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Article



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FACTORS OF PUSHING AND RETENTION OF THE POPULATION OF THE REGIONS OF RUSSIA DURING MIGRATION MOVEMENTS

Abstract: The article analyzes the population movement of Russian regions in the period from 1990 to 2023, including intraregional and external migration flows. The authors focus on the scale, directions and effectiveness of migration exchange with Russian regions and foreign countries, study age characteristics and factors of migration, assess its consequences for the socio-demographic potential of Russian regions as donors. Mechanisms for curbing migration outside the regions are considered, including the provision of preferential mortgages and other social payments to the population. The importance of their spatial characteristics at the level of the post-Soviet space of Russia and its regions is studied and demonstrated. The combination of the widely used "language of numbers" in the text - an abundance of statistical material - with an emotionally charged assessment of the demographic and ethnic processes under study enlivens the work and cannot leave the reader indifferent. The article poses important scientific questions to the reader, but, unfortunately, provides fewer answers.

Key words: migration; migration exchange; efficiency, direction of migration; push and pull factors, depopulation, ethnic aspects, regional migration.

Language: English

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Introduction

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The regions of Siberia and the Far East are the most important territories of the Russian Federation in geostrategic terms, ensuring the implementation of their interests in the Asia-Pacific region. If before 1990 they developed at an accelerated pace, then with the beginning of the reforms the situation changed dramatically. This is well illustrated by the dynamics of demographic indicators. Thus, in the period from 1959 to 1990, the population growth of these regions exceeded the similar indicator of the European part of Russia three times and amounted to 66.4%, which determined the increased rates of development not only of the service sector, but also of various branches of the economy.

With the onset of reforms, the state was unable to pursue a targeted economic policy in the macro-region. Although all development programs for these regions, starting with the very first one from 1987, proclaimed the consolidation of the permanent population and the attraction of labor resources as one of the priority tasks of state policy, the demographic situation here developed under the influence of large-scale political changes that caused an economic crisis and the degradation of social sectors. Migration as a factor in population growth lost its significance. Over the next three decades, the population of the macro-region decreased by a record 22%, while in the European part this indicator remained practically at the same level. At present, the socio-economic situation in the regions of the Far Eastern Federal District and Siberia remains difficult, complicated by a number of institutional problems. The main evidence of this is the incessant migration outflow, when the population "votes with its feet" against the decline in the standard and quality of life, dissatisfaction with its future and distrust of state and municipal authorities. Migration mobility of the population of these regions is one of the highest in the country. The volume of migration in the period 2018–2023 averaged 8.2% of the total population of the regions per year, while in the Russian Federation as a whole this figure was 6.4%. At the same time, the efficiency of external migration is the lowest in the country (1,316 out-migration per 1,000 in-migration).

These trends are typical for both Crimea and the North Caucasian republics, where state support instruments came into full effect after their incorporation into Russia. Before that, the regions had the status of "invited participant" in the priority development programs of these regions of Russia, which determined the residual approach to financing the planned activities. The purpose of this article is to analyze migration processes in these regions from 1990 to 2023, including identifying the scale, directions and effectiveness of migration exchange in the modern period (2018–2023), factors pushing and

attracting the population, and assessing possible consequences. The information base for the study was Rosstat data and statistics of these regions. The object of the analysis was long-term migrants registered at the place of stay for a period of nine months or more.

Main part

A long period of depopulation of the regions under study began in 1992, when migration loss exceeded natural growth for the first time. In 2007, the population reached its minimum; the decline since 1990 was 8.1%, including due to natural decline (Figure 1). Since 2008, due to natural causes, there has been a slight annual increase in the number of residents (by the beginning of 2021, the final increase compared to the 2008 level was +2.1%). The exceptions were 2018 and 2020, when there was a decrease in the population due to a negative migration balance against the background of a decrease in natural growth. Since 2018, there has been a significant decrease in the birth rate (–25.5% by 2023) and a gradual increase in the mortality rate (+4.3%), which indicates the formation of a stable trend towards a decrease in natural population movement. In 2023, the situation was worsened by the negative consequences of the coronavirus pandemic, which will continue to have an impact. The last two months of the past year were characterized by high mortality, as a result of which 2023 became the worst in terms of mortality in the last eight years.

The repeated mention of the "peaceful" coexistence of Russians with some other peoples for many centuries, as well as the "peaceful" annexation of some peoples and territories, gives grounds to assume that the ethnic balance in the article means peaceful and relatively conflict-free coexistence of different ethnic groups within Russia, which was disrupted by depopulation, first of all, of the "state-forming ethnic group" – Russians. The prerequisites of such an approach do not quite correspond to the harsh reality of the former colonization of the ethnic outskirts of Russia. Thus, the five-century-long truly peaceful coexistence of Russians and Mordvins was preceded by hundreds of years of regular wars. Commenting on the quote from the article: "The peaceful coexistence of the Slavic and Finno-Ugric peoples is already a good millennium old," it would be appropriate to mention scientific works on history that focus on this topic and refute the author's statement above. The colonization of Siberia was also so "peaceful" and voluntary that in the folklore of the peoples of the North, Russians still have negative characteristics. For example, during ritual dances, the indigenous people put on masks and explain to the spirit of a dead animal that it was killed by Russians, and the spirit must take revenge on them. At the same time, it would be wrong to claim that only Russian colonizers were cruel killers. In fact, violence between different ethnic groups was absolutely normal at that

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time. The colonized peoples also waged wars with their neighbors. Colonization, violent and non-violent assimilation are justified and explained in the article as follows: "the Slavs, being at a higher level of social development than the aborigines ..."; "... (Latvia and Estonia) did not have their own statehood at all ... These countries were not captured by Russia, but reconquered by it"; "These countries ... were at a lower level of social development and were weak due to their small size ... (also) focused on themselves the geopolitical interests of (other) major powers." A worthy illustration of the "low level" of development is, for example, the fact that the most ancient cities in the territory of the Russian Empire and the USSR were not built by the hands of the Slavs and not on Slavic lands. Another interesting fact: in the 17th century, the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia (modern western and central Latvia), which "did not have its own statehood," owned its own colonies in Africa (modern Gambia) and America (Tobago Island in the Caribbean). But not only the history of achieving "ethnic balance" is described in the article "Depopulation and its ethnic aspects in Russia." The interpenetration of peoples within the union republics in the USSR due to a single migration space is noted in a positive light. The importance of the peace-loving national ideology of the Soviet state is also mentioned. At the same time, in the article we find data on the exodus of the Russian population from the ethnic outskirts of the USSR from 1959 to 1989 in Transcaucasia and from 1979 to 1989 in Central Asia. This, as well as the well-known bloody ethnic conflicts in these regions in the late 1980s, suggests that Soviet ideology was not at all that effective. It is obvious that interethnic tensions were not resolved with the help of ideology, but only accumulated. State pressure made it possible to keep ethnic conflicts in a latent state for the time being, giving them the so-called "compressed spring effect". Speaking about the role of ideology in interethnic relations, we can also recall how the Soviet state helped not only ordinary people, but even historians to "forget" the less than peaceful pages of the relations between the Russian ethnic group and the peoples of the colonized territories. Thus, the leading Soviet ethnographer of the 1930s – 1950s, Professor S.P. Tolstov, while creating the program of the historical department of the "leading theoretical organ of the party" (the magazine "Bolshevik") recommended that the

