Russia’s 2012 Concept of Migration Policy: Are Chinese immigrants a solution to the Russian Far East’s demographic problems?

THESIS

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Daniel M Purdy

Graduate Program in Slavic and East European Studies

The Ohio State University

2013

Thesis Committee:

Nicholas Breyfogle, Advisor

Jessie Labov

Anthony Mughan
Abstract

Russia is currently facing numerous demographic problems, which are leading to a declining and aging population. In particular, the Far East faces a demographic crisis due to the low birth rate, high death rate, and westward internal migration. In response to these demographic problems President Vladimir Putin signed the 2012 Concept of Migration Policy, which hopes to utilize immigrants to mediate population decline and to fill in emerging gaps in the labor market. This paper focuses on the potential for success of this policy in the Russian Far East and the potential for Chinese immigrants to mediate the demographic problems of the region. The literature on replacement migration suggests that policies increasing the flow of immigrants into Russia may be able to stabilize the country’s population, but will be unable to maintain a steady labor force and population support ratio. However, even if the government is able to use immigrants to stabilize the population size, the number required would likely cause high levels of conflict in Russia. This is particularly true in the Russian Far East. Russia has a long history of interacting with Chinese immigrants in the Far East and Siberia. The Chinese were often seen as threats to Russia’s security, health, and culture. However, the Russian government also faced a shortage of workers so they wished to use the Chinese as laborers. Thus, Russian policy towards the Chinese in the pre-Soviet times often revolved around conflicting policies of using the Chinese as laborers, but preventing them from
interacting with society. Many of the same issues of intolerance towards the Chinese immigrants are seen in the Far East today. The Chinese are seen as a threat to the region, as criminals, and as takers of jobs. In particular, there is a high level of intolerance among the youth. The significant level of intolerance Russian youths hold towards the Chinese does not bode well for the possibility of using Chinese immigrants to mediate the demographic and labor force problems in the region. However, it is likely that the government will force the policies through at the national level. To increase the possible effectiveness of the Concept of Migration and to decrease the potential for conflict certain steps should be taken. Agencies being tasked with implementing the policy need to be given the authority and resources to be effective. However, they must also be held accountable for their failures. The government needs to communicate clearly the nature of the policy and why it is being implemented, as well as providing the responsible agencies with the authority and the funding to effectively implement the program. Rule of law needs to be enforced in the region and the level of corruption needs to be reduced, particularly among border officials and police officers. Research needs to be done on the economic impact Chinese immigrants have on the region, as economics plays a substantial role in how immigrant are viewed. Overall, it will be very difficult for Russia to significantly increase the number of Chinese in the Far East as a way to mediate the declining population without creating conflict.
Dedication

Dedicated to my parents for their years of support and encouragement.
Acknowledgments

I acknowledge and express gratitude for the detailed assistance of my advisor Dr. Nicholas Breyfogle and thesis committee members Dr. Jessie Labov and Dr. Anthony Mughan.
Vita

2006………………………………..B.A. International Studies, The Ohio State University
2009………………………………..Chinese Language Study, Middlebury College
2011………………………………..Russian Language Study, Moscow State University
2012………………………………..Russian Language Study, Middlebury College
2011 to present…………………..Graduate Student, John Glenn School of Public Affairs, Center for Slavic and East European Studies, The Ohio State University

Fields of Study

Major Field: Slavic and East European Studies
Table of Contents

Abstract ................................................................................................................................. ii

Dedication .............................................................................................................................. iv

Acknowledgments .................................................................................................................. v

Vita ........................................................................................................................................ vi

Table of Contents .................................................................................................................. vii

List of Tables .......................................................................................................................... viii

List of Figures ........................................................................................................................ ix

Introduction ........................................................................................................................... 1

The Demographic Situation in Russia and the Far East ......................................................... 14

A Critique of Replacement Migration ................................................................................... 36

Russia’s Migration Policy ....................................................................................................... 53

Historical and Cultural Aspects of Chinese Immigration in the RFE................................. 79

Current Issues of Intolerance against Chinese Immigrants in the Far East ......................... 107

Conclusion ............................................................................................................................ 123

Bibliography ........................................................................................................................ 128

vii
List of Tables

Table 1. Total Vital Statistics Rates in Russia................................................................. 30
List of Figures

Figure 1: Map of the Russian Far East ........................................................................ 3
Figure 2. Total Population Projection for Russia ......................................................... 17
Figure 3. Russia's Population Change ........................................................................ 29
Figure 4. Working Age Population Projection .............................................................. 29
Figure 5. Migration in the Russian Far East ................................................................. 33
Figure 6. Emigration from Russia ............................................................................... 57
Introduction

Issues of migration and demographics are facing countries across the globe. Many developed countries are facing declining and aging populations, which affect the size of their labor force and their population support ratios. These demographic issues have the potential to affect a country's economic and physical security, as well as placing increasing strain on their social welfare infrastructure. In reaction to these problems, governments are searching for ways to mitigate the demographic problems. Policies focusing on increasing the birth rate and lowering the mortality rate are unlikely to have a significant effect on increasing the population size. Even if the policies are mildly successful, it will take time for populations to grow and for population support ratios to change. Therefore, governments and academics have turned to the third possible method of increasing their population and the size of their workforce, immigration, as a way to mitigate the demographic problems they face.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, a demographic crisis leading to a declining population in the Russian Federation combined with the influx of migrants and refugees has created a fear for Russia’s future. This is particularly true in the Russian Far East (RFE) where demographic issues are severe. This thesis will examine whether the 2012 Concept of Migration Policy, as proposed by the Russian government, can be successful in mitigating the RFE’s demographic problems by increasing the numbers of Chinese
in the region. In July 2000, President Vladimir Putin said “If you do not take steps to advance the Far East soon, after a few decades, the Russian population will be speaking Japanese, Chinese, and Korean.” In 2012, Putin wrote, “The sense of the situation is evident: without implementing a large-scale, long-term project of demographic development…we risk turning into an ‘empty space’ globally, whose destiny will be decided by others”. Similarly, in December 2012, Prime Minister Medvedev said, “The objective of defending our Far Eastern territory from an excessive expansion of citizens from neighboring countries remains”.

In 2012, in response to the perceived threat of demographic decline, Putin signed a Concept of Migration Policy, which involves using immigrants as a means to mediate the demographic problems Russia faces. Immigration policies, while adopted at the federal level, will be applied at the regional level. To determine the potential effectiveness of a policy it must be examined at the local and regional levels. This is because each region has its own characteristics and environment, and federal policy will affect each locality differently. Therefore, this thesis will focus on the Far East region. This region was chosen for several reasons. First, the Russian Far East faces demographic problems that are even more dramatic than those of Russia as a whole, due to a high level of westward internal migration and a low life expectancy. For example, in 2006 the life expectancy for men in Russia was 60.4 and 73.2 for women, while in the RFE the life expectancy for men was 57.9 and 70.65 for women.¹ The mitigation of demographic

problems in the RFE is essential for the perceived stability of the region by the federal government and the citizens of the RFE. Additionally, there has been a significant discourse in Russian society about the threat Chinese immigrants present to the Far East. While the RFE as a whole will be examined in this thesis, this is a loose description of the region. Primarily, the territories of Primorsky Krai, Amur Oblast, and Khabarovsk Krai will be discussed due to the higher level of Chinese migration present. This higher level of migration comes from the place of these territories in the southern part of the RFE and their nearness to the Chinese border. Therefore, this region presents an excellent example of several of the major factors surrounding the concept of replacement migration, including intolerance and population decline.

Figure 1: Map of the Russian Far East

\[\text{\url{http://wikitravel.org/en/Russian_Far_East}}\]
Definitions

In order to clarify the usage of multiple migration related terms in this thesis, this section will provide a series of definitions.\(^3\) *Migration* refers to the entrance and exit of people across national borders and is a general term that refers to circulation of populations. *Immigration* is the entrance of people across national borders for long-term purposes, such as settlement. Likewise, *emigration* is the exodus of people across national borders, usually to settle long-term in another country. *Internal migration* is the movement of populations within a state’s borders. *Labor migrants* are people who move in search of employment opportunities. These people are part of a larger class of *economic migrants*, which are people choosing to migrate for economic reasons. *Illegal migrants* are those who enter a country without the proper documentation or who remain there once their documentation expires, most often for an extended period. Depending upon their reasons for migrating and their current status of residency these people may be referred to as *undocumented workers* or *undocumented immigrants*.

Unlike immigrants and economic migrants, who make the decision to move voluntarily, refugees and asylum seekers represent the very large involuntary movement of populations. *Refugees* are people who have left their country due to fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, or political opinion. *Asylum seekers* are people

---

who seek formal protection for the same reasons, but submit a request for protection and residency soon after entering the country.

2012 Concept of Migration Policy

It is important to understand the nature of Russia’s 2012 Concept of Migration Policy, as it is under this policy that Chinese immigrants may be used to mitigate the demographic problems in the Russian Far East. On June 13, 2012 several months after his re-election, Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation, signed the Concept of a National Immigration Policy for the Russian Federation until 2025. Since 1991, Russia’s migration policy has been reactive to its political, economic, and demographic environment. Putin’s policy is the first comprehensive immigration plan that Russia has adopted since the collapse of the Soviet Union. The document defines the goals, directions, and mechanisms for implementing a migration policy for Russia. The objectives of the immigration policy are: to ensure the national security of the Russian Federation, to stabilize and to increase the resident population of the Russian Federation, and to help the Russian economy by promoting the needs of the labor force. The main directions of the policy are to: help Russians living abroad to return to Russia, to promote the immigration of low-skilled and high-skilled workers that the labor market requires, to create conditions that will allow for increased immigration by entrepreneurs and

---

investors, and to simplify entry requirements for foreigners traveling to Russian for the purpose of business.

To implement these goals the policy outlines three stages. The first stage (2012-2015) includes developing and adopting regulations that will lead to the implementation of the given goals, objectives, and main directions of the migration policy. The second stage (2016-2020) involves adopting programs to implement Russia’s migration policy and then monitoring these programs. This stage also involves increased usage of technology to analyze the migration situation in Russia. Finally, the third stage includes assessing the effectiveness of the adopted programs, making any necessary adjustments to the programs, and clarifying the direction of the migration policy. Russia’s new migration policy assumes that the migration outflow from Siberia and the Russian Far East will stop after the second stage and that after the implementation of the third stage a migration inflow will begin. But, while Russia’s new concept of migration policy is a significant step forward, it remains to be seen how great the change will be from its current one, since the new policy does not offer specific strategic solutions, only broad directions and goals.

Overview

Chapter 1 of this thesis examines the demographic problems in Russia and the Far Eastern region, which is particularly important to the development of Russia’s migration policy. Like many industrialized nations, the birth rate in Russia is below the replacement
level, which is leading to a declining population. From 1992-2007, Russia’s population declined by more than 7 million. However, Russia also faces the additional challenge of a high mortality rate, particularly among middle-aged men. Russia’s high mortality rate comes from high rates of alcoholism and tobacco use, suicides, traffic accidents, and infectious diseases. Policy makers have adopted numerous policies attempting to increase the birth rate and to reduce the mortality rate such as providing a subsidy to women with a third child and increasing the minimum price on alcohol and cigarettes. This paper will show that while it is unlikely that Russia will be able to increase their birth rate significantly, Russia may be able to affect their demographic situation by decreasing their mortality rate. This policy is not available to many developed countries. The 2012 Concept of Migration Policy is another attempt at resolving these demographic problems, and in the view of the Russian government, ensuring Russia’s future.

Compared to many parts of Russia, the RFE is faced with even more significant demographic problems. Internal migration is drastically affecting the region with high levels of population movement westward, particularly among youths and people of working age. This high level of internal migration stems from a lack of perceived opportunities, high rent, high unemployment, and the harsh climate. Initially the Soviet Union used forced labor to develop the region and then later progressed to providing increased wages to those working in RFE. Many of the regional and local governments and the state-owned industries were highly subsidized. The collapse of the Soviet Union led to a significant decrease or even total elimination of many subsidies. This has left the RFE searching for a way to survive and to develop in the new market economy. Internal
migration combined with the low birth rate and the high mortality rate presents a threat to
the stability of the Far East. Therefore, Russia’s policies attempting to mitigate
demographic issues will be of particular importance to this region.

The issue of whether or not population decline may be negative for a country is
vital in understanding Russia’s 2012 Concept of Migration Policy. Population decline
may be beneficial for a country when considering environmental variables such as
resource usage and dependency, as well as pollution and climate change. However, the
size of the population has historically been connected with a country’s strength by the
government. It suggested that the argument of population decline affecting military
strength is not valid for Russia, but that population decline could affect economic
investment and that changing population support ratios would place strain upon family
social structures and social welfare infrastructure. Regardless of the actual threat of
population decline, Russia’s government considers population decline the most
significant threat facing Russia and is focusing upon reducing the decline in population.
These policies are especially needed in the Far East due to their significant level of
population decline.

The second chapter of the thesis examines the concept of replacement migration
to determine its potential for success in the Far East. The concept of replacement
migration has become very prominent in both academic and policy-oriented discourses
surrounding declining and aging populations in industrialized countries. Replacement
migration is defined as the importation of immigrants as a means to counteract declining
and aging populations. However, a 2001 controversial report by the United Nations
showed that for many nations replacement migration would not be a long term solution to their demographic issues.\textsuperscript{5} The literature shows that the number of immigrants required to maintain to keep Russia’s population steady is feasible, the number required to maintain the labor force or population support ratios is near impossible. While the number of immigrants the 2012 Concept of Migration Policy hopes to attract (250,000 per year) is only half that required to maintain a steady population (500,000 per year), lowering the mortality rate will also help reduce population decline. Overall, whether replacement migration can be successful depends upon the overall goal of the government’s policies and the social and political environment of the country in which the policies are enacted.

The third chapter examines the history of Russian migration policy following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The collapse of the Soviet Union led to conflict in many of the former Soviet states and forced many ethnic Russians to Russia. The period from 1991-1995 was characterized by migration laws attempting to accept these ethnic Russians. Inexperience at controlling large-scale international migration and a lack of resources led to these laws being generally ineffective. In the Far East, the opening of the border and a visa-free migration regime led to a significant inflow of Chinese merchants and laborers. From 1996-2001, the nature of the population inflows changed from refugees to economic migrants. Laws towards migrants were ineffectively implemented, which led to a significant increase in the number of illegal immigrants in Russia.

\textsuperscript{5} \textit{Replacement Migration: Is It a Solution to Declining and Ageing Populations?} New York: Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, 2001.
Immigrants, particularly Muslim immigrants, were seen as a threat to national security following the events of 2001 in the United States.

From 2002-2005 policies were designed around the belief that immigrants were a threat to national security. Laws were passed that were supposed to create a legal method of immigration, but instead created so many bureaucratic hurdles, that the number of illegal migrants continued to increase. A quota system was implemented, but proved ineffective. Corruption surrounding the migration process was significant. In 2006, Russia implemented a program to attract ethnic Russians to Russia, but this policy also proved ineffective and the number of ethnic Russians recruited was much lower than projected. The nature of the work permit program was changed, but there was a lack of clarity and communication regarding the program.

Overall, Russian migration policy has changed significantly since the collapse of the Soviet Union depending upon the goals of the programs and the demographic and migration environment in which they were operating. The 2006 policies indicated a shift towards using immigrants to mitigate demographic problems, but the nature and implementation of the policies and the 2008 economic crisis led to the policies only being partially implemented. The failure of the “compatriots” program shows that Russia will not be able to only utilize ethnic Russians in their policies seeking to overcome demographic problems. While attracting only ethnic Russians would decrease potential conflict and xenophobia, it is not a solution.

The 2012 Concept of Migration shows that Russia understands that ethnic Russians cannot be the only solution as the Concept provides numerous options for
immigration from a wide variety of immigrants. Russia seeks to attract high skilled
immigrants, but also immigrants that can fill gaps in the labor market. Russia’s previous
migration policies show many mistakes in design and implementation. The process
surrounding immigration needs to be transparent and efficient. A simple transparent
process will decrease the level of illegal immigration and opportunities for businesses to
take advantage of immigrants. A communication campaign needs to be implemented,
both nationally and internationally, to ensure that immigrants know the necessary
procedures. The 2012 Concept of Migration is eliminating work quotas and implementing
a point system, which may possibly be more transparent. Additionally, past policies show
the need to provide the agencies tasked with the resources and the authority to operate
effectively. How Russia implements and funds the policies resulting from the Concept of
Migration are elements of how effective the new Concept will be.

Chapter four of this thesis examines the history of the Chinese in the Far East,
how Russia has historically viewed the Far East and China, policies they adopted towards
the Chinese, and historical issues of prejudice. An understanding of the history of
Chinese immigration into the Far East of anti-Chinese prejudice in the region is important
when examining the current issues of intolerance in the region and in determining if the
potential effectiveness of Russia’s 2012 Concept of Migration Policy. The movement of
Chinese into the Russian Far East is not a new phenomenon. Since the Treaty of Aigun in
1858, which granted much of the Far East to Russia, the Russian government has adopted
numerous policies trying to take advantage of Chinese labor, while at the same time
trying to prevent the Chinese from affecting Russian culture. Since much of the land in
the Primorye region was previously Chinese and already settled by Chinese inhabitants, many Russians fear that the Chinese are trying to eventually regain their land. The feelings of intolerance towards the Chinese in Imperial and Soviet Russia were in many ways similar to those in the Far East now. The Chinese were viewed by Russians as transmitters of disease, as well as a criminal element within society. These historical problems are examined to show that the issues surrounding Chinese migrants in the RFE go back a long time; that a quick solution is not likely to be found.

