

“Transformation of Migration Data Collection in Post-Soviet Countries. (Case of the Russian Federation)”

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1. Preface

Paper presents results of a research that was carried out in 2005 for Federal Statistics Service of the Russian Federation (Rosstat). Its main purpose was to analyze the reasons and consequences of considerable deformation of Russian current migration statistics since the middle of the 1990-ies and to review the experience of the neighbouring countries in the sphere of migration data collection after the decay of the USSR, when the former compatriots appeared to be foreign migrants, people obtained freedom for move and when it became clear that new flows of international migrants should be registered and counted in a special way.

We used different sources of information : Rosstat official data on migration, statistics collected by Federal border and Federal migration services, Russian and foreign legislation (dealing with registration, migration, status of foreigners, rules of statistics collection), interviews and consultations with experts from authorities responsible for population registration and national statistics agencies in the Russian Federation and foreign countries.

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2. Features of migration statistics collection transformation.

Why can we make a conclusion about transformation of migration statistics collection in the post-soviet countries?

- Since the beginning of 1990-ies in all the countries of the region new systems of data collection were established in almost all the countries of the region to register phenomena that did not exist (or were inconsiderable) before the decay of the USSR. First changes in data collection were caused by necessity to register in a special way new flows of forced and labour migrants. Russian statistics on forced migrants has been collected for Rosstat by the Federal migration service (FMS)¹ since 1992 and on legal labour migrants – since 1994. Data on refugees are collected by FMS within standard schemes. Labour migration data are based on reports of employers who hire foreign

¹ Federal migration service of the RF is (since 2002) a separate division of the Ministry of Interior of the RF. First it was responsible for control over labour and forced migration, quite recently (in 2004) all functions of population registration in the place of residence or place of stay – both of nationals and foreigners – were delegated to FMS as well.

workers, and reports of licensed employment agencies in the RF which help Russian citizens to find a job abroad. The reports are sent to FMS for further processing. Rosstat receives from FMS a set of aggregated tables and information is published in Statistical yearbooks (data on refugees are published in annual editions of “Population and Migration in the RF” and on labour migration - in “Labour and employment in Russia”).

- Old system of migration current data collection based on so-called “propiska” (obligatory registration of a person in a certain address) was substituted by another type of data collection based on another type of registration - population registers that produce migration (and other demographic) data for national statistics institutes. Data from these systems of registration, including data on migration, are sent to national statistics bodies - either in the form of individual information (Estonia, Lithuania), or in the form of aggregated tables (Moldova). Registration systems in the other of the post-soviet countries are in process of transformation: countries of Caucasus plan to or have recently run population registers, and it is expected that very soon information on migration should be collected within this system of registration. Creation of population registers is also planned in some countries that still use old registration system – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and even the Russian Federation (it is planned that by 2010 Russia will have a population register).
- Old system of migration current data collection was modified and transformed simultaneously with changes in the system of registration (propiska): basic principles of registration and migration data collection were not abolished, but some new features appeared. More liberal terms of registration, more freedom for move (and more liberal legislation in general) – all this factors changed the traditional system of registration In the countries with the soviet – or similar to the soviet - system of (Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and some other).
- Censuses of population upgraded the questionnaires in order to observe new trends and phenomena in the sphere of migration: census programs (round 2000) in many countries of the former USSR included questions about temporary stay abroad (for nationals) or in the country (for foreigners), about refugee status, etc.
- Access to data that were hardly available before, became possible and data began to be published annually. For instance, till the end of 1980-ies data on migration in the USSR were almost not available, it was necessary to get a special permission to use them even for a research work, and it was rather difficult to publish the results of the research based on these data. Rosstat has published annual information on migration flows since 1988. Federal Border service began to send to Rosstat general data about entries and departures of foreigners distributed by purposes of trip, types of transport and countries of origin and destination. These data (except information on types of transport) are published in Rosstat yearbook “Population and migration”.
- Technological development and rapid computerization opened new possibilities for data collection, input, processing and exchange.

These changes were inevitable as the old systems and procedures were not adequate for observation of new trends and scales of migration. Nowadays all of the post-soviet countries have several systems of collection data on mobile population (for the RF see annex (C)). Registration of current migration flows (independently of reasons for move) is, perhaps, the most important, as it shows dynamics of migration flows and its reaction to changing economic and political environment. In Russian annual official statistics of migration - both internal

and international- has always been the basic source of information used by researchers, policy makers and other specialists. These data are published in Demographic Yearbook of Russia. However, recent changes in methodology of data collection decreased dramatically the quality of statistics, especially on international migration, and nowadays we consider these data to be unsatisfactory.

3. Some explanations on primary data collection procedure.

Arrivals. Transformation in current statistics collection could hardly be understood if we do not explain the origin of primary data used by Rosstat. Since the early 1930-ies and till now migration statistics of current flows in the RF has been a product of population registration system. Russian official statistics of migration (both foreign and domestic) is based on primary statistical forms (printed on paper). These statistical forms are filled in by the staff of a municipal registration offices where a migrant comes to be registered in a new place of official residence. Some other forms are filled in simultaneously for administrative (police) purposes. Monthly statistical forms are sent from police bureaus to regional departments of Rosstat for further processing. Statisticians prepare them for input, for instance - change names of territories for digital codes according to a special system, check if all positions are filled in, etc.) and input information (except migrant's name) to a database.

Since the middle of 1990-s input and processing is computerized and all primary forms are processed. Earlier the sampling method was used; in big cities it covered about 20% of collected forms. Before 1995 statistical and administrative forms were absolutely similar: it was a double-part sheet of paper, one part was left in police for administrative statistics, the second part was torn off and used for official statistics collection. For registration of arrivals it was a special detachable "coupon of arrival", for departures – "coupon of departure". Since 1995 statisticians have used a special form (so-called form № 12 – see Annex (A)) that was composed directly for (and by) statisticians and contains more questions. Primary forms for registration of departures since the end of 1995 are filled in only for emigrants. Data on internal migration (departures) from the regions of Russia are based on information obtained from primary forms collected in the regions of destination.