Propaganda and Agitation Department of the Soviet Communist Party in 1944 promote "... the great positive role that the spread of elements of Russian culture had on the development of backward peoples," and also fiercely denounced Soviet historians who could not "... grasp our Soviet understanding of historicism and the patriotic attitude to the historical past," mistakenly, in his opinion, "... exposing Russia's predatory policy." Professor Tolstov, as was customary at that time, generously flavored his texts with quotations from Comrade Stalin. This effective manager, as is well known, easily and effectively solved any ethnic problems, teaching entire nations remarkable field lessons in interethnic good neighborliness in the steppes of Kazakhstan, as well as in the taiga and tundra of Siberia. Isn't that why Soviet ideology and propaganda of those years were so effective? The article notes the important role of the "single Russian language for the country" in the USSR. We see the inaccessibility of education (especially professional) in the native language as one of the main tools for the assimilation of Russian ethnic groups and the marginalization of their remnants. Nevertheless, the process of colonization and assimilation of the peoples of Russia is described in the article rather as useful for establishing "ethnic equilibrium". Consequently, the continuation of the discriminatory language policy by the state towards ethnic minorities, according to this logic, helps to "neutralize the negative consequences of the ongoing ethnic ... processes". While fully sharing the author's position on the importance of the Russian language as a language of interethnic communication uniting the peoples of Russia (and previously the peoples of the USSR), we still believe that he exaggerates the severity of the consequences of the exodus of the Russian population from the national republics. The article describes the threatening process of "systematic squeezing out of the state-forming people of Russia from the national republics". This part clearly demonstrates a noticeable reduction in the share of Russians in the population of a number of subjects of the Russian Federation during the intercensal periods. The most frightening picture has developed in Yakutia, Tuva and all the North Caucasian republics except Adygea. But is Russia really losing these national outskirts? We analyzed the results of the 2010 and 2020 population censuses in these regions (table 1).

Table 1. The share of the population who speak Russian in individual regions of Russia according to the 2010 and 2020 population censuses, %

Subject of the Russian Federation	The share of the population that speaks Russian		
	2010	2020	change in share, p.p.
Chechen Republic	81.4	91.8	10.4
Republic of Dagestan	88.2	90.5	2,3
Republic of Ingushetia	86.6	88.4	1.8

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Republic of North Ossetia	96.3	97.0	0.7
Kabardino-Balkarian Republic	95.1	95.6	0.5
Karachay-Cherkess Republic	96.3	96.3	0
Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)	93.3	92.3	-1.0
Republic of Kalmykia	99.3	97.6	-1.7
Republic of Tuva	87.8	84.7	-3.1
Dagestan, Chechnya and Ingushetia together	86.2	90.7	4.5

As can be seen from Table 1, the proficiency in the "unique language for the country" Russian in the specified republics is not only at a high level, but is even growing in most of them. Fulfilling our interest "especially the three North Caucasian Republics" we also calculated this indicator for them together. Thus, despite the reduction in the share of the Russian population in the republics, the spread and influence of the Russian language in them is only growing. Perhaps this tool of interethnic communication will have a greater impact on peace and stability than the presence of hundreds of thousands of Russian residents had in the Soviet years. Describing the ethnic dynamics of the population of the Caucasus using census data, it is necessary to raise the issue of their quality. The results of the 2010 and 2020 censuses (primarily in the republics of the North Caucasus, but also in Moscow and Bashkortostan) have been repeatedly subjected to justified criticism. Among their shortcomings can be called, for example, the probable double counting of the population that left the regions. Direct falsifications aimed at artificially

inflating the region's population cannot be ruled out. In addition, in some regions, local authorities probably tried to influence the census results in terms of answers about nationality. Thus, taking into account the language situation, the imbalance of the "ethnic equilibrium" in the North Caucasus may not be as catastrophic as the author of the article describes. Analyzing the results of the 2020 census, they point to "an acceleration in the rate of decline in the share of the main ethnic group in the population of Russia" compared to the results of the 2010 census. In particular, the article reports that "over 10 years, the share of Russians has decreased by almost 4.9 million people." Even if we ignore the rather unusual measurement of the share in millions of people, such an interpretation of the census results looks a bit superficial. As we have already noted above, the quality of the censuses left much to be desired. This is especially true for the 2020 census. In Table 2, we have provided data from both censuses for further analysis.

Table 2. Some data from the 2010 and 2020 Russian population censuses by ethnic composition of the population, thousand people.

	2010	2020
The entire population	145 167	142 857
including Russians	115 889	111 017
nationality not specified	1,461	5 629
including refusal to answer	n.d.	584

As can be seen from Table 2, the share of Russian residents whose ethnicity ("national" in census terms) is not indicated at all has increased several times. If in 2010 such residents made up 1%, then in 2020 it was already 3.9%. Despite the decrease in the absolute number of Russians during the intercensal period, their share of the total population who indicated their nationality increased slightly from 80.64 to 80.9%. But according to our research, "a decrease of almost 9 million people in the Russian people" "is a breeding ground for nationalism". Consequently, fearing Russian nationalism, numerous representatives of ethnic minorities who "systematically squeeze out" Russians could refuse to inform the census taker of their nationality. This, it would seem, can explain such an increase in the share of the censused population without indicating their ethnicity. But in reality, about

90% of this population was not asked about their nationality at all in 2020, since many residents were censused based on administrative sources that do not contain such information. This means that the number of ethnic minorities hiding their nationality, even in the worst case, did not exceed 584 thousand people. Based on this and the reasonable assumption that residents of Russia censused in absentia are distributed by nationality in the same way as those who indicated their ethnicity, we calculated the approximate total number of Russians according to the 2010 and 2020 censuses. It amounted to 117.1 million people in 2010 and 115.1 million in 2020. Thus, it is most likely that the number of Russians in this intercensal period decreased by 2 million people, or almost 1.7%, while the entire population of the country decreased by 2.3 million people, or 1.6%.

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These results contradict our previously mentioned findings, according to which between the 2010 and 2020 censuses, “the share of Russians decreased by almost 4.9 million people.” We have repeatedly pointed out the important role of migration in establishing or disrupting “ethnic equilibrium.” By and large, we are talking about the repatriation (here and below, we conditionally use this term, implying only the increase in the Russian population of Russia in international migration exchange) of Russians from the former republics of the USSR. Despite this importance, in Russia “since 2020, the recording of the ethnic composition of migrants has ceased.” Therefore, the authors are forced to only approximately inform readers of the number of Russians who arrived for permanent residence between the censuses - “70-80 thousand people.” This estimate seems strange. We are right that the recording of the ethnic composition of migrants has ceased since 2020, but it was conducted before that. In such an accessible source as the “Demographic Yearbook of Russia” for 2020, one can easily find information according to which the migration increase of Russians in 2018–2020 alone amounted to 242 thousand people, and it most likely did not stop after that. If we assume that its value over the three years before the population census at the end of 2020 was equal to the average annual value for 2018–2020, then for the entire intercensal period it should have been 387 thousand people. To a certain extent, these data can be controlled due to the fact that, fortunately, there is at least one more large post-Soviet state that is very responsible about the ethnicity of its residents - Kazakhstan. We allowed ourselves to use the statistics