The fifth and final chapter of this thesis examines contemporary issues of intolerance and prejudice towards the Chinese in the Far East. Though replacement migration seems to be a potential solution, or at least partial solution, to the demographic problems in the Far East, the political and cultural environment of the region will make it very difficult for the policy to be successful. The issue of Chinese immigrants in the RFE has gained an especially prominent place in the migration discourses among politicians, policy makers, and academics, both nationally and internationally. The period of chaos in the early 1990s led to an opening of the border between Russia and China and a subsequent massive influx of Chinese into a region that had been closed to Chinese migration since the Sino-Soviet split of the 1970s. There was a high level of intolerance against the Chinese in the Far East during the 1990s for many economic, cultural, and political reasons. There was also a general sense of insecurity in the region, which led to a belief that the government could not control population flows into their territory. When combined with a feeling that they had been abandoned by the center, citizens of the Far East reacted strongly against the Chinese. Additionally, the rise of China as a global
economic power and the extreme differences in population density in the regions along
the Russian-Chinese border continues to increase the feelings of insecurity in the
population. These issues will make it very difficult to successfully implement policies
using Chinese immigrants to mitigate the Far East’s demographic problems.

In conclusion, this thesis will argue that Russia’s 2012 Concept of Migration
Policy will not be effective at mitigating the demographic problems of the Far East for
two major reasons. First, the concept of replacement migration has inherent flaws. While
it is possible for governments to use immigrants to maintain a steady population, the
number of immigrants required to maintain a stable population support ratio is extremely
high. Second, though Chinese migrants are the natural source of immigrants in the Far
East, cultural issues have created a high level of intolerance towards Chinese migrants
from Russian citizens and both federal and local governments. Overall, Russia’s 2012
Concept of Migration Policy is unlikely to be successful, as the natural source of
immigrants to the Far East is likely to result in increased conflict and xenophobia.
The Demographic Situation in Russia and the Far East

Russia is experiencing a series of demographic trends that have the potential to negatively affect Russia’s economic and physical security in the future. In his 2006 State of the Nation speech, Russian President Vladimir Putin called the demographic crisis the most urgent problem facing Russia. High mortality rates and low fertility rates are shrinking the working-age population. The number of working people available to support the number of retired people is steadily decreasing, which can only place a greater strain on the financial and social structure of the country. The Russian Far East, to an even greater extent than the rest of Russia, is currently facing long-term, demographic trends that potentially pose a threat to the social and security fabric of the state. The youth are leaving the Far East in search of better opportunities in the western part of Russia. These problems of population decline and population aging, as well as internal migration leave the RFE in a very poor demographic situation. Both the national and regional governments are taking this issue seriously. The Russian region of Ulyanovsk has started a novel way to raise the nation’s birth rate. It has declared September 12 the Day of Conception, allowing people to take time off work to procreate and providing

awards to couples giving birth exactly nine months later.\(^7\) The national government has adopted several policies attempting to change people’s lifestyles and lower the mortality rate, including the 2012 Concept of Migration. In order to determine the potential effectiveness of the Concept of Migration Policy in using Chinese immigrants to solve the RFE’s demographic problems, the demographic situation in Russian and in the Far East specifically needs to be considered. For politicians and other analysts, the most concerning aspects of these demographic trends are a low birth rate, a high mortality rate, a decrease in the country’s population, an aging work force, and the westward migration of the population in the Far East.\(^8\)

Demography includes the study of population composition such as size, age, gender, and ethnicity, as well as the study of population dynamics such as population movements and birth/death rates. Like social and economic progress, changes in populations play an important role in human development. This chapter will examine data collected by the Russian State Statistics Service (RSSS) over the last several decades and RSSS projections in an attempt to frame the current demographic situation Russia is facing, and the projections and implications for Russia of this situation. In certain instances, data from other sources will also be used, particularly from various opinion surveys. Additionally, often there is a tendency, both among policy makers and academics, to examine Russia’s demographic traits as a whole, without accounting for


regional differences. Therefore, this chapter will also examine the demographic situation in the RFE, to ensure that the unique aspects of the Far East are taken into account when determining the effect of Chinese immigrants on the region and the feasibility of Russia’s new Concept of Migration.

A low birth rate and high mortality rate among the working age group, and a low life expectancy has caused and will continue to cause a decline in Russia’s total population. Russia’s population peaked at 148.5 million in 1993 and has since declined to 141.9 million in 2009. From 1992-2007 there were approximately 12 million more deaths than births in Russia according to the Federal State Statistics Service. However, the decline was partially mediated by 5.5 million in net migration. The Rosstat forecast in 2008 predicted a decline in the population by 11 million people by 2025, with other forecasts even more pessimistic. While Russia has experienced a growth of the working age population over the last 5-6 decades, in 2006 the number began to decline and will continue to do so. According to Rosstat’s middle variant, the decline will reach approximately 14 million people between 2009 and 2012. While the high projection shows a population growth in Russia, most policy makers consider this projection extremely optimistic and almost impossible to actually achieve, due to the large increase in the birth rate that is assumed.

---

9 Vishnevsky, “Russia’s Demographic Crisis,” 12.
10 Vishnevsky, “Russia’s Demographic Crisis,” 12.
The Russian government as well as numerous academics from Russia and international institutions such as the UN and the World Bank often portray the demographic situation in Russia as extremely negative, giving the title of ‘demographic crisis’. However, debate exists over whether certain aspects, such as a declining population, are actually negative for a country. The literature surrounding migration and demographic issues in Russia almost all assume that population decline is inherently a problem. However, population decline in the broader demographic literature is argued as both positive and negative; often depending upon the exact nature of the country in which the decline is occurring.

11 Russian State Statistics Service
The belief that population decline presents a threat to a state’s security is not simply a present day discourse. In the 1870s, some intellectuals attributed France’s military defeats in the Franco-Prussian War to France’s low rates of population growth compared to Germany.\textsuperscript{12} As Michael Teitelbaum notes, during the debates over the Treaty of Versailles, Premier George Clemenceau said, “The treaty does not say that France must undertake to have children, but it is the first thing that should have been put in it. For if France turns her back on large families, one can put all the clauses one wants in a treaty, one can take all the guns of Germany, one can do whatever one likes, France will be lost because there will be no more Frenchmen”.\textsuperscript{13} In 1941, the Presidium of the Soviet Union established special taxes on citizens who were unmarried or had fewer than two children, and in 1944 they declared women who had large families as “Heroic Mothers” eligible for official decorations such as the “Glory of Motherhood”.\textsuperscript{14}

In the broader demographic literature a decline in population may be positive for a country. Homeostatic feedback between population size and family building was the foundation of Malthusian population theory, but is no longer considered today.\textsuperscript{15} However, negative feedback may have an important role to play in today’s society. Coleman and Rawthorn argue that while defining the optimum population is very difficult, small populations can have economic, social, and environmental advantages.

\textsuperscript{13}Teitelbaum, 29.
For example, a smaller population may decrease a country’s negative effect on the environment. Meyerson expands on this environmental discussion by showing countries with small population can react more quickly to climate change and use fewer natural resources. A smaller population may also force the government to invest in additional capital intensive manufacturing as a small labor force will demand higher wages or simply not be willing to work in certain sectors at all. Thus, Russia may need to search for ways to obtain greater economies of scale. Natural resources play a significant role in discussions of conflict resulting from population growth. An increase in population may lead to an increase in demand for resources such as water and oil. This can potentially lead to conflict both domestically and internationally as regions and nations fight for needed resources.

Arguments that population decline may negatively affect Russia are often shown in terms of domestic and international security. Internationally, demographic change can cause conflict by directly increasing domestic politics of a given state so that it becomes a security problem for its neighbors. Additionally, a broader examination of economic, political, military, and societal issues shows that demographic change can create conflict.

---


18 Nichiporuk, 29.
by exacerbating or creating new tensions within a state. Demographic changes can affect a country’s domestic situation in four ways: ‘the creation of revolutionary states, the creation of failed states, the outbreak of ethnic warfare, and the ecological marginalization of poorer socio-economic groups’. These domestic and international issues show why a decline in population growth may present a problem for the Russian Federation. First, a decline in population can affect Russia and the RFE for political and military reasons. While demographic changes can affect elections, in Russia national elections are normally decided by the ten most populous regions. Therefore, a decline in population in the RFE is not likely to significantly affect national elections. However, population decline does increase the political and military importance of sparsely populated border regions. A 2000 Russian Security Council conference argued that the state border would increase in significance as natural resources such as hydrocarbons, drinking water, and agricultural land diminish. The Russian military is based upon conscription and therefore a decline in population, particularly the decline in the number of young men aged 17-19 will affect the size of the Russian military. Fewer young men in Russia combined with public health issues such as high levels of drug use and alcoholism create a much smaller pool of men for the military to choose among. In the late 1980s, 90% of the young men were deemed fit to serve.

---

20 Nichiporuk, 39
21 Herd, 51.
22 Herd, 51.
while in the early 2000s only 60% were deemed fit.\textsuperscript{23} Therefore, the Russian military will be forced to downsize due to the decline in the population and poor public health. The downsizing of the military has the potential to negatively affect the Far East. Primorskii Krai in particular had a large military presence from the naval fleet. As the military shrinks due to population decline, as well as the end of the Cold War, industries tied to the region by the military have and continue to move away. This leads to fewer opportunities for employment and decreased investment in the region.

Demographic factors may also negatively affect Russia’s economic growth. Population decline reduces the ability of Russian’s to build upon existing skills in an effort to increase productivity among the labor force.\textsuperscript{24} Additionally, a declining population reduces levels of savings and thus rates of investments, which negatively affects economic growth. Russia’s aging population is placing a strain upon the state as fewer workers have to support an increasing number of retirees. As the support ratio in Russia declines more and more pressure will be placed on Russia’s pension system, which could lead to significant internal strife.

Finally, a declining population may lead to conflict within society. As the population declines, Russia is increasingly interested in importing ‘desirable migrants’. As will be examined more thoroughly later in this paper, the potential supply of ethnically Russian migrants is limited and thus Russia will be dependent upon migrants

\textsuperscript{23} Herd, 53.
\textsuperscript{24} Herd, 54.
from China, Korea, and Central Asia. This economic dependency on immigrants from these countries creates a societal security dilemma.

Therefore, though it may be debatable, this thesis will follow the line of reasoning that these demographic trends in Russia are negative from the perspective of economic, security, and social stability concerns, and are a problem for which a solution must be found. Most importantly, regardless of what others say, the Russian government itself views this decline in the population level as dangerous given the amount of rhetoric coming from President Putin and his administration declaring this decline a crisis and proposing multiple, though often ineffective, potential solutions. Often, population size, along with economic and territorial size, has been a determinant of state power. Therefore, the government seeks to reduce the decline in population. Occasionally political or academic figures make statements about a potential turnaround of the situation, but even the official position, given in the “Concept of Demographic Policy of the Russian Federation for the period until 2025” does not project a quick return to population growth.

Russia’s Declining Fertility Rates

Russia’s trends of population decline and an aging workforce are very similar to the demographic situations in which many industrialized nations find themselves today. One of the most discussed aspects of the current demographic transition, in Russia as well as in other industrialized nations, is declining fertility. This decline occurs within the
context of fundamental structural changes in society consisting of later marriages, giving birth at a later age, and a decrease in the number of formal unions. These are trends that almost all developing countries are seeing and there is no reason to believe that they will not continue. The birth rate in Russia began to decline in the 1920s when Russia entered a time of rapid industrial development and urbanization. Later, the disparity between genders coming from high male casualties in WWII significantly affected Russia’s population. By 1964, the net reproduction rate fell below 1 and the 1960s can be seen as the beginning of Russia’s demographic crisis. Only during the period of 1986-88 has the birth rate rose above the replacement level thanks to improvements in Russia’s quality of life. The negative effect of a low fertility rate was not seen for a long time due to growth potential in the age structure. The population began to explicitly decline in 1992, as the number of deaths grew larger than the number of births. The birth rate hit bottom in 1999 with 1.5 births per woman, and it has only slightly grown since then.

The negative effects of this decline were not felt for several years as Russia’s age pyramid allowed the working age population to increase, even while total population was declining. This demographic dividend is over. The working age population is decreasing, placing additional pressure upon both the state and the populace.

The decline in fertility in Russia stems from numerous aspects of Russian society. The first is that there is simply a decrease in the desire of couples to have children. Postponing childbirth allows families to become more financially stable, though this may

25 Replacement Migration, 12.
26 Replacement Migration, 18.
27 Vishnevsky, “Russia’s Demographic Crisis,” 8.
also lead to the decision to not have children at all due to the impact children may have on their lifestyle. Limited apartment space also makes it more practical for a family to have fewer children. It also allows women to more easily pursue additional education and a career outside of the home. Delaying childbirth also leads to a decrease in the overall number of children a couple may have due to medical reasons such as reproductive health and the increased potential for complications during childbirth. Reproductive health challenges are a significant problem in Russia due to high levels of infertility (particularly among men) in Russia and high levels of abortions.\textsuperscript{28} In many ways, these factors are similar to those being faced in other industrial states, but when combined with Russia’s poor medical infrastructure, when compared to other developed countries, and social instability resulting from the post-communist transition, they are multiplied.

Russia has adopted several policies to increase the fertility rate among women, such as providing subsidies to multiple-child families and increasing maternity services. However, while these policies are a step in the right direction, Russia should not expect to see a significant, long-term increase in the birth-rate. Financial incentives to increase fertility are a trend that is occurring in many industrialized countries and which most of these countries have been unable to change. The basic idea behind the concept of the second demographic transition is that industrialized countries have reached a stage in their demographic transition characterized by full control over fertility. Couples are

\textsuperscript{28} Yelizarov, Valery V. \textit{Demographic Policy in Russia: From Reflection to Action}. Moscow: United Nations in Russia, 2008.
choosing not to have children, to reduce the number of children they have, or to postpone having children.

The values of the individual play a substantial role in decision of whether to have children. The value placed upon having children and on whether living conditions are suitable to have children are both important. In the past, low fertility rates were thought to be inevitable, because it was believed that women’s workforce participation was incompatible with children. However, today some European countries with high female participation rates also have relatively high fertility due to significant policies to minimize financial loss and career damage that might result from taking time off work. In Russia, financial incentives are limited due to its economic troubles stemming from the transition to capitalism and the need to balance numerous necessary expenditures. Also, the government needs be careful since sudden changes in the birth-rate can create age waves that may have long-term negative effects, such as the burden an increase in children will place on the working age population. Drastic policies to increase the fertility rate could have unintended long-term consequences. Overall, the decline in the fertility rate represents a trend that will be likely to last for the near future, leading to a steady decline in the labor force.

High Mortality Rate and Low Life Expectancy

Another major component of the demographic situation in Russia is a very high mortality rate and a low life expectancy. This issue of mortality is a fundamental aspect of Russia’s current demographic issues, and one where government policy may actually be able to make a difference. The high mortality rate, particularly among working age men, presents a significant demographic threat to Russian society. While the death rate in Russia dropped significantly after WWII due to the introduction of antibiotics, there has been almost no reduction of the death rate in the last forty years. Russia is one of the few countries that currently have a lower life expectancy now than it did in the 1960s. A significant aspect of the problem is that while mortality in Russia for older people is comparable with other similar countries, the mortality rate for the working aged population is 3-5 times higher for men and more than twice as high for women.\textsuperscript{30} When compared to the top developed countries in the world the situation in Russia is very poor, but when Russia is compared to countries with similar GDP per capita the life expectancy gap is 3-11 years for men and 1-5 years for women.\textsuperscript{31} The high mortality rate for men comes from alcoholism, smoking, and drug use. Such mortality rates have had and will continue to have a negative effect on the size of the workforce and on the gender balance in Russia.

While the high mortality rate for the working age population is by far the most significant and negative aspect of Russia’s mortality crisis, the mortality rate for other

\textsuperscript{30} Yelizarov, 28.
\textsuperscript{31} Yelizarov, 28.
sections of populations also need to be examined. In the 1960s, Russia’s infant mortality rate was similar to other comparable countries, but it remained stagnant while the rate in other countries rapidly improved. By the early 1980s, the infant mortality rate in Russia was three times worse than the rate in the European Union countries and in the United States due to relatively poor healthcare infrastructure. Throughout the 1980s and the 1990s the infant mortality rate steadily improved, though when compared against other developed nations, Russia is still near the bottom. Additionally, Russia currently does not utilize the World Health Organization’s definition of the infant mortality rate. Russia does not include children who die within the first seven days, which would lead to an even higher infant mortality rate. Overall, while the infant mortality rate in Russia is high, it has been steadily improving and does not present as great of a difficulty as the working age mortality rate.