New administrative or official place of residence was the main criterion for migrants identification till 1996. For international migrants it was necessary to cross the border of the state, some more conditions existed for internal migrants (for instance -it should not be residence mobility within one city or move from one village to another within the borders of the same administrative district). Besides, a person should have been registered in the new place of residence (and deregistered in the previous) if he or she intended to stay in the place of destination for more that 45 days², for foreigners this time limit made 3 months. In both cases these migrants were included into statistical observation.

Departures. Before 1996 if a migrant planned to change place of residence (independently within USSR / RF boundaries or to move abroad) he or she first had to apply to the local registration bureau to be deregistered, and to fill in³ statistical "coupon of departure". It was done for nationals and foreigners as well. Official statistics of departures was based on these primary forms.

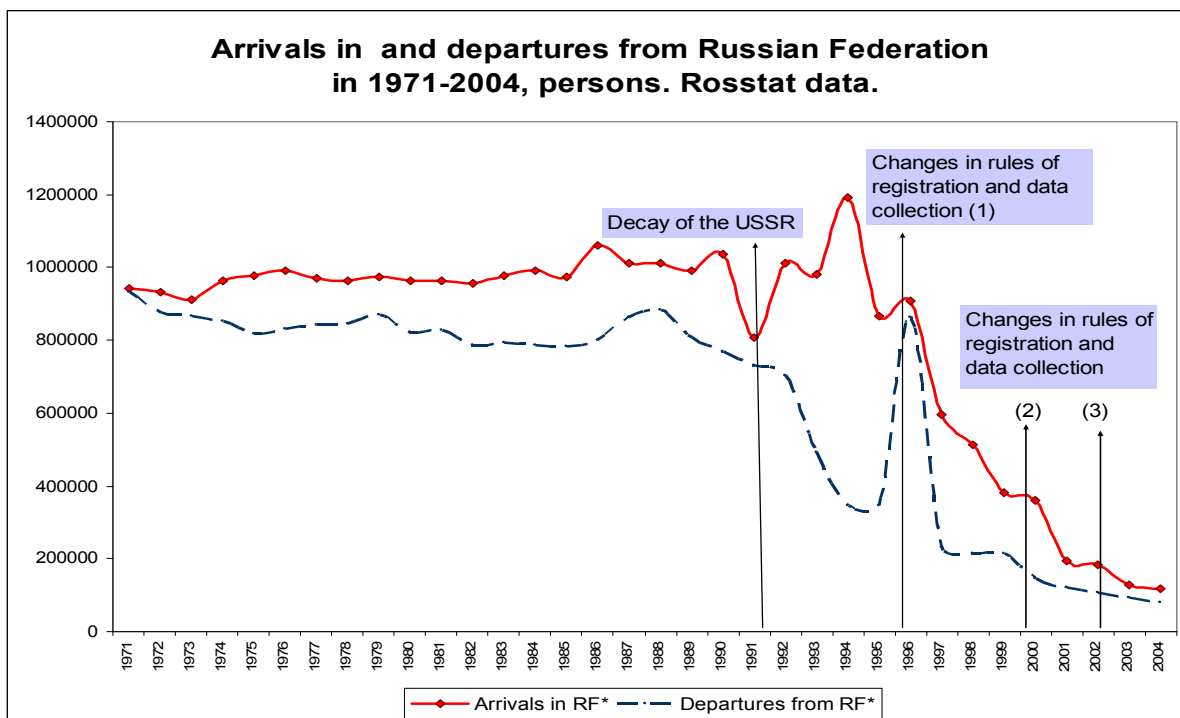
4. Main changes in the system of collection data on migration flows. This system had been used for a very long period and produced data of good quality. It is clear, that such quality to a certain extent was provided by control over private life and strict limitations of freedom for move. What happened to Russian statistics collection after 1995? Charts 1-2

² Except arrivals for recreation, treatment etc.

³ These forms are to be filled out by the registration bureau officer.

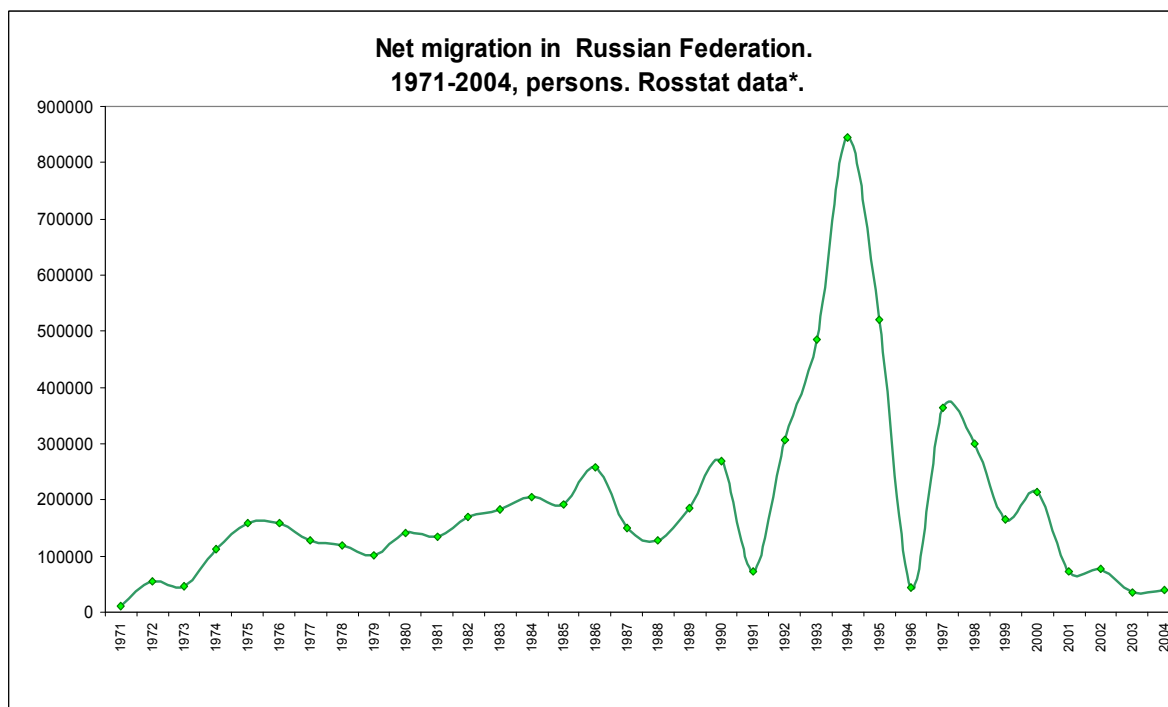
demonstrate annual volumes of in-, out- and net migration in the Russian Federation since 1971 till 2004. We may observe relatively equal volumes of annual in- and out-migration during the latest Soviet period, rapid increase of immigration and emigration in the beginning of 1990-ies, and rapid decrease of this inflow since 1996.