of this country (and other countries of the post-Soviet space), which is a major migration partner of Russia, and also tried to make approximate estimates of Russian repatriates in the specified period. The Statistics Committee of the Ministry of National Economy of Kazakhstan publishes data on the national (ethnic) composition of migrants, including for individual countries, including Russia. An analysis of these data showed that from 2010 to 2020, Kazakhstan lost a total of 156.3 thousand Russians in migration turnover with Russia. It should be added that, no matter the quality of migration accounting, departures are recorded worse than arrivals, which means this number should be even higher. As you can see, the Kazakh Russian repatriates alone more than cover our estimates. We went further and calculated what the migration loss of the Russian population in the CIS countries in exchange with Russia could have been, based on the size of the Russian diaspora in these countries in the early 2000s, Kazakhstan data and the assumption that the exodus of Russians to their historical homeland from other CIS countries was approximately the same intensity as in Kazakhstan. To do this, we collected data on the national composition of the population of the censuses closest to 2020 in a number of countries. Based on the 2019 Kazakhstan census and the above current accounting data, the migration losses of the Russian diaspora in Kazakhstan amounted to approximately 3.5% of its size at the beginning of the 2000s. In Uzbekistan, no censuses were conducted for a long time, so the estimated size of the Russian population at the beginning of the 2000s is given. General data on the Russian diaspora in the CIS are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The number of Russian population in individual countries according to population censuses, million

Country	Census year	Number of Russians
Ukraine	2019	8.3
Kazakhstan	2020	4.5
Belarus	2020	1,1
Kyrgyzstan	2019	0.6
Moldova (including Transnistria)	2014	0.37
Turkmenistan	2019	0.3
Azerbaijan (excluding Nagorno-Karabakh)	2014	0.14
Georgia (excluding Abkhazia and South Ossetia)	2012	0.07
Tajikistan	2020	0.07
Armenia	2019	0,015
Uzbekistan	2020	about 1.0
Total		about 16.5

The migration increase of the Russian population of Russia in exchange with the CIS countries for 2010-2020 calculated in this way could exceed 500 thousand people. But Kazakhstan is not the only country full of Russian people. Therefore, we found another way to roughly estimate this repatriation flow.

The database of non-personalized microdata of the 2020 Russian population census allows us to identify residents who participated in the census, called themselves Russian and indicated their place of residence a year before the census in other countries. There were 72,081 such Russian immigrants who

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arrived in just one year. Let's add to them 3.5% of people who were probably censused in absentia without indicating their ethnicity and we get at least 75 thousand Russian immigrants. The above-mentioned statistical data from Kazakhstan show that during this intercensal period, the flow of Russian emigrants was rapidly decreasing. Therefore, we can assume that in the specified years, Russian immigration was greater than 600 thousand people. There was, of course, emigration of Russians. But in the context of the ongoing repatriation of Germans, Jews and titular peoples of the post-Soviet countries, its volume probably did not exceed 300 thousand people, based on Rosstat data on international migration, showing a total of about 450 thousand people who left in 2018-2020. Thus, we can estimate the migration increase of the Russian population of Russia between the 2010 and 2020 censuses at least within 300-500 thousand people, which is in good agreement with the data of the Demographic Yearbook of Russia, but significantly more than the author's estimate. Of course, in addition to Russians, other titular peoples of Russia (Tatars, Bashkirs, Chuvashes, Mordvins, etc.) are widely settled throughout the fragments of the empire and are also partially moving to their historical homeland. But we did not take them into account, since by their appearance on Russian soil, as should follow from the logic of the article, they only aggravate the violation of the "ethnic balance".

The number of these peoples from 2010 to 2020 decreased by almost 1.1 million people, and their share in the population of Russia decreased from 2.87 to 2.39%, or by 16.7%. Based on the author's logic that

"such dynamics" among Russians are "a breeding ground for ... nationalism", we assume that among the above-mentioned peoples, who are depopulating much faster than Russians, the environment for regional ethnic nationalism (and, as a consequence, separatism in the national republics) is much more fertile. It must be especially fueled by the fact that the depopulation of these peoples is reaching such a scale due to assimilation (otherwise, in the absence of wars and genocide, it would be problematic for these peoples with a relatively high average birth rate to decrease so much). In confirmation, we cite data from the 2020 population census on the average number of children born per woman of the named nationalities aged 30-44, i.e. those women whose birth rate peaked during the described period of depopulation (Figure 1). Following the logic of the article on the breeding grounds for nationalism, by analogy with the fact that correcting the dynamics of the Russian people in Russia should make the environment for nationalism less fertile, we inevitably come to the conclusion that the way to minimize the risk of nationalism and separatism in the national republics is to improve the population dynamics of the corresponding titular peoples in their regions. Consequently, representatives of these peoples in their republics must make every effort to "systematically squeeze out the state-forming people," that is, the Russians (as well as all other non-titular peoples), thus nipping nationalism in the bud. As a result, we came to contradictory conclusions about who, whom, and from where should squeeze out in order to preserve peace, harmony, territorial integrity, and "ethnic balance" (Figure 1).

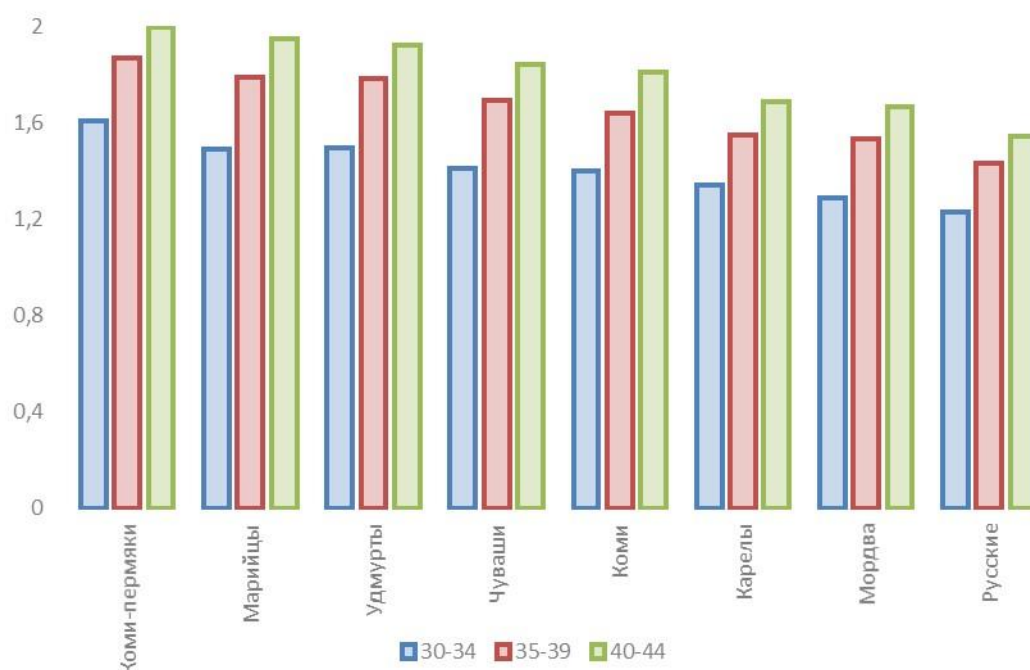


Figure 1. Average number of children born per woman of the corresponding age by individual ethnic groups according to the 2020 Russian population census.

