

# The Immigration Labour Potential of the Russian Far East

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**Abstract**—The article analyses the problems of a labour market influence on forming the labour migration potential of the region. The authors believe that the peculiarities of labour migration are determined, first of all, by structural imbalances of the labour market.

The main research hypothesis, being verified in this article, is that the conjuncture of the labour market in Russian, and especially in the Far East, is formed as a result of the systemic interaction of various, relatively autonomous spheres, which constitute the external environment of the region. Ultimately, the corporate culture, the core of which in terms of labour economy is labour motivation, forms some motivational field in which any immigration labour flow is immersed in the recipient country.

We evaluate the immigration labour potential of the Russian Far East and possible risks in working out the migration strategy of its development through the analysis of Chinese migration, which took place in the late XIX-early XX centuries and nowadays.

**Keywords**—labour potential, the Far East, migration, labour market, labour force.

## I. INTRODUCTION

We wanted to get workers, and got people' is an integral formula of immigration, which reveals the essence of this multifaceted issue. Labour immigration doesn't carry only labour force or human capital by means of cross-border flows, despite the fact that this is its key characteristic (Abercrombie, N., Turner, B. (2004). An immigrant is a bearer of some qualities and he transfers social values, relations, cultural traditions, i.e. a part of a different society in other regions. Migration is believed to cause confrontation and opposition between different subcultures, increases the level of criminality and instability associated with adaptation processes of foreign labour force to the local conditions of the recipient country (Alsted, J. (2005).

In order to obtain realistic estimates of the migration capacity, it is necessary to take into consideration this problem, which will affect both the factors of attracting immigrants to any territory and the effectiveness of their adaptation (Akerlof, G., Spence, M., & Stiglitz, J. (2001). This remark should certainly be taken into account when analysing the migration capacity of the Russian Far East.

Nowadays many of the processes taking place in the Far East, namely the penetration of illegal migrants from abroad, ethnic conflicts, territorial disputes, low population adaptation and high migration mobility, date back to the middle of the XIX - early XX centuries.

According to V. Trubin the analysis of migration in the Far East during this period helps to realize that the study of migration problems without taking into consideration the specific social and historical conditions is unproductive. Migration, as a form of human existence, is not only the cause of social reproduction processes different in character and forms but also the result of the impact of factors determining the conditions of population reproduction (Trubin V. V. 1996).

The analysis of scientific works that appear in the succeeding period shows that as changes in the society have taken place, the views of researchers on problems of migration have also changed (Martens, D., 1994). It is worth noticing that the tradition of understanding the specifics of migration processes has remained, however, the causes influencing the movement of people were scientifically reinterpreted, the state of migration flows, their speed and depth were analysed (Hallsten, M., Edling, C., Rydgren, J. (2016).

The problems of migration and the labour market, the migration situation in contemporary Russia and its regions are studied in the works of (Liu, G., Wang, H., Cheng, Y., Zheng, B., Lu, Z. (2016). These scientific publications reveal an important aspect in the study of the migration potential, presented by theoretical approaches to the analysis of factors affecting the social and professional mobility of young people (Lisowski, V. (2008).

Migration in terms of international security and conflict resolution is described in a number of scientific works (Becker, G. S., 2003). The problems of the population of the Russian Far East, sociological studies on migration, the study of labour and migration motivation of graduates of the Far Eastern Federal District; the functioning of the labour market in the Far East are revealed in the works of Far-Eastern researchers.