Chart 1⁴.



*Including migration to and from the former USSR republics

Chart 2



*Including migration to and from the former USSR republics

⁴ The chart like this was suggested by M. Denissenko (in a lecture prepared for representatives of Norwegian Directorate of Immigration, Moscow, January 2004), we prolonged the row of observation (since 1971) and modified information about changes in rules of registration.

Researchers – both foreign and domestic – often interpret these data as an obvious trend of migration inflow decrease⁵. However, real situation differs from what official statistics shows. Some of the authors while speaking about decline of migration flows in Russia, emphasize that they mean “officially tabulated” or “officially measured” annual levels of inflows and outflows in Russia⁶. It is not enough to say “officially measured” if we do not explain what official measurement of migration means.

Quite a few scholars in migration note that decrease in registered immigration and emigration might have been caused by peculiarities of migrants registration system. (M. Denissenko, 2003; N. Mkrtchyan, 2003; O. Chudinovskikh, 2004). In this paper we shall try to explain the observed trends in terms of migration registration procedures and from the viewpoint of changes in migrants’ identification criteria.

Trends of international migration in the first half of the 1990-ies are well studied and explained in literature: rapid growth of immigration in 1989-1995 reflects consequences of political processes in the former USSR republics that caused massive migration of Russian speaking population to the RF. Economic troubles and open borders of the Russian Federation caused increase in out-migration from Russia. Scholars of migration both in the RF and abroad explain further decline in immigration level only with objective reasons: those who wanted to move to RF had already moved before 1996, the RF became less attractive for migrants, etc. However there was one more reason for this decline. In my opinion it is closely connected with peculiarities of Russian official statistics transformation and with changes of migrants’ identification criteria that occurred in 1996, 2000 and 2002

Chronology of changes in registration of arrivals.

1. After the decay of the USSR, on the wave of liberalism new Law on freedom for move was adopted (1993) and in July 1995 new “Rules of the RF citizens registration and deregistration in a place of stay and in a place of residence” were established. Special Instruction on how to apply the Rules was adopted in October 1995. Since the end of the same year the procedure of migration statistics collection changed. We must emphasize that the “Rules of registration” are the main juridical document where the procedure of primary data collection for statistical purposes is described. As the Rules of registration determined procedures for the RF citizens only, nobody knew how to collect statistical data on foreigners. Perhaps by inertia or tradition many of migrants from the former USSR- our former compatriots - were still registered in the same way as the RF citizens were, but it is just a suggestion.

Juridical act (1991) which during that period (till 2002) had determined status of foreigners did not describe any procedure of statistics collection. That is why many migrants who arrived in the RF in 1996 were possibly not included into statistical observation⁷. To fill the gap, in 1997 a special Governmental Decision proliferated the jurisdiction of the Rules of RF citizens’ registration on migrants from the CIS countries (the major part of in-migration flow in the end of 1990-ies). Citizens of the other countries were still excluded from official statistical observation⁸. This Decision (1997) was cancelled in May 2002 by another special Governmental act.

⁵ For instance- see Salt, John. Current Trends in International Migration in Europe. 2001

⁶ For instance – see Eberstadt, Nicolas. Russia, the Sick Man in Europe. 2005.

⁷ We do not know what was the citizenship composition of international migration flow before 2002, as these data have been processed by Rosstat only since 2002. But we can suppose that ratio of foreigners among in-migrants has decreased since new rules of registration were adopted.

⁸ Of course all these migrants were included into police administrative statistics, but these data were not sent to Rosstat and were never published.

There was one more - quite unexpected but a very serious problem about migration statistics collection. New Rules (1995) declared two types of registration – a) in the place of residence and b) in the place of stay⁹. The latter initially implied temporary stay for not longer than 180 days. However, very soon (one year later) Constitutional Court abolished all time limitations for registration in the place of stay.

What was the result from the viewpoint of statistics? According to the same Rules of registration primary statistical form must be filled in only for migrants who are registered in a new place of residence. If a migrant is registered in the place of stay - independently of its duration- primary statistical form must not be filled in. In 2003 (at a request of Rosstat) Ministry of Interior issued a special Recommendation that suggested to fill in statistical forms for migrants who got registration in the place of stay for one year and more. As it was a recommendation but not an order, some regions do not collect this data.