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At present, the region's population is 985.4 thousand people (0.7% of the Russian Federation's population), with a population density of only 2.8 people/km².

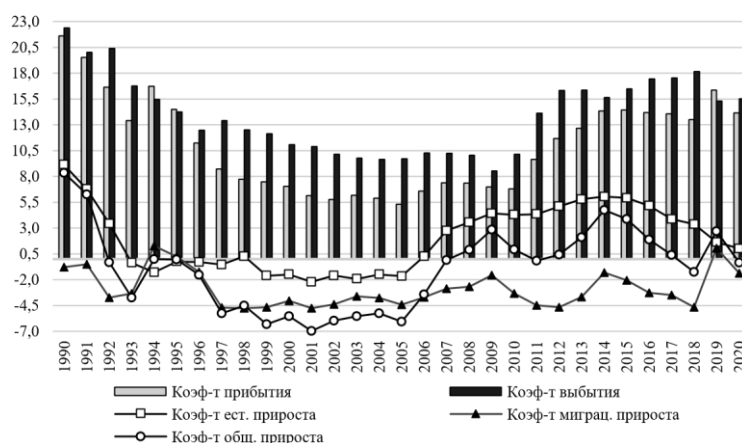


Figure 2. Migration and natural population growth rates

The mechanical movement of the population of the analyzed regions, in contrast to the natural one, had a strictly negative trend during the study period, with the exception of three years when there was an insignificant migration increase (from 0.2 to 1.3 per mille). In total, 433.1 thousand people have left the republic since the early 1990s. The influx and natural population growth could not compensate for these losses. As a result, Buryatia alone lost 88.3 thousand people, or 9% of the average annual population in 2020 - mainly of working age and high qualifications. The migration balance during the study period fluctuated in the range from -0.5 to 4.8 per mille. In the last decade, the migration loss, having reached a minimum value in 2018 (-1.3 per mille), began to increase annually and reached a maximum in 2023 (-4.7 per mille).

In 2023, a small migration increase was noted (+1.0 thousand people), due to the influx of foreign labor from China (migration balance +0.8 thousand people), Uzbekistan (+0.4 thousand people) and Kyrgyzstan (+0.3 thousand people), mainly for work in construction, the rise of which occurred after receiving the "Far Eastern" federal subsidy for the creation and reconstruction of infrastructure facilities, as well as in the field of timber harvesting and processing. In addition to these industries, foreign labor migrants are employed in agriculture, certain sectors of trade and services. In some cases, attracting migrants is the only possible resource for performing temporary and seasonal work, for example, in agriculture or construction.

It should be noted that the number of foreign workers, taking into account illegal labor migrants, is several times greater than official statistics show. According to the Migration Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia, about 3 thousand violations of entry rules, stay regime of

foreign citizens and illegal labor activity are registered annually. A large number of people who arrived in Buryatia alone on long-term visas (from 1 year) for the purpose of labor activity and study were also recorded. Thus, in 2023, their number was 10,320 and 1,926 people, respectively (19.6% of the number of foreign citizens initially registered for migration at the place of stay). In general, the balance between the number of people registered and removed from migration registration in 2023 was 11,401 people.

However, given the low standard of living and income in the Republic of Buryatia alone, one can hardly expect a mass influx of foreign citizens here. Until now, China has been the main "supplier" of migrants. But in recent years, China's population has been aging, as well as its wealth has been growing, which will restrain the growth in the number of labor migrants from this country. At the same time, interregional emigration continued in 2023, which led to a negative migration balance in 2023, despite the quarantine measures caused by the COVID pandemic. In this regard, the migration increase in 2023 can only be regarded as an episode so far. There are no cardinal changes in the migration situation, the permanent population continues to leave, labor migrants, not finding any special bonuses, also leave the regions after the end of their contracts, a slight annual increase in the population is provided by natural factors.

In general, the level of migration mobility of the population of the Republic of Buryatia alone is quite high compared to other regions of the Russian Federation. In the period 2018–2023, the average annual migration turnover rate was 90 per mille, which corresponds to 14th place in the Russian Federation and 4th in the Far Eastern Federal District. In the last decade, migration turnover has been characterized by annual growth to the level of the early 1990s. The exceptions were 2018 – due to a

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decrease in the volume of intra-republican flows, and 2020 – due to the pandemic and the introduction of quarantine measures (Figure 3).

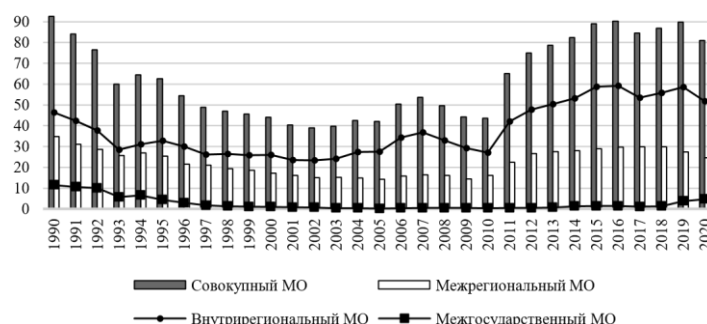


Figure 3. Volume of migration exchange in 1990–2020, thousand people

If in the republic since 2018 there has been an increase in migration outflow and a decrease in natural growth, then in the Far Eastern Federal District as a whole during this period the intensity of negative population dynamics has noticeably decreased due to the creation of additional institutional incentives and the implementation of investment projects in certain regions of the district (Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, Primorsky Krai and Amur Oblast). Therefore, joining the Far Eastern regions gives the Republic of Buryatia certain hopes for an improvement in the quality of life, without which it is impossible to improve the migration situation. In the meantime, it loses 2.3 people out of every thousand of the population annually, which is still slightly less than the average for the Far Eastern Federal District - 3.2 people.

A distinctive feature of migration processes in the Republic of Buryatia is the predominance of intraregional movements (65% on average per year in the period 2018–2023). This is one of the highest rates in the country (the average for the Russian Federation is 42%) and the highest in the Far Eastern Federal District (51%).

In the 1990s, the share of internal and external displacements was almost equal. At that time, there was a significant outflow of population outside the republic due to the completion of construction work on the Buryat section of the Baikal-Amur Mainline and the cessation of state investment. Former builders, mainly from the regions of Siberia and the Far East, began to return back. The share of "northern migration" in these years amounted to 50-65% of the annual population loss outside the republic. Also, in connection with the collapse of the state, the processes of external migration caused by the ethnic factor sharply increased - Jews, Poles, Germans, Tatars and representatives of some other ethnic groups began to leave for their historical homeland. These processes were accompanied by reverse flows of migrants from Central Asia and Transcaucasia, among whom were refugees and forced migrants. During these years, interregional movements amounted to 40%, and intercountry - 9%.

In the 2000s, the migration mobility of the population decreased, which was more noticeable in relation to external flows (almost twice). The bulk of movements began to occur within the region (64%). Migration from the northern to the southern regions continued, due to the inability of the republic to support and ensure the development of remote territories with harsh natural and climatic conditions. There was a loss of the stimulating value of the benefits and wage supplements previously established by the state, which had been used for many years to attract personnel there. Rural areas of the republic also lost population - due to stagnation in agriculture and the closure of systemically important enterprises and organizations.