The reasons behind Russia’s high working-age mortality rate are numerous. In general, Russia has failed to complete their epidemiological transition. Abdel Omran’s theory states that as a country transitions to developing nation status the developments of medicine and the modern healthcare system will lead to a lower infant mortality rates and a longer life expectancy. This coupled with the decrease in fertility will cause chronic and degenerative diseases to replace infectious diseases as the most prevalent causes of death. However, this has not fully occurred in Russia as infectious diseases such as HIV-AIDS and tuberculosis maintain a significant and even growing presence. In the US,

---

32 Yelizarov, 56.
Japan, and many Western European countries there has been a shift in the initiative for public health from the institution to the individual. This is because many of the major threats to life and health are no longer directly influenced by medicine; rather they are influenced by diet, environment, and behavior. Thus Russia is a relatively unique situation where they are facing health threats from both medical and behavioral issues. First, Russia has not prioritized investment in its public health infrastructure. Infectious diseases still present a major threat to Russian society. The most prominent of these are Tuberculosis and HIV, which is steadily approaching a point where it could be classified as endemic and epidemic. Secondly, the transition from communism to a capitalist system has led to periods of uncertainty and marginalized a significant portion of the population. This marginalization helped drive the growing mortality rate through alcoholism, smoking, improper nutrition, traffic accidents, avoidance of healthcare, and psychological stress.\textsuperscript{34} While Russia has implemented policies to try and reduce the levels of alcoholism and of traffic accidents, it has yet to be seen if they will be effective.

\textsuperscript{34} Yelizarov, 30.
Figure 3. Russia's Population Change

Figure 4. Working Age Population Projection

---

35 Russian State Statistics Service
36 Russian State Statistics Service
Demographics in the Russian Far East

The demographic situation in the Far East differs in several ways from that seen in Russia as a whole. The Siberian and Far East districts have the lowest life expectancies in all Russia, with both men and women living approximately three years less than the average population in Russia. For example, in 2006 the life expectancy for men in the Far East was 57.9 and 70.65 for women, while in Russia as a whole the life expectancy for

---

men was 60.37 and 73.23. The infant mortality rates in the RFE and in Siberia are also the highest in all of Russia. Even though infant mortality rates in many parts of Russia have been improving and are approaching those of other developed countries, the Far East is simply falling farther behind.

The third major demographic trend that Russia is facing is internal migration. The internal migration of the population has played a significant role in Russia’s development and continues to do so today, especially in the Far East. As a whole the Russian Far East lost 14% of its population between 1990 and 2005. No cities east of the Urals have positive net migration and almost all of them face declining populations. A significant amount of research has been done on this trend, examining movement of the population in the Far East, how this negatively affects the region, how immigrants are needed to counteract this migration, as well as the adoption of policies to slow the migration.

While migration policy will be covered in greater detail later in this paper, this section will examine how internal migration is affecting the demographic situation in the RFE. During the Soviet period migration to the RFE was initially forced, as prison labor was used to try and develop the region. After the Stalinist period, the government maintained the desire to populate the RFE and thus, they created numerous government

---

38 Vishnevsky and Bobylev, 58.
39 Vishnevsky and Bobylev, 57.
41 Yelizarov, 52.
42 For literature on Internal Migration in Russia see: Vishnevsky, Khlystun, Yelizarov, Fuhrmann, Ivakhnyuk, and Andrienko & Guriev
policies to incentivize population movement eastward.\textsuperscript{44} Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the attractive destinations for both internal and external migrants have been the Center and the North-West regions, though the popularity of the South has also been increasing. Population has been steadily flowing out of Siberia and the Far East marking the end of several centuries of colonization trends.

The rapid outflow of population in the RFE and in Siberia is occurring for several reasons. First, the climate in many parts of these regions can be extremely inhospitable to life. People do not want to live in these conditions unless they do not have a choice or unless they are receiving significant benefits (normally financial) to living in this region. Second, the primary reason for the flow of population westward is the adoption of a market economy, which led to a significant decrease in the amount of subsidies the Far East and Siberia received from the central government.\textsuperscript{45} The “Siberian Curse” was partially the subsidization of the population and of development in general, both in Siberia and the Far East.\textsuperscript{46} The development of this region cost significantly more than the return that the state received. Now that a free market economy is in place and the significant subsidies by the center to the regions have decreased, if not disappeared altogether, people are moving out of the region westward. Young people in particular are moving westward for education and employment. However, in Russia, the potential for migration from rural regions to towns is almost exhausted. In the 1990s, the significant


\textsuperscript{45} Hill and Gaddy, “Russia’s Geography,” 7.

\textsuperscript{46} Hill and Gaddy, “Russia’s Geography,” 5.
influx of migrants from the former Soviet states was often funneled towards smaller towns and rural regions, where it would be easier to find housing. As figure 4 shows, the westward migration out of the RFE is actually slowing. The westward drift of the population peaked in the mid-1990s due to the chaos following the collapse of the Soviet Union. In particular, the movement of the population was connected with the average temperature of the region, with the northern regions experiencing the greatest loss in population. Overall, the movement of populations westward presents numerous difficulties for both Russia and the Far East.

Figure 5. Migration in the Russian Far East

---

47 Vishnevsky and Bobylev, 22.
49 Russian State Statistics Service
Western drift is often discussed in terms of security, social factors, and economics by both academics and policy makers. These demographic factors will have a profound effect on the labor market in Russia. Russia is already starting to see certain trends: economic growth has increased demand for labor; a decreasing working age population; low wages constrain labor productivity growth; social inequalities are exacerbated by wage inequalities; and the deteriorating quality of the labor force through declining educational quality, health, and increasing age. As the population ages and declines Russia will continue to see an increasingly smaller workforce and a steadily growing older population that is dependent upon the workforce.

With regards to the economic research on the movement of the population of the Far East, many economists, utilizing a neo-classical framework, have attempted to show that regulation by the state, both during and after the Soviet Union, created substantial interregional differences. This regulation involved highly subsidizing industries in the Far East and providing wage incentives for people willing to work in the region. These authors argue that by removing regulation, Russia’s scarce labor resources may be put to better use. For example, Hill and Gaddy discuss how the outmigration of the population creates a more efficient distribution of resources. In addition, outmigration has kept the unemployment rate low. Most of the economic research has shown that the primary barrier to internal migration within Russia is high rent and other issues in the real estate

---

50 Yelizarov, 15.
52 Hill and Gaddy, “Russia’s Geography,” 8.
market. The sociological research shows that sociological factors, such as social links, stable housing, and then employment, are the primary pull factors to a destination. Barriers to westward migration exist in the Far East currently. Therefore, it is possible that the level of internal migration out of the Far East has not reached its highest level.

While there is no agreement among academics on whether migration out of the Far East is a benefit or not, this flow is occurring. While internal migration out of the Far East might create a more economically efficient system, the decline in population has created a fear among citizens and officials for the security of Russia’s borderlands. Russia’s leadership has decided that one of the goals of the new concept of migration is to stop this flow. As will be discussed later in the paper, a potential increase in highly skilled Chinese immigrants in the RFE may be accompanying Chinese investment in the region. This investment has the potential to increase the revenue and the number of jobs for both Russians and Chinese labor migrants.

Overall, this chapter has outlined the significant demographic problems Russia and the Far East in particular, are currently facing. Population decline is coming from low fertility rates and high mortality rates, while the Far East faces significant westward migration of its population. It is in response to these problems that the Russian government has adopted the 2012 Concept of Migration Policy, along with multiple other policies designed to increase the fertility rate and lower the mortality rate. In particular, Russia has the ability, which is not available to many developed countries, to significantly affect its demographic situation by lowering the mortality rate.
A Critique of Replacement Migration

As Russia’s population continues to decline and the labor force ages, academics and policy makers have published numerous works offering potential solutions; varying from social and economic policies, to increasing migration into Russia. However, Russia is not the only country to face a declining population; many of the same demographic trends, except for the high mortality rate, are being faced by industrialized nations throughout Europe, the United States, and parts of Asia. The concept of ‘replacement migration’ has been increasingly prominent in the discourse in these countries and a lot of research has been completed on the potential effectiveness of this concept. Replacement migration is defined by the volume of migration that would be required to compensate for future population losses and for aging populations. By examining the literature on this issue we will be able to see to what extent, if at all, replacement migration may be an effective policy for Russia and the Russian Far East. Overall, the concept of replacement migration is not viable. While immigrants can maintain a country’s population size depending upon the rate of decline, it is almost impossible for replacement migration to stabilize the population support ratio. For Russia, immigrants may be able to mediate the Russia’s population decline, particularly when combined with a drastic improvement in

53 Replacement Migration, 2.
the mortality rate. However, the high level of intolerance towards Chinese immigrants in the Far East makes the likely success of Russia’s 2012 Concept of Migration Policy low.

In 1992, the concept of replacement migration was critically examined by David Coleman and Serge Feld. Coleman determined that Europe had significant labor force reserves among the unemployed and the inactive and that the highly skilled nature of the labor demand made large scale movements unlikely. He concluded that Europe would not need immigrants to satisfy gaps in the work force for at least 20 years (which is 2012). Analyzing data for twelve European countries, Feld concluded that only Italy would face a shortage in the workforce population by 2020. However, Feld placed a greater focus on possible changes in production strategies and changes in the labor market than Coleman. A critique of both of these initial publications was their failure to take into account the reluctance of natives to perform certain jobs in the labor market, which are often typically performed by immigrants.

It was not until the publication of ‘Replacement Migration: Is it a solution to declining and aging population?’ by the United Nations’ Population Division in 2001 that the analysis on this topic exploded. The report begins by analyzing the demographics of aging populations and population decline, which depend on three different demographic components: fertility, mortality, and international migration. The report considers efforts to change the mortality and fertility rates as almost impossible. As we move into the second demographic transition due to the presence of already low birth

---

rates and the ineffectiveness of policies designed to increase birth rates in many
developed countries. Yet, according to the report, even the most optimistic of projections
of an increase in the fertility rate will not prevent the rapid decline of the potential
support ratio by 2025. Therefore, the authors of the report assume that of the three
variables, only international immigration will be able to have a large enough effect to
offset population aging.\textsuperscript{56}

Using data from a wide variety of developed nations such as: Russia, European
Union, United States, Korea, Japan, and several European nations, the report runs
numerous scenarios to determine the volume of immigration that would be needed to
meet certain conditions. The report found that the level of immigration needed to offset
population decline for France, Italy, the UK, the US, and the European Union as a whole
are comparable to current rates, while the level of migration needed for Italy, Japan,
Korea, and Europe would have to be much higher than the current level. The report
showed that the level of immigration needed to offset population aging, through
stabilizing the population support ratio, was vastly higher than had occurred in the past.
Therefore, maintaining potential support ratios through immigration seems almost
impossible. The report concludes with a statement that solving the challenges brought on
by declining and aging populations will require a complete reassessment of established
economic, social, and political policies, using a long term perspective.

In my opinion, the findings of this report may not apply when it comes to
analyzing Russia, because Russia has a mortality rate that is higher than the majority of

\textsuperscript{56} Replacement Migration, 5.
developed nations. Russia has recently instituted policies designed to deal with the high levels of alcoholism and tobacco usage in Russia. While it remains to be seen if these policies will be effective at lowering the mortality rate, Russia does have options to improve their long term demographic situation that many developed nations with both low birth rates and low mortality rates do not have. Vishnevsky found that if Russia’s mortality rate was to decrease to a point similar to Western countries annual deaths could decrease by 500,000-700,000 deaths per year.57 This would greatly improve Russia’s demographic situation and decrease the number of immigrants needed to maintain their population size. The UN Report found that for Russia to hold their population steady, 25 million immigrants, or 500,000 per year would be required. For Russia to maintain a stable working-age population between ages 15-64, 910,000 immigrants annually would be needed between 2000 and 2010, and 871,000 per year from 2010-2050. In this scenario 43.8 million or 28% of the population would consist of immigrants or their descendants by 2050.

A large body of literature has developed around the UN report on replacement migration. One class of research is articles that consider a range of various countries within the context of the report to see what the prospects of replacement migration policies might be. A report by Boris Burcin, Dusan Drbohlav, and Tomas Kucera deals

with the application of the concept of replacement migration in the Czech Republic.\textsuperscript{58} These authors frame their examination of replacement migration in a practical, rather than theoretical or methodological manner. This is because replacement migration has been proposed as an important if not main tool for solving the demographic problems in the Czech Republic. They conclude that, as in most advanced countries, replacement migration is an effective manner to maintain the current size of the population, but if the goal is to maintain the support ratio or the same working age population, then it is absolutely ineffective due to the high numbers needed. Therefore, they conclude that they hope their findings will lead to the abandonment of this idea and turn the attention of policy makers towards a preparation of society for the irreversible effects of population aging.

In addition, Piotr Korcelli examined the UN Report in the context of Poland.\textsuperscript{59} Korcelli begins by analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the U.N. report, concluding that replacement migration cannot compensate for the population decline and the aging of the workforce; it can only slow these processes down a limited amount. He writes that as Western Europe slowly rejects the concept of replacement migration, a more skeptical view of international migration is emerging. He cites Coleman’s 2001 analysis of European migration, which said that Europe had already faced one episode of mass migration in the WWII context, which failed to prevent population aging, and while some


\textsuperscript{59} Korcelli, 5.
of its aspects are economically positive, overall migration has created significant anti-immigrant prejudice.

Though Korcelli’s view, as well as Coleman’s, of this matter greatly minimizes the benefits that do occur to both the nation and the immigrant, their view of replacement migration as an ineffective long term policy seems to be correct due to the societal conflict it creates and the very high number of immigrants needed to unilaterally solve a country’s population decline. He concludes that Poland should pursue a policy of balanced immigration, which includes increased immigration and reduced emigration rates. This seems to imply that while immigration may not be a successful unilateral solution to population decline; it is a way to partially reduce the decline and may be an effective short-term policy, though anti-immigrant prejudice will still be a fundamental factor.

To see how the concept of replacement migration as proposed by the U.N. report is being applied outside of European countries, we can turn to Teitelbaum’s work on Japan. Teitelbaum begins by offering a review of how demographic thought and issues have developed in Western society and moves into the controversial nature of the U.N. report. He then offers a basic overview of the major demographic issues the West is facing, such as low fertility and aging populations. He then moves into a discussion of the other major factor, anti-immigrant sentiment, when considering the variables of immigration and age. When large flows of immigrants move into a country that has a low fertility rate then it is possible for a rapid transformation in the proportion of native and

---

60 Teitelbaum, 7.
foreign born to occur. Teitelbaum then examines the low fertility ratio in Japan and the possible cultural causes for the low rate. He then concludes his examination by stating that the only way to determine the appropriate fertility level and level of international migration for Japan is through an examination of Japan’s social values, rather than quantitative demographic analysis. The decision made by many women in Japan, as well as many other developed countries, to postpone marriage is the most significant aspect in Japan’s low fertility rate and in their declining population. Because understanding the nature of the fertility rate in a country is essential in estimating the number migrants needed to maintain a steady population, the social values in a country need to be understood. The attempt made by Teitelbaum to move beyond the demographic and economic to consider the social aspect of the local is something that is lacking in many examinations of the possible effectiveness of replacement migration.

Another class of papers primarily critiques the methodology of the U.N.’s report and questions its overall validity.61 Keely begins by saying that population projections 50 years into the future are very unstable; that the longer into the future you project, the more likely there will be large inaccuracies. He shows that demographic variables such as the fertility rate, as well as the level of immigration, have been very volatile over the years.


www.jstor.org/stable/27503754
previous 50 years, making any attempt at projection difficult. Then he critiques the report for its unwritten assumption that population decline is inherently negative. A decline in population does not necessarily equate with a decline in output, productivity, or economic welfare for the population. In conclusion, Keely states that replacement migration is a catchy, yet worthless concept that will not be adopted on any significant scale. However, immigration will need to be part of a package of policies to mitigate population decline and aging. Governments should maximize the economic and social impact of migration by facilitating international movement between countries.

Meyerson has many of the same critiques of the U.N. report as Keely (2001), such as the inability to project relatively volatile fertility rates into the far future. However, he then expands his analysis by focusing on the lack of environmental considerations in the U.N. report. Most migration to developed countries results in a higher population in countries that produce more pollution. These immigrants then adopt characteristics of high consumption and pollution similar to those of the host nation. Overall, Myerson is very critical of the notion of both replacement migration and migration in general. He believes that population growth has many negatives and that governments should not adopt policies designed to increase their populations. This is due to the difficulty countries with large populations would have in adapting to environmental issues such as climate change.

David Coleman (2000) offers probably the most thorough critique of the U.N. report and of the concept of replacement migration in general. Like the other critiques, he does not believe that it is possible to perform projections out 50 years, especially on
fertility rates. Additionally, he is highly critical of the way the U.N. framed the report. By using the word ‘solution’ in the title, the U.N. created uproar over their results. Additionally, Coleman notes that the U.N. did not use the latest data and that they used a methodology that led to a change in the projected number of migrants needed to achieve certain results. In his conclusion, Coleman writes that instead of examining replacement migration, which was already known to be an unsuitable demographic tool; they should concentrate on developing policies to increase the birth rate.62

However, studies also exist that attempt to move beyond the U.N. report, with regards to the concept of replacement migration. One example of this is the study performed by Jakub Bijak, Dorota Kupiszewska, and Marek Kupiszewska.63 These authors project data for 27 primarily European countries for the period of 2002-2052. By adding additional aggregate measures to their projections such as the Elderly Support Ratio and Labor Support Ratio they are able to take into account the size and structure of the labor force. These aggregate measures allow us to project the economic burden of inactive pensioners on the working population and the economic burden of the inactive population on the labor market. The authors do not focus on migrants as a potential remedy for an aging population, since prior studies have already disproved this due to the substantial number of immigrants needed to maintain the population support ratio (PSR). Instead, they focus on assessing how much of a demographic deficit is generated over a

---

long time by a below replacement fertility level. Their study shows that policies aimed at changing the labor market and on increasing labor force participation rates, for example, by raising the retirement age, may be effective in mediating the consequences of a declining and aging population. Studies such as this provide examples of how researchers can move beyond critiques of the U.N. report to begin providing additional options that, when combined with migration, may be able to mediate any potential negative effects of population decline and aging.

