills to make work of governmental agencies with refugees effective.

13. Despite vast opportunities for social integration, the research revealed severe difficulties faced by refugees and Temporary Asylum holders when seeking to receive documents necessary for obtaining benefits for mothers of many children, when entering higher education institutions, for receipt of pensions and social allowances.

14. The Law on Refugees guarantees a refugee's right to employment equal to that of the RF citizens, but practically refugees are not able to exercise this right through official government institutions. Public Employment Service prescribes registration of a refugee according to the place of residence, pursuant to the Law on Employment, according to which a person may only be recognized as unemployed at the place of residence. Conflict of law is obvious, when the Law on Employment disagrees with the Law on Refugees in its principal provisions. Undoubtedly, under international obligations, Russia has to adopt special law enforcement norms, and a refugee should be deemed unemployed at the place of his stay.

15. Russia is prepared for a sudden influx of refugees.

16. Development and expansion of communication of the RF decision-makers with expert migration community and Russian society as a whole is an issue dealing not only with asylum but also with general development of the legislation, introduction of amendments, innovations. This concerns work of the government with civil society, population, feedback. There are many positive examples of feedback received from the society, including vast foreign experience, and using this experience seems to be promising. As for today, interaction of the government with civil society and society as a whole is limited and formal, but even the possibility of prior familiarization with a draft law and submitting comments is positively assessed by experts. Legislative reforming mechanism can be updated, making it more effective.

17. Temporary Asylum status is fragile, depends on FMS employees, and keeps its holders in the state of constant fear of its possible non-prolongation. The fact that holders of Temporary Asylum status are not able to receive Temporary Residence Permit, since they have no opportunity to receive permanent residence, also indicates the necessity of legislative changes.

18. When organising information campaigns aimed at briefing of government employees, it is necessary to understand that along with their awareness raising it is necessary to introduce additions to the standards used by them in their work. If working standard and the format of a service for refugees and asylum-seekers is determined, government employees will know what to suggest to them. As for information campaign arrangement, it is necessary to establish partnership among government institutions and NGOs. Perfect option would be a request initiated by government institutions and implemented in practice by NGOs, using all capabilities of the government institutions and own practical experience.

The research fully confirmed all hypotheses of the author concerning the possibilities for integration of recognized refugees in the RF.

1. Violations of rights of refugees and Temporary Asylum holders in the RF are related to weak informational work with government institutions (especially police, higher education institutions, schools, public employment services), not being informed of the rights of refugees and Temporary Asylum holders in the RF.

2. In Russia refugees are not treated as a valuable demographic resource within the framework of the Migration Policy Concept, and many of them are not able to integrate, despite formally available

rights.

3.

Updating Russia's refugee integration policy is strongly impeded by contradictions in the Russian legislation. Though, in 2014 hope emerged that legislative amendments will be introduced to eliminate existing conflicts of law. Limited involvement of civil society into refugee integration is primarily related to the governmental standpoint, when experience gained by civil society institutions remains unclaimed.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire for Interviewing Experts**1. The notion of integration and current migration environment in the context of asylum-seekers in Russia, and possibilities for integration and impediments to integration.**

In your opinion, how can the term "integration" be defined?

How is there refugee integration mechanism in Russia arranged?

Are there any differences in integration for refugees with official status and for those with no status?

For what refugee categories is the process of integration in Russia the easiest and for whom is it the most difficult?

What are the reasons?

Which country refugees become easily integrated in Russia and which country refugees become integrated more difficultly?

What do refugees of different categories have to do first of all to make their integrations successful?

What are the impediments for their receiving the initial support?

What can be done to eliminate these impediments?

2. Assessment of access of recognized refugees in Russia to legal integration

In your opinion, how easy is it for refugees staying in Russia to get access to legal information necessary for them (laws, documents)? How easy is it for them to execute documents for obtaining Refugee Status and why?

During the time you are working with the migration problem,

do you see any changes in the access of refugees to practical legal information and in the formal acquisition of Refugee Status?

Are there any differences depending on refugee categories and countries from which they have arrived?

What are the reasons?

3. Assessment of access of recognized refugees in Russia to social integration

In your opinion, how easy is it for refugees staying in Russia to get access to social services - medical care, education - for the refugees themselves and for their children?

How do they solve their housing problems? What specific difficulties do they face?

