

FACILITATING MIGRATION MANAGEMENT
IN NORTH AND CENTRAL ASIA

Working
paper

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Migration and Skills in North and Central Asia

**Facilitating Migration Management
in North and Central Asia**

Migration and Skills in North and Central Asia

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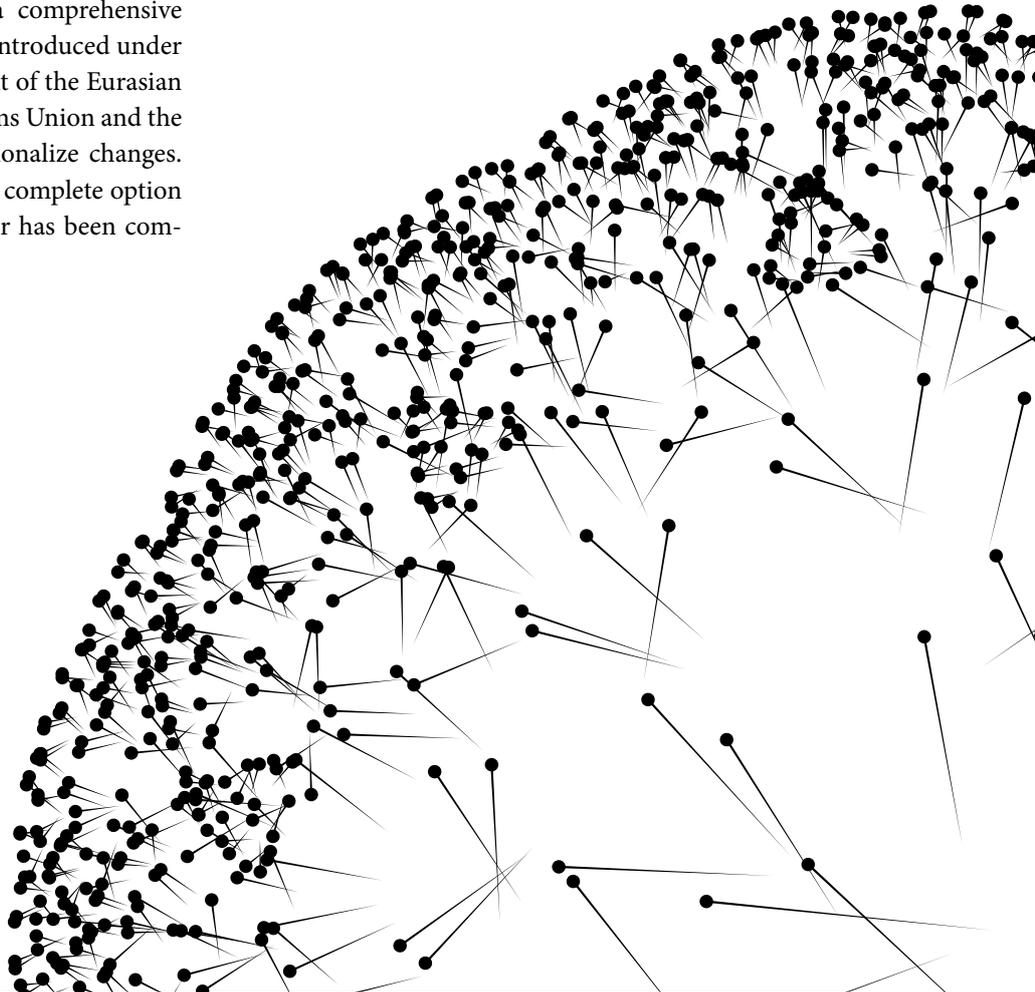
Abstract

The present paper seeks to comprehensively analyse the possibilities for the best use of the professional skills and competencies of migrant workers from North and Central Asia in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan. Special attention is paid to the readiness of education systems in both sending and destination countries as regards the implementation of special training and retraining programmes and certification of in-demand occupations.

Two options exist for changing current policies in the five countries under study: one partial, the other complete. The partial option involves the introduction of a labour market analysis system, certification of highly skilled workers with the involvement of employers' associations, promotion of an organized recruitment system, licensing private employment agencies and streamlining the mechanisms for hiring foreign workers. The complete option requires a comprehensive approach to solutions that have been introduced under the partial option and the involvement of the Eurasian Economic Union, the Eurasian Customs Union and the Eurasian Economic Space to institutionalize changes. Moving from the partial option to the complete option is only recommended after the former has been completed.

The proposed measures, conclusions, recommendations and analysis of the current state of affairs are based on data from available studies and official statistics, as well as on the findings of 12 interviews conducted by the author in September and October 2014. The interviews took place with experts on migration in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan (two interviews in each country) and the Russian Federation (four interviews), concerning measures to be implemented in order to make full use of the professional skills and competencies of migrant workers from Central Asia both in the countries of destination and origin (after return).

References to dollars (\$) are to United States dollars, unless otherwise stated.



Characteristics of migration flows

Migration within the North and Central Asian subregion is primarily intraregional, with large numbers of migrants from countries of origin such as Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan migrating to work primarily in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan. Table 1 shows that the number of migrants from these three countries in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan reached over 2.5 million in 2015.

TABLE 1: MIGRANT STOCK FROM KYRGYZSTAN, TAJIKISTAN AND UZBEKISTAN IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND KAZAKHSTAN, 2015

Countries of destination	Number of migrants, 2015		
	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan	Uzbekistan
Russian Federation	591 349	466 508	1 146 803
Kazakhstan	6 734	15 816	281 713
Total	598 083	482 324	1 428 516

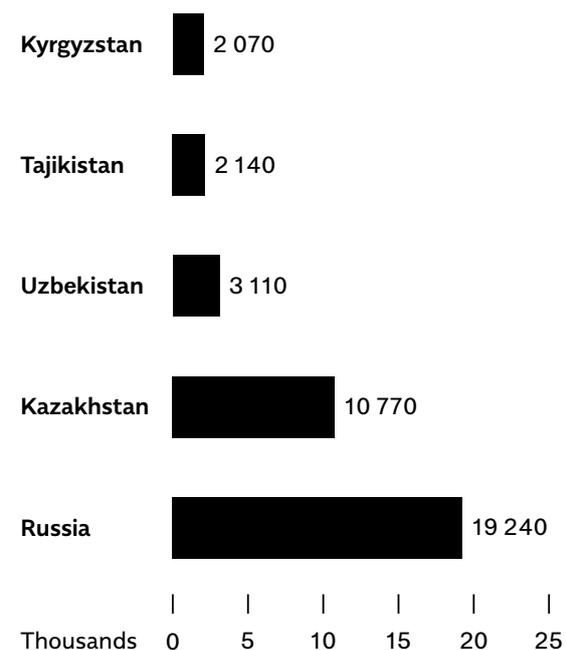
Source: United Nations Population Division, 2015

Although there have been other causes for migration between these countries since the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, in recent years the main drivers of these movements have been economic. Figure 1 shows that per capita incomes in Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation are significantly higher than in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, with the per capita income in the Russian Federation being almost five times its equivalent in Kyrgyzstan.

Employment prospects in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are relatively poor, with unemployment rates ranging from around 8 per cent in Kyrgyzstan to around 11 per cent in Tajikistan (figure 2). For those in employment, meanwhile, vulnerable employment levels are high: almost 1 million people in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were in own-account and

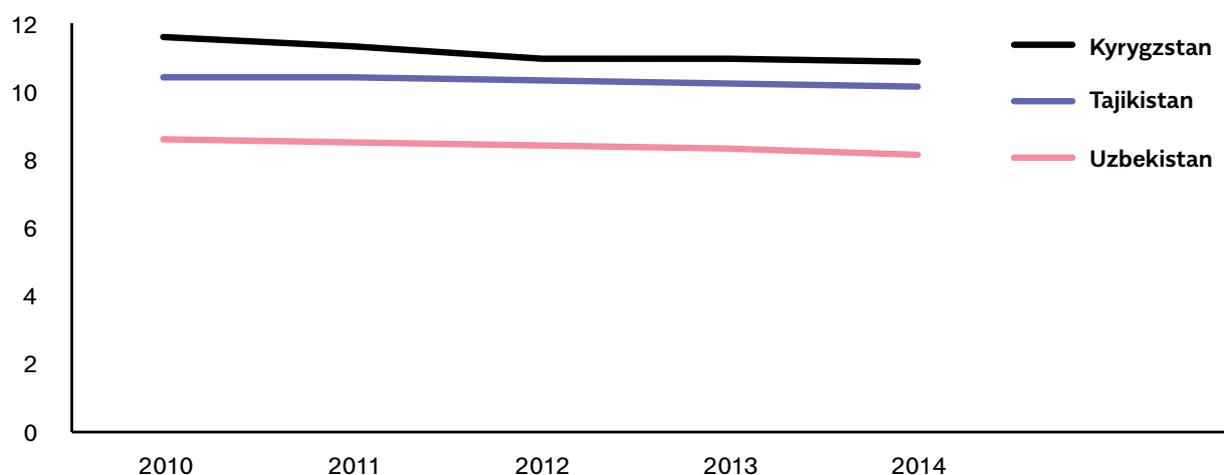
family employment, which usually represents a high level of vulnerability in employment (ILOSTAT, N.D.). The projected growth of the working-age population further creates incentives for international migration: in Uzbekistan, the working-age population is expected to grow both in absolute and relative terms, over the coming 30 years, going from almost 20 million in 2015 to over 25 million in 2045 (UNPD, 2015). The persistence of unemployment, vulnerable employment and an ongoing working-age population boom in these countries, increases the likelihood of inducing people to migrate for work.

FIGURE 1: GDP PER CAPITA IN KYRGYZSTAN, TAJIKISTAN, UZBEKISTAN, KAZAKHSTAN AND THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION (2012), DOLLARS



Source: Wishniewski and others, 2014.

FIGURE 2: TOTAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN KYRGYZSTAN, TAJIKISTAN AND UZBEKISTAN, 2010-2014, PER CENT



Source: ILO, 2015, Key Indicators of the Labour Market, 9th Edition

The migration of citizens of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan is also shaped by factors in countries of destination. Historical links between Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan on the one hand, and the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan on the other have found concrete expression in the “hard” (physical infrastructure) and “soft” infrastructure of laws, policies and social networks that facilitate connectivity and movement between countries, such as the existence of transport links between the countries and the possibility for visa-free access to the territories of the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan. This has combined with strong employer demand in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan driven by periods of growth in both of these countries, combined with falling working-age populations in the Russian Federation.

The jobs offered by these employers generally provide opportunities for higher-quality employment in the latter countries, especially in the form of the promise of higher wages. As a result, labour migration from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan has risen to high levels: in 2014 alone, over 2.2 million documents authorizing citizens of these countries to work in the Russian Federation were issued (Ryazantsev, forthcoming).

Migrants largely fill positions in retail, services, construction, agriculture and in the domestic sector. For the most part, this migration has been focused at the lower end of the skill scale, with only around 5 per cent of migrants under the work permit system being considered “highly-skilled” in 2012 (Ryazantsev, forthcoming).

Despite the current recession in the economy of the Russian Federation, the long-term decline of the working age population highlighted in figure 3 as well as the persistent demand for labour, suggests that the scale of migration between these countries will remain significant.

However, the skills required from migrants are changing. Recent growth in both Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation has been driven by high oil prices, which account for more than 70 per cent of the exports of both countries (ESCAP, 2016). Recognizing that this reliance on a main source of exports is unsustainable in the long-term, both countries have worked to diversify their economies, with a particular focus (in the case of the Russian Federation) of moving towards higher added-value activities and increasing the share of innovation in the national economy (Rusventure, 2013).

Similarly, in Kazakshtan, the aim is to reduce the dependence on natural resource-led growth through increased innovation and high-technology outputs (Government of Kazakhstan, N.D.).

Achieving this goal will require a major increase and shift in the skills of the workforce, requiring not only technical skills – where survey results suggest that education in the Russian Federation remains strong compared to other countries at the same income level – but also higher-order skills (for example, problem-solving skills) as well as, non-cognitive and interpersonal skills, such as teamwork, where employers report that skills are lacking (Nellemann, Podoloskiy and Levin, 2015).

In reflection of this goal, in the Russian Federation the “State Concept of Migration Policy through to 2025” prioritises the attraction of highly-skilled migrants. Similarly, Kazakhstan is adopting procedures to increase highly-skilled migration. Given the persistent drivers of migration within the subregion, the majority of this new demand for more skilled migrants – as well as the demand for migrants at the lower end of the skill scale – will be met from countries within the region. Therefore, the skills of potential migrants has increasingly become an issue of importance for the countries of destination.

This paper will aim to assess the skill needs of the countries of destination of the region, before considering the ability of the educational systems in the countries of origin to meet these needs. It will then outline some potential measures that could be taken to reform educational systems to upgrade them and enable potential migrants to graduate with skills that will not only support their employment in their own countries, but also allow them the potential to migrate to work abroad as well.

Assessment of the short-term and long-term needs and shortages of the labour markets of the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan

Assessment of the needs and shortages of the labour market of the Russian Federation

As mentioned in the introduction, the Russian Federation faces a serious decline in working-age population. Even in light of the current difficulties faced by the Russian economy, demographic trends suggest that migration is likely to be necessary to offset this decline.

