



IMPACT OF MIGRATION PROCESSES ON SOCIOECONOMIC CHANGES IN RUSSIA AND THE SECURITY OF ITS CITIZENS

IMPACTO DOS PROCESSOS DE MIGRAÇÃO NAS MUDANÇAS SOCIOECONÔMICAS NA RÚSSIA E NA SEGURANÇA DE SEUS CIDADÃOS

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ABSTRACT

Migration is one of the phenomena of modern social relations that still has an ambiguous impact on the political, economic, and social situation and affects the security of the country's citizens, especially in connection with the development of illegal forms of migration. The study aims to determine a variety of threats and negative consequences of illegal migration for the Russian Federation and analyze their impact on the transformation of socioeconomic processes in Russian society, including the security of the country's citizens. Using methods typical of qualitative case studies, the authors conclude that the consequences of illegal migration to Russia include quantitative (an increase in the number of unwanted migrants) and qualitative problems (violations by migrants in the economic sphere and a compromised sense of security among citizens). They are especially noticeable in times of economic crisis. The phenomenon in question has enormous criminal potential. Therefore, the state cannot ignore this situation and should take appropriate organizational and legal measures aimed at limiting the scale of illegal migration and its consequences.

Keywords: Russian Federation; Illegal migration; Shadow economy; Economic crime; Transnational crime; Ethnic crime.



RESUMO

A migração é um dos fenômenos das relações sociais modernas que ainda tem um impacto ambíguo na situação política, econômica e social e afeta a segurança dos cidadãos do país, especialmente em relação ao desenvolvimento de formas ilegais de migração. O estudo tem como objetivo determinar uma variedade de ameaças e consequências negativas da migração ilegal para a Federação Russa e analisar seu impacto na transformação dos processos socioeconômicos na sociedade russa, incluindo a segurança dos cidadãos do país. Usando métodos típicos de estudos de caso qualitativos, os autores concluem que as consequências da migração ilegal para a Rússia incluem problemas quantitativos (um aumento no número de migrantes indesejados) e qualitativos (violações por parte dos migrantes na esfera econômica e uma sensação de segurança comprometida entre os cidadãos). Eles são especialmente perceptíveis em tempos de crise econômica. O fenômeno em questão tem um enorme potencial criminoso. Portanto, o Estado não pode ignorar essa situação e deve tomar medidas organizacionais e legais adequadas para limitar a escala da migração ilegal e suas consequências.

Palavras-chave: Federação Russa; Migração ilegal; Economia paralela; Crime econômico; Crime transnacional; Crime étnico.

1 INTRODUCTION

Migration is a process that has both positive and negative consequences (Rylskaya, 2016). Thus, many modern states do not dare to either close their borders to immigrants or completely open them (Abdullayev et al., 2023), which requires them to take measures aimed at limiting the adverse consequences of migration flows (Amirova & Khramova, 2016). This process depends on many factors. The most important are the legality of migration or lack thereof (Golubeva, 2017), the size and nature of the migrating group (Iontsev, 2017), the expectations and intentions associated with arrival in a new country (Perevezentseva, 2019), and the cultural, social, political, and legal environment of the host country (Burankova, 2016).

In the context of migration processes, scholars pay special attention to recording illegal migration, which is a problem affecting many countries. If we divide countries into the following groups, the first group records an excessive influx of immigrants (Andryushenkov, 2018), the second group suffers from large losses of the emigrating population (Rybakovskii et al., 2019), and the third group faces the problem of transit migration (Ryazantsev & Ochirova, 2021).

Scholars do not have a clear understanding of which group the Russian Federation belongs to. To comprehend the causes and consequences of migration in Russia, let us consider the genesis of such processes in Russia. This phenomenon originated in



the collapse of the Soviet Union, which destabilized the situation in both Russia and the other republics. Ethnic conflicts began to grow between the indigenous inhabitants of the republics and the representatives of other nationalities, in particular, in the North Caucasus, Transcaucasia, and Central Asia (Dzhafarov, 2007; Grigorieva, 2017). The collapse of the unified economic system caused an economic crisis in some countries (Yumashev et al., 2020), which led to the liquidation of enterprises, inflation, and unemployment (Akhmetshin et al., 2018). This situation made citizens of many former Soviet republics look for better living conditions both legally and illegally (Smirnova, 2009).