The term migration (Lat. *migratio*) means movement or relocation (Bondyrev, I.V., Singh, V.P., 2012). It is a complex social phenomenon, which is widespread and manifold (Bok,

K., Lim, J., Yang, H., 2016). Migration processes are a significant indicator of the socio-economic state of the society (Bryman, A., 2012). In general, the analysis of the publications in which migration is studied allows us to identify three directions of human movement: first, it is considered as a variety of spatial movement of the population regardless of its nature and purpose; second, spatial movement between settlements, permanent or temporary change of residence and work; third, migration of the population leads to the territorial distribution (Eccles, J. S., Barber, B. L., 1999). Currently, a third type of migration is of a particular research interest; citizens of a country with a very high population density are moving to some other country, where the population density is lower and there is an excess of jobs (Bednarikova, Z., Bavorova, M., Ponkina E. (2016). Thus, any territorial movement committed between different settlements or states, regardless of duration, frequency and target orientation is a migration (Denisenko, M.V., Kharaeva, O.A., Chudinovsky, O.S. (2003).

Nowadays migration is a movement of working population caused by economic reasons (Dyuzhenkova, N.V. (2002). Whether the borders of states are crossed, there is a distinction between internal and external migration.

The purpose of this work is to study the immigration labour potential of the Russian Far East.

The research objectives are a theoretical analysis of the immigration potential and a study of the labour potential of migrants arriving in the Russian Far East.

The scientific novelty consists in a complex analysis of the immigration labour potential of the Russian Far East.

In this work we analyse sociological and psychological literature and use sociological research methods, historical approach, analogies, specific sociological methods of questioning, interviewing, observation, content analysis.

The sources of the problems of any migration, as well as the conditions and resources to solve them should be sought within the region itself (Lucenko, E.L. 2013). The migration labour, especially foreign, aimed at filling empty niches as completely as possible or expanding them, is positioned in labour markets to such an extent that is 'allowed' by emerging asymmetries of the labour market and the forming legal space.

This research hypothesis needed not only theoretical verification, but also empirical testing. Our analysis of two periods (the late XIX - early XX centuries and present days) in the history of Chinese migration in the Russian Far East allowed us to prove our hypothesis. As the analysis showed, in these periods the relationship between the demand and the supply of labour depended, to a large extent, on the social system of the territory, on emerging labour preferences, motivations, values, attitudes to work in the local community, the position and role of a person in this community, the quality of individual and collective life, the corporate culture as a whole. A significant role in the formation of labour immigration belonged to the natural environment (Bazhenova, N., Lutsenko, E., 2014), sources for preservation and reproduction of life forces, adaptation mechanisms and institutions that allow for including the population in different sectors of employment.

As it turned out, in the end, two integral characteristics of the immigrant determined his competitiveness and demand in the labour market. The first is the ability to adapt to the natural and social environment of the region very quickly and effectively in conditions of high instability. The second is immigrants' more 'competitive motivation' to work in comparison with motivations of the local workforce. The competitiveness of labour immigration in conditions of high regional instability is primarily the competitiveness of motivations to work, that is, the degree of expressing a desire to have a job, regardless which system of social and material rewards it belongs to (Shkurkin A. M. 2002).

The external environment influences the labour market through its own disproportions, providing facilities for the heterogeneity of labour flows, their splitting into certain classes; this, in its turn, defines the segment structure, which becomes relatively homogeneous within the framework of the emerging interactions of the external environment (Shkurkin, A.M., Lutsenko, E.L. 2016). This peculiar cycle, in which closely intertwining the external environment, the labour market and external labour flows, determines the demand of the labour force of certain quantities and qualities.

The migration labour potential of the territory according to this definition, firstly, includes not only various resources (productive, social, labour, etc.), but also system relationships between them, established proportions, structures of the socio-economic system functioning in the historically formed external environment and stating the 'status quo' of this system.

Secondly, as a result, each specific territory is characterized only by its inherent set of environmental parameters, the impact of which will form differences in labour migration flows 'entering' the region and 'leaving' it. An objectively existing migration labour potential of the territory defines the value of a labour flow turnover. We can assume that the lower the performance of labour migration (stabilization), the higher the level of implementation (exhaustion) of migration labour flows on the territory (Shkurkin A. M. 2004).

Therefore, thirdly, taking into consideration the peculiarities of such processes should be an important condition for the development of effective migration policy in the region.