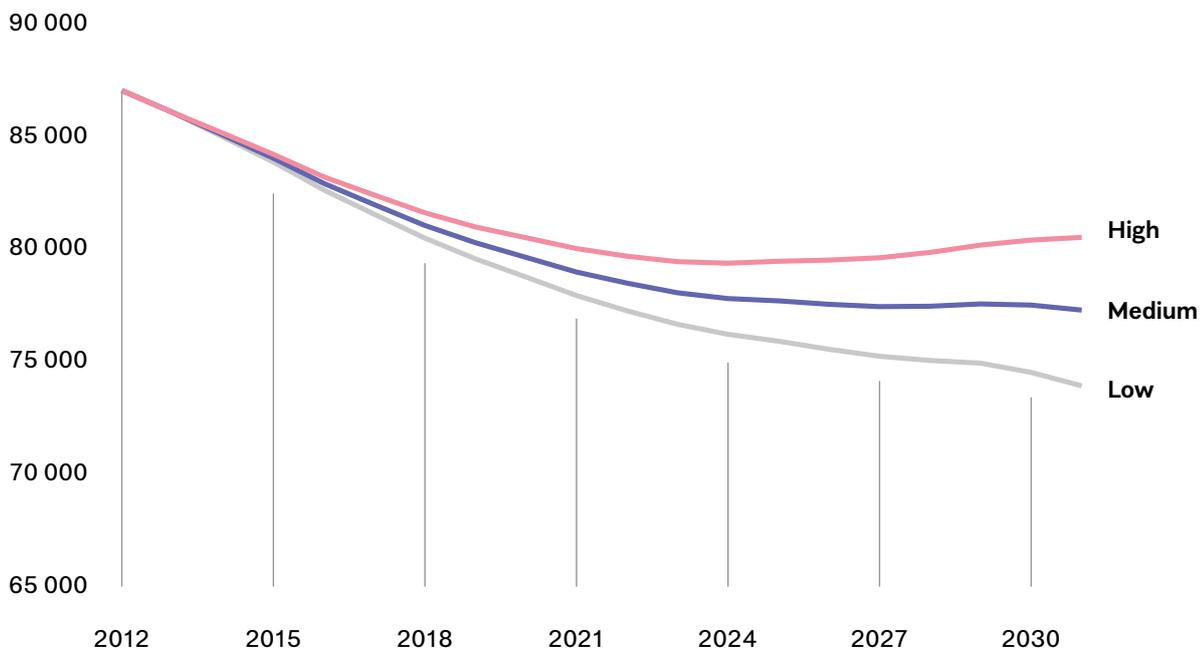
Population growth is already in large measure dependent on migration, as total fertility rates remain below replacement rates and life expectancies remain relatively low. The steady growth of the population of the Russian Federation up to 2030, according to the latest estimates from Rosstat (Wishniewski and others, 2013; Rosstat, 2014a and 2014c), is based on an increase in annual migration from 303,000 persons in 2012 to 530,000 in 2030, among other factors. With an average annual increase in migration of more than 300,000

but less than 350,000 persons, and less rapid increases in life expectancy and birth rates, the population of the Russian Federation will, after some stabilization, begin to decline in the 2020s. With an average annual increase in migration of less than 300,000 persons, the population will begin to decline in the coming years (Mukomel, 2014).

The result of these trends is population ageing, and a decrease in the number of Russians of working age. According to the medium alternative forecast of Rosstat for the period from 2012 to 2031, the population of working age will decrease from 87,055,000 to 77,311,000 persons, that is, by 9,744,000 persons (Rosstat, 2014b). This means a greater “burden” of retired people, an increase in social expenditure and an increasing shortage of labour (Mukomel, 2014).

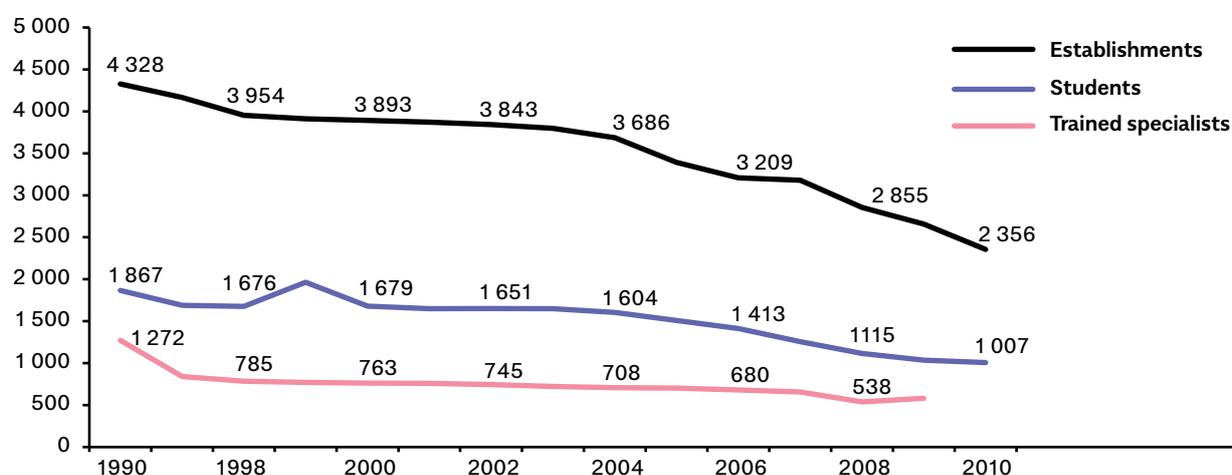
It is obvious that if there is a shortage of labour even during periods of recession (Shokhin, 2013), then the shortage will be even more acute when the economy starts to grow (Mukomel, 2014). Although labour demand can be offset to some extent through productivi-

FIGURE 3: **DECLINE IN THE POPULATION OF WORKING AGE IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION BETWEEN 2012 AND 2031 (LOW, MEDIUM AND HIGH ALTERNATIVE FORECASTS OF ROSSTAT)**



Source: Rosstat, 2014b.

FIGURE 4: THE NUMBER OF BASIC VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENTS, THEIR STUDENTS (MILLION PERSONS) AND TRAINED SPECIALISTS (MILLION PERSONS) BETWEEN 1990 AND 2012



Sources: Molodikh, 2013; and Rosstat data.

ty increases, this is a major investment that will require long-term action (Gurova and Ivanter, 2012). In this situation, labour migration is an important resource and obvious solution.

Such are the reasons to expect that the decline in the workforce of the Russian Federation will continue to facilitate the influx of foreign workers; the labour market needs workers and, therefore, workers come, mostly from Central Asian republics, which enjoy visa-free regimes with the Russian Federation. Those experts that were interviewed for this paper agreed that in the medium term, the number of foreign workers moving from North and Central Asia to the Russian Federation will remain stable.

In the long term, it can be inferred that the Russian Federation will need a large number of migrants with medium and low qualifications, but it seems difficult to define the exact range of specialities that will be needed, although the services sector, housing, construction and industry will be expected to dominate.

These trends are already apparent. As can be seen from table 2, in almost every Russian constituent region (except the North Caucasus Federal district), the number of unemployed is much lower than the demand for labour declared by employers. Taking into consideration that unemployment in the Russian Federation is of a structural kind (which means that most unemployed people are not interested in working in any available positions due to factors such as differences in qualifications, or low salary), together with the fact that there is a large informal sector, it can be seen that there is a constant demand for migrant labour. This has been evident over the last 15 years. Estimates of the size of the Russian informal sector vary from 20 per cent according to Rosstat estimations to 40 per cent according to cabinet ministers (Manuilova, 2013).

Currently, skills are required across a wide range of sectors, as shown by employer demand. For example, for positions such as auxiliary workers, drivers and cooks, there is a plentiful domestic supply of workers with relevant skills. However, for positions such as stonemasons, concrete workers, plasterers, carpenters, steel fixers, seamstresses and painters, demand is much

TABLE 2: NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED CITIZENS AND EMPLOYERS' DEMAND FOR LABOUR IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION (DECEMBER 2014)

FEDERAL DISTRICTS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION	NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED CITIZENS	DEMAND FOR LABOUR AS EXPRESSED BY EMPLOYERS
Russian Federation	885 559	1 397 438
Central Federal district	146 322	363 291
North-Western Federal district	65 424	167 146
Southern Federal district	62 217	120 005
North Caucasus Federal district	193 560	30 221
Volga Federal district	146 898	257 334
Ural Federal district	71 018	121 450
Siberian Federal district	147 104	200 994
The Far Eastern Federal district	50 746	135 998

Source: Rostrud, 2014.

higher than supply, and for these types of specialities migrants who have adequate skills have little competition (figure 5). For office employees, engineers, managers and security personnel, domestic supply is much higher than demand. However, among nurses, doctors, medical assistants and process technicians, demand is consistently higher than supply, creating demand for labour migrants who have the corresponding qualifications (figure 6).

As can be seen from figure 7, sectoral demand is also complemented by different levels of regional demand for workers. The greatest employment potential for migrants is in the Central, Volga and Siberian Federal districts. There is somewhat less potential in the North-Western, Far Eastern, Southern and Ural Federal districts. In the North Caucasus Federal district such potential is minimal.

The total demand for labour in Moscow, as at 1 December 2014, was 140,200 positions. The number of unemployed in Moscow, as at 1 October 2014, was 23,188. As figures 8 and 9 show, there is a constant demand for migrant labour in Moscow.

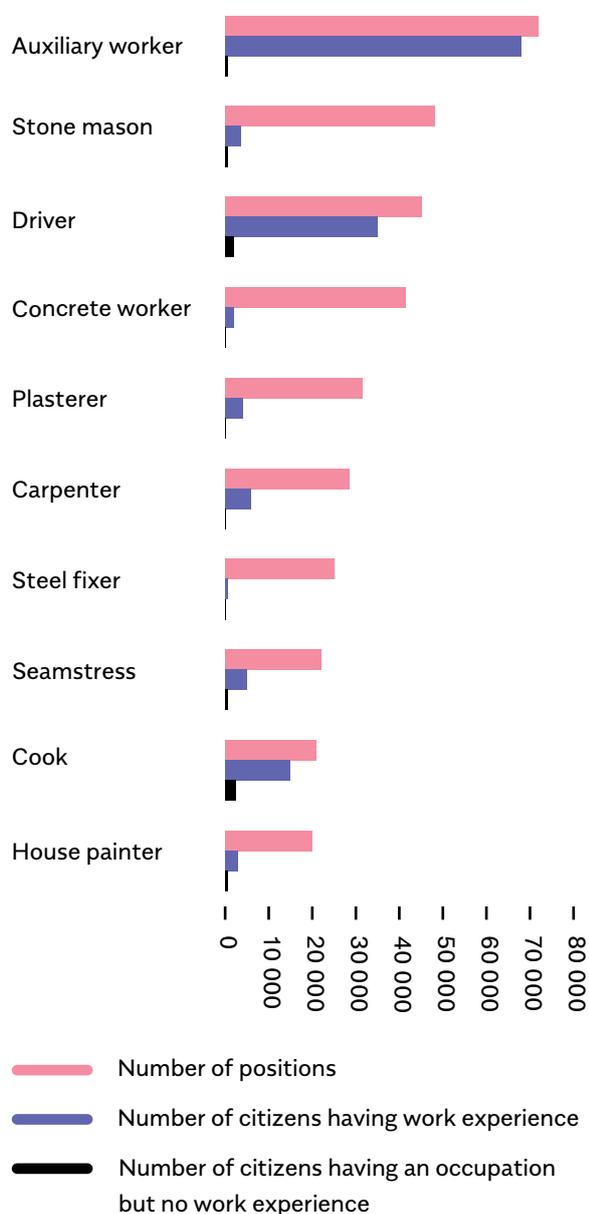
Currently, the list of vacant positions is on the decline and competition for work is increasing (Nikitin, 2015), but unemployment still remains structural. Russian citizens mainly focus their job-hunting efforts on the public sector and information technologies.

Considering the staff shortages at different skill levels, table 3 shows the shortages expressed by employers between 2009 and 2013, showing an upward trend across most levels, and particularly among the qualified workers and non-qualified workers, especially as recovery from the recession of 2009 took place.

This table shows that almost half of employers face shortages hiring qualified staff, and that this share of employers is growing. As table 4 shows, these shortages have grown even as unemployment decreased, suggesting that under normal circumstances, even in a situation of full employment of nationals, shortages of qualified staff will remain.