A thorough paper written on replacement migration by Katarzyna Saczuk is ‘A Development and Critique of the Concept of Replacement Migration’.64 This paper provides an examination of the U.N. report, followed by an examination of the literature critiquing the report. She begins with a critical approach of replacement migration. She moves away from the demographic and begins to briefly examine the broad social, economic, and political ramifications of replacement migration. The strengths of this paper arise in the examination of the U.N. report and the literature critiquing it, however since this paper was written in 2003 a significant body of literature has emerged on this topic that is not included in the paper. Additionally, while it is excellent that she is moving beyond the demographic to look at other aspects of replacement migration, the social, political, and economic effects are all going to be dependent upon the situation of

the region in which they occur. Replacement migration policies will “touch down” differently in different regions.\textsuperscript{65}

Replacement Migration in the Literature on Russia

The concept of replacement migration and the potential positive effect migration can have on the demographic situation in which Russia finds itself, play an important role in the discourse surrounding Russia’s 2012 concept of migration. Vishnevsky examines the demographic issues in Russia, concluding, like the UN report, that the number of migrants required to solve the population issues is too dramatic to be a realistic option.\textsuperscript{66} Vishnevsky found that for Russia to maintain an unchanged population size over 50 years approximately 690,000 immigrants per year would be required assuming the most favorable fertility and mortality rates. Assuming least favorable fertility and mortality rates the number of immigrants required would be 1.4 million per year. Vishnevsky believes that if Russia was to bring in this number of immigrants every year it would likely lead to high levels of conflict within society as the citizens reacted due to the high level of xenophobia in Russia. He then expands on the U.N’s report by very briefly examining how the internal demographic situation in Russia presents the country with a hard decision, whether to open the border to immigration or to succumb to population decline. He also examines the possibility that external demographic pressure, particularly

\textsuperscript{65} Massey, Doreen. "In What Sense a Regional Problem?" \textit{Regional Studies} 13, no. 2 (1979): 233-43.

\textsuperscript{66} Vishnevsky, “Replacement Migration.”10.
along the Russia-China border, might lead to increased legal and illegal migration. While his evaluation is very simplified, he does begin to take into account the additional social, economic, and political aspects in Russia that would affect the level of needed immigration and the potential effectiveness of the policy. This examination of specific variables within a country were lacking, but called for in the U.N. report.

Andrienko and Guriev, in the 2005 *Understanding Migration in Russia* report for the World Bank, say that international immigration is a major prerequisite to Russia’s economic development due to the ongoing demographic crisis.⁶⁷ Russia has a mortality crisis, as well as aging and depopulation trends that are more acute than even those in Europe. They then discuss specifically why depopulation is a threat to Russia, especially the need for a large army, which they minimalize due to Russia’s status as a nuclear power. The main threat they see is the change in the dependency ratio. With aging populations and low fertility rates, fewer and fewer workers are required to support a larger non-working population. However, this leads to the usual dichotomy of the government desiring to benefit economically from the immigrants, but afraid how they might affect the country’s identity and/or become a burden on the welfare state. These authors argue that the benefits far outweigh the costs in Russia, because the majority of migrants already speak Russian and Russia’s welfare state is much smaller than EU countries. In conclusion, they argue for the development of migration policy that will increase the immigration flow into Russia by 3 to 5 times, in order to successfully compensate for a shortage in the working age population.

⁶⁷ Andrienko and Guriev, 10.
This paper has several problems. First, they fail to consider any of the literature on replacement migration to determine if it is an effective policy. Second, they assume that the majority of the migrants will be Russian speaking, and while this was true for the first several years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, it is not true today, as many of the immigrants come from non-Russian speaking countries. These failures result in very suspect conclusions for the authors. Though, one positive aspect was that unlike the U.N. report and many of the papers that focus on the demographics of replacement migration, this paper did cover why the declining population was negative for Russia.

The report ‘Demographic Policy in Russia: From Reflection to Action’ primarily written by Valery Yelizarov in 2008, focuses on the demographic issues in Russia. One chapter in this report focuses on migration, in which the author argues that “migration is currently the most dynamic and positive process affecting Russian demographics”. While recognizing that immigrants can only partially compensate for demographic losses, Valery argues that the government should implement policies to ensure that the labor migrants are used effectively and that their rights are protected. While Yelizarov argues that an increased immigration flow would only partially mediate Russia’s demographic losses, he fails to examine when it is effective and when it is not, as well as potential social and political ramifications.

---

68 Ivakhnyuk, 31.
69 Yelizarov.
70 Yelizarov, 31.
In ‘Demographic Crisis: Russia’s Migration Debate’ Johann Fuhrmann provides an excellent overview of the demographic and migration situation in 2012 Russia.\textsuperscript{71} He provides very relevant detailed information on how Russia has arrived at the situation they are in, what current policies are, and what policies Russia should implement in the future. However, in one part of his report he says, “Immigration has become an absolute necessity if the Russian state is to survive in the long run. The politicians are well aware of this fact.”\textsuperscript{72} While overall, his paper is excellent, he fails to say what the effects of immigration will be on Russia’s demographic decline.

The most thorough paper on labor migrants, demographic problems, and Russia is the ‘Role of International Labour Migration in Russian Economic Development’ by Iontsev and Ivakhnyuk.\textsuperscript{73} This paper begins with a review of the literature, which argues that immigration has a greater role in contemporary Russia than ever before. The demographic crisis in Russia demands that migration be used to at least partially alleviate population decline and associated problems in the labor market. This extensive paper focuses on the role of immigrants in the labor market in Russia. They argue that Russia is in need of a regional dimension to its immigration policy, so that regions can make choices about the type and quantity of labor migrants they recruit. They also argue that foreign workers are now a structural factor in many cities. “Migrant niches” represent a

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{71} Fuhrmann, 108.
\item \textsuperscript{72} Fuhrmann, 109.
\end{itemize}
sustainable segment of the labor market population in multiple sectors such as construction, trade, and transportation. Labor migrants fill the niches of the market that Russians either cannot or will not. Therefore, the need for labor immigrants will increase, at least in the short- and mid-term. This paper provides an extensive look at the economic arguments for increasing the number of labor migrants into Russia in the short-term, even if it may not be a long-term solution to demographic issues.

Overall, the literature on the demographic effects of migration into Russia shows several trends. First of all, there is a disconnect between the broader literature on the effectiveness of replacement migration and the literature on migration as tool to combat demographic issues in Russia. Often it seems that the individuals writing the reports on Russia, simply take for granted that immigration will solve Russia’s population decline and/or population aging. When the authors do seem to understand to what extent replacement migration can be effective, they do not back their argument up with reasoning from the replacement migration literature. One author mentions that government officials are starting to understand that immigration is necessary to solve Russia’s demographic problems, and this seems to be true, given the more liberal direction Russia’s migration policy seems to be heading. However, it is equally as important that these authors thoroughly explain the strengths and limitations of replacement migration in their work, rather than simply recommending that migration policy be used to mitigate population decline and/or aging. Stronger, more thorough publications, will allow government officials who read these reports a more thorough understanding of this complex topic.
Russia’s 2012 Concept of Migration hopes to achieve an annual immigration gain of 200,000 people per year by 2015 and 250,000 per year by 2020. This is significantly short of the 500,000 per year that the UN Report estimated Russia would need to maintain a stable population. However, as Vishnevsky has shown, bringing the mortality rate to the level of most western countries could reduce the number of deaths every year by close to 500,000. While it is unlikely that Russia will be able to do this quickly, the combination of policies increasing the number of immigrants and policies lowering the mortality rate may be able to slow the decline of Russia’s population.

However, this policy will greatly increase the number of immigrants in Russia, and with the high level of xenophobia in Russia, will likely lead to conflict. Backlash from citizens may make it difficult for Russia to implement these policies.

Overall, this review of the literature shows that replacement migration is only an effective policy against certain demographic issues and for a certain period of time. Immigration cannot unilaterally overcome the issue of an aging population. Coleman notes that this is a permanent, irreversible consequence of the achievement of low birth rate and longer expectations of life. Russia does not fall into this category perfectly since they currently have a very high mortality rate. However, research shows that they are facing an aging workforce as well, due to the age structure of the population. Immigrants are unable to successfully solve the population aging problem due to extremely high numbers of immigrants needed to maintain the population support ratio.

---

75 Russia. “Concept of Migration Policy”.
76 Coleman, ”Mass Migration to Europe.” 364.
Research has shown that replacement migration is a possible solution to countering population decline. However, in a society with a below replacement level fertility rate, attempts to maintain a constant population level through immigration would eventually lead to the immigrants comprising the greater part of the population. Therefore, in the long-run immigration as a solution to demographic issues stemming from below-replacement level fertility rates will lead to an ever-increasing number of immigrants in the country as the minority slowly becomes the majority, and potentially may lead to conflict as the natives seek to retain their identity.

However, it is possible that migration policy can help mediate the effects of these population and work-force issues in the short term when combined with other policies. As the paper by Iontsev & Ivakhnyuk showed, there are multiple economic arguments for why migrants can be used to fill in gaps within the labor market in Russia, particularly in the agriculture and construction industries. Additional research needs to be conducted on the impact Chinese immigrants have on the Russian Far East. Besides the economic aspect of immigration, research also needs to be completed on the social, cultural, and political effects of replacement immigration.

---

77 Teitelbaum, 33.
Russia’s Migration Policy

In addition to understanding the demographic crisis that Russia and the Russian Far East is currently facing, as well as the literature on replacement migration, it is also necessary to understand the history of migration policy in Soviet and post-Soviet Russia in order to evaluate the potential effectiveness for Chinese immigrants in solving the Far East’s demographic and labor force problems. Therefore, this chapter will begin with an examination of migration policy under the Soviet Union. Migration, involving both immigration and emigration, and the way the state has attempted to control it, have played important roles in the development of Russia, with some experts believing that Russia was the first country in the world (in 1763) to create its own migration service with the intention of attracting highly-qualified immigrants from Western Europe.  

Internal migration policy in Russia and the Soviet Union leading up to 1991 was primarily concerned with controlling the domestic movements of its population. Prior to 1880s the majority of the Russian peasantry was tied to the land and lacked the ability to freely move. The elimination of serfdom benefited economic development Russia by fuelling urbanization, industry, and agricultural productivity. The state began to

---

78 Nozhenko, 22.
encourage the movement of this now mobile population eastward, in an effort to help settle the newly discovered, and sparsely settled Asian part of the country.\textsuperscript{80}

After the 1917 revolution and the following civil war, Russia faced numerous population movements, which resulted from famine and a shortage of goods as well as state policies attempting to suppress any resistance. In this chaotic time, the state had little control over these movements, as no migrant registration or single identification system existed.\textsuperscript{81} Therefore, in 1932, the Soviet Union adopted a common passport system for their entire territory, as well as making it mandatory for the passport holders to register their address.\textsuperscript{82} Known as the \textit{propiska}, this passport would become the tool by which the Soviet Union would control the movement of its citizens. However, only urban citizens were eligible to obtain a passport, thereby tying rural peasants to the land in a new form of “serfdom”.

Even though the \textit{propiska} strictly limited the individual’s ability to freely move, mass migration occurred on a large scale within the Soviet Union. First, there were voluntary, though state-initiated, migrations in order to provide employment to the necessary regions, through a labor recruitment system (\textit{orgnabor}). Resettlement to Northern and Eastern Russia was especially encouraged through numerous economic measures. While voluntary, this migration was limited to designated regions by the

\textsuperscript{80} Treadgold, Donald W. \textit{The Great Siberian Migration: Government and Peasant Resettlement from Emancipation to the First World War}. Princetown N.J: Princetown U.P, 1957
\textsuperscript{81} Ivakhnyuk, 4.
propiska system.\textsuperscript{83} Involuntary migration was also prevalent in the Soviet Union, particularly in the 1930s-1950s. Entire ethnic groups such as the Crimean Tatars, Germans, Koreans, and Chinese were moved from their homelands in an effort to destroy their unity and ethnic identity.\textsuperscript{84} In addition, millions of people were sent to labor camps, primarily in the Far East, Siberia, and the North. Often these camps were located in regions with inhospitable climates, but possessing vast natural resources.\textsuperscript{85} The Soviet government paid increased wages to entice workers to the north and the east after labor camps were closed. International migration was almost non-existent in this period as the Soviet Union strictly controlled those permitted to enter and exit. These entry and exit rules were regulated by decrees and ministerial instructions issued in 1918, 1925, and 1959. Illegal immigration was negligible. This central control over population movement, as well as the overall focus on internal migration, collapsed with the Soviet Union in 1991.

The Aftermath of the Soviet Collapse

The collapse of the Soviet Union led to a fundamental shift in the nature of migration in Eurasia as the number of international migrants moving in and out of Russia exploded. This led to the creation of border policies that were in some ways very


\textsuperscript{84} Fuhrmann, 99.

considerate of connections across the border and the wishes of people wanting to change the country in which they resided.\textsuperscript{86} Multiple forms of identity documentation were accepted at the border and a visa-free regime was created for members of the CIS. This visa free border regime, signed by all CIS governments in 1992 and known as the Bishkek agreement, would enable substantial legal and illegal immigration over the following decade. However, these new state borders also posed challenges due to increased transportation costs, the development of new currency systems, and the visa regulations that the Baltic States decided to implement.\textsuperscript{87} The problem of increased violence in several areas, but particularly the Caucasus also made it more difficult for people to interact across these newly founded State borders.

By far the largest group of people entering Russia following the collapse of the Soviet Union was refugees.\textsuperscript{88} The shockwaves that the collapse sent through its former republics divided many of the people living in them into categories of natives and immigrants. This led to the “repatriation” movement with ethnic populations from various regions moving back to their ostensible homelands, with the most numerous of these groups being the ethnic Russians. Armed conflicts in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Tajikistan and Russia provided the source for many of the refugees. Between 1991 and 1998 over 3 million ethnic Russians returned to Russia.\textsuperscript{89}

\textsuperscript{86} Ivakhnyuk, 28.
\textsuperscript{87} Ivakhnyuk, 27.
\textsuperscript{88} Gradivosky, Lopukhina, Mkrtchian, Vykhovanets, and Zhitin, 9.
\textsuperscript{89} Ivakhnyuk, 16.
Another significant migration that began with the collapse of the Soviet Union was the emigration of highly-educated individuals from Russia. Known as “brain drain” this flow of individuals out of Russia continues to be a major policy problem that the state has failed to solve as 45,000 to 50,000 Russians look for work abroad each year.\footnote{Fuhrmann, 101.} However, the overall emigration of people from Russia decreased from 690,000 in 1989 to 40,000 in 2004.\footnote{Nozhenko, 4.} The emigration of skilled Russians will not be extensively discussed in this paper as it is a separate migration issue that Russia needs to address.

![Emigration From Russia](image)

**Figure 6. Emigration from Russia**\footnote{Russian State Statistics Service}

**Forced Migration and Initial Legislation: 1991-1995**

The Federal Migration Service (FMS) was founded in 1992 by Boris Yeltsin in response to the mass movement of refugees following the collapse of the Soviet Union.
Units of the FMS were set up in all the Russian provinces, with refugee camps being organized in the most affected provinces.\textsuperscript{93} FMS was involved in both international and internal migration issues, with refugees and asylum seekers fleeing from the Chechen Republic to neighboring areas of the North Caucasus as one of the largest issues. However, the service was provided with insufficient resources to accomplish their mission as the number of refugees and asylum seekers grew. The FMS was unable to provide these people with the social services promised. Insufficient resources, a changing mission, and inexperience led to the FMS being relatively ineffective at its tasks.

After the United States, today Russia ranks second on the list of immigrant receiving countries, with 13.3 million foreign-born persons living in Russia. This means that like many other countries, Russia’s migration policy is primarily concerned with controlling the flow of immigrants. After the creation of the FMS, Russia implemented two laws on March 19, 1993 in an effort to control this flow. The “Law on Refugees” defined who may be considered a refugee, the procedure for acquiring refugee status, and the different rights and duties that come from such a status.\textsuperscript{94} A refugee is defined as “a noncitizen of the Russian Federation who has been forced to flee from his or her permanent country of residence due to acts or threats of force or other forms of persecution committed against the individual based on race, national origin, religion,

\textsuperscript{93} Ivakhnyuk, 30.
language, or membership in a certain social or political group."95 Provided within the law are numerous social benefits for the refugees as well as a guarantee that they not be returned to their country of origin.

The “Law on Forced Migration” applied to citizens of the Russian Federation who were forced to leave their permanent residence outside of Russia and extends to them an even greater level of support, such as payment of a monetary stipend until the individual obtains employment.96 While these benefits were excellent in concept, they were impossible for the government to actually provide given the steadily rising number of refugees and forced migrants and the lack of the social infrastructure necessary to provide these benefits. The inability to provide services and wages was the general situation across Russia due to economic collapse following privatization and democratization policies. Individuals able to obtain Russian citizenship were defined in the “Law on Citizenship” adopted in November 1991.97 While it was possible to obtain citizenship through multiple methods, a central condition for citizenship was residence on Russian land for a period of three to five years. With respect to the situation created by the fall of the Soviet Union, a facilitated naturalization process was created for former citizens of the USSR. For one year after February 1992, these former Soviet citizens were able to

95 Tessier, 248.
obtain Russian citizenship simply by taking up residence in Russia. The time limit on this policy led to many former citizens being unable to obtain citizenship.