The decision to leave such countries for Russia was greatly facilitated by the transparency of borders, including with Central Asia (Dubonos et al., 2016). Additional reasons for uncontrolled migration in the 1990s were the imperfect legislation (including in terms of preventing illegal migration, the unsettled issues of illegal stay and responsibility for it, the lack of relevant regulations preventing the admission of foreign labor to the Russian market) and shortcomings in the functioning of law enforcement agencies (including the lack of an appropriate immigration control system at Russian borders and the absence of deportation centers for foreigners and stateless persons), which facilitated entry into Russia using fake documents (Reznik & Amirova, 2016). Illegal migration to Russia was also aggravated by differences between the economic and demographic development of the home and host countries (Afanasev & Afanasev, 2022; Mikheeva, 2015).

Thus, the main reasons for the growth of migration flows to Russia can be found in the globalization of social relations, which necessitates movements to solve economic problems. Labor migration remains the predominant type. "Depending on the situation, changes occur but general migration flows have been stable for 15 years" (Kostenko, 2023) (for example, 600,000-700,000 migrant workers came to Moscow annually 10 years ago, and approximately the same number was recorded in 2022). Due to these reasons, Russia has become both a destination country and a specific corridor, i.e., a transit point for citizens from Asian countries, primarily to Western Europe (Metelev, 2015).

The Russian specifics lie in strict requirements for regulating migration processes (Rybak et al., 2023). These requirements determine the conditions for the legal entry, stay, residence, and work of foreign citizens in the host country. Any deviation from these rules makes a foreigner a violator (Andrichenko & Plyugina, 2019).



However, not all violations make a foreigner an illegal migrant; many types of misdemeanors can be settled with a fine. For example, failure to register for migration within seven business days can be rectified with a fine, while paid work without permits, if such a case is detected again, leads to deportation from Russia (Article 18.10 of the Code of Administrative Offenses of the Russian Federation (State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, 2001)).

Based on the conducted analysis, we believe that illegal migration has the greatest impact on the socioeconomic transformation in the country and contributes to a decrease in the level of security.

Considering the complex impact of illegal migration, this article aims to determine the threats and negative consequences of illegal migration for Russia and analyze their impact on the transformation of socioeconomic processes in Russian society, including the security of the country's citizens.

Within the framework of this article, we are trying to answer the following question: What are the negative consequences of illegal migration for Russia?

2 METHODS

Due to the research nature of the objective, we opted for a qualitative approach and based this study on the analysis of scientific literature on the research topic.

To achieve the objective set, we used an indicative set of theoretical methods: generalization to determine the negative consequences of illegal migration for Russia and structural and logical analysis to establish relationships between various negative consequences of illegal migration for Russia and possible measures to reduce them.

In conformity with the purpose of the case study, we selected regulations governing migration issues in Russia and national and international scientific sources from Research Gate, Science Direct, Google Scholar, and Elibrary using the keywords "Russia", "illegal migration", and "illegal migrants" (restrictions on the selection of sources are associated with limited access to Scopus and Web of Science).

3 RESULTS

The analysis of scientific literature showed that the negative consequences of illegal migration in Russia can be presented as threats to the state and society (Table 1).