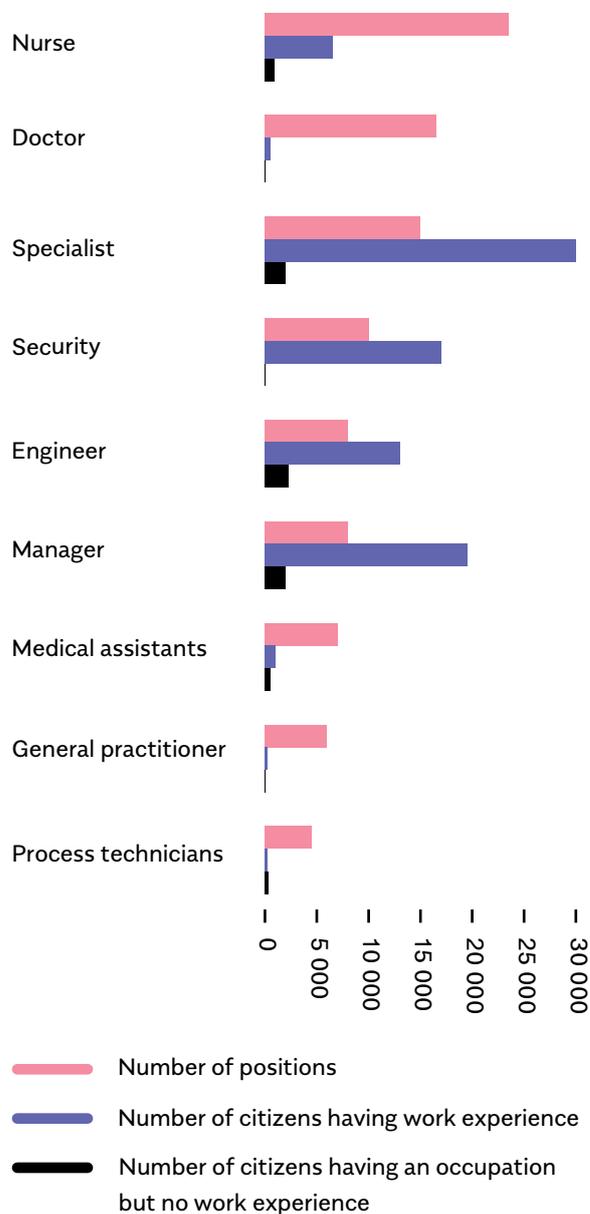
Table 5 shows the changing sectoral and job category distribution of shortages. It is clear that there is an extremely high level of shortages of qualified workers, especially in blue-collar sectors such as industry, con-

FIGURE 5: LABOUR MARKET DEMAND AND SUPPLY FOR THE TRADES MOST DEMANDED BY EMPLOYERS, AS AT 25 JANUARY 2015



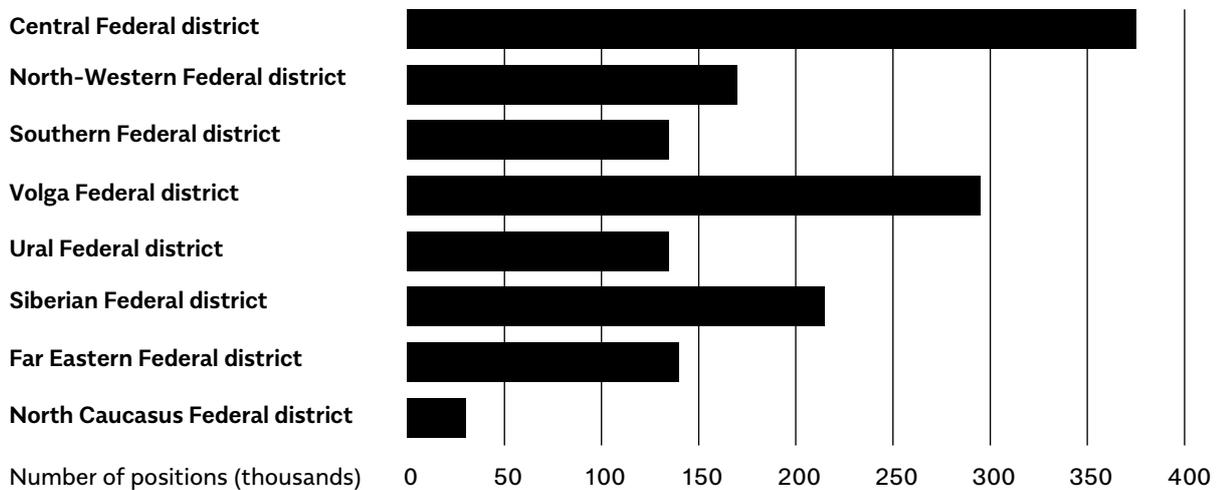
Source: Rostrud, 2015.

FIGURE 6: LABOUR MARKET DEMAND AND SUPPLY FOR THE PROFESSIONS MOST DEMANDED BY EMPLOYERS, AS AT 25 JANUARY 2015



Source: Rostrud, 2015.

FIGURE 7: DEMAND (TOTAL NUMBER OF POSITIONS) FOR LABOUR AS EXPRESSED BY EMPLOYERS, AS AT 23 DECEMBER 2014



Source: Rostrud, 2015.

TABLE 3: NATIONAL PERSONNEL SHORTAGES BY JOB CATEGORY, PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYERS

JOB CATEGORY	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Heads of functional departments	3	4	3	5	3
Heads of operating departments	8	8	8	12	10
Highly qualified executives, functional department specialists	4	6	6	6	7
Highly qualified executives, operating department specialists	10	12	17	17	18
Public servants, office employees, technical executives	3	4	7	7	7
Qualified workers	28	29	42	48	49
Non-qualified workers	9	15	22	24	26

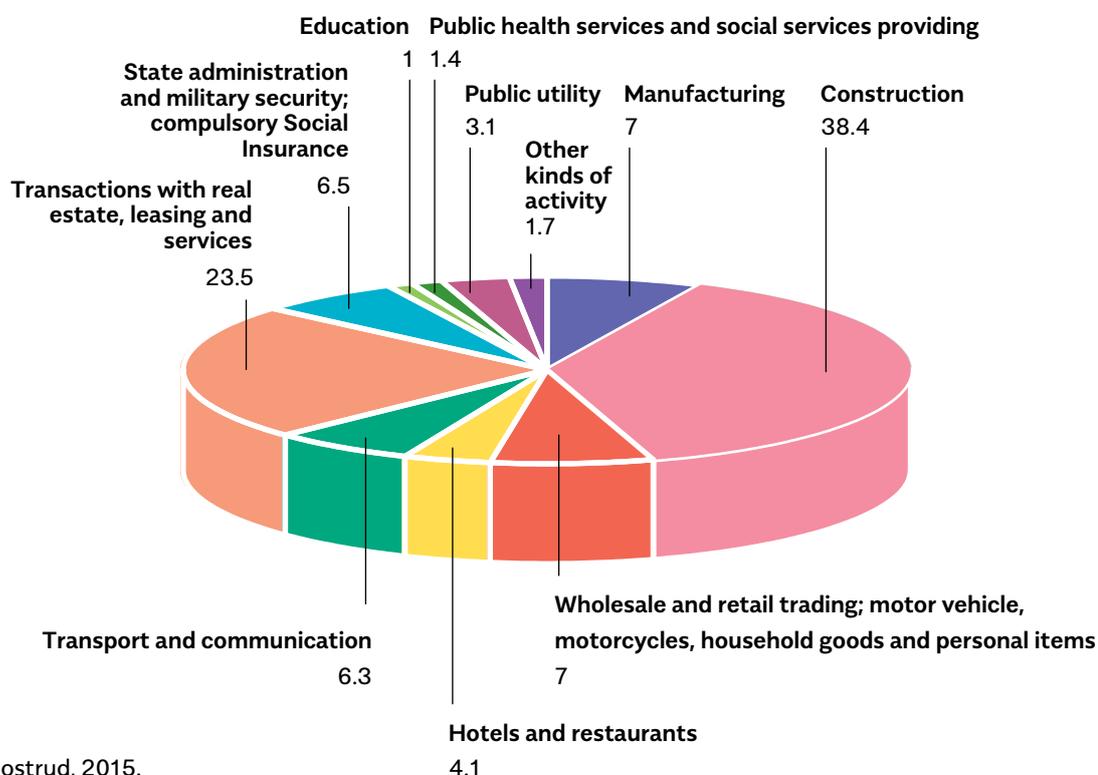
Source: Bondarenko and Krasilnikova, 2014.

TABLE 4: ANNUAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, PERCENTAGE

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
10.6	9.0	7.9	8.2	7.8	7.1	7.1	6.0	6.2	8.3	7.3	6.5	5.5	5.5

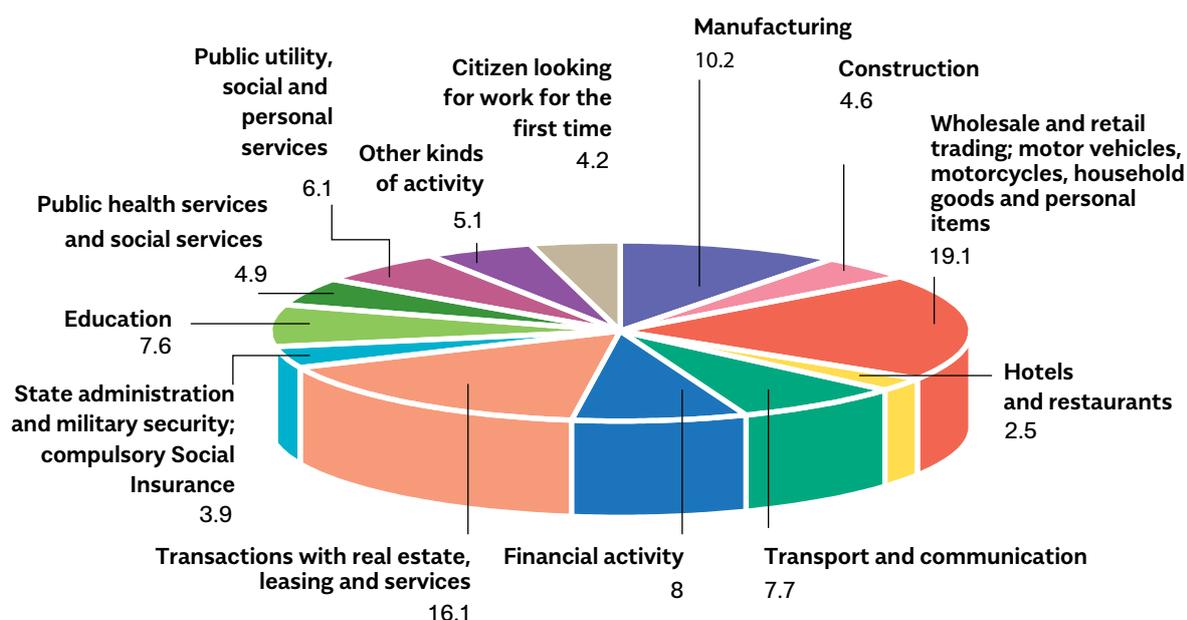
Source: Rosstat, 2014d.

FIGURE 8: BREAKDOWN OF THE DEMAND FOR LABOUR GIVEN TO THE MOSCOW EMPLOYMENT OFFICE BY TYPE OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, AS AT 1 DECEMBER 2014 (PERCENTAGE)



Source: Rostrud, 2015.

FIGURE 9: THE STRUCTURE OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN MOSCOW, BY TYPE OF PREVIOUS ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, AS AT 1 OCTOBER 2014 (PERCENTAGE)



Source: Rostrud, 2015.

TABLE 5: PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYERS EXPERIENCING STAFF SHORTAGES, BY SECTOR AND JOB CATEGORY, PERCENTAGE

	INDUSTRY	CONSTRUCTION	TRANSPORT	COMMUNICATION	BUSINESS SERVICES	TRADING
OPERATING SPECIALISTS						
2008	21	25	14	24	31	14
2013	22	15	14	18	25	15
FUNCTIONAL SPECIALISTS						
2008	8	7	6	12	12	8
2013	8	6	5	7	9	4
OFFICE EMPLOYEES						
2008	4	4	10	15	12	12
2013	7	3	8	9	7	9
QUALIFIED WORKERS						
2008	59	55	59	29	17	24
2013	58	49	60	21	16	30

Source: Bondarenko and Krasilnikova, 2014.

struction, and transport, with around half of employers in these sectors reporting shortages in both 2008 and 2013.

Thus employers demand both qualified staff and unskilled workers, and report that they have difficulty finding both. This shortage of qualified workers in the Russian labour market is not a cyclical event; rather, there are underlining causes to explain it. Firstly, there have been substantial cuts in primary and secondary vocational technical education. If during the Soviet era education was oriented towards vocational education, most young people after finishing secondary general education want to go on to higher/tertiary education. For example, in 2010, entry rates into tertiary education were more than 60 per cent, compared to less than 30 per cent for vocational institutions (OECD, 2012). This decision is explained by the availability of higher

education and the consequences of having completed it (for example, higher salaries). This is exacerbated by the ongoing retirement of existing qualified workers.

Assessment of the needs and shortages of the labour market of Kazakhstan

For Kazakhstan, the shortage of workers with secondary vocational education will increase in the short, medium and long term, as there is insufficient focus on training and demographic trends during periods of economic development.

According to the predicted balance of labour resources, economic growth will increase the number of people employed by 2017 up to 9.16 million (in 2012 the figure was 8.54 million) (Zhunusova, 2013). By contrast with the Russian Federation, total fertility is above replacement and the working-age population is expected to remain large in the coming years (UNPD, 2015), although this varies by region: in the Akmola, Qostanay, North Kazakhstan and East Kazakhstan regions there will be only slight growth or even a decline in the size of the economically active population due to a decline in the population (Forbes Kazakhstan, 2013).