These hastily planned and implemented immigration laws were often inadequate when applied to the large number of forced migrants and refugees wishing to enter Russia due to the lack of experience and expertise in managing migration flows that were not state-managed or state-approved.98 The borders remained fairly fluid due to ineffective border control and the visa-free regime, leading to an inability on the part of the Russian state to control their entry. Between 1992 and 1996 approximately 5 million people from former Soviet states came to Russia searching for permanent residence.99 However, gaps in the legislation and holes in the law of citizenship led to at least 3 million permanent migrants remaining in Russia without any status as of 2002. Overall, between 1992 and 1995, 1.4 million people were granted refugee or forced migrant status within the Russian Federation.100

The influx of refugees and forced migrants combined with the inability of Russia to control movement across its borders led to steadily increasing illegal migration. As this number grew so did Russia’s concern over the issue, which led to several policies on immigration control. In September 1994, the Russian Parliament adopted one resolution, which directed the FMS to implement policies to prevent illegal immigration. At the same time, they also adopted a resolution calling for the former Soviet States to enter into

---

98 Nozhenko, 5.
99 Ivakhnyuk, 28.
100 Ivakhnyuk, 29.
bilateral and multilateral agreements on immigration control. These illegal immigrants would come to play an important role in Russian immigration policy as the prevention of illegal immigration would increasingly become a fundamental part of migration policy after 2001.

The liberalization of migration law provided the Russian population with previously unknown freedoms, though many citizens were unable to access the benefits of these freedoms due to the economic transition. The socio-economic crisis faced by Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union created the need for a legal framework that would enable Russia’s participation in the international labor market, while also protecting their social rights. In 1993, the Federal law “On regulation of departure from the Russian Federation and entry in to the Russian Federation” that voided exit visa requirements for Russian Citizens was passed. Combined with the 1991 law “On employment of the population of the Russian Federation”, Russian citizens were able to begin looking abroad for employment. Since highly skilled people did move out of Russia in search of employment, it is a testament to the desire of the Russian leaders for a more liberal society that they did not return to a system that would prevent valued workers from leaving the country.

101 Tessier, 251.
102 Ivakhnyuk, 13.
Shift from Forced to Economic Migration 1996-2001

Russian migration policy between 1996 and 2001 was defined by a shift from refugees to labor migrants. As conflict within the former Soviet states subsided, the region began to enter a period of increasing political stability. Increased political stability in the regions resulted in a decrease in the number of ethnic Russians living outside of Russia but wishing to move to Russia, as they slowly adapted to life in this new global system. However, while the number of refugees and asylum seekers decreased, the number of immigrants from the former Soviet republics seeking permanent residence in Russia increased. Between 1993 and 2006 approximately 850,000 people were natives of these former republics.\textsuperscript{103} Of these the majority were Ukrainian, Armenian, Azeri, Georgian, Tajik, and Uzbek.

The structure of the refugee flow also began to shift from refugees and forced migrants to temporary labor migrants, who move across the border temporarily to work. Between 1994 and 2001 more than 1.5 million labor migrants were legally employed in Russia.\textsuperscript{104} Significant pull factors existed, which caused labor migrants to choose to work in Russia. Russia’s economy recovered at a faster pace than the regional economies after the 1998 economic crisis. Additionally, the visa-free border regime, a historical understanding of the post-Soviet territory as a unified region, and often a common ability to interact with the Russian language, provided reasons for migrants to seek work in

\textsuperscript{103} Vishnevsky and Bobylev, 15.
\textsuperscript{104} Ivakhnyuk, 31.
Russia. In the 1990s bilateral agreements on labor migration were signed between Russia and numerous former Soviet countries, but often the details in these agreements were not implemented, leading to low effectiveness. The lack of effectiveness came from the failure to create programs to implement the agreements and the failure to assign responsibilities to relevant ministries. The failure to effectively implement these agreements came from a lack of financial resources and the general level of chaos in the transition to capitalism. This is important because the failure to assign responsibility for the implementation of a policy is a quick way to ensure a policy’s failure.

In comparison to the increase in legal labor immigration, the increase in illegal employment-driven immigration was much larger. Visa-free regimes allow migrants to enter Russia legally, but they soon found themselves in an illegal status due to bureaucratic incompetence and corruption. The very bureaucratic and complicated registration and work permit application process of the late 1990s made migrants and their employers unwilling to pursue the legal route. For the most part the so-called “illegal” immigrants were forced into this situation by poorly designed legislation and policy, not by their own choice. It is estimated that this shadow sector produced one-quarter of the Russian GDP and employs 15-30% of Russia’s labor force.

The Laws “On Forced Migrants” and “On Refugees” were adapted to meet new developments in migration in 1995 and 1997 respectively. The changes to the Law on

---

105 Ivakhnyuk, 30.  
107 Fuhrmann, 102.
Forced Migrants formalized the application procedure as well as providing additional necessary requirements. For those unable to meet these requirements the institute of ‘temporary asylum’ was established; providing fewer social benefits than under forced migrant status. The Law on Refugees was changed to assist a greater sphere of asylum-seekers than simply those from the former Soviet Union. Additionally, the Law on Refugees was changed to restrict the number of people receiving refugee status. A change that was necessary due to the financial burden that was being placed on Russia because of the significant number of refugees entering Russia and the generous benefits provided under the 1993 law. Similar to the 1993 Law, the 1997 Law on Refugees had numerous deficiencies and was not effectively implemented. First of all, accepting refugees simply was not a priority for government as policy continued to focus more and more on controlling the influx of immigrants, particularly refugees. The 1997 law was successful at reducing the number of refugees. However, this is ironic because by failing to implement the law, refugees were denied asylum and simply were forced into the shadow economy.

Illegal Immigration as a Threat to Security: 2002-2005

Numerous terrorist attacks both within Russia and internationally led to a significant increase in the discourse about the potential threat posed by immigrants.

Increased fear of terrorist acts and of Islamic immigrants led Russia to view immigrants

---

as a threat. Immigrants from the Caucasus and from Central Asia primarily followed the Islamic faith. The Islamic beliefs of many of the immigrants flowing into Russia meant that migration policy between 2002 and 2005 would be focused on the fight against illegal immigration and the potential security threat that it posed.\textsuperscript{109}

During the late 1990s, the Federal Migration Service was undergoing increasing scrutiny. Claims that the organization was failing to pay migrants what they were owed led to a special commission being organized to review its activities in 1998. This review deemed the Agency’s operations unsatisfactory and the head of the FMS, Tatyana Regent, was forced to resign. Two years later the FMS was shut down for failure to make significant progress on the numerous tasks assigned them. Its responsibilities were then assigned to the Ministry of Federation and National Policy, but this organization was eliminated in 2001 and, after a six month wait, the FMS was re-established as part of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA).

The Ministry of Internal Affairs is primarily a law-enforcement institution, which shows the slow change of policy towards a more anti-illegal immigrant focus under President Putin as he strengthened the “line of command.”\textsuperscript{110} On March 9, 2004 President Putin re-established the FMS under direct executive control, where the President determines the agency’s functions and nominates the FMS director, though it remained under the day-to-day supervision of the MIA. Any changes to Russian immigration policy would be initiated directly on the President’s orders. However, while routine

\textsuperscript{109} Ivakhniouk, 36.
\textsuperscript{110} Ivakhnyuk, 76.
operations became the responsibility of the FMS, legislation and policy issues remained under the MIA, and the control of the President. The FMS began to receive additional funding as well, and its number of officers grew from 3,000 to 18,000 between 2001 and 2005. This placement of the FMS under the MIA had immediate negative effects for multiple reasons. The operations of the FMS became non-transparent due to the security aspect of their work. Also, relationships between the FMS and NGOs dealing with migrant issues deteriorated, as well as the relationship with the academic community.

In 2002 the law “On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens on the Territory of the Russian Federation” was passed. This law was supposed to regulate the legal situation of millions of non-status immigrants, as well as creating transparent procedures for new immigrants trying to obtain residence. However, due to the decision to focus on increasing the country’s security through lowering the quantity of illegal immigration, the new law complicated, rather than simplified, the migration legislation. This law was drafted by a working group led by Viktor Ivanov, a member of the Putin team, who was then Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration. This working group would create many of the tough migrant policies that would define the 2002-2005 periods and would lead to a drastic increase in anti-immigrant sentiment among the people that in many

112 Ivakhnyuk, 38.
113 Nozhenko, 5.
114 Ivakhnyuk, 39.
cases remains to the present day. The law created numerous new bureaucratic hurdles, with rules on the registration of foreigners becoming even more complicated.

A quota system was created to control the immigration of workers from non-CIS countries, such as China.\textsuperscript{115} This quota was officially determined by the number of slots requested by each Russian region. The region determined the number of slots needed through requests from businesses. In truth, the procedure for a firm to hire these foreign workers was so complicated that many employers preferred not to. Additionally, it was very difficult for smaller businesses to request labor migrants. The methods used by the state to set the quota were not transparent. The 2003 quota of 530,000 workers was reduced to 213,000 for 2004. In actuality, the quota system limited the amount of legal options available, since the number of migrant workers in Russia was at least twenty times larger than the quota.

Overall, the 2002 law would have numerous negative effects on the migration situation in Russia, such as limiting the number of temporary labor migrants working in the country legally due to the inefficiency of its bureaucratic system. Rapid growth in the level of corruption in the immigration industry resulted, as migrants began searching for ways outside of the law to obtain unofficial registrations. In response, militia obtained the right to check the documents of any potential migrant they saw on the street.\textsuperscript{116} Of course, the average migrant worker in a construction company makes double what a

\textsuperscript{115} Nozhenko, 5.
\textsuperscript{116} Ivakhnyuk, 41.
police sergeant is paid in a month.\textsuperscript{117} Therefore, it was just as likely for the migrant worker to offer the militia a bribe to not be deported as it is for the militia to extort money from the migrant. The number of migrants employed illegally drastically increased. Surveys show that while half of migrants are registered, only one in five is working legally. A significant amount of labor exploitation also exists as migrant workers are forced to work long hours in unsafe conditions. Female migrants in particular are often forced into the sex trade, with the number of illegal migrants in this trade five times higher than the number of legal migrants.\textsuperscript{118}

The “war” against illegal immigrants in Russia resulted in part from the policies of Putin and his efforts to establish order in Russia after the chaos of the 1990s. He strove to decrease illegal immigration into Russia, interpreting the inability of the government to control its borders as a sign of weakness. Mass apprehensions and deportations were combined with strong anti-immigrant rhetoric on the part of the media. Political figures also often invoked anti-immigrant rhetoric in an effort to appeal to the mass population, using such statements as “stopping the hordes of uninvited settlers.”\textsuperscript{119} Though counters to this type of rhetoric were given by the liberal political parties, their voices often went unheard.

A Relaxing of Policy: 2006-2011

\textsuperscript{117} Rahmonova-Schwarz, 293.
\textsuperscript{118} Ivakhniouk, 44.
A Change in Direction

In 2006, Russia, under President Vladimir Putin, decided for a number of reasons to adopt several radical changes to the country’s migration policy. The first catalyst of these changes was the blatant failure of the 2002 law, which greatly increased both the number of illegal immigrants as well as the level of corruption in the country. Secondly, Putin, as well as many other individuals in the political and academic sectors, consider immigration as a possible partial solution to the demographic and labor force problems facing Russia. Drastic declines in the population due to low fertility and a high mortality rate, as well as emigration, were becoming a topic of popular discourse due to their potential social, economic, and security implications. Third, economic considerations were also significant in Putin’s decision to adopt more pro-immigrant policies. Increased economic growth and the increase in nation-wide housing construction projects meant that Russia needed additional labor resources. In 2003, 40% of Russian enterprises faced a labor deficit.\(^{120}\) By increasing opportunities for legal employment, Russia hoped to bring illegal migrants out of the “shadow sector” of the economy. The number illegal immigrants and the size of the “shadow economy” continued to grow despite attempts by authorities to crack down. However, the high level of xenophobia in Russia made increasing the number of labor migrants extremely controversial.

This context led to Putin adopting a policy designed to entice ethnic Russians to move to Russia. In 2006, two principal laws were adopted in Russia: “The Federal Law on Amendments to the 2002 Federal Law on Legal Status of Foreign Citizens on the

\(^{120}\) Ivakhnyuk, 50.
Territory of the Russian Federation” and the “Federal Law on Registration of Foreign Citizens in the Russian Federation.” These laws applied primarily to migrants from CIS countries, and aimed to create simpler procedures for recruiting foreign citizens and for foreign citizens as legal migrants. The Russian government believed that immigrants from CIS countries would more easily adapt to Russia and would be less of a target for Russian xenophobia. Elements of these laws included: increasing the term of permanent stay for foreign citizens from 90 to 180 days; work permits to be issued directly to the foreign citizen, while an employer could hire anyone with a work permit; a ten-day approval term for work permit applications; a simplified registration procedure that allowed for registration at a migrants current rather than permanent address.  

These laws were meant to create a more efficient and effective way for migrant workers to work legally in Russia in the effort to lower corruption and mitigate population decline. By giving migrants the ability to more easily receive a work permit without a prior job offer; to stay in Russia for one year, with the option of extending the stay another year; and to change employers if necessary; these were the most humane laws since the fall of the Soviet Union. At the same time as these laws, Russia also substantially increased the legal consequences for employers who hired illegal immigrants. 

---


Policy regarding Compatriots

A program that the Russian Federation implemented in an effort to deal with a continuing significant decline in the population was the “2006-2012 State Programs on providing support for voluntary re-settlement of compatriots to the Russian Federation.” Compatriots are defined as descendants of former citizens of Russia and of the USSR, ethnic Russians or Tatars, and who had no other state than Russia to protect their cultural rights. In exchange for moving to Russia, they received a refund of travel expenses; a monetary grant; and a compensation package including health, education, and employment services.

Implementation of the Compatriots program was divided into three stages. In 2006 the program was designed and the demand for labor in the regions was determined. From 2007-2008 the program was initiated and from 2009-2012 the program continued and evaluation of its effectiveness began. In an effort to place the compatriots in regions with the greatest need, the regions were divided into sections “A, B, and C”, with the highest level of the monetary subsidy going to migrants willing to settle in provinces under section A, which includes mainly provinces in the Russian Far East and North. The effect of this program appears to have been minimal however. As of December 31, 2011 62,500 people had moved to Russia as participants in the program. While this is a significant number of people, it is far less than that predicted. For example, in 2007, 682

---

123 Nozhenko, 6.
124 Ivakhnyuk, 53.
125 Khlystun, 40.
people moved in comparison with a target number of 23,000.\textsuperscript{126} One reason for this low number is that regions must agree for the individual to migrate and often the cost of providing the benefits of the program are higher than the perceived benefit. Though several million compatriots remain as potential migrants, it is unlikely that they will play a significant role in the effort to fight the depopulation of the Far East. First, many of them have now adapted to the country in which they currently reside and do not want to relocate. Second, provinces where these migrants are needed most are primarily in the Far East and they do not want to move there due to this harsh climate. Overall, while the program to entice compatriots to resettle in Russia has been marginally successful, it did not create the expected inflow and those remaining are not likely to be easily persuaded to abandon their homes in order to create a new life in the desolate Far East.

\textit{Effectiveness of the 2006 Laws}

The question that must be asked is whether the 2006 laws were successful? As the game of domestic politics was being played, the promoters of this bill were required to prohibit migrants from working in jobs involving the retail sale of alcohol, pharmaceuticals, or in any markets in Russia in order to ensure the adoption of the law. In 2007, after these laws were passed, the number of work permits issued quickly doubled that in 2006 and tripled that issued in 2005.\textsuperscript{127} Thus it seems that the policy was somewhat successful in moving illegal workers into a legal status. However, foreign

\textsuperscript{126} Nozhenko, 6.
\textsuperscript{127} Nozhenko, 5.
workers were taxed at a rate of 30% compared to local workers’ 13%, causing many foreign workers to enter into unofficial labor relations with their employers. One of the major problems with the implementation of these laws was simply the lack of a thorough communication strategy preceding their introduction. Many workers and employers failed to understand the details of these laws and how the laws affected them. However, domestic politics began to play a role due to the economic crisis, and beginning in 2008 the quota for foreign workers was only 1.3 million in comparison to the quota in 2007 of 6 million. The decrease in the quota for migrant workers was due to the effects of the global economic crisis in Russia. As companies began to fail and natives became unemployed the first targets of populist politics were migrant workers. In 2008, media outlets began to predict an upswing in crime from migrants who had lost their jobs. The Movement against Illegal Immigration led by Alexander Belov worked to encourage ethnic-based conflicts between Russians and immigrants from Central Asia. Because of this high level of domestic pressure, on December 8, 2008 Prime Minister Putin declared that the quota would be cut in half to 3.9 million foreign workers. Yet, despite this fact, state leaders had already come to the conclusion that increased immigration would be one of many necessary steps needed to mediate the demographic and labor market problems that Russia faced and would continue to face.