2. In October 2000 one more limitation appeared for migrants who wanted to be registered in the RF. According to a special Ministry of Interior decision all migrants from the former USSR countries who wanted to be registered in a new place of residence, first had to apply for a residence permit. In accordance with another legislation act only a *spouse* of the RF resident could apply for and get residence permit. Therefore, other relatives (parents, adult children, siblings, etc.) could not expect to get the residence permit, could not get registration in the place of residence and could be registered only like temporary migrants – in the place of stay. In this case, as we have explained above, statistical form had not to be filled in, although, real duration of stay in practice was not limited. It means that since October 2000 another part of foreign migrants flow appeared to be excluded from statistical observation. These changes can explain the decline in migration inflow (chart 1) after 2000.

3. In 2002 the new federal Law on status of foreigners in the RF was adopted. This Law (for the first time in the RF history) defined basic principles of Foreign population data bank creation. Unfortunately nothing was said in the Law about communications between administrative sources of data and Russian official statistics. Besides, nothing was written about necessity to collect primary information for the needs of Rosstat. It means that since 2002 there is no any legal act which prescribes either to fill in the primary statistical form for foreigners registered in Russia, or to send any statistical data on migration flows from federal migration service to Rosstat¹⁰.

These important commentaries were included into introduction to the Demographic Yearbook of Russia 2005 (chapter 7 “Migration”, “Methodology description”), and Migration Statistics Yearbook of Russia- 2004 and we sincerely hope that users will not ignore this information, although it can not explain the size of migration flows underestimation. One can notice, that since 2002 citizenship appeared to become a criterion for exclusion of migrants from statistical observation.

Theoretically since that moment no statistical forms for foreigners who arrive in or leave from Russia should have been filled in and forwarded to Rosstat. We expected that Rosstat would receive information only on international migration of the RF nationals. In practice, in some regions people responsible for registration continued to collect primary data for Rosstat due to the tradition or another considerations; in the other, they stopped collecting data for Rosstat as soon as they had understood that they need not do any additional work any more.

⁹ The difficulties concerning definition of place of residence are in focus of researchers' interests : see – for instance, Michel Poulain, 2005.

¹⁰ Therefore, theoretically Rosstat should receive data on foreigner migrants only if they are refugees or foreign workers; as it was mentioned above, this information is obtained from special systems of data collection in Federal migration service.

For example, according to Rosstat data in 2002 and 2003 there were absolutely no (zero) foreigners among those who arrived in Moscow (total inflow from abroad - 10,6 and 7,6 thousand respectively). In 2004 there were only 704 foreigners of about 6.5 thousand of international in-migrants¹¹. Moscow is one of the most attractive regions for foreign migrants and such low figures arouse suspicion. In the same years several thousands of foreigners got residence permits in Moscow. Similar situation was observed in many other regions of the RF.

Table 1 shows the composition of international migration flows in the RF by citizenship, since this data became available. One can see that international migration flows are presented mainly by the RF nationals, however, according to new rules of data collection there should not be any foreigner in this data.

Table 1. Composition of international migration flows in Russia by citizenship of migrants. Rosstat data.

	Persons			%			
		2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Arrivals	Foreigners	18287	20377	12834	9,9	15,8	10,8
	Nationals	166325	108767	106323	90,1	84,2	89,2
	Total	184612	129144	119157	100	100	100
Departures	Foreigners	5953	4047	3225	5,6	4,3	4
	Nationals	100732	89971	76570	94,4	95,7	96
	Total	106685	94018	79795	100	100	100
Net migration	Foreigners	12334	16330	9609	15,8	46,5	24,4
	Nationals	65593	18796	29753	84,2	53,5	75,6
	Total	77927	35126	39362	100	100	100

Changes in registration of departures. Registration of departures is even worse than of arrivals. Rules of registration and deregistration (1995) define procedure of primary data collection only for the RF citizens and (in 1997-2002) for the citizens of the CIS countries. Since the middle of 1990-ies departures of foreigners from the RF could be estimated only if a person declares his or her intention to migrate and if he or she was a citizen of the RF or a CIS country. After the deregistration procedure primary statistical form is filled in by an officer in the registration bureau and later is sent to Rosstat for further processing.

Since May 2002 when Rules of registration and deregistration (1995) were no more applied to foreigners, there is no juridical base for statistical observation of out-migration of foreigners as well.

Although some categories of long-term foreign migrants must be deregistered in police if they want to leave for another place of residence in the RF or abroad, nobody must fill in the primary statistical form. As Rosstat still receives data on out-migration of foreigners, it means that there is no any clear procedure of data collection. People in registration bureaus just continue to use old practices although they must not do it any more.

Deregistration of the RF citizens is not obligatory even for those migrants who leave from the RF for residence abroad. It takes place only - for example - if a migrant needs to sell his or her flat. In this case deregistration of the previous owner is demanded by the new owner. But if a migrant does not want or need not sell the flat, (perhaps he or she plans to return back sometimes, or to lend the flat, or migrant's relatives continue to live in this dwelling space), voluntary deregistration is problematic. There are hundreds and perhaps thousands of migrants

¹¹ Source: Population and migration in the RF in 2003, 2004/ Statistical Yearbook, Rosstat, Moscow, 2004, 2005.

who left for abroad long time ago – for instance, for education or work – and never returned to Russia, although they remain to be registered in local police departments.

According to information received (by request of Rosstat) from the Ministry of foreign affairs of the RF, only few countries require a document that proves deregistration of a migrant in the RF if he or she wants to reside in this country (see annex (B)). It is also one of the sources of considerable differences between data on arrivals from Russia collected in foreign countries and data on departures collected in the RF (Tolts M. 2002). Underestimation of departures makes about 20% of registered outflow (Denissenko M. 2003).

There is a possibility to be deregistered in Russia after having moved abroad if the migrant applies to the RF consulate with a special request. The request is sent from the consulate to Russia for deregistration in the previous place of residence, statistical form is to be filled in and the migrant should be counted as an emigrant. In this case the year of departure may not coincide with the year of deregistration. Since the end of 1990-ies application for deregistration is not obligatory and registration in consulates is voluntary as well. It means that this channel of information about emigration could hardly improve quality of data on out-migration from the Russian Federation.