Some demand for labour is also being met through ethnic return programmes in Kazakhstan. Between 1991 and 1 October 2014, 258,786 families or 952,104 ethnic Kazakhs¹ moved to Kazakhstan and obtained the status of repatriates. The majority of repatriates, that is 68.6 per cent, came from Uzbekistan, while 1.1 per cent came from Kyrgyzstan. They comprise people of working age (70.5 per cent), children under the age of 18 (23.6 per cent) and pensioners (5.9 per cent). By education level, 7.7 per cent of repatriates of working age have completed higher education, 18.2 per cent specialized secondary education, 54.4 per cent general secondary education and 19.7 per cent have no education. They help to meet a significant proportion of demand for medium-skilled jobs.

Predictions for labour demand growth between 2014-18 suggest that it will grow by 700,000 persons, while the economically active population will only increase by 400,000, and that shortages will be most noticeable in qualified professions in mining, construction and engineering (Amirova, 2014). A relatively high number of women already participate in the labour force, suggesting that although there is space to increase women's employment, shortages will still remain (ILO, N.D.)

Shortfalls are particularly noted in the engineering sector, where, as in the Russian Federation, employees are retiring without being replaced by new employees (Sheveleva, 2014). Evidence suggests that expectations

among workers, especially those with higher education experience, around wages and working conditions are higher than that which many employers are willing to offer, leading to mismatches (Atoyants-Larina, 2014).

In 2013, the Statistics Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan introduced a new descriptor entitled "Report on the size and staffing requirements of large and medium-sized enterprises" to determine the number of vacant jobs and staffing needs by professional groups, occupations, economic activities and regions and to assess the demand for certain professions and positions (Nomad, 2013).²

According to the statistical survey, on 1 January 2013, the number of employees in the surveyed enterprises amounted to 2,807,100 persons and the number of vacant jobs to 25,748, that is a vacancy rate of 0.9 per cent (table 6). Most of the vacancies required skills, with the plurality of vacancies found in the "highly qualified specialists" category. Unskilled vacancies only accounted for 15.1 per cent of vacancies.

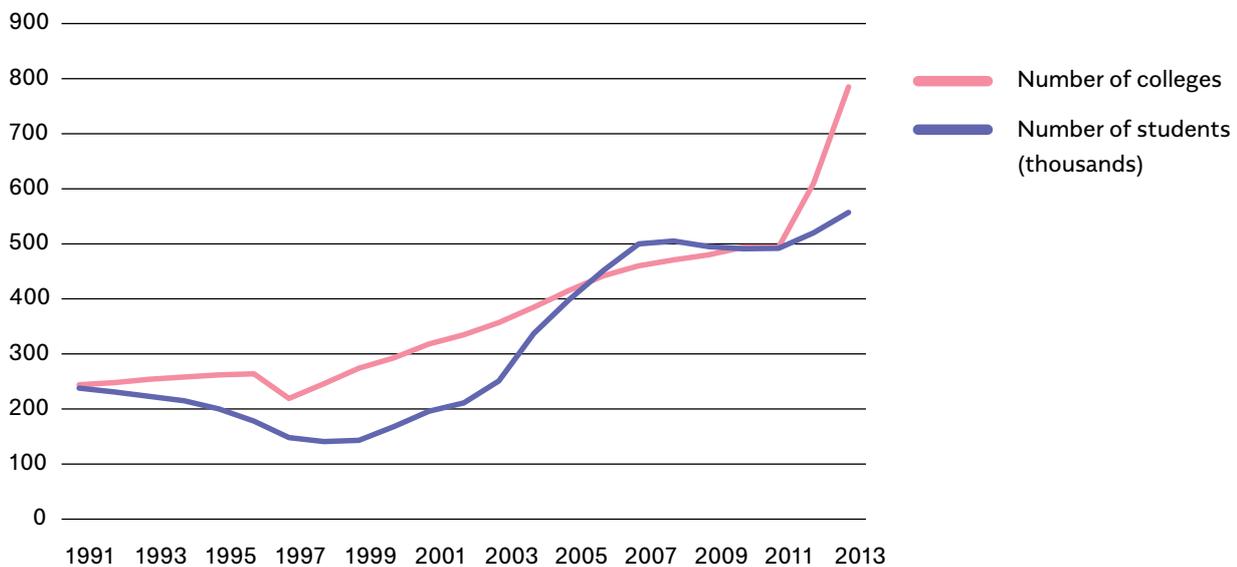
The expected demand for workers was 30,020 persons, some 1.1 per cent of the total number of employees (table 7).

In 2013, the largest shortfall in demand was for skilled workers, followed by that for unskilled workers. The greatest need for skilled workers in large and small industrial enterprises, arts and crafts, construction, transport, communications, geology and exploration of mineral resources was shared by industrial enterprises and organizations (who required 4,368 persons) and those in the field of construction (2,694 persons). Demand for highly skilled migrants was primarily

1 As at 1 July 2014, the population of Kazakhstan was 17,284,800 persons, including an urban population of 9,523,100 (55.1 per cent) and a rural population of 7,761,700 (44.9 per cent).

2 The list of professional occupational groups was defined in accordance with the State Classification of Occupations of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which was approved by State decree No. 22 on 16 October 1999. The large and medium-sized enterprises and organizations that are requested to provide information are engaged in all economic activities, except for: financial and insurance activities; public administration and defence; compulsory social security; and extraterritorial organizations and institutions. In the information on job vacancies, vacant jobs, as a result of the dismissal of workers, and newly created jobs are included in the total. In determining future staffing needs, the estimated additional number of personnel (employees) required in the current year is taken into account for the expansion of the company and the implementation of new projects.

FIGURE 10: NUMBER OF COLLEGES AND STUDENTS IN KAZAKHSTAN BETWEEN 1991 AND 2013



Source: Statistics Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2014a).

TABLE 6: JOB VACANCIES IN KAZAKHSTAN BY PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATIONAL GROUP AS AT 1 JANUARY 2013

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Heads of organizations and their structural units (departments)	1 090	4.2
Highly qualified specialists	6 641	25.8
Specialists with a medium skill level	3 938	15.3
Employees engaged in the generation of information, documentation, accounting and services	715	2.8
Employees of the services sector, provision of utilities, trade and related activities	2 671	10.4
Skilled workers in agriculture, forestry, hunting, fisheries and fishing	158	0.6
Skilled workers in large and small industrial enterprises, arts and crafts, construction, transport, communications, geology and exploration of mineral resources	4 026	15.6
Mechanics, equipment operators, engine operators of plant and machinery and fitters	2 627	10.2
Unskilled workers	3 882	15.1
Total	25 748	100.0

Source: Nomad, 2013.

TABLE 7: EXPECTED DEMAND FOR WORKERS IN KAZAKHSTAN BY PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS, 2013

	NUMBER	PER CENT
Heads of organizations and their structural units (departments)	1 021	3.4
Highly qualified specialists	5 755	19.2
Specialists with a medium skill level	3 283	10.9
Employees engaged in the generation of information, documentation, accounting and services	794	2.6
Employees of the services sector, provision of utilities, trade and related activities	2 026	6.7
Skilled workers in agriculture, forestry, hunting, fisheries and fishing	303	1.0
Skilled workers in large and small industrial enterprises, arts and crafts, construction, transport, communications, geology and exploration of mineral resources	8 322	27.7
Mechanics, equipment operators, engine operators of plant and machinery, fitters	3 745	12.5
Unskilled workers	4 771	15.9
Total	30 020	100.0

Source: Nomad, 2013.

found in health-care organizations and social services (1,635 persons), industry (951 persons) and education (931 persons) (Nomad, 2013).

Demand by sector shows the highest level of overall human resource needs in the private sector, especially in industry, construction, and health and social services, whereas minimal demand was noted in the agricultural sector; by contrast, public sector human resource requirements were highest in the health and social services sector. The largest numbers of vacancies were found in the main cities of Astana (5,044) and Almaty (4,964) (Nomad, 2013; Demoscope Weekly/Kyrtag, 2013).

These figures do not account for the large amount of irregular employment in Kazakhstan, however. They are thus likely to underestimate the true level of labour market demand, especially at lower skill levels.

Conclusion

Over the midterm and long term, demographic and economic trends will lead to shortages of medium-high skilled workers in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan. The factors driving this include a decrease in the number of people of working age as well as a reduction in the number and quality of vocational school leavers, including those working in specialized fields. While there may be scope for some of these shortages to be covered through increases in productivity and increased investment in aligning educational outcomes with labour market needs, in the midterm labour migrants will play a key role in filling these vacancies in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan. Ensuring that these migrants will have the right skills will also be important

TABLE 8: VACANCIES AND THE EXPECTED DEMAND FOR WORKERS BY TYPE OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND OWNERSHIP, 2013

	NUMBER OF JOB VACANCIES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE REPORTING PERIOD		ESTIMATED NUMBER OF WORKERS NEEDED IN THE REPORTING PERIOD		INCLUDING					
					PUBLIC OWNERSHIP		PRIVATE PROPERTY		FOREIGN OWNERSHIP	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Total	25 748	100.00	30 020	100.00	5 790	100.00	20 595	100.00	3 635	100.00
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	582	2.26	1 034	3.44	2	0.03	998	4.85	34	0.94
Industry	7 070	27.46	9 897	32.97	425	7.34	7 911	38.41	1561	42.94
Construction	1 518	5.90	5 278	17.58	49	0.85	4 445	21.58	784	21.57
Wholesale and retail trade; and repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	2 315	8.99	3 009	10.02		0.00	2 415	11.73	594	16.34
Transportation and warehousing	1 880	7.30	1 778	5.92	40	0.69	1 619	7.86	119	3.27
Accommodation and meals services	756	2.94	554	1.85		0.00	423	2.05	131	3.60
Information and communication	758	2.94	733	2.44	11	0.19	702	3.41	20	0.55
Real estate transactions	793	3.08	245	0.82	58	1.00	187	0.91		0.00
Professional, scientific and technical activities	1 315	5.11	1 643	5.47	642	11.09	616	2.99	385	10.59
Activities in the field of administrative and supportive services	2 185	8.49	990	3.30	230	3.97	755	3.67	5	0.14
Education	1 312	5.10	1 269	4.23	991	17.12	278	1.35		0.00
Health care and social services	4 365	16.95	3 041	10.13	2 845	49.14	194	0.94	2	0.06
Arts, entertainment and recreation	899	3.49	549	1.83	497	8.58	52	0.25		0.00

Source: Nomad, 2013.

Analysis of the education systems of the countries of origin and the skills provided by such systems, including vocational training

Given the shortages of skilled workers in key countries of destination, the following sections will consider the capacity of educational systems in countries of origin to meet these needs. Given the nature of demand for skilled workers, a particular focus will be placed on the vocational education system.

Kyrgyzstan

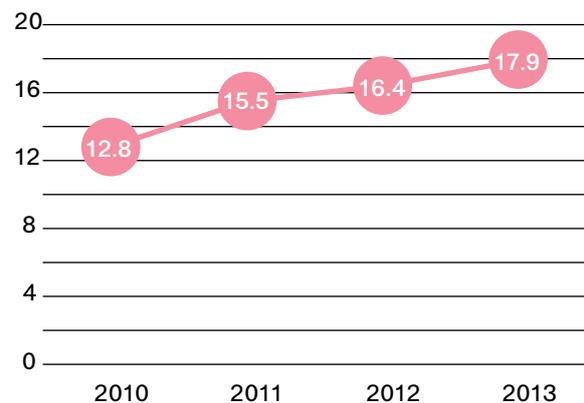
Levels of education in Kyrgyzstan are relatively high compared to developing countries. Indeed, tertiary completion rates exceed figures for the OECD countries, with 27 per cent of the working-age population having completed tertiary education (Ajwad, 2014a). However, despite the structure of demand in countries of destination in fields such as construction, manufacturing and engineering in the countries of destination, the fact that the number of graduates in engineering has declined since 2001 reduces the potential attractiveness of workers from Kyrgyzstan in this key sector for employment in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan. Moreover, the quality of the education is questionable, as Kyrgyz students' performance in the 2006 and 2009 rounds of the OECD PISA test was low, with 83 per cent of participants not reaching the baseline level of achievement (Bloem, 2013).

Vocational education and training (VET) is an area of particular concern, as it has the potential to increase the attractiveness of workers from Kyrgyzstan. However, in Kyrgyzstan, the number of graduates of VET programmes shrank by over 4 percentage points between 1989 and 2006, to only 11.6 per cent of the population aged 15 and over. There is an extensive, mostly-public and relatively accessible network of VET schools, with strong student growth in the fields of healthcare, economics and management, computer science, construction and operation of vehicles, all areas of interest for countries of destination. Standards for these institutions are set centrally by the State Migration and Employment Committee; however, quality varies between institutions, books, tools and curricula are often outdated, the status of the schools relatively low, while the oversight capacity of the State and resources

are limited. Moreover, recognition of the qualifications acquired is limited internationally (ETF and CEDEFOP, 2013). Since 2012, an educational reform strategy has been underway to address VET in the framework of broader educational reform, including increasing links with civil society and employers. (OECD and World Bank, 2011; Kyrgyz Republic, 2012).

A final potential area for skill upgrading is found in on-the-job training; however, data suggest that only around 20 per cent of employers in Kyrgyzstan offer such training, limiting the potential of this tool (Ajwad, 2014a).