In the 2010s, the continuing deterioration of the socio-economic situation in rural areas as a result of rising unemployment, deterioration of infrastructure, and accumulation of social problems led to an increase in migration outflow from the regions by two times compared to the 2000s. The rural population is characterized by a state of economic, social, and socio-cultural deprivation, characterized by deterioration in living conditions and quality of life. The maximum coefficient of migration loss reached 42.1 per thousand in the regions on average per year, and the average level in the Republic of Buryatia is 15.2 per thousand. Intraregional migration flows have a pronounced centripetal nature, which corresponds to global and all-Russian trends, when the population of the regions strives to regional capitals with their resources. The main migration outflow (60% on average) from rural and urban settlements of the republic is absorbed by Ulan-Ude and the three adjacent districts. By now, their total number has exceeded half of the entire population of the republic (58.2%). At the same time, suburban areas are growing at a much faster rate than the capital itself (up to five times). Territorial restrictions on development and the comparative cheapness of development in the suburbs are noted as reasons.

Thus, over the years of reforms the republic has turned into a mono-urbanized region. If the current

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trends of active migration mobility of the rural population are maintained, the role of the mono-center in the regional settlement system will increase, which threatens the depopulation of vast rural areas. This, in turn, sharply limits the possibilities for the development of agriculture (dairy farming, fine-wool sheep breeding, vegetable growing) and the corresponding processing industries, which are already in a state of crisis.

Interregional flows in the total volume of migration processes in the regions in the period 2018–2023 amounted to 33% on average per year, and interstate flows - 2%. They influence the change in the population of the regions as a whole. An important indicator characterizing the migration exchange between regions and countries is the coefficient of effectiveness of migration relations (CERMR). It shows to what extent the flows of migrants arriving in

the regions compensate for migration losses. If the coefficient is higher than 1000 ppm, the receiving regions lose population, and vice versa. Migration exchange is considered to be quite effective with a coefficient of less than 500 ppm. It is believed that the higher the value of the indicator, the greater the likelihood of permanent migration from a given region.

In the Republic of Buryatia, interregional migration exchange is ineffective - on average, 1,227 people left per 1,000 people who arrived per year in 2018–2023 (Table 4). This is 89 people lower than the average for the Far Eastern Federal District. The effectiveness of international exchange, on the contrary, is quite high - 546 people left per 1,000 people who arrived, which corresponds to 3rd place in the Far Eastern Federal District.

Table 4. Migration Relations Performance Rates (MRR) of the Republic of Buryatia in the period 2015–2019

Region	KRMS*	CIS country	KRMS
Federal District		CIS countries	596
Central	1755	Azerbaijan	669
Northwestern	1869	Armenia	603
South	2076	Belarus	472
North Caucasian	1098	Kazakhstan	950
Volga region	1378	Kyrgyzstan	439
Ural	1255	Moldova	477
Siberian	1252	Tajikistan	443
Far Eastern	879	Turkmenistan	750
Regions of the Far Eastern Federal District		Uzbekistan	605
Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)	1193	Ukraine	708
Transbaikal Territory	680	Other foreign countries	422
Kamchatka Krai	1333	Vietnam	526
Primorsky Krai	1147	Germany	1895
Khabarovsk Krai	1294	Georgia	486
Amur region	1040	Israel	2471
Magadan region	1196	China	216
Sakhalin region	1234	Latvia	429
Jewish Autonomous Region	861	Mongolia	579
Chukotka Autonomous Okrug	1247	USA	5222
Interregional migration in general	1227	Interstate migration in general	546

* KRMS – coefficient of effectiveness of migration links – the number of departures per 1000 arrivals.

In terms of the closeness of migration ties among the federal districts, the Siberian and Far Eastern Federal Districts stand out significantly. In 2018–2023, the average annual volume of gross migration

exchange of the republic with the former amounted to 11.6 thousand people (40% of the total interregional exchange) (Figure 4).

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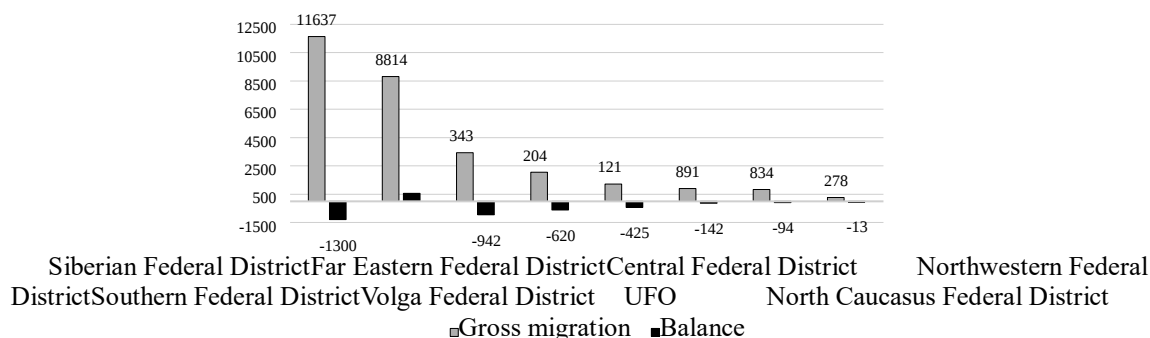


Figure 4. The volume of gross migration exchange of the Republic of Buryatia with federal districts and regions of the Far Eastern Federal District (within new borders) on average per year for 2018–2023.

At the same time, the highest migration loss was observed here – 1.3 thousand people on average per year (Figure 5). The largest outflow occurs to economically developed neighboring regions with a high level of human capital – Irkutsk Region (–595 people on average per year), Krasnoyarsk Territory (–294 people), Novosibirsk (–289 people) and Tomsk Regions (–193 people). At the same time, the intensity of losses in the regions as a result of exchange with the specified regions is from 1100 to 1500 ppm. An insignificant influx of population into the republic took place only from the Republic of Tyva (+18 people).

It should be noted that throughout the entire period under study, the republic has been losing its population with all federal districts, with the exception of the Far Eastern Federal District. Of the neighbors in the district, the closest ties have been established with the Zabaikalsky Krai (54.6% of the total exchange with the Far Eastern Federal District regions) and the Sakha Republic (17.2%). At the same time, the main donor for the republic both at the level of the Far Eastern Federal District and the Russian Federation as a whole has consistently been only the Zabaikalsky Krai, due to which the positive effectiveness of the migration exchange with the Far Eastern Federal District is mainly maintained. A slight increase also occurred due to the population of the Jewish Autonomous Region. However, the exchange with this region is not capable of having a significant impact on migration flows. The republic does not have significant migration ties with the other regions of the Far Eastern Federal District, which implies a relatively low intensity of its migration losses. In general, the greater the distance to the region, the less effective the migration ties with it.