Table 1. Negative consequences (threats) of illegal migration in Russia

Negative consequences (threats)		Sources
Economic consequences	The influx of cheap, often low-skilled labor	M.V. Mikheeva (2015), S.E. Metelev (2015), R.I. Akyulov (2021), E.V. Perevezentseva (2019), M.A. Burankova (2016)
	The growth of the shadow economy	S.M. Dubonos, A.A. Kovalev, D.A. Sorokolet, and V.V. Alpatikov (2016), M.V. Mikheeva (2015), S.V. Ryazantsev, A.A. Baikov, and V.M. Morozov (2019), O.A. Levshukova, N.R. Petrov, and A.I. Kopnina (2019)
	Massive capital flight from Russia	V.A. Smirnova (2009), S.M. Dubonos, A.A. Kovalev, D.A. Sorokolet, and V.V. Alpatikov (2016), I.V. Vorobeve (2020), M.A. Burankova (2016)
	Major costs of maintaining illegal migrants and the costs of their deportation	S.M. Dubonos, A.A. Kovalev, D.A. Sorokolet, and V.V. Alpatikov (2016), D.R. Amirova and A.I. Khramova (2016), E.V. Perevezentseva (2019)
Criminogenic (criminal) consequences	An increase in transnational crime	S.A. Dzhafarov (2007), L.V. Andrichenko and I.V. Plyugina (2019), I.S. Vlasov, N.A. Golovanova, and V.Yu. Artemov (2012), I.V. Nikitenko (2013)
	The creation of ethnic criminal groups	V.A. Andryushenkov (2018), I.S. Vlasov, N.A. Golovanova, and V.Yu. Artemov (2012), I.V. Nikitenko (2013)
	The criminalization of Russian society	S.A. Dzhafarov (2007), V.A. Smirnova (2009), M.A. Rylskaya (2016), V.A. Andryushenkov (2018)
Political consequences	The creation of terrorist, extremist, and nationalist organizations of ethnic origin	S.A. Dzhafarov (2007), S.M. Dubonos, A.A. Kovalev, D.A. Sorokolet, and V.V. Alpatikov (2016), G.A. Reznik and D.R. Amirova (2016), I.V. Nikitenko (2013)
	The corruption of law enforcement officials	R.I. Akyulov (2021), A.V. Solodilov (2016), M.A. Rylskaya (2016)
	Demographic changes in the area where migrants live	A.V. Solodilov (2016), D.R. Amirova and A.I. Khramova (2016), V.A. Iontsev (2017)
	The creation of ethnic enclaves	A.V. Solodilov (2016), D.R. Amirova and A.I. Khramova (2016), E.V. Perevezentseva (2019)
	An increase in ethnic conflicts	I.V. Vorobeve (2020), S.V. Ryazantsev, A.A. Baikov, and V.M. Morozov (2019), V.A. Iontsev (2017)

Compiled by the authors

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Main threats of illegal migration

When discussing the negative consequences of illegal migration, economic consequences come to the fore (Sidorenko, 2023). Illegal migrants work primarily in a grey zone, i.e., in construction, trade, public catering, and less often in industry or





transport (Mikheeva, 2015; Mirzabalaeva et al., 2019). They often work seasonally and have neither contracts nor social security (Meteev, 2015). Their employers do not care about legalizing their stay or establishing legal labor relations since this allows them to avoid taxes and pay lower wages (Burankova, 2016; Zakharchenko et al., 2018). All the above connects illegal migration with the shadow economy and economic crime.

Migration to Russia, especially from Central Asia, is rotational, i.e., visitors from other countries work in Russia, but the money they earn is taken away or sent home, and Russia loses it (Akyulov, 2021). Therefore, the home countries of migrants benefit from migration to Russia. Due to the help of migrants to their families, the financial situation of the population improves and the unemployment rate decreases (Bobkov et al., 2020).

The subsequent consequences of illegal migration are criminogenic. This is due to the fact that illegal migrants who are unable to get a job and have no means of subsistence are in a difficult situation, making them a risk group (Afanasev, 2018; Vlasov et al., 2012). Thus, illegal migration is associated with various types of crime, especially organized crime, since an important feature of foreign crime is its good organization. Some criminologists (Nikitenko, 2013) rightly believe that migration is a phenomenon that contributes to crime, affecting the dynamics of crimes against the individual, in the sphere of economics, public safety, law and order, government, etc., as well as any other criminogenic manifestations. As a result, the so-called criminal migration can be divided into:

- Transnational, including smuggling of drugs and weapons, trade in counterfeit goods, theft and resale of cars, human trafficking, money laundering, and international criminal cooperation;

- Ethnic, including the activities of ethnic criminal groups. For example, Chinese and Vietnamese groups (mainly in Primorsky Krai, Irkutsk Region, and Chelyabinsk Region) are engaged in the production of counterfeit products, smuggling flora and fauna, organizing illegal migration to Russia and Europe; Central Asian groups distribute drugs both in Russia and through Russia to Europe and the USA (Nikitenko, 2013). Ethnic criminals are also involved in arms trafficking, labor trafficking, counterfeiting documents, and smuggling. These structures are organized criminal groups headed by leaders and their inner circle of the same nationality. They are characterized by hierarchy, clearly defined management, strict discipline, a protection system, and constant sources of illegal income (Vlasov et al., 2012). In practice, they





become an element of international organized crime that has significant mobility compared to other groups and can pursue specific criminal intentions.

The threats arising from the activities of foreign groups include establishing criminal contacts with international criminal groups and exporting illegally obtained funds to their home countries. The development of international relations among ethnic criminal groups is facilitated by the flourishing ties with the CIS countries in the context of transparent state and customs borders and the corruption of the state apparatus (Andryushenkov, 2018).