5. Some figures and patterns.

It should be not absolutely correct to explain recent trends in international migration to and from the RF only with registration factor. However, we can be sure that the decline in net migration and migration inflow is not as dramatic as official data show.

We can try to prove how registration system influenced migration statistics comparing Rosstat data on educational migration of people aged 16 and older¹² with Ministry of education reports on entries to the higher and professional secondary schools (Chart 3). The trends seem to be quite contrary. While Ministry of education reports increase in number of students arriving from abroad to enter Russian universities, official statistics demonstrates an obvious decline in number of educational migrants.

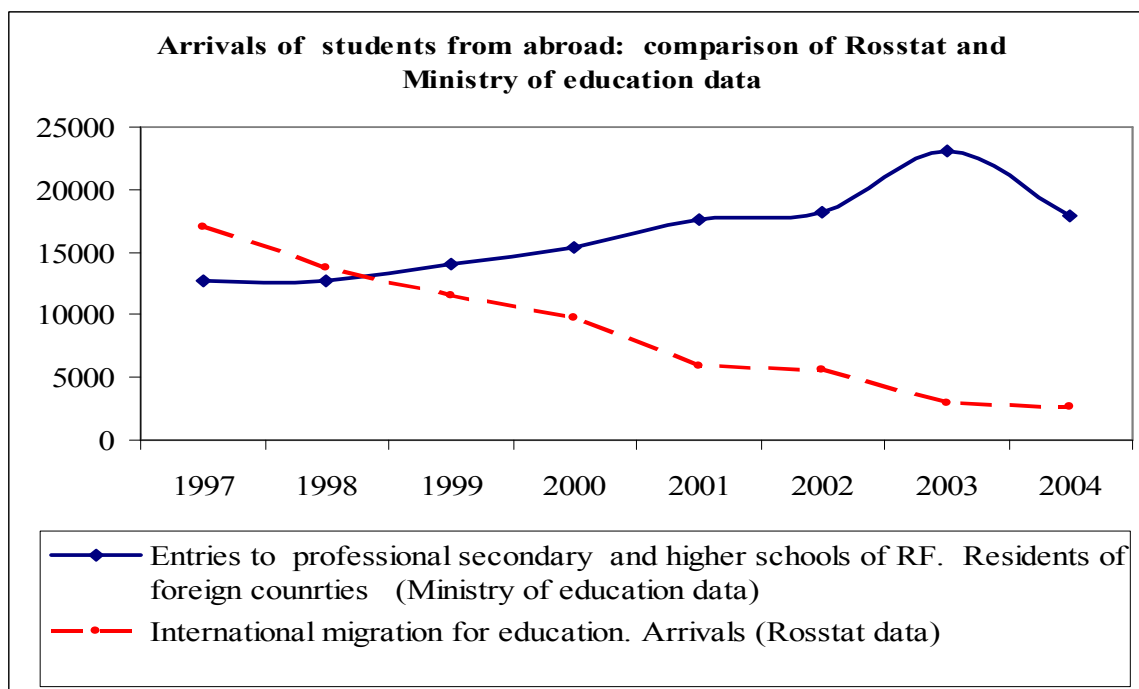
Quite the same trends could be observed if we compare Rosstat data on internal educational migration and Ministry of education data on students that need a place in a hostel (that means they moved from another settlement to a university centre). Since the middle of 1990ies students are mainly registered in the hostels as in a place of stay, not residence, and primary statistical forms are not filled in, although these migrants may live there for several years¹³. Till the end of 1990-ies students could get registration in the hostel as in a place of residence, however some of them after having graduated of been expelled from the university refused to leave the hostel as they insisted it was their place of residence. University authorities had to appeal to a court to solve the problem. Therefore now universities provide registration in the hostels only as in a place of temporary stay.

¹² Usually primary statistical forms were filled out for persons of 16 and older because at 16 a person got the first passport. Since the end of 1990-ies RF citizens must get passports at the age of 14, so Rosstat tables on reasons for move also now present this age group (14 and older).

¹³ Rosstat data (statistics on citizenship of migrants has been processed since 2002) demonstrate that major part (appr. 80%) of international educational migrants are RF citizens, however, there is no evident contradiction with Ministry of education data. The statistical report form (so-called form 3-NK) that every university has to present to Rosstat annually, contains data on residents, not obligatory citizens, of other countries. So does official statistics, as it collects data about people who arrived to reside in the RF after previous residence abroad independently of their citizenship. We must take into account that Ministry of education data do not obligatory relate to the year of actual migration because some of the future students could have arrived in the RF earlier. However, we believe that deviations are not very considerable and in general the chart proves our suggestion about influence of registration system on quality of official statistics.

Longitudinal survey of 594 higher schools of the RF conducted by the Federal agency of education (branch of the Ministry of education) showed that about 93-94% of the total stock of foreign students in Russia are engaged in long-term educational programs¹⁴, it means that the reported figures demonstrate mainly the number of long-term educational migrants.

Chart 3 .



The same thing happened to long-term labour migrants. Since the middle of 1990-ies almost all of them can get registration only in the place of stay, and almost none of them is included into statistics. According to FMS data in 2002, 2003 and 2004 there were (respectively) 378 , 460.6 and more than 700 thousand of foreign workers legally employed in the RF¹⁵. Unfortunately, there is no information about duration of foreign workers' stay in Russia, but we know that many of them have lived in the RF for several years. ¹⁶

FMS administrative statistics shows that about 65% of foreigners which arrived for work and were registered in the RF in 2003-2005 are citizens of non-CIS countries. It means that major part of labour migrants come to RF from the countries with visa regime¹⁷. If some of them (-let us suppose - 20%) stay in the RF for more than for one year, inflow of long term foreign migrants should be increased by at least 50-90 thousand per year (compare to less than 20 thousand of foreigners (from all countries) registered by Rosstat).