The scale of migration exchange between Buryatia and the regions of the "western drift" that are part of the Central and Northwestern Federal Districts is quite modest (on average 2–3.4 thousand people per year). However, the loss as a result of migration movements to these regions is quite high, and accordingly, the effectiveness of migration ties with them is one of the least effective for the republic. Migration ties with traditional centers of attraction -

Moscow and the Moscow region (–770 people in total on average per year), St. Petersburg and the Leningrad region (–520 people) lead to the greatest population losses. The number of people leaving for these regions is almost twice as large as the number of people arriving from them to Buryatia, and the probability of return migration is extremely low.

Despite the relatively small volume of migration exchange (1.2 thousand people annually), the Southern Federal District, mainly Sevastopol, the Republic of Crimea and Krasnodar Krai, appears to be the most attractive for residents of the republic in terms of migration. For every 1000 arrivals, there were a record 4071, 3034 and 2248 departures, respectively. In absolute terms, Krasnodar Krai, which is a federal-level recipient region, occupies the main share in the migration outflow among the regions of the Southern Federal District (–281 people on average per year).

The volumes of gross migration between the Republic of Buryatia and other federal districts of the Russian Federation are insignificant and do not exceed 0.9 thousand people on average per year for the period 2015–2019. However, migration exchange with the regions of the Volga Federal District is characterized by a high intensity of losses. In particular, twice as many people leave for the republics of Mari El, Mordovia and Tatarstan as arrive from them to Buryatia. Among the regions of the Ural Federal District, the most ineffective performance is observed in the exchange with the Tyumen Region (KRMS - 1785 ppm). The least migration ties are traced with the regions of the North Caucasus Federal District, while the losses for the republic are minimal, since the exchange with most of the North Caucasian Republics is equivalent.

As can be seen from the graph, migration exchange with the regions of the Siberian Federal District, despite its large volumes, does not lead to such significant migration losses as in the case of the western and southern regions of the Russian Federation. The regions of the Far Eastern Federal District, despite the incentives created to activate intraregional labor mobility, continue to remain not particularly attractive in terms of migration for

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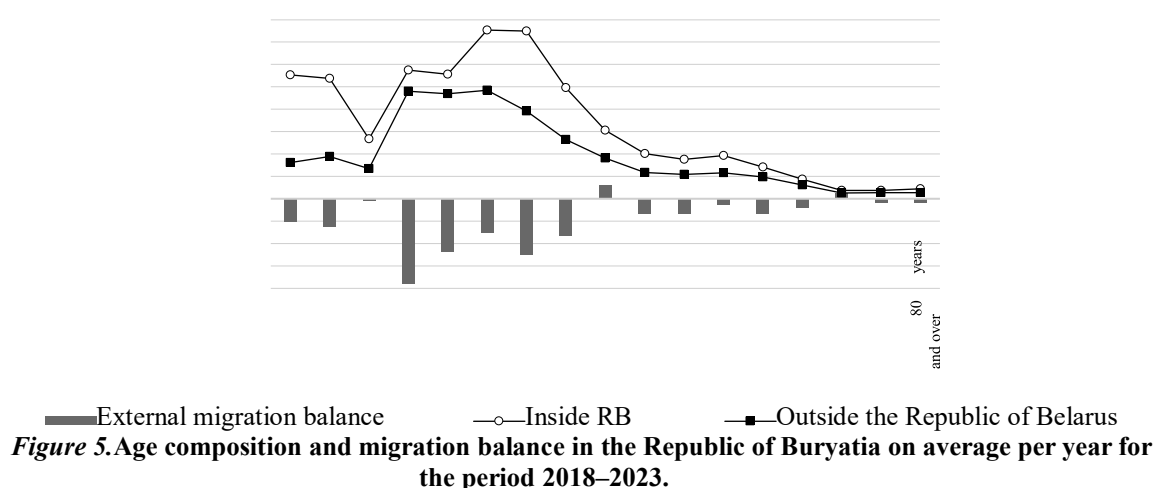
residents of Buryatia. Thus, migration from the republic continues to move in the western direction.

International migration consists of exchanges with the CIS countries and others. Despite its small volumes (according to Buryatstat, an average of 1.8 thousand people per year), in both cases migration ties are quite effective. The KRIMS with the CIS countries amounted to an average of 596 per mille per year in the period 2015–2019, with other foreign countries – 422 per mille (table). There is a positive migration balance with all CIS countries, and the closest ties have been established with Uzbekistan, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan.

Regular migration exchange is carried out with a number of foreign countries, but the closest ties with

the largest positive migration balance are established only with neighboring countries - China and Mongolia. In general, the effective migration influx comes from the countries of the Asian vector, especially China (KRMS - 216 ppm), and the former republics of the USSR. Whereas in exchange with countries of the far abroad, the republic is intensively losing population.

The peak of migration outside Buryatia (among all age groups) occurs at the age of admission to vocational educational institutions – 15–19 years. At this age, the greatest population losses are observed as a result of migration exchange with other regions and countries (Figure 5).



In educational migration of young people, the western drift clearly prevails. Only 13.4% of applicants attend educational institutions in the Far Eastern Federal District. In recent years, studying abroad (mainly in nearby Asian countries) has also become increasingly popular among young people. The scale of educational migration is growing every year. In 2023, half of school graduates left Buryatia to receive an education, which is 24.1% more than in 2018. At the same time, the return rate of applicants who left the region is insignificant. Thus, the results of a sociological survey of high school students show that only 7% of respondents planning to continue their education outside the republic intend to return home after completing their studies.

It is important that at this age there is still a slight predominance of intraregional movements, which indicates the continued role of educational institutions as a tool for containing young people in the region, but its importance is gradually declining. Thus, applicants with high USE scores prefer to study at higher-rated universities outside Buryatia. According to monitoring of the quality of admission to universities, the average USE score of applicants to local universities is below the average, which by the end of 2023 was 59.1 on a budgetary basis, and 57.5 on a paid basis.

In the following age groups of young people, migration is mainly due to the choice of place of work. The peak of intraregional movements occurs at the age of 25 to 34 years. The volume of external migration of the republican youth remains the same against the background of a decrease in the negative migration balance. Moreover, at the age of 20-24 years, there is a predominance of those who arrived over those who left. Although in all other age cohorts, there is a negative migration balance.

If earlier the republic was characterized as a region with high interregional educational migration and relatively low interregional labor migration of youth, now labor migration occurs at the same level as educational migration (Figure 7). In addition, according to the results of our research, the volume of potential migration of youth is increasing.

In this regard, it is important to consider the outflow of population from the republic from the standpoint of qualitative consequences. It is mainly active, young, qualified personnel who leave and plan to move. Young people aged 15 to 34 demonstrate the highest level of activity in migration movements. The most intensive migration loss of population occurs in these same age groups (with the exception of 20-24-year-olds). The share of young people in the migration outflow is 54.7%. In addition, the loss of children

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under 14 is more significant than the population of middle and older ages, which is a result of the migration behavior of their parents.

It should be noted that women are more active in migration. Their decline is twice as intense as that of men. With the departure of young people, especially women of childbearing age, the potential for future marriages and births decreases.

The majority of those leaving aged 14 and over are people with higher (about 35.4% of the total flow each year) and secondary vocational education (22.6%). Their number exceeds the similar number of those arriving by 19.2% (1.6 thousand people). The determining factor in resettlement for migrants with this level of education are personal, family and work reasons. In addition, those leaving have higher qualifications compared to those arriving. They often occupy higher status positions before moving. For example, the number of those leaving who are top-level managers and specialists, including well-known and highly qualified lawyers, doctors, economists, engineers and zootechnicians, exceeds the similar number of those arriving by 17.8% (0.6 thousand people). The opposite situation is with regard to workers, especially unskilled ones. The latter arrive in Buryatia in 2.2 times more than those leaving (0.8 thousand people).