FIGURE 11: GRADUATES OF THE SPECIALIZED (VOCATIONAL) SECONDARY EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENTS IN KYRGYZSTAN BETWEEN 2010 AND 2013, THOUSANDS



Source: CIS website (<http://e-cis.info/page.php?id=19611>).

Tajikistan

As with Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan shows a high rate of access to education: over 80 per cent of adults in 2013 had at least a secondary-level education, although evidence suggests that this level is decreasing (Ajwad

2014b; Republic of Tajikistan 2012). Meanwhile, levels of tertiary education, although below those of Kyrgyzstan, are nonetheless “on par with those in countries with similar levels of development” at around 13 per cent; however, there is a gender and regional imbalance, with more male and urban students completing higher education, and fewer female and rural students (Ajwad, 2014b). By contrast with Kyrgyzstan, there has been growth in graduations from programmes in the “engineering, manufacturing and construction” fields between 2000/1 and 2010 (Ajwad 2014a).

Vocational education in Tajikistan is provided in 110 institutions, 66 offering “basic” vocational education, and 49 offering “secondary” vocational education, covering almost 60,000 students aged 16 and above. However, it is recognized that the current level of provision is insufficient both in terms of number of places and in the quality of the education offered, as a result of limitations in terms of staff, curricula, and equipment. As a result, such institutions only account for 4 per cent of high school graduates, with training in some areas (including areas such as masonry and plastering, important given the predominance of construction among migrant workers from Tajikistan) declined significantly (Republic of Tajikistan, 2012; ETF, 2010). Furthermore, international recognition of qualifications from Tajikistan is limited (ETF and CEDEFOP, 2013). The situation is particularly concerning as evidence suggests that migrants are more likely to be from social groups who have not been able to access such vocational education, meaning that they are likely to migrate without the skills or qualifications most in-demand in countries of destination (ETF, 2010).

In 2012, recognizing the need for further development of this system, the Government adopted an “National Strategy for Educational Development to 2020”, which includes provisions related to vocational education. It aims to bring this system into line with labour market needs both in Tajikistan and abroad through methods such as updating curricula and teaching methods, equipping students with appropriate and certified labour market qualifications, working with employers, while also addressing “soft” interpersonal as well as “hard” technical skills (Republic of Tajikistan, 2012).

FIGURE 12: GRADUATES OF SPECIALIZED (VOCATIONAL) SECONDARY EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENTS IN TAJIKISTAN BETWEEN 2010 AND 2013, THOUSANDS



Source: CIS website (<http://e-cis.info/page.php?id=19611>).

Similarly to Kyrgyzstan, there are few opportunities to supplement formal learning with on-the-job training, as only 23 per cent of employers offered such training in 2009 (Ajwad, 2014b).

Uzbekistan

Access to general education in Uzbekistan is relatively high, with enrolment in primary and secondary education at 95 and 106 per cent of the school enrolment age groups. However, there is limited progression to higher education, as only 9 per cent of the population in the corresponding age group is enrolled in higher education, with the number and distribution of students decided by the Government (Ajwad, 2014c). As a result, the number of graduates from higher education institutions in Uzbekistan is lower than for countries with a similar level of income (World Bank, 2014). Even for graduates of these institutions, however, skill mismatches are evident, with graduates largely working

in fields such as construction whereas the majority of students (59.8 per cent) study education (World Bank, 2014).

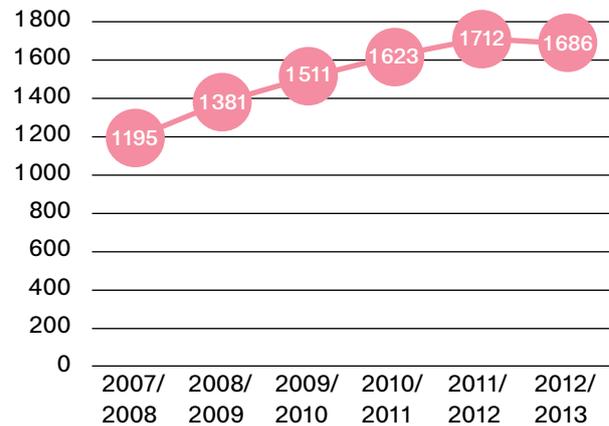
Under the National Programme for Staff Training, 12-year common compulsory free education was introduced in the country. A principal feature of the programme is that after nine years of study in a comprehensive school, the students are given the choice to study in specialized vocational colleges and academic lyceums for the next three years, where each of them receives, along with the general disciplines, training in two or three specialities that are in demand in the labour market, especially “engineering and other technical professions” (Karimova and Tskhai, 2014; Republic of Uzbekistan, 2012). In total, “nearly 80 percent of the country’s students enrol ... in vocational programs at the upper secondary level (a two-fold increase between 1999 and 2007)” (World Bank, 2014).

Education is provided through a network of 1,408 vocational colleges. While the student body is fairly balanced between male and female students (50.9 per cent male, 48.1 per cent female), female students are oriented overwhelmingly to courses in education and health, whereas male students make up the majority of students in areas such as agriculture, construction, and transport (Republic of Uzbekistan, 2012).

However, as with other countries under study, the quality of the education received at these institutions is perceived to be lacking. A 2008 study of employers found that 73 per cent of firms “indicated that the skills and education of the country’s workers posed an obstacle to doing business in Uzbekistan”, and that 35 per cent considered that a lack of employee skills “posed a ‘major’ or ‘very severe’ obstacle to growth”. There is a particular undersupply of tertiary graduates given the restricted number of places (World Bank 2014).

As with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, few employers offer on-the-job training: less than a quarter of employers surveyed in 2009 offered such formal opportunities (Ajwad 2014c).

FIGURE 13: THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS AT SPECIALIZED AND VOCATIONAL SECONDARY EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENTS BETWEEN 2007/2008 AND 2012/2013 (AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR), THOUSANDS



Source: State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Statistics, 2015.

Conclusion

Although each country shows distinct characteristics – such as the high level of tertiary graduation in Kyrgyzstan and the emphasis on vocational education in Uzbekistan – each country faces similar challenges, notably related to the content, teaching methodologies and capacity of their tertiary and vocational education systems. Although such education remains generally accessible (although less so for female students), the curricula, textbooks and equipment used to train students are often outdated; links with the private sector are relatively limited; the focus of education is on technical and hard skills, rather than soft skills which are nonetheless increasingly in-demand; and international recognition of qualifications is limited. This thus poses problems for matching the students graduating from such programmes with jobs in major countries of destination. However, the countries under study have also undertaken broad educational reform strategies and programmes, which include vocational training and in large measure aim to address these concerns.

Analysis of the employment patterns of migrant workers in the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and the Central Asian republics

Because Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan export labour, in this section we will focus on an analysis of the employment structure of migrants from these countries in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan.

Kazakhstan

Officially, highly skilled migrants are given priority among foreign workers. As at 1 September 2014, those employers with permits issued by the competent authorities had engaged 31,950 foreign migrants, which represented 7.9 per cent of the total number of workers employed by them (399,700 Kazakh citizens work in these organizations), including 23,307 first, second and third-category workers, indicating a priority given to skilled migration (Ministry of Healthcare and Social Development of Kazakhstan, 2014).

TABLE 10: CATEGORIZATION OF MIGRANTS BY SKILL IN KAZAKHSTAN

CATEGORY	MANAGERS AND DEPUTY MANAGERS	HEADS OF DEPARTMENT	SPECIALISTS	SKILLED WORKERS	SEASONAL WORKERS
Number of migrants	2 177	6 952	14 178	7 259	1 384

Source: Ministry of Healthcare and Social Development of Kazakhstan, 2014

It should also be noted that studies suggest that there is a high level of irregular migration, mostly at lower skill levels, that is not covered by these data; therefore the real structure of employment of migrants may in fact be quite different (Ryazantsev and Korneev, 2014). Nonetheless, the figures show that there is a market for skilled migrant workers in Kazakhstan.

Russian Federation

Employment of migrants

Both official data and research studies suggest that migrants in the Russian Federation are primarily employed in low-skilled positions. In the first half of 2014, the largest share of migrants (27 per cent) received a work permit to work as construction workers in mining, and installation and repair of constructions. The second largest category was made up of unskilled workers (22.4 per cent) (Shcherbakova, 2014). Most of the construction workers mentioned above came from CIS countries, namely: Uzbekistan (39.9 per cent) and Tajikistan (13.1 per cent). Unskilled workers came mainly from Uzbekistan (53.6 per cent), Tajikistan (21.7 per cent) and Kyrgyzstan (11.7 per cent) (Shcherbakova, 2014).

Other sectors of importance for migrant employment include: wholesale and retail trade and the repair of motor vehicles and household goods (36.3 per cent of migrant workers); 13.2 per cent in utilities and social and personal services; and 8.3 per cent in transport and communications (table 11).³ Less than one fifth of workers are accounted for in other types of economic activities (Mukomel, 2012b). Although certain differences exist in the economic activities of permanent and circular migrants, as well as in those who have just started working in the Russian Federation (table 11), trade is the main type of activity for all these groups. However, construction and transport are also attractive for circular migrants, as these types of activity enable them to make regular trips home to see their families. A relatively large number of circular migrants work in the manufacturing sector (Mukomel, 2012b).

A relatively large number of those who work in the Russian Federation for the first time are employed in the utilities sector; the share of those who work in this sector is 1.5 times greater than among permanent and circular migrants (Mukomel, 2012b). Consider-

³ The people working and having worked in the Russian Federation in 2011, but currently not working and looking for work. The Russian National Classifier of Economic Activities has been used.

TABLE 11: DISTRIBUTION OF MIGRANTS BY MAIN TYPE OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ACCORDING TO THE PERIODICITY OF TRIPS, PERCENTAGE

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES	PERMANENT	CIRCULAR	FIRST-TIME MIGRANTS	TOTAL
Manufacturing	2.8	5.1	4.0	3.9
Construction	22.0	24.3	20.7	22.6
Wholesale and retail trade; and repair of motor vehicles and consumer services	40.2	33.9	32.6	36.3
Hotels and restaurants	7.2	5.6	5.7	6.3
Transport and communications	6.9	10.2	7.5	8.3
Utilities, social and personal services	11.8	12.0	18.6	13.2
Domestic services	1.5	1.1	1.1	1.3
Total	92.4	92.2	90.2	91.9
Other activities	7.6	7.8	9.8	8.1
Grand total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Mukomel, 2012b.

TABLE 12: DISTRIBUTION OF MIGRANTS BY PROFESSIONAL GROUP ACCORDING TO THE PERIODICITY OF TRIPS, PERCENTAGE

PROFESSIONAL GROUPS	PERMANENT	CIRCULAR	FIRST-TIME MIGRANTS	TOTAL
Directors of organizations and structural departments	2.5	1.3	0.6	1.7
Highly skilled specialists	1.9	1.9	1.6	1.8
Semi-skilled specialists	1.8	2.0	0.9	1.7
Office employees	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.4
Qualified employees in the services, housing and utilities sectors and trade	30.5	26.0	18.9	26.6
Qualified employees in the agricultural sector and trade	0.3	0.7	0.7	0.5
Skilled workers	18.9	21.7	16.2	19.4
Machinery operators	6.9	9.4	7.8	8.0
Unskilled workers	35.7	35.7	51.9	38.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Mukomel, 2012b.

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TABLE 13: MIGRANTS EMPLOYED IN HOUSEHOLD DUTIES BY TYPE OF WORK, PERCENTAGE

	FOREIGN LABOUR MIGRANTS
Construction and improvement of apartments, houses, country houses or household buildings	67.6
Growing agricultural crops, land cultivation, landscape gardening, animal farming and fishing	13.1
Cleaning premises and housemaid services	5.6
Transportation services	5.8
Safety and security	0.5
Cooks or waiters	0.4
Babysitters, home teachers or tutors	1.0
Caring for ageing or sick family members	1.5
Other works and services	4.5
Total	100.0

Source: Rosstat, 2014e.

TABLE 14: NUMBER OF LABOUR MIGRANTS BY TYPE OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

	TOTAL NUMBER OF FOREIGN LABOUR MIGRANTS (THOUSANDS)	SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF MIGRANT WORKERS (PER CENT)	KYRGYZSTAN (THOUSANDS)	SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF MIGRANT WORKERS FROM KYRGYZSTAN (PER CENT)	TAJIKISTAN (THOUSANDS)	SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF MIGRANT WORKERS FROM TAJIKISTAN (PER CENT)	UZBEKISTAN (THOUSANDS)	SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF MIGRANT WORKERS FROM UZBEKISTAN (PER CENT)
Agricultural sector, hunting and forestry management	74.0	7.9	11.1	20.1	16.7	11.5	27.7	16.6
Fishing and fish-breeding	1.2	0.1		0.0				
Minerals extraction		0.0		0.0				
Manufacturing	64.7	6.9	14.5	26.3	22.4	15.4	9.4	5.6
Electric power, gas and water generation and distribution		0.0		0.0		0.0		0.0
Construction	161.9	17.3		0.0	32.7	22.5	31.1	18.6
Wholesale and retail trading; and repairing motor vehicles, motorcycles, household goods and personal items	352.6	37.6	21.9	39.7	35.0	24.0	66.3	39.6
Hotels and restaurants	58.8	6.3	1.9	3.4	2.9	2.0	8.9	5.3
Transport and communication	59.3	6.3		0.0	12.1	8.3	6.9	4.1
Financial activities		0.0		0.0		0.0		0.0
Transactions involving immovable property, leasing and provision of services	88.3	9.4		0.0	7.5	5.3	17.0	10.2
State administration and military security; and social insurance		0.0		0.0		0.0		0.0
Education	7.8	0.8		0.0		0.0		0.0
Public utilities, and social and personal services	65.9	7.0	5.8	10.5	15.4	10.6		0.0
Provision of public health services and social services	3.4	0.4		0.0	0.8	0.5		0.0
Total	937.9	100.0	55.2	100.0	145.6	100.0	167.3	100.0

Source: Rosstat, 2014e.