No less difficult is the situation when due to objective conditions, the migration Sigma potential is formed in the region. This means that, at some time, in the systemic interaction those environmental factors will dominate that provide a significant influx of migrants (Smolyakova, T. 2004). For example, the significant shortage of labour force in non-prestigious labour spheres objectively creates tension in various segments of the labour market and in the employment system that increases migration labour flows on the territory. The labour shortage may also arise as a result of the intensive development of specialized industries for the territory with a significant share of unskilled, low-paid jobs or due to an intensive outflow of the local population from the territory.

The migration pressure on the territory, which exceeds its ending possibilities of sustainable development, decreases the level of the area security; this can provoke a local or system crisis in some of its spheres connected with deterioration or

destruction of the basic systems of life support. Thus, the problem of the region safety does not just prevail in the regional management system, but, at the strategic level, requires the elaboration of all the elements that are responsible for ensuring the sustainable development regime. That is why regional programmes of all levels should include such necessary elements as

- substantiation of criteria for assessing the safety of the region functioning in various spheres of life support;
- classification of possible threats;
- identification of resources in order to prevent and eliminate threats, if, for some reason, the region is shifted to the zone of negative deviations from sustainable development;
- development of critical parameters (threshold values) of economic security.

The greatest risks of controlled functioning appear in the regions that are within the range of survival. For, on the one hand, in such regions, each system management decision is accompanied by the need to have a strategic reserve of resources necessary to continue the development trend if there are negative changes in the external environment; the number of these resources is limited in the regions functioning in the survival mode.

When analysing labour migration, it is important to take into account the migration potential of the territory; the peculiarity of the socio-economic system, its level of stability, its sensitivity to the pressure of the immigration labour potential, possibilities of institutions to preserve and develop a socio-cultural specificity of labour immigration.

The processes of forming Chinese labour migration in present day conditions differ from the same processes of the late XIX – early XX centuries in two principal points. The first difference is demographic situations during these periods. A century ago, despite the significant outflow of migrants from Siberia and Central Russia, Chinese migration took place when the demographic potential was improving in the Far East. In present day conditions, there is a sharp decline in the number of the Far Eastern population; there is a decrease in the sustainable development due to the depletion of the regional labour potential.

The second difference is that in the late XIX – early XX centuries, the Chinese labour force was unskilled or low-skilled in Far Eastern labour markets. Therefore, when the population was significantly growing in the Far East, there was an increase in the competitiveness of the local labour force. The situation at the end of the XX - beginning of the XXI century is diametrically opposite. The processes of reducing the demographic potential coincide with the decrease in the professional and qualification structure of the labour potential.

There is no doubt that economic needs and interests in the use of Chinese labour are quite large. They will be a constant counterbalance to tightening the immigration policy. The Far Eastern labour market with all its specific regional features is a powerful factor for increasing migration from China.

We think that in justifying the feasibility and economic efficiency of choosing a particular strategy for the development of the Far East, the most important criterion, namely the labour potential of the region is not paid enough attention to. The main socio-economic problem of the Far Eastern region was determined, and according to various estimates will be determined by the quantitative and qualitative indicators of the population structure in the past, present and future.

The problem of forming a stable population in the Far East, thus, becomes a key factor and a goal of the economic policy and strategy of the regional development. All strategic programme developments in the Far East should be subordinated to this goal.

In addition, it is assumed that the immigration policy of the Russian Federation should be aimed at the development of permanent immigration, i.e. moving to permanent residency. The last of the above criteria is significant for the Far East due to the following circumstances.

Nowadays the government is making decisions to attract compatriots living abroad to the Far East.

## II. CONCLUSION

As more than one hundred and fifty years of immigration experience shows, all forms of migration and adaptation of the newly arrived population are connected with significant costs, as a result of a significant amount of temporal migration, for the person, for the social and natural environment, and for the state. Therefore, it is much more effective in terms of material and financial costs, the formation of stable labour market and life to create favourable conditions for the population already living in the Far East, to prevent negative trends of destruction of the current demographic and labour potential of the region.

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