How easy are contacts with local residents for them and why?

Do diaspora support refugees? Which diaspora?

Do they receive support in a church, mosque? What is the support?

During the time you are working with the migration problem, do you see any changes in social integration of refugees? Are there any differences depending on refugee categories and countries from which they have arrived? What are the reasons?

4. Assessment of access of recognized refugees in Russia to economic integration

How do refugees become economically integrated? What difficulties do they face and why? During the time you are working with the migration problem, do you see any changes in economic integration of refugees? Are there any differences depending on refugee categories and countries from which they have arrived? What are the reasons?

5. What lies ahead

From which countries might refugees arrive to Russia in the following 5 years?

Please particularize these countries. First,

specify the countries from which the streams of refugees will most probably be the largest and then - the countries from which less refugees will arrive.

What refugee categories will they represent? (Environmental refugees, refugees in armed conflict, etc.)

What is to be done to simplify refugee integration in Russia in the future?

In spite of the fact that few refugees get Refugee Status in Russia, they all the same keep arriving to Russia.

Should the policy of their reception be changed? What is to be done in such a situation?

Are any special measures needed to change the existing refugee reception procedures in Russia?

What might these measures be?

What should be Russia's refugee migration policy now, in the medium run, in the long run?

Appendix 2

Questionnaire for Depth Interviewing Refugees

We would like to ask you some questions about your life in Russia and the life of refugees from your surroundings, about your problems here, further plans.

The purpose of our meeting is consideration of the problem of settlement and integration in Russia as viewed by a refugee. We have no intention to reveal infringements of law committed by you, neither will we try to control your stay in Russia.

Your opinion about the problems of refugees in Russia is what we are interested in.

You may tell us either about yourself and your own experience, or about the experience of your acquaintances and relatives.

We need no specific names. They make no difference to us.

We guarantee full confidence and anonymity.

1. Acquaintance

Please tell us your name and something about yourself - how old are you, where have you come to Russia from? Where had you been living before arrival (in a capital, in a town/city, in a settlement/village)? What country (countries) are you a citizen of? What is your ethnic nationality?

Your education, specialty?

Tell us about your family, have you got any children? Who of your closer relatives is staying in Russia with you?

How well do you know Russian? (native Russian speaker; my Russian is good; my Russian is not quite good; my Russian is poor).

How long have you been staying in Russia? Why did you flee (leave) your country?

What was the main reason for you?

Why did you choose Russia and that very Russian city/town?

Who helped you here when you arrived and who helps you now? What kind of aid did you need?

Is it easier for refugees with official status to overcome difficulties than for those with no status?

In what respects is it easier?

What should be done for refugees first of all to make their life easier?

What are the impediments for their receiving the initial support?

What can be done to eliminate these impediments?

In your opinion, what determines success or failure when settling down in Russia: personal skills, availability of documents, obtained Refugee Status, specialization and education, useful social contacts, relatives support?

2. Access to Legal Integration in Russia

Where did you get information about Russian laws and the documents preparation requirements? Who helped you with that? Which laws and documents were difficult to inquire about and how would it be easier to inquire about them?

What documents do you have on hand?

Have you received these documents yourself or have you bought them? If you have failed to do everything in compliance with the rules, please state the reason.

3. Access to Social Integration in Russia

Have you got a medical insurance? When you are sick, where do you apply to?

Do you receive medical treatment for payment or under policy?

What are your housing conditions in Russia? Do you live at the address at which you are registered?

How many people live in the same room with you? How much do you pay for accommodation per month? Do minor children live with you in Russia? If yes, do they go to school, kindergarten? What is the attitude toward them? What are the main difficulties of life with children in Russia? How does local community treat you? Is there any hostility or amicability on their part? How are these revealed? With whom do you primarily communicate within Russia, with local residents or with your fellow-countrymen? Who helps you in solving problems: relatives, friends-migrants, agents, human rights organizations, local acquaintances? How do you relax - go to the movies, visit or invite friends? How do you spend holidays? Do you sometimes spend them with the locals, or maybe they do not want migrants in their surroundings? Do you observe religious traditions, go to a church, mosque? Are you connected with your diaspora here? In what way and how closely? Do you feel safe in Russia? If you don't, what is the main hazard? Have your rights been violated in Russia? Please name violations of which you know from your experience and the experience of other refugees.