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ing the skills of permanent as compared to circular and first-time migrant workers, there are not major differences in profile; although there are proportionally more unskilled workers in the first-time migrant worker category, it is the largest group of all categories of migrant worker (Mukomel, 2012b).

Comparing countries of origin, there are some similarities in terms of the most popular occupations. For migrants from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, the most attractive jobs are found in the following spheres: wholesale and retail trade; and repairing motor vehicles, motorcycles, household goods and personal items. For those from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, construction is the second most attractive sphere, while for those from Kyrgyzstan it is manufacturing. The third most attractive sphere for those coming from Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan is the agricultural sector, while for those from Tajikistan it is manufacturing (Rosstat, 2014e).

Gender differences in employment are important. Male migrants are employed in construction, industry and transport, while women are employed in the services sector and trade. More than 40 per cent of all migrant women are employed in the services sector, including public services, cleaning premises and offices, housing services and utilities and providing private services at home. Another 33 per cent of such women are employed in trade. The remaining 25 per cent are employed in, among others, industry, construction and improvements, agriculture, public health services and education. The employment structure of women migrants is set out in table 15 (Tyuryukanova, 2011).

In general, such a distribution coincides with official statistics on labour migration. Women migrants from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are widely involved in the cleaning sector: 20 per cent of female migrants from Kyrgyzstan are employed in this sector. About half of all migrant women from Uzbekistan are engaged in trade (for instance, greengroceries and selling spices, dressings, fruits and vegetables at markets and in shops).

TABLE 15: EMPLOYMENT STRUCTURE OF WOMEN MIGRANTS BY SECTOR IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, PERCENTAGE

Services sector, total	42
Including	
Public services	21
Provision of private services at home	6
Cleaning	7
Housing services and utilities	8
Trade	33
Construction and improvements	8
Industry	5
Other kinds	12
Total number	100

Source: Tyuryukanova, 2011.

Migrant women from Kyrgyzstan are also represented in the group of better paid migrants, while the lowest salaries are earned by women from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan (see table 16).

In Moscow, the largest market for migrant workers, domestic employment is one of the major drivers of migrant employment, with private individuals hiring migrants to carry out household construction tasks, as well as domestic care tasks (Zayonchkovskaya and others, 2014b).

With regard to the methods used to find a job by domestic workers in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan, there are very few cases of official services being used; rather, social networks seem to be the main means of recruitment (Zayonchkovskaya and others, 2014a).

TABLE 16: THE AVERAGE MONTHLY SALARIES OF MIGRANT WOMEN IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

	ROUBLES PER MONTH	\$ PER MONTH (AT AN EXCHANGE RATE OF 30.5 ROUBLES FOR \$1)
Russian Federation (internal migrants)	26 500	869
Belarus	23 100	757
Ukraine	16 400	538
Kyrgyzstan	16 000	525
Azerbaijan	15 700	515
Georgia	15 500	508
Kazakhstan	14 900	489
Moldova	14 300	469
Uzbekistan	12 900	423
Tajikistan	12 800	420
Armenia	12 600	413

Source: Tyuryukanova, 2011.

TABLE 17: THE AVERAGE MONTHLY SALARIES OF MIGRANT WOMEN IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION BY SECTOR OF EMPLOYMENT

	ROUBLES	US DOLLAR
Education	17 800	584
Public health services	18 600	610
Services provided in private households	18 700	613
Transport and communication	15 200	498
Construction	15 700	515
Industry	15 900	521
Trading	15 000	492
Services sector (except those provided at home)	13 800	452
Cleaning	12 600	413
Housing services and utilities	12 500	410
Agricultural sector	11 000	361

Source: Tyuryukanova, 2011.

TABLE 18: METHODS USED TO FIND A JOB BY DOMESTIC WORKERS IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND KAZAKHSTAN, PERCENTAGE

With the assistance of friends, relatives and acquaintances	75.6
Through agents or recruiters	6.4
Through a private employment agency	4.7
Through an advert in a newspaper or on radio or television	4.7
Through an announcement or advert on the Internet	6.9
Other	1.7
Total	100.0

Source: Zayonchkovskaya and others, 2014a.

In many cases, the migrants who come to the Russian Federation come from poorer, more rural areas and have not received training: a study by the Eurasian Development Bank found that two-thirds of migrant workers in 2012 were younger than 35 and had no professional education (Vinokurov and Pereboev, 2013). Indeed, research suggests that more recent the migration, the lower the skill level of the migrants (Varshavskaya and Denisenko, 2014). However, even for those migrants who have higher skill levels, finding appropriate employment can be challenging: despite the fact that over 40 per cent of migrants from Kyrgyzstan had above-secondary education, most of these migrants were engaged in unskilled occupations. In many cases, migrants are engaged in informal employment: Studies have shown that large proportions of migrants are employed without any form of contract, with estimates of the number of migrants in this situation ranging from 40 to as high as 60 per cent (Wishniewski and others, 2014; Mukomel, 2012c).

Use of migrants' skills

These data suggest that, despite the growth in demand for skilled workers, most migrants are employed at low skill levels. Studies show that the number of highly qualified specialists who found their first job in the Russian Federation in accordance with their skills and education was eight times smaller than in their country of origin, while the figure for those with ordinary skills was four times smaller and for managers and office workers three times smaller. The same figure for unskilled workers was almost three times greater. As a result, there is a large divergence between what migrants do in their first job in the Russian Federation and what they did back home. For example, in the countries of origin, the percentage of managers and specialists stands at 21 per cent and of unskilled workers at 15 per cent of the total employed population, while in the Russian Federation the figures are 4 and 39 per cent, respectively (Varshavskaya and Denisenko, 2014).

There may be a number of reasons for these outcomes. Firstly, although demand for skilled labour is growing, there is also a growing demand for unskilled labour, especially in the informal sector. In particular, revenue from natural resources extraction is invested in areas such as construction, creating large numbers of unskilled and semi-skilled positions in these sectors, which are unlikely to be filled by Russian workers given the low status and wages of these positions (Tyuryukanova, 2012).

Secondly, these employment patterns reflect the fact that migrants are not in a strong position in the labour market, and thus in many cases accept the first job offered to them. Positions in public service, where there are more potential areas for skilled migrant workers to find employment, are barred to migrant workers except for those positions at the lowest grade. Similar problems are found in health care and education: only 7 per cent of the migrants working in the health-care sector at home work in the same field in the Russian Federation; in education, the figure is between 3 and 4 per cent (Wishniewski and others, 2014).

The earning structure of migrants further disincentivizes migrants from using their acquired skills. In the Russian Federation, migrants from Tajikistan earn on

average 3.8 times more than at home, but those who have completed higher education earn only 2.3 times more (Eurasian Development Bank, 2013). Survey data in Tajikistan point to a wage underrun of about a third compared with the average wages of skilled Russian workers in industrial enterprises and operators of machines and installations, but almost equal pay for working in less-skilled areas such as commerce and services (Wishniewski and others, 2014, p. 367). The prohibition on employing migrants at anything other than the lowest grades of public service means that skilled workers do not take up positions in this sector.

The lack of confidence in employees' skills among employers may be another factor. Insofar as recognition of foreign qualifications is permitted, it is subject to regulatory procedures which are relatively expensive and complex for migrant workers.⁴ Such professional mobility as is possible is done informally. Interviewed experts suggested that those migrants with the longest labour market experience had been able to leverage this into better positions in the workforce.

As a result of these trends, despite the demand for more skilled labour, rather than employing workers with relevant qualifications, most migrants are hired in unskilled positions. Earnings from migration become an alternative to professional advancement or completing the next stage of education.

Thus, de facto, the labour market of the Russian Federation attracts low-skilled work, even for workers with vocational and higher-level qualifications, and despite the demand for higher-skilled workers.

4 <http://obrnadzor.gov.ru/en/nostrification/>

Development of the skills that are in demand both in the countries of destination (the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan) and the countries of origin (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan)

Opportunities for increasing the qualifications of migrants working in the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and the countries of Central Asia, taking into account the capacities of the professional training centres in the countries of origin

As mentioned previously, reform efforts are underway in countries of origin to address the shortcomings with regards to education, including vocational education. The example of Tajikistan is provided below.

The President of Tajikistan supports the idea of establishing centres to train migrant workers to work abroad. It is recognized that both vocational and foreign language training in Russian are needed. As a result, a number of initiatives have been undertaken in Tajikistan. The Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment has set up a development programme for retraining staff, which runs until 2020. Between 2011 and 2015, a programme was introduced for the development of staff training centres in Tajikistan. So far, there are seven centres in different regions of the country.

A pilot resource centre has been opened in Lyceum Number 30, which includes several departments, namely: tourism; work with building materials (supported by Knauf); woodcarving; plumbing; car repair (supported by the German Corporation for International Cooperation); electric and gas welding; and hospitality. Furthermore, short-term paid training and retraining courses of between one and six months have been set up under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Science for about \$20 a month, and are proving very popular.

The Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment runs retraining courses (at the Employment Centre for Adults), where an allowance for studies is offered during training. Foreign partners from Germany (GIZ), Turkey (Tika) and the Islamic Republic of Iran helped in organizing retraining. However, according to experts from the Ministry of Education and Science, the effectiveness of such training is limited because the students pay tuition fees themselves.

FIGURE 14: THE RETRAINING CENTRE (THE CAR REPAIR DIVISION) AT THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR OF TAJIKISTAN



Source: Photo by the author.

By 2013, the number of workers eligible for further work abroad (mostly in the Russian Federation) had increased to 100,000 persons. Training financed from

the State budget covers 12,000 persons who are paid a stipend; electricity and utilities bills are paid for unemployed people who study.

Vocational training is a long process that requires careful planning and coordination of the actions of all the parties involved. Institutional reforms, such as the reorganization of the Migration Service to bring it under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment in 2014, can help inter-departmental misunderstandings

Despite these programmes and advances, however, further progress is needed, and training for certain occupations in colleges is undersubscribed. This is likely due in part to inadequate facilities, such as outdated machine tools, which limit the willingness of potential applicants to study in the colleges.

External support will be required for further progress, especially from countries of destination such as the Russian Federation. Proposals for reform from experts interviewed include providing training in countries of destination. The tertiary education system in the Russian Federation has fared better than those in Central Asian countries (Molodikh, 2013) and provides a solid base on which to build. Therefore, it makes sense to start developing migrant training infrastructure in the Russian Federation. The investments and the training process itself will require control, and it will be easier to do that in the Russian Federation where the required supervision system is already in place. This may also be easier to justify as investment will take place within the Russian Federation.

However, experts indicated that finding support from private sector bodies might be difficult due to a lack of a training culture in the Russian Federation and a fear of human resources being “poached” by competitors. This could be overcome through an obligation to work imposed on qualified foreign workers that graduate from Russian vocational schools. The best guarantee, however, is the Russian labour market, which continues to attract the majority of Central Asian migrants.

A further complication would come from the lack of labour market data to guide the list of professions to be offered by training programmes. Unfortunately, the la-

bour market projections in the Russian Federation are not regular or detailed enough. The State authorities do not provide the necessary funding to conduct such projections, while the size of the informal economy further complicates the task as is the dependency of the export-oriented economy of the Russian Federation on the volatile commodities market.

The Eurasian Economic Union, which Tajikistan may join very soon and which Kyrgyzstan joined in 2015 (Latuhina, 2015), could be a potential arena for finding solutions for these issues. Although it does not yet serve as a factor in developing training infrastructure for labour migrants from countries of origin, it could be a strong measure supporting the integration of labour markets provided for by this Union. Otherwise, the risk is that migrants from the Eurasian Economic Union will continue to be employed in the informal economy, limiting their prospects for skill development.

Within the Eurasian Economic Union, the recognition of the right of workers “to engage in professional activities in accordance with their specialisation and qualifications specified in their certificates of education ..., to be recognised in accordance with this Treaty and the legislation of the state of employment” is a positive development. It would be further expedient to conclude special agreements supporting the movement of skilled labour, as has been done in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN, 2008) and to strengthen human resource capacity through retraining programmes using Russian as the medium for such retraining. ASEAN (2009), for example, uses English for the same purpose. Another useful and promising lesson that might be used and adopted by the Eurasian Economic Union relates to the protection of workers’ rights with different qualifications as they move within the Union, as happens in ASEAN countries (Huguet, 2014).

Kazakhstan is not yet ready to implement large-scale professional training programmes for foreign migrants in its vocational schools, as became evident from the interviews that were conducted as part of the present study and an analysis of its labour market.