Although Rosstat provides data on reasons for move they can not be reliable because majority of long-term labour and educational migrants are excluded from the registered flow. For instance, in 2004 according to Rosstat data only 5418 persons arrived in RF for work and 2673 – for education, that made 5.2% and 2.6% of the flow respectively.

¹⁴ Source: "Training of foreign students in the RF higher school." Statistical digest. 2 edition. Federal agency of education. Moscow, 2005. In Russian

¹⁵ Since 2002 work permits are valid for 12 months since date of issue, in 1990-ies different duration of permit validity was possible.

¹⁶ Figures on number of Russians employed abroad via Russian agencies are rather low: in 2002-2005 about 50 thousand annually.

¹⁷ Citizens of Georgia and Turkmenistan also need visa.

There is one more problem with estimation of real volumes of long-term migration of foreigners to RF. Migrants from the countries with visa regime of entry and stay in the RF can theoretically live in Russia for a very long period, if they have a confirmed reason for prolongation of visa. Visas of several types are issued first for 3 months and then can be prolonged up to 12 months. There is no limitation in number of prolongations. It is not obligatory that migrants with such type of visa should apply for temporary or permanent residence permit. It means that such migrants always would be registered by place of temporary stay, not residence, and would never be included into statistical observation. Only some categories of foreigners with *ordinary business* or *ordinary humanitarian* visa can not stay in the RF for more than 180 days. Almost all other foreigners who have multi visa may stay in Russia as long as they want, if they prolong this visa in time (prolongation is done by FMS) and do not want to change its type (purpose of stay)¹⁸.

It is much more difficult to estimate number of long-term migrants who do not need visa. According to the Law on foreigners' status (2002) they can stay in the RF for more than 12 months even if they have a job contract or another officially proved reason for stay in the RF. These people (except students) must leave RF after 12 months. Many of them return back just in a few days and arrange new registration. Such people can live in the RF for many years. Some of the CIS citizens do not leave RF in time and become illegal migrants as they can not apply for registration without new migration card received at the border. These difficulties create a good ground for development of firms providing false registration documents.

Some more patterns from official statistics. Can we estimate the difference between real amount of long-term foreign in-migrants and Rosstat data? First, we need to make some explanations on status of foreigners in the RF. According to the new Law on the foreigners' status in the RF (2002) the following variants are possible:

- 1) Temporary visitor (<90 days or by visa expiry term which can be prolonged, the real period of stay may be 12 months and longer);
 - 2) Temporary resident (a person with a Temporary residence permit, issued for 3 years, after one year of stay a person can apply for a (permanent) Residence permit. Annual registration in police (migration service dept.) is obligatory. Application for this status is possible from abroad, when a foreigner has not left for Russia yet.);
 - 3) Permanent resident (a foreigner with a Residence permit, issued for 5 years, number of issues is unlimited, annual registration is obligatory)¹⁹;
 - 4) Military status (CIS citizens recruited to the RF army. 5-year contract with the RF Ministry of Defense.)²⁰;
 - 5) Foreigner with a special status (diplomats and heads of governments, etc.);
 - 6) Refugee or asylum seeker;
 - 7) Foreign employee;
 - 8) Foreign employer.
- (There is no special definition of migrants who arrive in RF for education.)

Chart 4 demonstrates differences between amounts of foreign migrants that were observed by Rosstat and long-term migrants who got residence permits in the same year. This comparison is qualitative rather than quantitative as we do not know the year of arrival of all these migrants. However, if we suppose that primary statistical form is filled in for foreigners who are registered

¹⁸ If a foreigner wants to change the purpose of stay- for instance to work after graduating from a university - he or she must leave RF and apply to RF consulate for visa of another type because FMS in the RF can prolong visas but does not issue them.

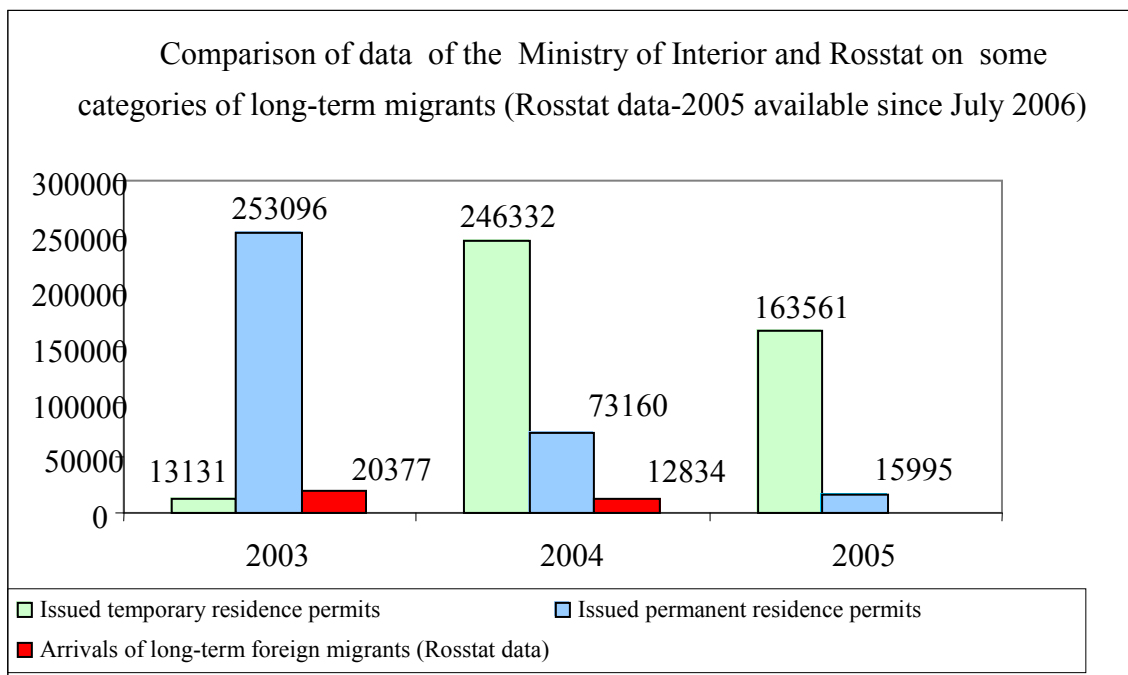
¹⁹ Data on issued permits of both kinds, rejected applications, annulled permits and stocks of migrants with such permits are collected by FMS. Not published.