Thus, the outflow of talented youth and highly qualified personnel affects the quality of the professional-qualification and demographic structure of society. There are not only problems with recruitment to local educational institutions, but also negative consequences for the development of the region in terms of personnel provision and the formation of regional elites, which ultimately limits the implementation of the task of priority development of the regions of the Far East and Siberia.

Due to the fact that the largest share of migration movements, both external and internal, is made up of the population of young working age, it should be assumed that the basis of such an outflow are economic factors that determine the standard and quality of life.

The Republic of Buryatia is a complex region in terms of geopolitical location, climate, environmental restrictions, sparse population, multinational composition, etc. Under the pressure of these and other factors, the socio-economic situation in the region is stagnating. In terms of key development parameters, Buryatia looks less attractive compared to most Russian regions, including the Far East, which is reflected in various ratings, where it occupies very modest places - 68th in terms of population income, 73rd in terms of the socio-economic status of the regions, 81st in terms of quality of life, etc.

On the positive side, the republic's investment rating has grown to 2nd place among the Far Eastern Federal District subjects by the end of 2023 due to the accelerated growth rate of industrial production and

construction work, as well as the registration of the first residents in the Buryatia Priority Development Area, created at the end of 2023. However, these successes are not reflected in a corresponding increase in the well-being of the local population, for whom the potential for the development of small and medium-sized businesses, employment opportunities, and wages (especially in the public sector, since employment in it is 56.5%) are more important. The lack of prospects in this area significantly affects the migration sentiments of the republic's residents.

Thus, the activities of small and medium-sized businesses in the republic are characterized by low profitability due to complex logistics and high energy costs, and low population involvement. The share of people employed in this sector is only 8.8%, which is lower than the average for the Russian Federation and the Far Eastern Federal District. In addition, Buryatia traditionally has the highest unemployment rate in the Far Eastern Federal District - 10.8%, which is almost twice as high as the Russian average (5.9%).

The goal set in the Strategy for Spatial Development of the Russian Federation to attract labor resources to the subjects of the Far East has not yet been realized in the republic. Moreover, as a result of "advanced development", Buryatia has lost 17.5 thousand jobs over the past three years. The rate of decline was 4.4%, among the regions of the Far Eastern Federal District the situation is worse only in the Magadan Region (-6.3%). The labor market is characterized by a low social potential of vacancies, their low diversity due to weak diversification and investment attractiveness of the economy, a structural imbalance in labor supply and demand, the prevalence of nepotism and informal employment channels. The average monthly salary for vacancies declared to employment centers for 2020 amounted to only 25,090 rubles. However, according to the analysis of applicants' resumes, salary expectations vary from 40 to 60 thousand rubles, which corresponds to the average monthly salary in the region - 41,800 rubles, which in turn is the lowest in the Far Eastern Federal District (60,358 rubles) and below the Russian average (51,352 rubles).

Moreover, since 2018, when the republic became part of the Far Eastern Federal District, the level of wages has been growing at a slower rate (16%) compared to the Far Eastern Federal District (16.8%) and the Russian Federation (17.4%) on average. At the same time, the opportunities for obtaining higher or additional income in the republic are limited. Thus, in the structure of the population's income, the main share is occupied by wages - 59.7% and social payments - 21.4%. The level of wages in the most numerous industries (trade, education, healthcare, public administration) is much lower than in the extractive and financial sectors of the economy, the share of which does not exceed 2%. While in the Soviet period, higher wages, 1.5-2 times higher than

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the national average, were the main factor attracting people to the Far East.

Accordingly, the average per capita income of residents of Buryatia (RUB 25,770) is also the lowest in the Far Eastern Federal District (RUB 38,696) and lower than the average for the Russian Federation (RUB 35,676). Taking this into account, you can buy only 2.1 consumer basket items (one of the worst results in the Far Eastern Federal District), while in the Russian Federation the average is 3.2. In short, it is hardly appropriate to talk about compliance with the principle of preferential development in Buryatia, which helps attract labor resources and retain the local population. In recent years, the environmental situation in Buryatia has deteriorated sharply. Thus, in terms of the number of cases of air pollution in 2020, the region took 2nd place after the Samara Region. Ulan-Ude and Selenginsk are regularly among the worst cities in terms of air quality. Violation of the ecological balance, in turn, leads to an increase in diseases, primarily oncological ones, which together increases migration sentiments in the republic.

There is a growth of social tension and mistrust of the authorities, one of the confirmations of which is the insufficient rate of vaccination and, as a result, a high growth in the incidence of coronavirus infection. In the summer of 2023, Buryatia was the first among Russian regions to be forced to declare a second lockdown (from June 27 to July 11, 2023) and introduce mandatory vaccination. The inclusion of the republic among the regions with the strictest COVID restrictions exacerbates migration sentiments among the population. The opinion "either get vaccinated or leave Buryatia" is becoming widespread. The introduction of such measures to contain the population as the Far Eastern mortgage, in addition to the positive effect, resulted in a colossal increase in real estate prices, which became inaccessible to the majority of residents of the republic. In terms of growth rates of prices for secondary housing in the second quarter of 2023, the capital of Buryatia took 3rd place after Sochi and Krasnodar, almost catching up with Krasnodar in terms of the average cost of 1 square meter. It should be noted that this fact can potentially influence the growth of migration from the republic, because now residents of Buryatia, having sold their apartment, will be able to afford housing in a more migration-attractive region.

Similar conclusions can be made regarding the preferential rural mortgage for the construction or purchase of housing in rural areas, which started in 2023. It has spurred migration within the republic towards the capital and caused a surge in prices in the suburbs of Ulan-Ude. In addition, recipients of preferential mortgages of the Far Eastern Federal District in Buryatia are increasingly residents of other regions, primarily the Irkutsk region, since having a republican residence permit is not a mandatory condition for obtaining it. As a result, residents of the

western regions, having a higher income, buy land in the tourist areas of the republic and real estate in Ulan-Ude with state support. Very often - for rent to local residents, or for speculative purposes. It is unlikely that this contributes to the goals and objectives of the Far Eastern state program for the consolidation of the local population. So far, this program is rather directed against its interests. In our opinion, it is necessary to introduce levers to curb the growth of real estate prices in accordance with the purchasing power of the population of the republic. A positive aspect of the implementation of another support measure, the Far Eastern Hectare program, was its greater than planned demand for the year of implementation. Buryatia took 2nd place in the rating of Far Eastern Federal District regions in the number of contracts concluded for Far Eastern hectares per year (2.1 thousand, while the government of the republic expected only 500 applications). Despite the predominance of residents of the republic among the program participants, applications are also received from other regions, primarily the Zabaikalsky Krai and the Sakha Republic, as well as the Irkutsk and Moscow regions, Moscow, and St. Petersburg (122 applications). At the same time, it cannot be said that these are tangible results, especially given that this program was initially intended to attract 30 million people to the Far East. The main problem is the lack of mechanisms for creating infrastructure, so plots of land in areas close to Ulan-Ude, Lake Baikal, the Russian-Mongolian border are in demand, the number of which is not infinite. Since a third of the land is taken for agriculture, many questions arise about the size of the plot, which is not enough for livestock farming – a priority sector of agriculture in Buryatia.