Developing a strategy to introduce a flexible mechanism for pre-departure professional training and to supply labour to meet the demands of the market, including the demand for skilled workers and managers

In addition to technical training, practice suggests that pre-departure preparation should further include seven areas, which will significantly improve the situation of migrant workers (Zaripov, 2011):

- a** Medical and health information (including a medical examination prior to departure, providing health insurance and the possibility of free medicine in the country of origin, advice on a healthy diet and lifestyle, and basic information about HIV, tuberculosis and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs));
- b** Accommodation and the local community (looking for initial and long-term housing, conditions of tenancy, security measures at home and on the street, principles of coexistence and housing and payment for community, relations with neighbours and police, and local shops and services, etc.);
- c** Moving and transport (preparation of personal affairs and documents for the trip and behaviour on the journey, public transport in the country of destination and minimizing costs, safety when travelling, using a car and road traffic rules);
- d** Legalization and employment (registration, terms of a licence or work permit);
- e** Protection of rights (in employment and everyday situations, communication with the police and immigration officers and enlisting the assistance of human rights NGOs);

- f** Children (getting to school, kindergarten, interaction with the local school administration and parents and opportunities for leisure activities for children);
- g** Leisure (free opportunities for recreation and rules of behaviour in places of entertainment).

When organizing pre-departure preparation, it is important to take into account the specifics of different groups of migrants. Migrants are likely to show differences in the following areas:

- Urban and rural background
- Age
- Level of education and knowledge of the Russian language
- Migration experience
- Professional experience

The idea of organized recruitment, which could provide a structure for such training, of foreign workers for vacant jobs in the Russian Federation has been under discussion for a long time. There are some positive examples of implementing organized recruitment schemes: for example, the Moscow programme to recruit taxi drivers from the Ukraine (Lebedev, 2008). However, such an organized approach has not received wide acceptance, although an agreement on the organized recruitment of migrant workers from Kyrgyzstan is under negotiation (official communication from the Federal Migration Service, 21 November 2014).

From the perspective of a country of origin, the experience of the Philippines provides a useful example for pre-departure orientation. The Philippines offers pre-departure training courses attuned to the specifics of each country of destination to prepare migrants for work and life abroad as part of a broader set of services to departing migrant workers. (Rogozhin, 2010).

Civil society can support this process. The Urals House NGO (Uralsky Dom) organizes recruitment schemes for migrant workers. The list of services provided by the NGO to labour migrants includes helping them to

search for a job in accordance with their level of education and qualifications and also for accommodation. They also provide operational support in obtaining work permits and licences and meet migrants upon arrival and accompany them to their place of work. The NGO also provides a number of services for employers: consultations and advice on the procedures applicable to recruitment of foreign labour; searching for suitable candidates; operational support regarding official quotas; assistance with providing the necessary documents to the Federal Migration Service, the Federal Tax Service and employment centres.

The Migrants' Multifunctional Support Centre run by the NGO delivers a number of services in one place: it provides information, consultations, accommodation and assistance with regularization, helps to find jobs for migrants and candidates for employers, maintaining links with migrants and employers, and compiles a database on prospective labour migrants from CIS countries and on vacancies available in Sverdlovsk region (from an interview with Leonid Grishin (Urals House, Zarechny, Sverdlovsk region).

Urals House NGO also provides accommodation in a dormitory equipped with all the necessary facilities, household appliances, furniture and kitchen equipment for the temporary housing of migrants.

In the future, NGOs' experience in solving migration-related issues could be a model for further governmental support in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan and be widely disseminated as a working model for agencies dealing with organized recruitment schemes. Regulatory schemes to ensure that they do not exploit workers or employers should also be implemented.

FIGURE 15: URALS HOUSE DORMITORY



Photo: Provided by Urals House.

FIGURE 16: A NEW DORMITORY FOR 23 PERSONS BUILT BY URALS HOUSE IN 2012 FOR THE TEMPORARY HOUSING OF MIGRANT WORKERS



Photo: Provided by Urals House.

Developing a strategy to decrease the ineffective use of migrants' skills through the recognition of qualifications and registration information

Effective use of the professional skills of migrants depends on there being a well-functioning system already in place in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan for labour force planning and upgrading and recognition of workers' qualifications. Unfortunately, this is not currently the case, as labour market information is scarce, and informality in the labour market is significant. Combined with the volatility of the labour market in these countries, it is hard to decide on how training can be organized in terms of numbers and required skills. As a possible way out, Governments could consider additional professional training for migrant workers so that they can learn a profession quickly (for example, a driver of a heavy goods vehicle).

Developing systems of certification of skills and competencies should be an essential component in ensuring the effective use of migrant workers' skills. This process is linked to the ensuring the regularization of migrants' status, as it is difficult to certify the work experience and skills of workers who have not had contracts. Furthermore, regularized employment of migrants provides routes for promotion and incentivises further training. It will be necessary to involve employers' associations (from the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and Central Asian countries) in skills assessment procedures.

Thus ensuring the labour migrants are able to migrate and work legally will be an important tool in ensuring that migrants are able to work in positions to which they are best suited — rather than being obliged to take up the only opportunities available — and to develop their skills through decent work. Current regulations, such as those enabling the deportation of migrants for minor traffic violations, would, however, seem to go against this goal.

Facilitating more active workers' participation in the labour markets of the countries of destination

The current situation for migrant workers looking for work is that they use social networks. Only 13 of the 35 licensed private employment agencies are working actively and some 4,069 persons were employed through them in 2012. There is therefore significant scope to formalize and organize the matching of prospective migrant workers in line with skills, rather than social capital. An important step would be to adopt a special law on private employment agencies, which will help to improve the situation as regards organized recruitment (information gathered from an interview with experts).

Furthermore, the creation of migrant-focused labour exchanges could help to transfer the issue of foreign workers' employment to the level of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. If migrant labour exchanges are institutionalized within the public policy domain, the issue of migrant workers' employment could be addressed in multidimensional and comprehensive ways. The box below shows a potential good practice in this regard in the Russian Federation.

BOX 1. GOOD PRACTICE IN THE KURGAN REGION (MOKROUSOV VOCATIONAL TRAINING COLLEGE NUMBER 35, MOKROUSOVA VILLAGE, MOKROUSOVSKY DISTRICT, KURGAN REGION, WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE URALS HOUSE NGO)

Since 2013 an experiment in training adult youth from Tajikistan has been conducted in a vocational agricultural college.

We have been carrying out an experiment for two years. We take grade 11 graduates from Tajikistan, who mostly do not speak Russian at all, and arrange for them to study at an agricultural college in the Kurgan region. They learn the language relatively well as they are in the right environment and involved in the learning process. They are trained for popular specialities (for example, tractor drivers and combine harvest operators) and provided with further work. They become sought after in the Russian labour market. Only 30 per cent of such students stay until the end. We teach them together with those in grade 9. We take those in grade 11, because they are at an age when they can take responsibility for themselves. Our vocational colleges are basically ready to accept them. The budget will cover them, and the inter-State agreement allows foreign citizens to be admitted. However, the quota for foreign students is never met, even though the system works. While they are learning, there is also on-the-job training. Agricultural enterprises determine for themselves if a student is capable. If they are, they are employed directly by these farms. They practice, then they sow the seeds, before harvesting the crops. And then they become employees of these enterprises. The experiments were performed in the Kurgan region. They live in a college dormitory with a 500-ruble scholarship — it is not much, but enough for toothpaste, soap and other necessities. There are also free meals and a uniform — they have everything. In addition, any 18-year-old student has the opportunity to go to work and earn something after school. This scheme is very easy to implement.

We want to see what the results are when the students are six months away from completing a three-year course. We expect that the students will have adapted and integrated themselves, and many of the problems that we hear about now will have disappeared.

However, this experience can already be applied now and on a large scale. Not this year, but the next — it could be a breakthrough. There is no written manual, we use our own initiative.

From an interview with Leonid Grishin (Urals House, Zarechny, Sverdlovsk region).

Young workers from Central Asia can help to solve the problem of the shortage of skilled and low-skilled workers. However, they risk encountering certain limitations in doing so. For example, as the case study in Box 1 shows, quotas for these schemes remain unfilled, suggesting that their marketing is still limited, which in turn reduces their impact. However, with a scaling-up of these examples, vocational education in Russian or Kazakh schools could be offered, creating a cadre of migrant workers trained to the standards of the labour markets of countries of destinations, as well as having relevant soft skills such as Russian language skills through the experience of living in these countries.

The next stage of implementing professional training programmes for migrant workers from Central Asia could target another age category, namely those aged between 25 and 35. A pilot project to upgrade the skills of migrant workers already in the workforce to build them up to the level required by the Russian and Kazakh labour market could provide a testing ground for such an initiative.

Changes in migration policy should be coordinated with changes in economic policy, together with employment, labour market, social and foreign policies.

Policy options

The changes in migration policy and education proposed above, and targeting more effective ways of using and improving the professional skills and competences of labour migrants from Central Asia, will need to have recourse to facilitators from the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Three strategic options might be considered in this context:

- a** To continue to support the status quo: Central Asian countries, the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan make no changes in terms of migration and education policies targeting labour migrants;
- b** Make adjustments: Central Asian countries, the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan adjust existing migration and education policies in accordance with the outlined shortfalls and insufficiencies in migration management;
- c** Revise and change: Central Asian countries, the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan reconsider their strategic approaches to migration and education policies, taking into account labour migrants' needs.

The results of our research demonstrate that ensuring the effective use and improvement of professional skills and competences of Central Asian labour migrants will require reforms to current policies.

TABLE 19: POLICY OPTIONS

	ZERO OPTION "SUPPORTING THE STATUS QUO" (A)	TRANSITION (ADJUSTMENT) OPTION (B)	FULL-CHANGE OPTION (C)
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	<p>Central Asia migrants' professional skills are not used in full; migrants are employed in low-skilled jobs; successful examples of professional training of Central Asia migrants exist in Russian regional vocational schools; competition among students entering Russian vocational schools increases as a result of Russian education reform and a decrease in opportunities to enter university; current migration regulations in the Russian Federation impose certain risks on the professional training of foreign workers in vocational schools due to possible deportation and being placed on the blacklist of foreigners banned from entering the Russian Federation for three years; no Russian language courses available in Central Asian republics; <i>and little in-depth research of the labour market by sectors is carried out.</i></p>	<p>Multiply positive practices regarding migrants' training in Russian vocational schools in professions demanded both in the Russian Federation and Central Asian countries; add an additional age group of Central Asian migrants in professional training programmes in the Russian Federation; amend existing migration policies and cancel deportation and entry bans for non-criminal offences; support Russian language learning programmes in Central Asia; sign an agreement with Uzbekistan on labour migration; strengthen the role of formal employment services (labour exchanges) and include Central Asian migrants as clients of these services; carry out information campaigns in Central Asian republics focusing on the possibilities of education in the Russian Federation; include a separate sector in educational policies; introduce educational programmes in Russian vocational schools destined for foreign migrants with bilateral certification of these programmes; initiate sector-specific research on the labour market to estimate the need for skilled workers and compile a list of priority occupations; sign bilateral agreements on organized recruitment of workers with Central Asian countries and monitor implementation of these agreements; certify private employment agencies that provide services for foreign workers; launch training programmes on the professions most in demand; develop legal employment services for migrant workers; certify skilled workers with the active involvement of employers' associations from the Russian Federation and Central Asia; and ensure pensions and access to medical services for migrants.</p>	<p>Create an association and a network of private employment agencies in five countries; unify education systems in the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union, prioritizing the professions demanded in all five countries; monitor regularly and periodically the labour market and make short-, mid- and long-term forecasts; introduce certification systems with active involvement of the employers' associations in carrying out tests; recognize bilaterally diplomas of the top vocational schools as rated by employers, to be applied in all five countries; and ensure maximum convergence of the certification systems with international standards.</p>

KAZAKHSTAN	The flows of labour migration from Central Asia are smaller compared with the Russian Federation; undocumented migrants from Central Asia are mostly employed in low-skilled jobs; <i>and little in-depth research of the labour market by sectors is carried out.</i>	Launch professional training programmes for workers from Central Asia with a guarantee of subsequent employment in Kazakhstan and Central Asian republics; sign bilateral agreements on organized recruitment of workers with Central Asian republics and promote organized recruitment schemes within the Eurasian Economic Union; regularize migration inflows; initiate sector-specific research on the labour market to estimate the need for skilled workers and to forecast the list of priority occupations; develop legal employment services for migrant workers; certify skilled workers with the active involvement of employers' associations from Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Central Asia; and ensure pensions and access to medical services for migrants.	Create an association and a network of private employment agencies in the five countries; unify education systems in the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union, prioritizing the professions demanded in all five countries; monitor regularly and periodically the labour market and make short-, mid- and long-term forecasts; introduce certification systems with the active involvement of the employers' associations in carrying out tests; recognize bilaterally the diplomas of the top vocational schools as rated by employers, to be applied in all five countries; and maximize convergence of certification systems with international standards.
KYRGYZSTAN	Labour migration is recognized as an important economic factor; lack of internal resources for large-scale vocational training in professions that are in demand; no support of Russian language learning in schools and vocational schools; limited prioritization of professions for training programmes; and little in-depth research of the labour market by sectors is carried out.	Create Russian language learning programmes for young people; sign bilateral agreements on labour recruitment with the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan; initiate sector-specific research on the labour market to estimate the need for skilled workers and to forecast the list of priority occupations; introduce vocational training programmes for the most in-demand professions; certify skilled workers with the active participation of employers from Kyrgyzstan and the Russian Federation; and ensure pensions and access to medical services for migrants.	Create an association and a network of private employment agencies in the five countries; unify educational systems in the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union, prioritizing professions demanded in all five countries; regularly monitor the labour market and make short-, mid- and long-term forecasts; introduce certification systems with the active involvement of employers' associations for carrying out tests; bilaterally recognize the diplomas of the top-rated vocational schools by employers, to be applied in all five countries; and maximize convergence of certification systems with international standards.
TAJIKISTAN	Labour migration is recognized as an important economic factor; lack of internal resources for large-scale vocational training in those professions most in demand; limited support of Russian language learning in schools and vocational schools; limited prioritization of professions for training programmes; and little in-depth research of the labour market by sectors is carried out.	Expand pilot programmes on potential labour migrants' training using the facilities of leading vocational schools and invite Russian specialists; sign bilateral agreements on labour recruitment with the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan; initiate sector-specific research on the labour market to estimate the need for skilled workers and to forecast the list of priority occupations; certify skilled workers with the active participation of country of origin and destination employers; and ensure pensions and access to medical services for migrants.	Create an association and a network of private employment agencies in five countries; unify education systems in the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union, prioritizing the professions demanded in all five countries; regularly monitor the labour market and make short-, mid- and long-term forecasts; introduce certification systems with the active involvement of employers' associations in carrying out tests; bilaterally recognize the diplomas of the top-rated vocational schools by employers, to be applied in all five countries; and maximize convergence of the certification system with international standards.