²⁰ Information collected by the Ministry of Defense. Not published.

in a place of residence (because according to the law only foreigners with permanent residence permit can get registration of this type), the figures should be at least close or similar.

FMS data on residence permits both permanent and temporary - should be analyzed carefully to avoid double counting and some other problems with data interpretation. As it was mentioned above, permanent residence permit is issued for migrants with temporary resident status after at least one year of stay in the RF, but application is possible within all 3 years of stay with temporary resident status. It is not obligatory that all temporary residents apply for residence permit simultaneously, therefore when we collect data about foreigners with residence permit we can not know the exact year of arrival.

Chart 4²¹



Is it possible to use other administrative data to fill the gap in official statistics of migration? There would not be a big problem to estimate approximately correct number of foreign migrants if we have good administrative data on registration in the **place of stay** and if these data were available for statisticians. Theoretically if we could choose those migrants who have stayed in the place of arrival for 12 months and longer, we can have more complete information of real amount of migrants. However data collected in registration offices are invalid for these purposes. Police counts only facts of issuing of registrations in the place of stay. There is no procedure of registration *prolongation*, every time a person gets a new registration as if it was done for the first time. As one person can get such registration, for example, twice a year, he or she would be counted twice in the annual report of police department, even if the migrant did not move anywhere during this period. Actually these data are not senseless from the viewpoint of registration bodies. They show real work of police departments and pressure of work on one officer. Computerization of the process of foreign population registration, accumulation of information in the central data bank of foreign population will possibly solve this problem.

²¹ As temporary residence permits did not exist before 2002, high numbers of persons who got permanent residence permits (PRP) in 2003 could be explained with granting, or re-registration of Residence permits for foreigners who had lived in the RF for several years before 2002. Temporary residence permits were issued only for new-settlers.

6. Future of RF official statistics of international migration.

While official statistics stopped receiving adequate data on foreigners, administrative sources of data collection improved their capacity. In 2002 it was decided to create a central data bank of foreign population in Russia. It is supposed to be a centralized database, that regularly accumulates information from regional bodies. Data bank should include all modules of foreign migrants data- beginning with border statistics, information obtained from migration cards, data based on registration of foreigners, work permits and employment information, data about foreign students, information on issued visas and, of course, data about long-term foreign migrants that applied for permanent or temporary residence permits. Data input format and list of requisites are supposed to be enough to identify the same person if he or she is registered in different regions. There are several questions to answered: data of what kind Rosstat could expect to receive from the central data bank of foreign population, whether it would be personal data or just aggregated information, how often the data will be sent from FMS to Rosstat, if these data would be sent from regional FMS departments or from the central data bank in Moscow, etc. The list of questions could be prolonged.

Quite recently (in the end of March 2006) the new Law on registration of foreigners in the RF was discussed in Russian parliament. The draft of the Law contains special chapters that provide transfer of data about registration of foreigners from registration bodies to Rosstat. Of course there are still some questions dealing with statistics that must be solved as soon as possible. (For example, in the draft of the Law nothing was said about necessity to send to Rosstat any information on deregistration of foreigners, i.e.- on departures). However, we hope that good will and readiness for dialogue with Rosstat demonstrated by the Federal migration service very soon will change the situation and we shall get an opportunity to analyze reliable and available statistics on international migration flows and stocks in the RF.

A few more words should be said about statistics of internal migration in the RF. It also meets with some of the problems described above. Two types of registration – in the place of stay or in the place of residence, make it impossible to count long-term migrants with registration of the first type. Although there was an agreement between the Ministry of interior and Rosstat to fill in primary forms for migrants who intend to stay for 12 months and longer, these data are collected not everywhere. Besides, there is a problem with registration of departures. Departures from the place of official residence could be registered if a person gets registration in another *place of residence*. He or she may report the planned departure in advance, or a police officer in the place of new residence will do it by mail within one month, and the migrant will be excluded from registration list in the previous place of residence. This procedure does not exist for those who are registered in the *place of stay*. Independently of its duration (as according to the law, there are no real time limits) registration bodies in the place of official residence will never learn where this person has moved. Moreover, if this migrant several times gets registration in the place of stay (even in the same city), every time it would be marked that he or she arrived from the region of official residence because there is no document or any seal in the passport that proves place of previous stay.

Conclusions

Transformation of migration data collection after the decay of the USSR had very negative consequences from the point of view of official statistics of international migration: big volumes of long-term migrants appeared to be excluded from statistical observation. Contemporary official data on international migration in the RF especially – since 2003, are

reliable only for flows of the RF citizens. If we want to improve the situation we must initiate changes in corresponding legislation, and Rosstat must get from the Central data bank of foreigners (which is run since January 2006), either primary or at least aggregated data related to flows and stocks of foreign migrants in the RF.

Quite new methods of data collection should be used, as the former variant seems to be too laborious. Even if Ministry of interior and Rosstat come to an agreement and FMS begins to fill in statistical forms for long-term international migrants with residence permits, it will not be a good solution of the problem. Migrants who get the residence permit may have arrived in the RF in different years and belong to different cohorts of migration. Besides, it is quite incorrect to process data on foreigners and nationals as a homogeneous massive (as it happens now): RF nationals are registered in the year of arrival, foreigners must wait at least for a year to get the residence permit. In the era of computerization and development of advanced technologies of data collection and transfer it looks like an anachronism when primary data are collected on a paper carrier and later are input once again.