Migration also has political consequences, i.e., it can lead to the political destabilization of Russian society. This might be caused by the activities of criminal, terrorist, extremist, and nationalist organizations of ethnic origin, whose participants are mainly migrants. The corruption of law enforcement officials by illegal migrants and organizers of illegal migration also has a political manifestation (Solodilov, 2016).

Migration causes demographic changes in the structure of society in areas where migrants live, which often contributes to the growth of ethnic conflicts (Petrov et al., 2022). The situation can be aggravated by the economic problems of the state and its citizens. These problems cause widespread discontent in society. If the crisis worsens, it develops into national opposition to migrants (Amirova & Khramova, 2016), where the latter are being blamed for all problems. Moreover, Russians are concerned about the formation of ethnic enclaves (Perevezentseva, 2019) as the result of migrants gathering under difficult situations. This leads to the creation of communities, diasporas, and subcultures which can constitute migrant crime reserves (Solodilov, 2016). Therefore, the presence of migrants often makes citizens feel a threat. Russians worry about their transformation into criminal elements, ideologization, and politicization (Iontsev, 2017).

In this connection, the Russian authorities and society should realize that migration processes cannot be stopped in a situation of slow population growth and a shortage of labor. It is important that migrant communities are not isolated as this causes suspicion, anxiety, and uncertainty about their intentions, which results in tension and conflict.

Modern illegal migration is a factor in the criminalization of Russian society. This is a complex mechanism with the corresponding infrastructure. It involves not only criminal gangs and government officials but also ordinary Russians who serve migrants by providing them with housing or legalizing documents for their stay.





4.2 Measures to reduce threats associated with illegal migration

There is no doubt that Russia can take measures to reduce the threats associated with illegal migration. Considering the connection between migration and the internal security of the state and society, one of the most important tools is an appropriate immigration policy in combination with the development of international cooperation. This should cover not only the exchange of information but also the neutralization of the causes of illegal migration and the adverse phenomena accompanying or associated with it (Chernysheva et al., 2022). We mean a comprehensive Russian immigration policy focused on the creation of rules of entry and residence, as well as mechanisms that allow the integration of immigrants within Russian society (Zharov et al., 2022). Consequently, three elements are significant for immigration policy: border security, immigration control, and integration policy.

A key role in the implementation of preliminary checks is played by special systems containing information about passengers and operating based on agreements concluded by transport companies (railways, airlines). This allows transport companies to exchange data on passengers with Russian immigration services, as well as help border control process unsuspecting travelers more quickly and spend more time on those who might pose a threat. For effective control of entry into Russia, it is crucial to use modern solutions in the field of protecting documents from forgery (the use of biometric technologies) and the proper collection, processing, and use of personal data.

To fight against illegal immigration, the Russian authorities should take not only standard measures to introduce appropriate legal norms and carry out coordinated police actions against groups involved in smuggling or human trafficking but also address the socioeconomic and political problems that give rise to illegal migration flows. This refers to establishing and developing cooperation with countries that are the main sources of illegal migration. This cooperation should include:

- Concluding agreements that combine migration policy issues with trade and development programs (promoting sustainable development in those countries that produce the largest number of illegal migrants);
- Implementing cooperation programs providing financial and technical assistance to countries directly related to migration;
- Conducting campaigns in countries sending illegal migrants to raise awareness of the threats associated with illegal migration flows.





Limiting the possibility of legal entry into the country often reduces illegal migration.

In addition to protecting borders and controlling the influx of foreigners, appropriate integration policies are key to neutralizing threats associated with migration and countering the isolation of migrants, on the one hand, and strengthening xenophobic sentiments, on the other hand.

Serious public discussion, as well as educational and information programs implemented by the state regarding both the positive and negative consequences of migration, can weaken xenophobic tendencies. However, the establishment of normal relations between the host society and immigrant communities requires a compromise. In the case of the host society, it means the acceptance of differences. Thus, immigrant communities need to abandon certain elements of their cultural traditions that contradict the basic values of the country of residence.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The study proved that the main problem of growing illegal migration is a decrease in the level of state security, including at the level of public requests to increase the safety of citizens. Another challenge is the influx of criminals and the development of cross-border crime since illegal migrants finding themselves in difficult situations are likely to join organized crime. This phenomenon contributes to the creation of migrant phobia and the formation of negative stereotypes about migrants among the country's population.

Further research should focus on the analysis of the necessary measures to minimize the negative consequences associated with illegal migration, such as appropriate immigration policy, solving socioeconomic and political problems that give rise to illegal migration flows, public discussion, and educational and information programs of the state about the consequences of migration movements.

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