UZBEKISTAN	Labour migration is discouraged, although the departure of workers is not impeded; limited support of Russian language learning in schools and vocational schools; limited prioritization of professions for training programmes; and little in-depth research of the labour market by sectors is carried out.	Create Russian language learning programmes for young people; adjust migration policies and sign bilateral agreements on labour recruitment with the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan; initiate sector-specific research on the labour market to estimate the need for skilled workers and forecast the list of priority occupations; introduce vocational training programmes on those professions most in demand; certify skilled workers with the active participation of country of origin and destination employers; and ensure pensions and access to medical services for migrants.	Create an association and a network of private employment agencies in the five countries; unify the education systems in the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union, prioritizing professions demanded in all five countries; regularly monitor the labour market and make short-, mid- and long-term forecasts; introduce certification systems with the active involvement of employers' associations in carrying out tests; bilaterally recognize the diplomas of the top-rated vocational schools by employers, to be applied in all five countries.
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Source: The author's data.

The two policy-change oriented options targeting effective use and improvement of professional skills and competences of Central Asian labour migrants require a comprehensive and complex approach, including coordination of the actions of Central Asian countries with those of the destination countries. Numerous stakeholders will need to be involved in order to maximize results and facilitate a change of approach to labour migration as a long-term process.

In order to develop such a comprehensive approach, it may be preferable to start with the transition option (b) so as to ensure smooth changes and to provide the possibility of making adjustments in the course of its implementation. The final result of these gradual changes will be the strategic policy-change option (c): transforming migration and education policies in terms of better cooperation among all five countries, implementing best practices for effective use and improvement of professional skills and qualifications of Central Asian labour migrants, and developing the training infrastructure of Central Asian labour migrants in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan, and developing mutually beneficial cooperation among all five countries in the field of labour migration.

In both cases, education policies targeting labour migrants' training should be designed in accordance with the migration policies of the Russian Federation

and Kazakhstan, as well as with the migration policies in Central Asian countries and the development prospects of their labour markets.

Categories of Central Asian migrants to be targeted by new policies

When summarizing the discussion about the changes to be introduced to migration and education policies, it is necessary to distinguish between different categories of migrants that need to be targeted by new educational and training programmes in line with migration trends. These categories are the following:

- a** Young male labour migrants (between 18 and 24 years old) from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan;
- b** Young female labour migrants (between 18 and 24 years old) from Kyrgyzstan and in the midterm to those from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan;
- c** Central Asia migrants' teenage children born in the Russian Federation or having arrived with their parents;
- d** Labour migrants from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan who have had experience of working in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan;
- e** Skilled workers trained in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan who have worked in the country of origin.

The most vulnerable categories requiring attention are female labour migrants and migrants' children. The policies should be gender sensitive.

Conclusions and recommendations

The research showed that Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan are at different stages of the modernization of their migration and education policies for better use, improvement and development of labour migrants' professional competencies that are required in the labour market.

While countries of origin such as Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan make efforts to reform their systems with limited financing and capacities, the situation in Uzbekistan is complicated by the official attitude towards labour migration. Meanwhile, despite the likelihood of continuing migration flows to the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan (even in light of current challenges) there are a number of limitations preventing the effective use of the skills of migrant workers in these countries, stemming both from migration policies and broader labour market trends.

In Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, it will be necessary to overcome capacity and infrastructure gaps. Countries of destination would be logical partners to provide the necessary funds and help to organize the whole process, from textbooks and teachers to modern equipment for the classrooms. This will require increased commitment from these countries. The Eurasian Economic Union could play a role in this process, in addition to providing a framework for mutual recognition of qualifications.

In countries of destination, the need for international migrants is likely to continue at all skill levels. To make the most of this migration, more effective labour market data will be required, along with reforms to encourage migrants to make use of their skills, rather than taking jobs below their skill level, and to formalize the labour market and migration processes. Current reforms opening up licences to more classes of migrants in the Russian Federation are a positive development in this regard.

Recommendations

Implementing training programmes for migrants: the relative strength of the Russian education system, the importance of Russian standards for training, the comparative advantage for the development of language skills and the assurance of quality control

all imply that migrant training infrastructure would be most productive if hosted in the Russian Federation. It could build on the successful examples of the Urals House NGO, with increased measures to market these schemes and with support from the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation. Investments in these programmes from the private sector could be secured through imposing an obligation on graduates of these programmes to work for a certain time in the Russian Federation. Kazakhstan could also consider similar programmes for migrants looking to come to Kazakhstan.

Policy reforms: laws that make regular migration difficult, or provide authorities with a wide latitude to deport migrants, keep migrants in precarious situations, limiting their and their employers' willingness and ability to invest in upgrading their skills. Reforms to such laws should ensure that migrants are able to migrate regularly where their skills are needed and are not unduly threatened with removal, thereby fostering their personal and professional integration.

Formalization of migration processes: improving formal processes to match migrants with jobs according to skills and needs rather than social connections may be useful in making more efficient use of their skills. Sharing information on vacancies that cannot be filled in countries of destination with governmental employment agencies in countries of origin could be one means of ensuring formal migration. The potential role of legitimate private employment agencies in job matching, in the framework of ILO Convention (No. 181) concerning Private Employment Agencies, could also be considered in this regard.

Eurasian integration: the Eurasian Economic Union should consider strengthening its role through undertaking practical measures to strengthen education systems in countries of origin to support its goals of labour market integration. These could focus on agreeing on common standards for training infrastructure and curricula and programmes to implement these in member States of the Eurasian Economic Union. Specific agreements on high-skilled migration could also be forged in the context of this integration process, along the lines of the mutual recognition agreements in the ASEAN context.

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Annex I

The questions for experts

- 1 Assess the short-term and long-term needs of the labour market in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan.
- 2 Which professions will be in demand?
- 3 How is the migrants' employment market organized in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan?
- 4 What is the professional level of migrants from Central Asia working in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan?
- 5 What strategy could be developed to use and develop migrants' professional skills so that they are in demand both in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan and in the Central Asian countries themselves, upon their return?
- 6 Are the education systems of the Central Asian countries currently able to train migrants in the professional skills that are in demand in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan?
- 7 How flexible are the education systems in Central Asian countries and could they be reorganized to retrain migrant workers on a large scale?
- 8 Are the migration policies of the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan focused on the best use of migrant workers' skills?
- 9 What changes in the migration policies of the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan could be made so as to make best use of migrants' skills?
- 10 In the long term, what training system should be implemented in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan and in the Central Asian countries to help migrants find jobs according to their qualifications and needs at home and in the country of origin?

Annex II

List of experts interviewed

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

1	Nikita Mkrtchyan	Leading researcher, Institute of Demography, Higher School of Economics
2	Grishin Leonid	Chairman (Zarechny, Sverdlovsk region), Urals House (Uralsky Dom) NGO
3	Sergei Abashin	Professor, Department of Anthropology, European University at Saint Petersburg
4	Irina Denisova	Professor of Economics, New Economic School

KAZAKHSTAN

5	Vadim Nee	Independent expert
6	Kairatbek Djamankulov	Expert at IOM
	Kyrgyzstan	
7	Anara Aldasheva	Expert Centre for Social Research NGO
8	Bolot Temirov	Expert, Zamandash Association (Bishkek)

UZBEKISTAN

9	Yulduz Ataniyazova	Chairman of the Regional Public Organization for the Promotion of Spiritual Enrichment and Harmonious Development of the Personality
10	An anonymous source	

TAJIKISTAN

11	Aslisho Nadirshoev	Head, Department for the Organization and Training of Migrant Workers, Migration Service, Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment
12	Muzaffar Zaripov	Director, Centre for Migration and Development, Information Resource Centre for Labour Migrants, IOM Tajikistan

Annex III

Purpose of the research

The present research is aimed at studying the labour market needs of destination countries in North and Central Asia (namely, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation) and options for building the capacities of countries in this subregion to make efficient use of migrants' skills and to develop those skills that are particularly in demand in both the countries of destination and origin (the latter comprising Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan). The present paper contains recommendations on how to adjust migration and education policies in order to target better utilization of the potential of labour migration and make better use of labour migrants' skills and competences in both the countries of origin and destination.

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Given that the Russian Federation considers labour immigration as a way to compensate for shortages in its internal labour market, the present research will contribute to the development of measures to be undertaken by the country, in conjunction with the sending countries, to improve labour migrants' qualifications.

Objectives of the research

The present research seeks:

- a** To assess the short-term and long-term needs of the labour markets of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation;
- b** To analyse the level of professional training of migrant workers from Central Asia working in Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation;
- c** To analyse the employment patterns of migrant workers in both the countries of origin and destination;
- d** To propose a strategy for the development and use of labour migrants' skills that are in demand both in the countries of origin and destination.

The research was guided by the following research questions:

- a** Do the prevailing education systems in the countries of origin provide people with skills that meet the requirements of labour markets both domestically and in the countries of destination?
- b** Are education systems in the countries of origin sufficiently flexible so as to allow specific skills training, for example vocational training?
- c** Does the current policy on migration in the Russian Federation make best use of migrants' skills and knowledge?
- d** How can migration policies be reformulated so as to allow better use of migrants' skills?

- e** In the long term, which training systems have to be put in place in both the countries of origin and destination so as to provide migrants with the necessary skills?

Limitations of the research

Due to the limitations of time and resources, the research only identified basic trends.

Methodology

A flexible methodology, based on a combination of qualitative methods (expert interviews) and secondary data analysis, was used. Due to limited and fragmentary data on labour migrants from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation, the use of qualitative sociological methods was considered suitable for this study.

Semi-structured interviews with experts were used as the main method of primary data collection. The main objective of such interviews was to find out how the experts evaluated the extent to which labour migrants' skills were being utilized, and what measures they thought could be implemented in migration and educational policies — in both the countries of destination and origin — in order to improve the existing situation in the most effective way.

The interviews were structured according to a guide prepared in advance. However, the list of questions was changed depending on the professional backgrounds of the experts. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed, and took place by Skype or telephone, or were conducted in person.

The qualitative character of the research meant that the approach was open, enabling refinement and modification of the formulated hypotheses and assumptions.

Experts working in the fields of migration, labour market and education were selected for interview.

A combined technique was used for interviewing, which included the use of:

- a** A short questionnaire with open questions (for qualitative analysis);
- b** Free narrative — recorded on a Dictaphone or written down — to preserve the information that was not included in the questionnaire.

On the one hand, this combined technique formalized the more general aspects of the interviews, while, on the other hand, it helped to minimize the loss of the specific information that the experts shared.

Collecting secondary data and materials related to the research topic

Analysis of previous research findings, scientific articles and statistics gathered by the national statistics offices and relevant ministries (of migration and education) was carried out and supplemented by an analysis of the data concerning the level of qualifications of migrants grouped by country of origin, the data of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

The scope of the information that was analysed provided for a broader picture of the challenges faced by both countries of origin and destination, as well as by labour migrants themselves when trying to match competences and skills with the demands of the labour market. The findings that resulted from the analysis of secondary information allowed the preparation of recommendations to enhance the use and development of competences and skills. The results of the project can be used for evidence-based policymaking by the Governments of countries of destination, as well as for adjusting migration and education policies in the countries of origin.

Selection of interviewees

Experts from various organizations working in the fields of migration and education were selected (the full list of experts appears in annex II).

Interviewees included the following:

- a** Employees of migration services;
- b** Employees of non-governmental organizations (NGOs);
- c** Officers of higher educational institutions;
- d** Employees of diaspora organizations;
- e** Experts from international organizations;
- f** Officers of ministries of education;
- g** Scientists and researchers.