128 According to the Russian Tax Code, a 30% income tax was applied to all foreign citizens employed in the Russian Federation during the first 6 months of their work in Russia.

129 Ivakhnyuk, 70.
Immigration Rhetoric and a New Concept of Migration: 2012

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia’s migration policies have shifted significantly as they have adapted to changing circumstances. From being initially focused on the movement of refugees and forced migrants following the collapse of the Soviet Union, to a focus on controlling illegal immigration, Russia’s new Concept of Migration is focused on the potential for migrants to mediate Russia’s demographic problems and to fill widening holes in the labor force. Russia’s history of implementing migration policy has been poor because of a lack of understanding of population movements by policy makers and politicians, domestic politics, and a lack of funding.

While it is excellent that Russia is focusing on the creation of a long-term migration policy, the fact that the Concept only spells out the policy in broad terms, without specifying specific changes, does not bode well for its being more effective than the policies that have preceded it. However, it may be that Russia now has a better understanding of the demographic issues that they face and that this concept will result in the implementation of a successful policy, which will help alleviate these issues.

Even with Putin and his administration understanding the need for immigrants in mitigating demographic issues, anti-immigrant rhetoric continued to play a significant role in politics. The media are significant actors in spreading the anti-immigrant rhetoric and often fail to show the positive aspects of labor migration, such as immigrants taking jobs that citizens would not wish to perform and the ability of small businesses to survive thanks to immigrant laborers. In general, there is a strong anti-immigrant mood among
the public in Russia. Public attitudes towards migrants have become increasingly ethnically biased, particularly towards migrants from the Caucasus, Central Asia, and China, and the case against them was often couched in economic terms.\textsuperscript{130} The discourse is often on the number of jobs illegal immigrants take from natives, how illegal immigrants do not pay taxes, the negative effects of illegal immigrants on wages, the amount of remittances they send home, and the tendency of the immigrant to engage in criminal behavior. Thus, when elections roll around in Russia it is often profitable for a candidate to appeal to the popular vote by utilizing anti-immigrant rhetoric. For example, in January 2012, then Prime Minister Putin, in the run up to the election in March, spoke and wrote at length about the need for a stronger policy against both illegal immigrants and employers who hire them. He published an article, which examined the problems of assimilation and multiculturalism in Russia, claiming Russia’s “cultural dominance.”\textsuperscript{131} Overall, he suggested the adoption of several policies for immigrants, such as a Russian language exam, that combined with his discourse against illegal immigrants proved popular with the general population.

\textbf{Migration Policy in the Far East}

In 1989, during the reforms of perestroika, Gorbachev and Deng Xiaoping met to declare full normalization of Sino-Soviet relations. One of the first steps taken between

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{130} Ivakhnyuk, 73.
\end{footnotesize}
the countries was the creation of a visa-free border regime.\textsuperscript{132} This visa-free regime, combined with multiple pull and push factors from the two countries, led to an explosion of Chinese migration into the Far East. This migration primarily consisted of merchants and laborers, with both of these groups being composed primarily of temporary migrants, rather than settlers. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 had decimated much of Russia’s light industry, leading to a significant decrease in the availability of consumer goods. Chinese merchants were able to bring these consumer goods from China and sell them at a significantly lower price than they could have been purchased for in the Far East, if they could have been purchased at all. Though Russians often complained about the inferior quality of these goods, overall they were happy that the goods were available.

In 1992, a Russian-Chinese agreement was signed on the principles of recruiting Chinese workers to Russia.\textsuperscript{133} In addition to the merchants, a significant number of immigrant workers come to the RFE in search of employment. While the majority of these workers and merchants came to the Far East to work temporarily or to sell their goods, a small portion settled in the region. In 1993 approximately 751,000 Chinese entered Russia.\textsuperscript{134} However, this number is thrown off due to the fact that Chinese merchants crossed the border on an average of 15 times per year. In 1990, 2,500 Chinese workers were working in the construction and agricultural industries in the Chita region.

\textsuperscript{133} Datsyshen, 29.
\textsuperscript{134} Datsyshen, 30.
In 1994, the Russian government eliminated the visa-free regime with China, partially as a reaction to the large numbers of Chinese moving across the Russia-China border unrestricted. The stricter policy occurred at the same time as the crackdown towards immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers across all of Russia. After 1994 and the re-implementation of visa controls along the Russia-China border, the number of migrants coming into Russia initially decreased. However, according to a 1992 exception, tourists were not required to have a visa. Chinese merchants and workers took advantage of this exception to enter Russia legally and then conducted their business. The high number of Chinese entering Russia in the early 1990s led to a fear among both citizens and officials that the Chinese presented a threat to the Far East. This fear was based on a wide range of vastly exaggerated numbers showing that 10-20 million Chinese were in Russia, while in actuality data showed that the real number was less than half a million. Even in the Far East, the vast numbers of Chinese seen were temporary merchants, not permanent immigrants.

In 2002, Russian and Chinese authorities implemented a policy that would allow both countries to continue to benefit economically from migration and mobility, while at the same time lowering security concerns.\(^{135}\) This new policy occurred at the same time as federal immigration policy was shifting to a focus on security concerns. A building named the Primorskii Trade and Economic Center is located on the border with an

entrance from each side. Individuals are permitted to enter, conduct their trade, and then leave through the same side that they entered on.

The Russian Federation passed a law in 2007 preventing foreigners from selling in markets. This initially had a negative effect on the Chinese merchants, but eventually led to Chinese immigrants joining into larger groups in order to purchase large stores that do not fall under this prohibition. Additionally, by creating large groups of workers, the immigrants were able to collectively bargain for better treatment and contracts. Russia has promoted these larger organizations as it allows for them to negotiate with Chinese workers with greater ease.

In conclusion, Russian immigration policy in the Far East usually follows in line with federal policy. As President Putin begins to initiate policies from the Concept of migration the policies will be implemented in the Far East. As this region suffers from significant demographic and labor market issues they potentially may greatly benefit from the new policy. However, this will depend upon effective implementation and funding of the policy at both the federal and regional levels. While Russia has had only limited success in implementing migration and immigration policies since the fall of the Soviet Union, hopefully they will have learned from their mistakes and implement a policy that may potentially benefit Russia and the Far East. One significant problem for successfully using Chinese immigrants to mitigate the demographic problems in the Far East will be xenophobia and anti-Chinese sentiment, which has a long history in Asia.
Historical and Cultural Aspects of Chinese Immigration in the RFE

Introduction

The issue of a Chinese presence in the Russian Far East has become prominent once again in the everyday discourses of Russian society, academic research, and government policy. In the chaotic period following the fall of the Soviet Union, Chinese merchants and laborers moved across the Russian border in large numbers. This unrestricted movement was accompanied by an increase in prejudice against Chinese immigrants among the local Russian population. As Mikhael Alekseev has shown in his extensive research on Chinese immigration, this prejudice stems from a combination of demographic and economic concerns the Russian Far East is facing today.\textsuperscript{136} Local and national politicians have exacerbated the negative feelings towards Chinese immigrants. They raised the alarm that China is trying to reconquer the Far East through a policy of peaceful immigration. While current research has shown that the number of Chinese immigrants and the potential danger they pose on the Far East has been greatly exaggerated, prejudice against the Chinese still exists. This anti-Chinese prejudice in the Far East will make it very difficult for state leaders to implement a policy that increases in the number of Chinese immigrants and labor workers in the region. Russia’s history

\textsuperscript{136} M. Alekseev’s & C. Hofstetter’s article “Russia, China, and the Immigration Security Dilemma” offers an excellent overview of Chinese immigration into Russia in 2006 and the current Russian view of these immigrants at that time.
with China in the Far East and its xenophobia and yellow-peril fears of Chinese immigrants in the region will make it very difficult for the Chinese to be a potential solution to the Far East’s demographic problems.

Even though current events have brought anti-Chinese prejudice to the fore-front of today’s discourse, this prejudice has deeper historical roots. To understand the roots of this current prejudice, the interactions of Russia and China, which began in 1618, must be examined. The first section of this chapter will contain a brief description of the events between 1618 and 1860, when the signing of the Treaty of Beijing gave possession of the Primor region to Russia. The second section will examine the Russian view of itself, and the conflicting views that existed towards Asian peoples and nations. This examination of the Russian mindset will provide the framework within which we can understand the conflicting government policies toward Chinese migrants, as well as the prejudice that developed towards the Chinese ethnic group. A key conflict in the development of government immigration policies in the RFE will be the conflict between the desire to develop the Far East using Chinese labor and the belief that the immigrant population poses an economic and physical danger to the Russians and natives of the RFE. These cultural, economic, and physical conflicts will be examined in the third section of this chapter.

Russian-Chinese Relations

80
In 1618, Ivan Petlin traveled to China and provided the first description of the region by a Muscovite. Later, in an effort to discover a food supply for Siberia, the voevoda of Yakutsk, Petr Golovin, dispatched Vasily Poyarkov to the Amur. Poyarkov dealt harshly with the native population, and reports were sent to Peking of “demons” who had entered the Amur region. The first official contacts between Russia and China were in 1653, when the embassy led by Fedor Baikov and his assistant Setkul Ablin traveled to Peking, and then by Milesku in 1676. These meetings accomplished very little as the Chinese saw non-Chinese as inferior barbarians, with only the potential to become tribute payers. In 1689, Russia and China signed the Treaty of Nerchinsk, which gave Moscow the caravan trade they desired, but forced them out of the Amur Valley.

With the exception of the 1727 Kiakhta Treaty (discussed below), which helped create substantial trade between Russia and China, this would remain the status quo until the 1850s when Governor Muraviev laid claim to the Korean territory and founded several outposts, all without the knowledge of St. Petersburg. In 1854, he received permission to descend the Amur, using concerns over Sino-Russian security as a pretext. He would eventually occupy the Primorye and convince the Chinese governor-general to sign the Treaty of Aigun in 1858. This treaty gave the left bank of the Amur River to Russia, with the right bank being designated as jointly held area. Muraviev took advantage of ambiguity in the treaty to lay claim to additional land. Beijing was surprised.

---

to learn that the jointly held area extended as far south as Korea. In 1860 the Qing emperor ratified the treaty of Aigun and Tianjin, surrendering the Primorye and access to the Sea of Japan. However, the Chinese learned from their initial interactions with Russia and sent surveyors to oversee the demarcation of the border. These led to future conflict between Russia and China as the Chinese people would view this territory as historically Chinese.

In the late 19th century the demographics of the RFE began to change. In 1878, China relaxed the restrictions on Chinese settlement in Manchuria. The Qing emperor had preserved the region as a homeland for the Manchus by preventing Chinese migration. Manchuria had served as a buffer zone between Russia and China, preventing the mass movement of Chinese migrants, though a significant number of merchants and laborers already lived and worked in the Far East. Over the next thirty years over 200,000 Chinese would move into the Russian Far East.

Koreans too moved in the RFE. Initially, the Koreans who traveled into the Far East were laborers who would return home each year upon the conclusion of the working season. However, historian Chia Hsu notes that these workers began to settle and by 1884 there were 15 Koreans villages in the South-Ussurisskii okrug, containing at least 9000 Koreans. To minimize the number of Koreans leaving Korea and to allow the Russian government to better monitor the number of Koreans entering Russia, the two nations

139 Stephan, 7.
signed a passport agreement in 1884. Russia also applied the passport agreement to the Chinese in an attempt to limit the number of Chinese immigrants to only those holding a valid Chinese passport. A 1914 ministerial report stated, “Our policy in the Far East began to take on a firmer and more conscious character in the execution of the tasks of securing Russian possessions in the Priamur”, in particular the, “fight against the progressive influx of the yellow race year after year.”

This historical framework identifies several issues that continue to play a defining role in Russia-Chinese relations and the relationship of Russians towards Asians. Both the Russian and Chinese governments’ policies played a significant role in Chinese immigration into the Far East. However, Russian policies toward Chinese immigrants changed regularly and conflicting policies were often implemented at the same time by different individuals. These conflicting policies often came from the dichotomy of wishing to benefit from the Chinese laborer and the fear of immigrant contamination. However, these conflicting policies also stemmed from the differing nature of the Chinese population in the Far East. The Chinese who remained in the Russian Far East after the Treaty of Aigun in 1858 maintained their status as Chinese subjects. These Chinese were known as the Zeiskii Manchus by the Russians and they would move back and forth across the border based on economic need. The Treaty of Beijing in 1860 ensured that these Zeiskii Manchus could remain in the region and continue to work. A second category of Chinese was those who migrated to Russia permanently. Permanent

---

141 Hsu, 181.
142 Hsu, 17.
143 Hsu, 221.
Chinese settlers varied distinctly from those Chinese who came to Russia to work for a part of the year, but would return home to their families in China upon conclusion of the working season. These varying categories of the Chinese population made it very difficult for Russia to successfully target and implement their policies toward the Asian population.

Another issue that played a significant role in Russia-China relations is the insubstantial, porous nature of the border. For a significant portion of Russia-China history the border was often demarcated by stones or sticks, which often disappeared. In addition, the border between the Russia and China is the sixth longest in the world. This extreme length and insubstantial nature of the border made it very difficult for Russia to successfully implement any policies toward the Chinese in the region, as well as to guard their borders. These borders would also lead to conflict between Russia and China, as several disputes existed on the exact demarcation of the border. Overall, this historical framework will allow us to see the difficult nature of the task faced by the Russian government as they worked to develop and implement policies toward the Chinese population in the Far East.

Russian mindset towards themselves and Asia

The search for a Russian identity would become a central theme of Russian cultural life in the 18th century and is important in framing a discussion of Russia’s policies toward Chinese immigrants. Petr Chaddaev’s controversial “First Philosophical
Letter” claimed in 1836, “We are neither of the West nor the East and don’t have the traditions of the one or the other. Placed outside of the times, we have been bypassed by mankind’s universal education”.\textsuperscript{144} David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye provides an excellent examination of whether Russia is a European nation, an Asian nation, or something unique. The Mongol invasion left Moscow isolated from Europe. During the Renaissance years this isolation helped the European nations develop the view that Russia, due to its exoticism, Eastern geography, and repressive rule was essentially Asian.\textsuperscript{145} Under the rule of Peter the Great and Catherine the Great, Russia began to think of themselves as a European continent. Most Russians believed they were not Asian, but rather defenders of the cross against the wickedness of pagans. However, this desire to be European began to sour after the revolution in France and the invasion of Russia by Napoleon.

Unlike the unanimity of view toward Asia espoused in Edward Said’s controversial work \textit{Orientalism}, Russia has never been of one mind about Asia.\textsuperscript{146} In contrast to the view that Russia was inherently European, Slavophiles, influenced by German Romanticism, argued that Russia’s identity was unique, and lay in the traditions of the Orthodox Church. These contrasting views of Russia as a European nation, or as a unique Slavic nation, were bitterly argued in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century as Russia tried to develop

\begin{footnotesize}


\end{footnotesize}
their self-identity. Though to a lesser extent, a discourse also existed that portrayed Russia as an inherently Asian country. The 19th century historian Nikolai Karamzin wrote, “Moscow owes its greatness to the Khans”, and believed that Moscow had developed their autocratic traditions from the Mongol political tradition.\footnote{Schimmelpenninck, “Russian Orientalism,” 4.} As described below, this view that Russia was inherently Asian was further espoused by Prince Ukhtomskii, but lost its popularity after the war with Japan in 1904-05.

An offshoot of the Russia as an Asian country identity developed in the idea of Russia as a Eurasian continent. Rather than arguing that Russia was inherently Asian, the Eurasianists believed Russia was a nation unto itself, though they still maintained many of the core beliefs of the Asianists, such as the rejection of materialism and their advocacy of autocracy.\footnote{Schimmelpenninck, “Toward the Rising Sun,” 235.} Like the Asianists, they rejected the West. One of the initial promoters of this view was the historian George Vernadsky. He wrote that the people of Russia and the Steppes had blended into a “superethnos,” a people named Turanian. These people shared not only similar blood types and languages, but a desire for a strong, autocratic, government that came from the vast size of the region.\footnote{Schimmelpenninck, “Toward the Rising Sun,” 236.} If Eurasia exists, this means that the people inhabiting it have something in common and that they ought to live together in a single state.\footnote{Laruelle, Marlène. Russian Eurasianism: An Ideology of Empire. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2008. 202.} While this view of a unique Eurasia did not attract a prominent following in the late 19th century, it resurfaced in the period of chaos following the collapse of the Soviet Union.
Just as Russia’s view of itself was conflicted, so was Russia’s view of Siberia and Asia. As Schimmelpenninck describes, in the late 19th century four primary views of Asia existed within Russian circles.\textsuperscript{151} These perceptions of Asia held by the elite of Russia would provide the foundation for conflicting government policies for the following century. Przhevalskii, an imperial officer, promoted the viewpoint that Russia should expand into Asian territories through conquest.\textsuperscript{152} He looked at other civilizations with contempt and justified Russian expansionism with the belief that it was a “civilizing mission.” This was very similar to the view held by Western European powers towards their Asian colonies. Prominent individuals such as Skobelev and Dostoevsky also held this view of the East being only a region fit for conquest. This view fits into the template provided by Edward Said’s Orientalism.\textsuperscript{153}

In drastic contrast to Przhevalskii, Esper Ukhtomskii, a newspaper publisher and poet, who accompanied Prince Nicholas II on his grand tour of the Far East, had a very positive view of the Orient. He believed that the Russians and Chinese had a natural connection and this would lead China to eventually become part of Russia. This natural connection arose from his belief that both Russia and Asia were repelled by the materialism of the West and that both countries had a yearning for the hand of a firm ruler. Ukhtomskii wrote, “The East believes no less than we do…in the most precious of our natural traditions-autocracy. Without it, Asia would be incapable of sincere liking for

\textsuperscript{151} Schimmelpenninck, “Toward the Rising Sun,” 200.
\textsuperscript{152} Hsu, 61.
\textsuperscript{153} Schimmelpenninck, “Russian Orientalism,” 11.
Russia and of painless identification with her."\textsuperscript{154} His respect for the Asian civilization and belief that military action should be avoided would have a great effect on the future Tsar.