But the most popular type of use of the "Far Eastern hectare" is individual housing construction. Therefore, according to a survey of residents of the republic, the attractiveness of this program can be increased by such support measures as preferential mortgages for home construction, financial support for starting your own business, grants for creating a farm, as well as support for the sale of products.

In this regard, it is expected that the expansion of the "preferential house kit" project, "Far Eastern and rural mortgage", and the partial opening of buffer zones in the suburbs of Ulan-Ude will have a positive impact on the development of the "Far Eastern hectares".

As a factor in attracting the population, it is necessary to note the favorable situation in the sphere of interethnic relations, which is caused by the absence of significant differences in the socio-economic status of ethnic groups, long historical experience of interaction, friendly mentality of the peoples and the work of state authorities to maintain interethnic harmony. Buryatia as a multiethnic region is traditionally distinguished by tolerance towards representatives of different nationalities, therefore it is

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attractive for migrants from the CIS countries, China, Mongolia. However, with the intensification of competition for jobs, local residents increasingly have a negative perception of migrants. In addition, they are concerned about the illegal development of mineral resources with the participation of migrants, the rejection of the values of national culture in the region, the mentality of a temporary resident among visitors. It should be noted that initially the scale of settlement of the republic at the expense of residents of other regions was less significant than in most regions of the Far Eastern Federal District. The population of Buryatia has lived in this territory since time immemorial, so the degree of attachment to native places is much higher here, which is especially common among the titular population.

Conclusion

If the current trends of significant socio-economic lag of the republic behind most Russian regions, including the Far East, persist, the migration outflow beyond the republic and from rural areas to the capital and its suburbs will increase, which poses a threat to the implementation of priority development of both Buryatia itself and the Far Eastern territories of the Russian Federation as a whole. Therefore, migration policy should be aimed at curbing the outflow of indigenous people by creating appropriate economic conditions and social infrastructure at the local level. The current system of preferences is clearly insufficient for this. First of all, it is necessary to intensify the policy aimed at creating new jobs with decent wages, which would be an incentive to reduce the outflow of the local population and the influx of qualified personnel from other territories. It is necessary to converge the level of wages in the republic with the average for the Far Eastern Federal District, as well as to level out the gap in inter-industry and inter-professional wages, expand the zone of "social elevators" and provide young people with opportunities to receive a quality education. One of the growth points of the economy, the development of which is limited by a special economic activity regime (most of the territory of the republic is part of the Baikal natural territory), can be the implementation of the principles of green and digital economy and types of economic activity that contribute to the development of human capital. These include aquatic economy, production of environmentally friendly food, healthcare, recreation, education, including environmental education, etc. This can be facilitated, in the opinion of our colleagues, by the republic receiving the status of a pilot region for testing new mechanisms for the creation and development of modern non-resource industries.

In this regard, there have been certain advances in connection with the launch of a number of investment projects: the establishment of industrial production of marbled beef, the creation of the

greenhouse complex "TK Gusinoozersky", the Baikal textile mill (based on the revival of fine-wool sheep breeding), the "Biotechnopolis" technology park in the field of high technologies, the comprehensive development of an aviation training center, the construction and operation of solar power plants, the creation of tourist and recreational complexes, etc.

But within the framework of such a paradigm, it seems to us that the authors underestimate the role of the Russian language in modern interethnic relations in Russia, noting, at the same time, its extremely high importance during the Soviet era. At the same time, the attitude both to the problems raised in the article and to the author's conclusions, in our opinion, can be reduced to the well-known dilemma "Man for the state or the state for man". Probably, the authors of the article are closer to the position of "Man for the state". This is confirmed, for example, by their concern about the ranking position of Russia among the countries of the world in terms of population, the geopolitical status of the country, its political influence, defense and economic potential. It is unlikely that residents of prosperous, but little-noticed in global politics, countries suffer greatly from the fact that their state cannot veto decisions of the UN Security Council, as well as because of its inability, for example, to "turn the United States into radioactive ash". Developing the well-known idea of "small is beautiful" in this aspect, I would like to cite another interesting international rating. The University of Sydney's Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies has developed and compiles the Global Peace Index. In the latest such ranking (for 2023), there is only one country with a relatively large population among the leaders - Japan (in 8th place). The first among countries with nuclear weapons is the United Kingdom - in 39th place. At the same time, such countries known for their multinationality and tolerance as Canada, Australia, and New Zealand are in the top ten of the ranking. Russia is in 152nd place in this ranking, and only residents of North Korea, Pakistan, and a number of countries with permanent civil wars can envy our peacefulness. At the same time, we do not claim to be absolutely right in this matter. It is obvious that the interests of the state in the formation of demographic and ethnic policies are also important, and sometimes they can even coincide with the interests of individuals living under its control and guardianship. It cannot be said that in matters of national (ethnic) policy in Russia the state has withdrawn itself and is inactive. At the same time, the state's actions in this area may cause justified concern. We doubt that Russians concerned about the violation of the "ethnic balance" should be satisfied with the current national policy of Russia, within the framework of which the federal center turns a blind eye to corruption, the selection of civil servants by ethnicity (and even by kinship), the actual introduction of certain religious norms as a law mandatory for all residents in a number

Impact Factor:	ISRA (India)	= 6.317	SIS (USA)	= 0.912	ICV (Poland)	= 6.630
	ISI (Dubai, UAE)	= 1.582	ПИИИ (Russia)	= 0.191	PIF (India)	= 1.940
	GIF (Australia)	= 0.564	ESJI (KZ)	= 8.100	IBI (India)	= 4.260
	JIF	= 1.500	SJIF (Morocco)	= 7.184	OAJI (USA)	= 0.350

of subjects under the pretext of the alleged "national traditions" of such republics. At the end of the article we read, a "time bomb" was mentioned - the strengthening of the localization of the peoples of Russia in their national "apartments" - the titular regions - with the simultaneous exodus of the Russian population from there. In this regard, it seems to us that at least some of the problems of the Russian and other ethnic groups in Russia could be "demined" by ensuring real equality of citizens, regardless of their ethnicity. Overall, the results of our research leave a certain feeling of incompleteness. A large-scale detailed analysis of mainly census data on ethnic dynamics is provided. Some results raise gloomy concerns about the fate of Russia and the Russian people. Because of all this, we think that it is necessary to continue research in order to develop life-saving

recommendations for restoring the "ethnic balance". But, unfortunately, we have to conclude the article with only general, albeit correct, formulations and good wishes: "a well-thought-out, coordinated national and demographic policy is needed that could neutralize the negative consequences of the ongoing ethnic and demographic processes". At the same time, we cannot yet indicate what exactly such a policy should consist of, but as befits a scientific epic, we pose important research questions to researchers. But, unfortunately, they provide far fewer answers. In conclusion, I would like to express the hope that in the bright future in Russian society, ethnicity will become so insignificant against the background of the prevailing civic identity that the problem of the violation of the "ethnic balance" will become irrelevant – I sincerely want to believe in this.

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