4. Access to Economic Integration in Russia

How did you get the first job in Russia? Who helped you? What other jobs have you had? Who usually helps you to find a job? What is your current job? What are your job duties? Is it compliant with your profession? Do you work under an official employment contract or according to verbal arrangement? What is your average monthly income? Has your income increased after you started working in Russia? Are you satisfied with your salary in Russia? Is this salary higher or lower than that in the country of origin? What are the reasons? How do you think, will you be able to earn more in the future? What does it depend on?

5. Plans and Prospects

Are you willing to stay in Russia forever? What are your future plans? What can have a positive or negative effect on your decision? Please name the main challenges of your life in Russia. What are they connected with (with migrants' problems in general or with problems of refugees in particular; with ethnic nationality, etc.)? What was the most challenging for you in Russia? What difficulties do you have to overcome? If we haven't asked you about something important for refugees, please tell us about that.

Thank you for the answers!

AppendixNo. 3. The List of Interviewed Experts

No	Surname, Name, Patronymic	Place of Work, Position
	Moscow	
1.	Kazakova Valentina Lvovna	Chief of the Directorate for Citizenship Affairs of the Federal Migration Service (FMS) of Russia
2.	Rucheikov Vladimir Konstantinovich	Chief of the Department for Asylum Affairs of the FMS of Russia
3.	Regent Tatiana Mikhailovna	Dean of the Finance, Management and Economics Department of the Russian New University (RosNOU). Doctor of Economics, professor. Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences. Since 1992 till 1999 - Head of the Federal Migration Service (Moscow)
4.	Gannushkina Svetlana Alexeevna	Chairman of the "Civic Assistance" Committee, Board Member and the Head of "Migration and Law" Network of "Memorial" Human Rights Center (Moscow)
5.	Plykina Olga Alexandrovna	Advocate, a member of the Moscow City Chamber of Advocates
6.	Khukhlaev Oleg Evgenievich	Professor, Head of the Department "Ethnopsychology and Psychological Problems of Multicultural Education" of the Moscow City University of Psychology and Education (Moscow)
7	Soldashenko Olesya	Lawyer, officer of the Refugee Reception Centre (RRC) of UNHCR
8	Deryabina Nina	Social worker of the Refugee Reception Centre (RRC) of UNHCR
9	Salaev Oleg	Lawyer, UNHCR
10.	Pavlovskaya Yuliana Yurievna	Director of the Labour Migration Information-Consultative Center of IOM, Moscow
11.	Rybakova Olga Alexandrovna	Coordinator of the help hot-line concerning labour migration and anti-human-trafficking, IOM, Moscow
12.	Melnichuk Yulia	Head of the Labour Migration Department, IOM, Moscow
	St. Petersburg	
13.	Maniragena Valence	Chairman of the Board of Charitable Organization Ichumbi (St. Petersburg)
14.	Goryacheva Dina	Durable Solutions Assistant, St. Petersburg Red Cross (St. Petersburg)
15.	Chistyakov Viktor	Lawyer, St. Petersburg Red Cross (St. Petersburg)
16.	Akhmed Adam	Deputy Chief of public Organization of African Unity,

		Chairman for External Relations of the Russian-Arab Cultural Centre, St. Petersburg
17.	Yakimov Andrey	Labour Migration Expert of Anti-Discriminatory centre "Memorial" (St. Petersburg)
18.	Tseitlina Olga	St. Petersburg Branch of Red Cross, Integration Assistant, Durable Solutions Specialist
19.	Zaibert Natalia Svyatoslavovna	Director of the Information and Advice Centre on Migration Legislation of Public Charitable Organization "St. Petersburg Centre for International Cooperation of the Red Cross"
20.	Vaddakh Al-Dzhundi	Director of the Russian-Arab Cooperation Centre

Appendix 4. Procedures for Granting of Political Asylum, Refugee Recognition, Granting of Temporary Asylum in Effect in the RF

Granting of Political Asylum

Political asylum at the Russian territory is granted by the Decree of the RF President, and granting of political asylum is regulated by the Regulation “On the Procedure for Granting Political Asylum in the Russian Federation”, approved by Decree No. 746 of the RF President dated July 21, 1997. Political asylum is granted to foreign individuals and stateless persons seeking asylum and protection from persecution or are at threat to become persecuted in the country of nationality or in the country of residence for sociopolitical activity and beliefs, that do not contradict democratic principles shared by the world community, the norms of the international law.