In contrast with the desire of the tsarist-era expansionists, Sergei Witte focused on economic growth, not territorial gain. This view developed around the construction of the Siberian Railroad and the desire of Russia to develop and industrialize the Far East.\textsuperscript{155} The railroad would allow for the movement of the vast number of peasants, logistics, military personnel, and communication necessary for development. This development was essential in allowing Russia to control trade and develop efficient economic power in the Far East. Witte also saw the uncontrolled meeting of the East and West as a potential problem. It was the government’s job to manage this meeting in a way which would maximize Russia’s benefit. For Witte, this meant ensuring a Russian and Chinese labor supply that would allow the Far East to develop at a maximum rate.\textsuperscript{156} Witte was only able to promote his policies regarding economic rather than military growth partially due to increasing pressure from expansionists, particularly after the Japanese attack on Port Arthur in 1904. However, he was able to create a Russia-Chinese alliance, which was fundamental in the construction of the Chinese-Eastern railroad.

The final prominent view of Asia during the late 19\textsuperscript{th} and early 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries was that of the “Yellow Peril”. A prolific number of Japanese, Chinese, and Korean laborers and merchants were located in the Far East and this caused extreme concerns for certain

\textsuperscript{154} Schimmelpenninck, “Toward the Rising Sun,” 234.  
\textsuperscript{155} Hsu, 54-56.  
\textsuperscript{156} Hsu, 190.
government officials. These individuals viewed Siberia as a strategic liability, as the vast numbers of Asians in the region made it indefensible. One of the major promoters of the view of a “Yellow Peril” was A.N. Kuropatkin, who believed that conflict between the “white and yellow” races was inevitable. This negative view of the Asian races stemmed partly from the remembrance of the former Mongol invasion. It was also connected to the instances of crime and disease which were connected to Asian immigrants and a belief that the Chinese were taking advantage of the native Siberian population. This belief in the “Yellow peril”, and the factors that led to it, play an extremely important role in the way the Russians view the Chinese.

Overall, the Russian mindset towards themselves, China, and the Chinese provides an important framework within which to understand the conflicting policies towards the Chinese the tsarist Russian government attempted to implement. The negative opinion of the Chinese began to become the prominent view among both the Russian government officials and the local Russian population in the Far East, especially after the Russo-Japanese War. As this negative view became prominent it became increasingly difficult for the Russian government to balance their policies of benefiting from Chinese labor, while still protecting the local Russian population.

Russia’s View of the Chinese as a Cultural and Physical Threat

The ways in which the Russians viewed Chinese immigrants as a cultural and moral threat in the past is another element that must be examined to understand the
current prejudice against Chinese immigration today. A strong belief existed, and continues to exist, in the Far East that the Chinese were a negative influence on society. One of the major causes for this was the difficulty the Chinese had assimilating into Russian society. Overall, anti-Chinese prejudice, which can be seen in government policies and everyday societal discourse, began to gain prominence in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These feelings partially stemmed from the belief that the Chinese represented a cultural and physical danger to the Russian Far East. Of particular importance are the various epidemics which occurred along the Russian border and their connection to the Chinese. These negative feelings also came from the belief that the Chinese were a criminal element in society, who exploited the local native and Russian population. As these beliefs became more prominent, the Russian government began to implement policies to control or eliminate the potential threat.

I define assimilation as the Chinese adoption of Russian language and dress, and a willingness to adopt the cultural norms of Russia. This belief stemmed from several factors. First, a majority of the Chinese immigrants were migrant laborers in the tsarist era. They would enter Russia for part of the year, work, and then return to their homes in China. This prevented the laborers from successfully adopting the Russian language and culture. The Chinese who did settle in Russia worked by themselves on the farm, lived with other Chinese in settlements outside of the city, or lived in a section of town with other Chinese. This prevented them from interacting with Russians, which slowed their
learning of the Russian language and culture, and increased the belief that the Chinese were not only unable, but unwilling to adopt the Russian way of life.\textsuperscript{157}

An interesting aspect of the Chinese cultural threat is how Russians viewed intermarriage of the two ethnic groups and how the Russians treated the Chinese. Stephan notes that little prejudice towards inter-marriage existed in the late 19\textsuperscript{th} and early 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries, though he was unable to find statistics to support this claim.\textsuperscript{158} This is surprising considering the demographic situation of the Far East. Women from both ethnic groups were in the minority in the Far East. While there might not have been prejudice against a Russian man marrying a Chinese woman, the reverse would have decreased the availability of Russian women to Russian men and it is surprising that little prejudice existed towards intermarriage.

The Chinese were treated poorly by the Russians in the tsarist period as a normal part of life. Stephan writes, “Prejudice infected all reaches of society, from peasants to governors”.\textsuperscript{159} The newspaper Vladivostok wrote, “Beating the manza has become a custom with us. Only the lazy don’t indulge in it.” The belief that the Chinese represented a danger to society can be seen in the government’s policies toward Chinese laborers during WWI. The increased war-time demand for production and the decreased labor supply led Russian employers to request from the government large numbers of Chinese and Korean workers in the Far East. This led to the government recruiting Asian

\textsuperscript{157} Hsu, 213.  
\textsuperscript{158} Stephan, 74.  
\textsuperscript{159} Stephan, 73.
laborers to work in not only the Far East, but in the Urals and Southern Russia as well. In 1916 alone, 50,000 Chinese workers were hired.  

However, the government was worried about the negative effects these workers would have on society. Hsu writes, “to prevent the danger of the “penetration of the empire by yellow peoples” resulting from the employment of “yellow labor” the office of the Ministry of Agriculture implemented a set of “Regulations Concerning the Employment and Transport of Workers of the Yellow Race” in 1916.” These regulations required that the Chinese laborers travel on specially designated trains and that they not be allowed to depart at any point besides the destination noted on their passport. They would be closely supervised the entire journey by their team leader and by government agents. In response to this exploitation by the Russian government, the Chinese began to unite and assert their rights. By the end of the WWI strikes, by both Russian and Chinese workers were becoming more frequent. The fear of the negative influence of the Chinese laborer can be seen through the numerous resources, such as specialized trains, the government was willing to allocate to keep the Chinese from entering Russian society.

In the pre-Soviet period, the Chinese were also seen as a criminal element in society. Russian government officials and citizens have connected the Chinese with smuggling alcohol, opium, and natural resources since the beginning of the two nation’s relationship. Stephan estimated that between 1890 and 1916 between 20% and 60% of

160 Stephan, 80.
161 Hsu, 236.
162 Datsyshen, 24.
annual gold production was smuggled out of the Far East. The Cossacks, working as border guards, did little to stop this smuggling since they relied on the smugglers for alcohol. Chinese neighborhoods in Far Eastern towns were also connected with opium dens, which were believed to lead to a decline in morals in Russian society. In addition, many Chinese were in Russia illegally, which only led to an increase in the view of Chinese criminality. There are many instances of Chinese forming criminal gangs, which proceeded to raid villages and trains throughout the Far East in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Some of the most famous of these bands were the *hong huzi* (red beards).

These bands established themselves in the borderlands and moved inland to attack settlements in the Khanka Plain and along the Peter the Great River. During the conflict over the Askold Island gold deposits in 1868 the *hong huzi* destroyed several villages outside of Vladivostok. These criminal actions by portions of the Chinese population led to a general increase in the prejudice against the Chinese in the Far East.

Russian officials saw Chinese merchants as exploiters of the native populations and Russian peasants. It was relatively easy for these poor natives and peasants to become indebted to the local Chinese merchants, and when this occurred, they would often become little more than slaves. V.K. Arseniev, a noted ethnographer in the Far East, published several studies recommending policies that would reduce the trends of Chinese dominance he observed. Arseniev also noted that the natives were quickly

---

163 Stephan, 73.
164 Stephan, 73.
adopting Chinese dress, mannerisms, and language, and that soon the native populations
would disappear forever.\textsuperscript{166} The Russian/Soviet governments desired to protect the
native populations and these protective views may have inspired anti-Chinese policies
and sentiment in the Far East.

The Russian government also saw the Chinese as a danger to the Russian
population through their transmission of disease. RFE government officials and the
general population believed Chinese settlements in Russia to be filthy, crowded regions.
The unsanitary nature of these settlements, accompanied by a lack of knowledge among
the Chinese about the proper implementation of public health policies would lead to the
spread of disease.\textsuperscript{167} The best example of this was the 1910 plague epidemic in
Manchuria. The first cases of pulmonary plague were found among Chinese in the
concession zone of the Chinese Eastern Railroad (CER) on the Chinese side of the border
in the Transbaikal region.\textsuperscript{168} The epidemic lasted for six months and caused around
60,000 casualties in Manchuria and Northern China. While the majority of these
casualties were Chinese, a number of Russians also died. The development of the railroad
played a significant role in the spread of the epidemic as it allowed for faster movement
of the disease. Thus, urbanization, population density, and technological development,
when combined with a lack of knowledge about the spread of disease would create a fear
that the Chinese were a potential danger to the Russian population in the Far East.

\textsuperscript{166} Hsu, 215.

\textsuperscript{167} Hsu, 305.

\textsuperscript{168} Hsu, 288.
Economic Competition and the Contract-Laborer

Economic competition between Russians and Chinese in the late 19th and early 20th centuries also led to an increase in anti-Chinese feelings and to the creation of anti-Chinese government policies. Russia’s relationship with the Chinese began with a focus on trade and the economic benefit which this trade would provide Russia. The Treaty of Kiakhta, negotiated by Count Vladislavich in 1727, provided for the opening of the trade town of Kiakhta and permanent trade between the two nations. This town was located in an isolated section of the border, far from any mass of population. The reason for locating the trade town in this isolated region was the xenophobia of the Qing emperor.\textsuperscript{169} He feared that the Russians would negatively impact the culture of China and he wanted to keep this influence out by segregating all trade to a remote outpost. This shows that fear of cultural contamination has had an impact on the relationship between Russia and China since the beginning. Trade in Kiakhta developed slowly, but in 1762 the Russian government eliminated the state monopoly on the export of Russian furs, which caused an explosion in trade.\textsuperscript{170} Private fur trade would lead to Kiakhta becoming one of the most important trade towns of its time.

Along the Far East border, the relationship between Russian peasants and Chinese immigrants has often been defined by the dependency of Russians upon Chinese merchants for certain goods. When Russian settlers first entered the Priamur and


Primorye regions they found Chinese agricultural settlers in the region. Soon these Chinese farmers were supplying the Russians with needed food supplies.\textsuperscript{171} Stephan notes, “In 1877 four of every five civilians in Vladivostok was Chinese or Korean, a proportion that did not dramatically change for the rest of the century. Chinese and Koreans supplied most of the unskilled labor, owned the bulk of small stores, and controlled local supplies of fresh water, firewood, and animal feed”.\textsuperscript{172} This dependency upon the Chinese for survival led to an increase in anti-Chinese feelings in the Far East.

Russian industry was also often dependent upon Chinese laborers in the Far East in the pre-Soviet period.\textsuperscript{173} Chinese laborers were used extensively in the mining, lumber, and agricultural industries, as well as in the construction of many of the major cities, especially Vladivostok. These laborers were used for two reasons. First, Chinese laborers were paid lower wages than Russian workers. Second, the supply of Russian labor was short, especially before the development of the railroad. Government policies towards these Chinese laborers often conflicted. However, local firms normally wished to maximize their profits and this was impossible using only Russian labor. Therefore, while they did not respect the Chinese, they wished to continue to benefit from their cheap labor. These firms would often ignore current government policies toward the Chinese and hire illegal laborers. The desire by local firms to hire cheap laborers continued even as the number of Russian settlers to the Far East rose. This led to an increase in prejudice against the Chinese immigrants as the Russian settlers had to

\textsuperscript{171} Stephan, 72.  
\textsuperscript{172} Stephan, 74.  
\textsuperscript{173} Hsu, 220-242.
compete for work. Even in situations where the Russians were not required to compete with the Chinese for employment, the Chinese represented an excellent target upon which to place their economic woes.

An additional conflict over the Chinese migrant laborer was the issue of remittances. Since many of the Chinese workers were seasonal laborers, they returned to their homes in China upon the completion of the working season or their contract. The Chinese laborer would take his earnings back to China, rather than spending the money in the Russian economy. This was different from the Korean laborers who primarily settled in Russia permanently. Remittances to China were believed to have a negative effect on small Russian business and the Russian economy in general.

The Russian government developed a policy that allowed businesses to benefit from Chinese workers, but did not allow the Chinese workers to permanently settle. The creation of the contract-laborer, rather than the migrant-settler, settled the either-or nature of previous government policies toward the Chinese immigrants. This policy came from a law passed on June 21, 1910, which forbade the selling of state land to foreigners or the hiring of foreign workers for government projects. However, exemptions to this policy were allowed upon approval from the Council of Ministers. The result of this exemption was the creation of a legal method of hiring foreign laborers. This law resulted from a balance of two conflicting views. Stolypin believed the need to russify the region outweighed the need to develop the region economically. Therefore, he did not believe in the use of Chinese labor. Kokovtsov wished to benefit from Chinese labor in certain fledgling sectors, such as lumber and mining. To deal with this dichotomy of both
opening the territory for Russian settlers, while at the same time benefiting from cheap Chinese labor. Kokovtsov suggested implementing policies that would allow the Chinese to work, but not participate in society. The Chinese workers were only allowed to stay in Russia for the period of their employment. This policy also allowed the Russian government to better control the flow of migrant labor into the country.

Overall, while Chinese immigrants were necessary for the development of the Far East, the belief that they negatively impacted the financial status of the Russian individual led to an increase in anti-Chinese sentiment and the creation of anti-Chinese government policies against Chinese in the Far East in the late tsarist period. The creation of the contract-laborer was extremely significant as it removed the Chinese immigrant from permanent settlement in Russian society, while still allowing Russian industry to benefit from their labor.

Security of the Russia-China Border

The idea of a “Frontier Ethos” or the “Frontier as a Sacred Area” is an important issue which affected Chinese immigrants in the Russian Far East. This is the view that borders are the most vulnerable regions in a nation and they must be not only protected by responsible, efficient guards, but that the local population needs to be of the highest quality; individuals whose loyalties are beyond reproach. The view of the frontier as a vulnerable region is not unique to the Far East. Russia also implemented policies to

---

174 Hsu, 232.
ensure the loyalty of the population along its western border. In 1886, the governor-general of Priamur province, Baron A.N. Korf organized a conference to discuss the problem of the Chinese population. From this conference emerged an order to relocate to the interior all Chinese living within 34 miles of the border. Over the next decade thousands of Chinese were moved out of the Sikhote Alin and Zeya valleys.¹⁷⁵

The Boxer Rebellion in 1900 brought the Russian fear over the danger to the border caused by Chinese immigrants to a head.¹⁷⁶ In July, the Rebellion reached the border and Blagoveshchensk came under sporadic bombardment from the town of Sagalian across the Amur River. These attacks and an order by the Chinese provincial governor to fire on Russian warships, combined with the fact that almost the entire garrison of troops had been sent to reinforce Harbin created a heightened sense of insecurity in the region. Taking advantage of the increased tension, Governor K.N. Gribsky ordered all local Chinese deported to Manchuria. 3500 Chinese from the city of Blagoveshchensk were driven into the Amur River, which demarcated the border between Russia and China. Stephan estimates that only 100 of the 3500 Chinese who were driven into the Amur reached the far bank alive. Those Chinese unable to reach the Amur were killed by Cossacks. However, Schimmelpenninck expands on Stephan to show that the reason for the high casualty rate was that the Qing soldiers on the far bank

¹⁷⁵ Stephan, 79.
¹⁷⁶ Imperial Rivals, by S.C.M. Paine, contains an excellent description of the massacre and the entrance of Russian troops into Manchuria to protect the Chinese Eastern Railroad. Though Russia was not initially worried about the Boxer rebellion, in the end they would send more troops to this conflict than any of the other foreign powers.
thought they were being invaded and opened fire. The majority of the casualties occurred during the following exchange of fire.\textsuperscript{177}

The official reaction to this massacre was decidedly mild. Several of the leaders were reprimanded, with the most serious penalties being imposed being three-month prison sentences. While this massacre had a decidedly demoralizing effect on the Chinese immigrants who remained in the region, it did not stop additional laborers and merchants from entering Russia and pursuing work in this border region. Thus, neither the government policy to deport Chinese from the border region in 1886, nor the massacre of the Chinese in Blagoveshchensk provided a solution to the fear caused by the Asian population along the border.