We have recommended Rosstat to stop publication of data on foreigners as they are collected without any methodological base and should be recognized as defective. Rosstat should increase its efforts to develop communications with Federal Migration Service of Russia and to look for joint solution of the problem related to data preparation and exchange. Development of Central data bank of foreign population and new legislation on registration of foreign migrants in the RF may help to improve data quality, if necessary and timely amendments are done.

In this article we did not analyze other sources of international migration data in the RF, (such as labour migration, border statistics, etc, although almost all of them were transformed during the last decade and have certain bottlenecks). There are some more problems to be discussed: migrants stock in the RF, more adequate calculation of underestimated immigration flows to the RF, analytical capabilities and limitations of different types of data, etc.

Our purpose was to present results of a general analysis of changes in the basic source of statistical information in the RF – Rosstat annual data on migration flows. We tried to explain some peculiarities in interpretation of official Russian statistics on foreign migration collected since the middle of the 1990-ies in order to avoid incorrect conclusions about contemporary migration trends in the RF.

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Annexes

(A) Contents of the primary form for migration statistics collection in the RF

- 1,2,3 Name, patronymic and surname
- 4 Date of birth
- 5 Place of birth (state, republic, region, town, district, village)
- 6 Sex
- 7 Citizenship
- 8 Ethnicity
- 9 New place of residence (full address)
- 10 Previous (last) place of residence (state, region, district, town, village)
- 11 Since what year had lived in the previous place of residence: _____(year)
- 12 Main circumstance that caused necessity to change the place of residence: 1.education, 2.job, 3. return to the previous place of residence, 4. ethnic conflicts aggravation, 5.increase in crime 6.environmental troubles, 7. discrepancy of climatic conditions and health status 8.private and family circumstances, 6. other reason (to be specified)
13. Sphere of occupation in the previous place of residence (industry; agriculture; transports and communications; construction; trade; informatics; health care; education; culture and arts; science; finance, credit, insurance; official administration and government; other sphere; studied; studied in a higher school.
- 14 Kind of job in the previous place of residence (1.manager, 2. specialist, 3. clerk, 4. worker; 5. self-occupation)
- 15 Kind of social welfare in the previous place of residence(for people of post-labour ages)
- 16 Education
- 17 Marital status
- 18 If before migration had lived with family than arrived: 1. with the whole family, 2. with a part of the family, 3.alone. 4. – has lived without family.
- 19 If a part of the family already lives in the place of destination (yes or no)
- 20 Name, sex and date of birth of children under 14 (if arrived with the adult migrant)
- 21 Date of filling in the form (date of registration)

(B) Requirements to prove deregistration in the RF if a migrant arrives from RF for residence in the foreign country:

Deregistration in the RF is obligatory

Armenia
Byelorussia
Kazakhstan
Kyrgyzstan
Tajikistan
Turkmenistan
Uzbekistan
Spain

Deregistration in the RF is not obligatory

Australia
Azerbaijan
Bulgaria
Canada
China
Estonia
Finland
Georgia
Germany
Greece
India
Italy
Latvia
Lithuania
New Zealand
Norway
Poland
Sweden
The Netherlands
United Kingdom
USA

Israel - deregistration in the RF is obligatory if migration for residence is arranged in the RF before the departure, if application for residence is done after arrival deregistration is not obligatory.

(C) Main types and sources of data on international migration in Russia²²

²² The scheme like this was suggested by Michel Poulain, 2000

Type of data	Source	Responsible body and/ or source of primary information	Quality	Availability
Annual flows arrivals and departures	Current statistics of migration (based on registration procedure) – both foreign and internal flows	Federal statistics service (Rosstat), primary data received from Ministry of home affairs (Federal migration service)	Unsatisfactory	Available, published annually by Rosstat
(Planned) flows of arrivals and departures Issued	Data on permits on arrival for residence and departure for residence	Ministry of home affairs Data had been sent to Rosstat till 2002	Adequate, but refer to a very special flow	Available
Stocks and flows (arrivals) Since 1992	Data on refugees and asylum seekers	Ministry of home affairs (Federal migration service- FMS) Data are sent to Rosstat for publication	Adequate	Available, published annually by Rosstat
Flows (arrivals for employment of foreigners, departures of nationals) Since 1994	Data on foreign workers and Russian citizens legally employed abroad	Ministry of home affairs (FMS). Data are sent to Rosstat for publication	Moderate (as the data show only legally employed persons)	Available, published annually by Rosstat
Stocks and flows (arrivals) Since 2003	Data on Permanent residence permits and permissions for temporary residence (temporary residence permits)	Ministry of home affairs (FMS)	No information about quality of data on stocks (double count is possible)	Not published
Stocks and flows (arrivals)	Data on registration of foreigners by purpose of arrival	Ministry of home affairs (FMS)	Moderate (big underestimation of foreigners without registration)	Not published
Flows (arrivals and departures) Since 2003	Migration cards statistics	Ministry of home affairs (FMS)	Inadequate (only part of the whole massive is processed for	Not published
Flows (arrivals and departures)	Border statistics	Federal Security Service (Federal Border Service) General data are sent to Rosstat for publication	Underestimation of out-flows, problems with identification of purpose of trip.	Available since 2000, published by Rosstat
Stocks and flows	Data on foreign students in Russian higher and high professional schools	Ministry of science and education	Satisfactory	Available, published by Rosstat and Ministry of Education
Issued visas and invitations for entry	Visas and invitations statistics	Ministry of foreign affairs	No information	Not available
Stocks and flows (partially)	Population Census	Federal statistics service	Satisfactory	Available, published