Applications for political asylum shall be submitted to territorial departments of the FMS of Russia.

Recognition as Refugee

The main form of protection of foreign citizens in the RF is recognition as refugee subject to the legislation on refugees. The procedure of recognizing a person as refugee is regulated by Federal Law No. 4528-1 “On Refugees” of February 19, 1993. According to the provisions of the said Law, a foreign person, staying outside his country of nationality, may file an application for refugee recognition to a Russian representative office abroad, at the state border, or at the RF territory. Applications accepted by representative offices abroad are considered and decided upon by the FMS of Russia.

Applications accepted at the border or at the RF territory are considered and decided upon by the relevant territorial departments of the FMS of Russia. Applications for refugee recognition shall be filed by all adult applicants and by minor unaccompanied persons. A qualified interpreter is provided to applicants. The procedure of application consideration comprises two stages – preliminary examination and examination on the merits (substantive examination).

Preliminary examination is carried out in 5 days and substantive examination can take up to three months. In some cases the FMS of Russia may sanction the extension of the application examination period for another three months. All applicants for asylum in the Russian Federation undergo obligatory medical examination and dactyloscopic registration.

A certificate on the substantive examination of the application for refugee recognition is issued to the applicant for a period of examining the application. This certificate is the applicant’s identity document and confers him the right to stay in the country for the period of examining the application as well as the right to possible appeal against refusal of recognition as refugee. National documents of the applicant are given for storage to territorial departments of the FMS of Russia. The applicant is recognized as refugee if he has reasonable fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, citizenship, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country. A person recognized as refugee is issued a refugee certificate. The certificate is the document which identifies personality of its holder and confers him the right to stay in the Russian Federation. Information on minor children of refugees is registered in the certificate of one of the parents.

A travel document is issued to refugees for travelling outside the RF. Refugees with travel documents do not have to receive Russian visas for leaving the Russian Federation and entering it.

Refugee Status is granted for a period up to three years. A refugee shall undergo re-registration

annually. During the re-registration, the status may be either extended or cancelled. The decision on the status cancellation may also be appealed. Applicants may appeal against negative decisions on the application at each stage either to the FMS of Russia or to the Court. Appeals against decisions of territorial subdivisions of the FMS of Russia are considered by regular courts in civil proceedings. An appeal may be considered by courts of three jurisdictions as well as in the order of supervision. The applicant may not be expelled from the country during the period of consideration of appeals against decisions of territorial subdivisions of the FMS of Russia.

Granting of Temporary Asylum

According to provisions of Article 12 of the Law and Decree No. 274 of the RF Government of 09/04/2001 “On Granting Temporary Asylum on the Territory of the Russian Federation”, temporary asylum may be granted to foreign citizens whose applications for refugee recognition in the Russian Federation were rejected but who cannot be expelled from the RF for humanitarian reasons. Temporary asylum is a kind of “humanitarian status”, or suspended expelling. To receive temporary asylum in the Russian Federation, a person has to file a relevant application to territorial subdivisions of the FMS of Russia.

After the application is accepted, a reference on the examination of the application for granting asylum at the RF territory is issued to the applicant. The reference confers him the right to stay at the Russian territory for the period of examining the application. Examination of the application takes up to three months. Application is decided upon by a territorial department of the FMS of Russia. In case of positive decision, a certificate on granting temporary asylum at the Russian territory is issued. Negative decision can be appealed through the courts. Temporary asylum is granted for one year, and this period can be extended annually by 12 months. Under certain circumstances, a person might lose or be deprived of the temporary asylum. There are three Reception Centres for asylum-seekers in the Russian Federation under the FMS of Russia, with total capacity of 180 persons.

Asylum-seekers in the Russian Federation who have been granted Refugee Status, political or temporary asylum in the Russian Federation have access to the internal labour market. They may work without any special permission.

Uzbekistan	2	2						7	10			4	4	2	2		4	9	11	24	33
Ukraine					2	2		4	4			1	1							7	7
Eritrea												1	1	1	1					2	2
Ethiopia										1	1									1	1

Source: DataoftheFMSofRussia