The 1904 Russo-Japanese war would only exacerbate anti-Chinese sentiment along the border. Concerned by the Russian invasion of Manchuria during the Boxer rebellion and in search of land and resources, Japan decided to invade the Far East. The invasion began on February 8, 1904 with an attack on Port Arthur. Russia had a tendency to group all Asians together and the security threat imposed by one nation would be placed upon all Asian races.\textsuperscript{178} Russia viewed the Chinese living in the Far East as potential spies, both during and following the conflict. This view was not unsubstantiated as Japan did attempt to use Chinese and Koreans as spies and some were caught in the act of espionage. The 1904-05 war only exacerbated the view that the Chinese were
threatening the security of the Russian borderlands and that drastic measures needed to be taken to secure the borders.

The view of “Russia for the Russians” played an important, yet conflicting role in the development of immigration policies in the Far East. Following Witte’s reforms and the construction of the Siberian Railroad, Russian peasants were able to travel to Siberia at a greatly increased rate. This led to a shift in perceptions and policies along the frontier to a “Russia for the Russians” viewpoint. After 1881, government policy was to encourage the settlement of Russian peasants and to restrict the influx of non-Russians. At this time there were said to be 15,000 Chinese in the Amur region as compared to 41,300 Russians. Regulations approved by the Tsar in 1882 prevented non-Russian subjects from owning land in the region and in 1910 the contract-laborer system was created.

However, the nature of the relationship between the Far East and the Chinese population which resided there changed significantly between the October Revolution and WWII. The borders of the USSR changed from “loosely defined frontiers” to “hard and fast borders.” Bone writes that the more involved the USSR became in constructing socialism in its own country, the greater need it felt to isolate itself from the rest of the world. As the USSR began to “fortify lines in the sand” ethnic issues would play a significant role. Due to the belief within the government that the Asian population

---


180 Bone, 263.
represented a potentially non-loyal element, the USSR would initiate policies that would effectively remove a majority of the Asians from the Far East border regions.

Chinese and Korean immigrants would remain along the border until the purges struck the region in the fall of 1937. Unlike the purges in other parts of the Soviet Union, class rhetoric was not involved in the actions taken against the Koreans and Chinese, rather ethnic status was the basis for action. On 21 August, 1937 mass deportations of all Koreans in the Far East were ordered by the Commissariat of Internal Affairs. By October, according to a report by Commissar Nikolai Ezhov, 171,181 Koreans had been shipped to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. The purpose given for these deportations by Stalin and Molotov was “the forestalling the penetrations of Japanese espionage”, though this was likely simply a justification for the police services. Koreans who resisted the deportation were shot, as well as many Koreans who had any contact with Japanese nationals. Koreans who worked for the Russian intelligence services were also executed as their loyalty was in question. While this mass population movement of the Koreans occurred during the purges, there were differences. For example, since class was not an issue, the deported Koreans were offered minimal relocation payments, and upon reaching Central Asia were given the status of regular resettlers. This allowed them to retain many of their civil rights, which had been taken from the internally resettled kulaks. Overall, during the fall of 1937 almost the entire Korean population was removed from the border regions.

---

181 Bone, 276.
182 Bone, 276.
Once the Korean presence was eliminated from the border regions the Soviet Government turned their attention to the Chinese population. Though the Chinese population along the border was significantly smaller than the Koreans, they were targeted for several reasons besides the fact that were a different ethnic group. The occupation of Manchuria by Japan led to thousands of Chinese soldiers being forcefully relocated from Manchuria to Siberia in the 1930s. While many of the Chinese soldiers relocated, eventually ended up in Xinjiang province, the Soviet government sent hundreds of Chinese to labor camps in Siberia to serve in the mining and lumber industries. These individuals protested their internment in several ways, such as public demonstrations, refusal to work, and establishing fake farm collectives. This led to a perception by the government that the Chinese were not loyal to the Soviet state, though primarily the Chinese stayed out of the political discourse. In addition to the belief that the Chinese were not loyal to the Soviet state, the Chinese were targeted for removal because of the belief that the Chinese were potential spies, and that the majority of the Chinese were engaged in criminal activities, primarily smuggling natural resources and running opium dens. The removal of the Chinese would allow the Soviet Union to eliminate a potential security threat to their border.

While government actions against the Chinese population began in 1936, they were not a priority until late 1937, following the deportation of the Korean ethnic group.

---

183 Datsyshen, 27.
184 Datsyshen, 27.
However, unlike the deportation of the Koreans to Central Asia, the removal of the Chinese began with mass arrests. Chernolutskaya writes, that “This was due to the high level of the illegal immigration of Chinese nationals and their high criminal level.”\textsuperscript{186} The first operation against the Chinese population began in 1937 with an order from Nikolai Yezhov to Lyushkov, the head of the NKVD in the region, to arrest all Chinese, without regard to citizenship, who undertake provocative actions or have terrorist intentions.\textsuperscript{187} A majority of the Chinese population living in the Far East were located in the Maritime district. Thus, the majority of the initial arrests were conducted there under the command of Likhodzeyevsky, the senior Lieutenant of the border-guard troops.\textsuperscript{188} On Dec.30, 1937 the first operation was effectively and methodically carried out. Areas known for a concentration of Chinese were searched and 853 individuals arrested.\textsuperscript{189} The actions against the Chinese took place during an overall purge of the Far East of all undesirable elements, though the Chinese were specially targeted. Special quotas were introduced that allowed for the execution of 12,000 individuals sentenced for treason and murder. Additional operations against the Chinese took place in February and March 1938, with another 5,993 Chinese arrested. They were then placed in the Vladivostok prison and a concentration camp located outside of Vladivostok. Of these prisoners, 3,123 would eventually be shot under accusations of espionage. These arrests would continue through June 1938, when another 1,350 Chinese were arrested.

\textsuperscript{186}Chernolutskaya, 7.
\textsuperscript{187}Chernolutskaya, 3.
\textsuperscript{188}Chernolutskaya, 7.
\textsuperscript{189}Chernolutskaya, 7.
As these mass arrests and executions were occurring, the Chinese embassy in Moscow, in an effort to save their countrymen, requested that Chinese nationals from the Far East be resettled in Xinjiang and Kazakhstan, similar to the actions taken against the Koreans.\textsuperscript{190} This proposal was accepted in principal on March 3, 1938, most likely as an attempt to maintain good relations with the Chinese government. On May 6, Yezhkov ordered the deportation of Chinese without a passport to Xinjiang province and the deportation of Chinese with a Russian passport to Kazakhstan. Mandatory deportations occurred until June, 1938 when the government issued an order that voluntary deportations should be initiated and the mass arrest of the Chinese nationals should be stopped, with the exception being those suspected of espionage. Overall, the mass arrests, executions, and deportations significantly reduced the number of Chinese living in the Far East, and specifically in the Maritime region.

The end results of the actions taken against the “Yellow Peril” in the Far East were a significant, though not total, removal of the Koreans and Chinese nationals. Bone concludes in his dissertation that, “the pursuit of socialism in one country required establishing both the unique physical and the multiple conceptual limits of that country.”\textsuperscript{191} By removing a potentially disloyal population, the USSR had not only solidified their borders, but they were now free to populate the Far East with loyal citizens.

\textsuperscript{190} Chernolutskaya, 10.  
\textsuperscript{191} Bone, 285.
Overall, the view of the “Frontier as a Sacred Area” played an important role in the development of policies by the Russian/Soviet governments toward the Chinese in the Far East. Since the 1880’s with Baron Korf, Russia attempted to ensure the loyalty of the border population by reducing the number of Chinese and Koreans residing there. The fear that the borderland was vulnerable was only exacerbated due to the conflicting relationships Russia had with the Chinese and Japanese governments. The Boxer Rebellion and the Russo-Japanese war both led to an increasing belief that the Asian people presented a threat to the security of the border region which must be dealt with. The Soviet Union finally hardened their Far East border with the deportation and mass arrest of the Koreans and Chinese.
Current Issues of Intolerance against Chinese Immigrants in the Far East

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the movement of the Chinese across the border and into the Russian Far East has once again become a prominent source of strife. There is a high level of prejudice and anti-immigrant rhetoric directed towards the Chinese. To determine if the 2012 Concept of Migration Policy can be successfully implemented in the RFE the sources of this strife must be understood. As previously shown, the overarching themes of border security, economic interactions, and cultural conflict are that prevalent in today’s discourse on the Chinese in the Far East were prominent features in the past. Also, the political, economic, and demographic instability during the transition period of the early 90’s created an environment where politicians were able to use anti-Chinese rhetoric to solidify their position, both regionally and nationally. This section will examine these factors to determine the sources of anti-Chinese feelings, as well as to determine if and how these feelings have changed over the two decades following the creation of the Russian Federation. Overall, increased education of Russians and Chinese, increased rule of law, and a belief that Chinese immigration economically benefits the general Russian population will be needed to lower the level of intolerance in the Far East.

Russia has a very high level of intolerance against all migrant workers from abroad. This intolerance is informed by perceptions of large population movements in the
country, which the government is incapable of controlling. Alexeev hypothesizes that the more acute the perceptions of anarchy are, the more ambiguous the sense of migrant intentions are, and the more distinct and cohesive the perceived “groupness” of migrants, the higher the level of immigrant phobia in society. These perceptions of anarchy create a security dilemma in Russia, which is even more acute in the Far East due to regionalism, economic and geographic isolation, and the demographic crisis. This is one reason why anti-Chinese feelings and the belief that Chinese immigrants present a threat to the region is so high. The fact that the number of Chinese in the region is in reality quite low despite the numbers given by regional politicians and the center does not matter because insecurity in the region is so high.

The problem of regionalism in Russia significantly affected the views people held of China and the Chinese. The Russian Far East was an extremely vulnerable region following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The struggle by Gorbachev and Yeltsin to prevent the Russian Federation from fragmenting led to a situation where the regions were more powerful than the center. Power in the regions was held by political and economic elites. These elites were able to use the opportunities that came from the center’s inability to project power into the regions to solidify their leadership position. Particularly, regional political and business elites manipulated elections to ensure that they and their followers were in positions of power. The regions often failed to comply

---

with the legislation passed at the federal level.\textsuperscript{194} This non-compliance provides an indicator of the state’s ability to effectively govern and in this case, the noncompliance of regions may have increased the people’s fear of instability and thus of the Chinese moving across the border into the Far East.

Economics played a substantial role in the problem of regionalism and the noncompliance of the regional leaders. Regional governments particularly failed to follow federal laws in areas linked to the region’s material well-being.\textsuperscript{195} Kathryn Stoner-Weiss shows that non-compliance peaks at times when the national economy is in crisis. This was particularly the case during the 1998 economic crisis that started in Asia, but swiftly affected Russia’s weak economic system. Strong regional leaders would break federal laws in an effort to ensure that their region was provided for economically.

Inter-governmental fiscal relations are fundamental in understanding the role of regionalism in enhancing the negative opinions of the Chinese held by the Far East and in the anti-Chinese rhetoric espoused by political leaders and the media. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian fiscal arrangements were characterized by dual subordination; revenues were shared from the local to the regional and then the federal level. Main taxes, such as the value-added tax and the property tax, were collected at the


\textsuperscript{195} Stoner-Weiss, 137.
local level and then given to the center, which then redistributed part of them. Initially, there was no formula for how to redistribute the finances to the local and regional governments. Thus, the amount redistributed indicated the political strength and bargaining abilities of local and regional politicians. However, regional and local expenditures were drastically rising. The center shifted the responsibility for numerous social services to the sub-national level, which raised the budgetary requirements of the region. The decline in subsidies to commercial enterprises reduced the income of sub-national governments. The 1994 Fund for Financial Support of Regions was meant to redistribute finances from richer to poorer regions. However, this policy was ineffective as the center used the Fund to appease oppositional leadership in the provinces. Many provinces in the Far North and the Far East ended up in a worse financial situation than before, which could have been an indication of a change in regional priorities. On average, 20% of regional budgets came from federal subsidies, but hidden subsidies were very high to some regions. Overall, inter-governmental financial relations played a very important role in regional governments as leaders tried to use every tool possible to obtain additional finances from the center.

To show one example of this, the actions of Evgenii Nazdratenko, the Primorskii governor, will be examined. Nazdratenko was appointed as the governor on 24 May

---


197 Kirkow, 69.

198 Kirkow, 70.
1993. He was highly adept at using political tools and rhetoric to obtain financial concessions from the center. Nazdratenko strongly favored regional separatism, though he changed his position on this issue when it no longer became politically useful. The 1991 treaty between Russia and China proposed a settlement of the issues surrounding the demarcation of the border. The new demarcation would give China approximately 15 hectares of land that previously had belonged to Russia. Nazdratenko was strongly against the border treaty since the land to be handed over was in the Primorye.

The tool he most often resorted to in his negotiations with Moscow, however, was saying that the Chinese presented a clear threat to the Russian Far East. In 1999, Nazdratenko wrote a book entitled “And All of Russia Behind My Back.” This book starts with several news articles crediting Nazdratenko with saving the region from the “yellow peril.” Nazdratenko used this populist rhetoric to solidify his position in the region and to press the center for additional subsidies. An independent media could have countered this rhetoric and provided a measure of horizontal accountability, but instead the local media further promoted it. This could have been for several reasons. First, the “yellow peril” is a sensationalist story, which helps sells newspapers and increase profits. Secondly, the media in Primorski Krai was primarily under the control of the Krai administration. Therefore, if the media wished to remain in business, they had to adopt the same rhetoric of the region’s leaders. However, while espousing rhetoric of the “Chinese threat” Nazdratenko had no qualms of dealing with the Chinese in order to

---

200 Hah, “Regional Politics in Russia.”, 101.
further economic development in the Primorye. For example, on March 11, 1999 he announced plans for long-term cooperation with Chinese officials from Jilin province.201

The rhetoric of a “yellow peril” was not simply used by Nazdratenko. Regional governments across Russia used anti-immigrant rhetoric as a bargaining tool in order to obtain additional subsidies or concessions from the center. In 1999, researchers from the Vladivostok Institute of History and the Moscow Carnegie Center blamed local Russian politicians in the Far East for evoking the Chinese threat as a political tool for bargaining with federal politicians.202 In July 1999, Governor Viktor Ishaev of Khabarovsk Krai warned of “a peaceful invasion” of the Russian Far East by ethnic Chinese.203 In Krasnodar Krai, Governor Alexander Tkachev began using anti-Armenian rhetoric. In 2001, he gave a speech saying that introducing a market for land in the region would lead to an armed revolt as non-Russians would buy all the best land.204

Anti-Chinese feelings and rhetoric surrounding economic issues are as prevalent in the RFE today as in the past. In most cases, economic gain is the primary push factor driving the Chinese to enter Russia. While many factors affect how Russians view the Chinese, economic reasons may be the most important. One of the major groups of Chinese entering the Far East has been merchants. The instability in Russia in the early

201 The details of a number of the events described in this thesis rely on data taken from Alexseev’s Event-Data System, which is accessible at http://www.rohan.sdsu.edu/~alexseev/RussiaInAsia/event.html. See Alexeev’s 1999 Event-Data System. Entry #102.
203 Rossiiskaia Gazeta, July 10, 1999
1990s led to there being a scarcity of food and basic manufactured products in the border regions. Restrictions on travel across the Russia-China border had disappeared in the early 90s and Chinese traders immediately took advantage of the situation to bring across goods which helped the Russian locals to survive. Even in instances where the Russians were not dependent upon the Chinese for goods, they still shopped at the Chinese merchants’ stalls. The Chinese merchants were better able to supply a wide variety of goods at cheaper prices than could be obtained from Russian merchants, though these goods were often inferior in quality.\textsuperscript{205}

The 2007 Law preventing foreign merchants from selling in markets initially significantly affected the ability of Chinese merchants to sell in the Far East. However, they quickly adapted. Merchants began to band together and began wholesale practices rather than the prior shuttle-trade. In 2007, the Chinese invested around $2 million dollars in the construction of shopping centers in Blagoveshchensk.\textsuperscript{206} While the federal government may have passed the law banning foreigners in the marketplace, the local governments in the cities of Heihe and Blagoveshchenck requested exemptions for the Chinese merchants in their regions.\textsuperscript{207} Thus, local governments currently believe that migrants to provide an economic benefit to their region. A 2000 poll in the Primorye showed that respondents predominantly believed that the Chinese benefited more from

\textsuperscript{205} Alexseev, “Immigration Phobia and the Security Dilemma.”, 127.
\textsuperscript{207} Larin, A., 58.
cross-border interactions than Russians.\textsuperscript{208} Wholesale trade is a more official system and has led to an increase in the quality of goods coming from China, which should reduce the belief that the Chinese are sellers of cheap goods. It is difficult to determine the effect these merchants are having on local businesses. In some cases, Chinese merchants might be filling a niche where locals are unable or unwilling to provide required goods and services. In other cases, the Chinese might drive the local Russian competition out of business due to their ability to undersell. For example, the Chinese almost possess a monopoly in the vegetable trade in the RFE.\textsuperscript{209}

A significant source of anti-Chinese sentiment in the RFE stems from the view that Chinese laborers take jobs from Russians. Larin’s survey shows that 10\% of respondents’ primary view of the Chinese is that “They rob us of our jobs”.\textsuperscript{210} Russians in the Far East believe that the Chinese present a threat to their job security due to their willingness to work for lower wages. This view is especially prevalent in times of economic crisis, such as the early 90s and after 2008 due to high levels of unemployment in the region. For example, as the effects of the 2008 crisis swept through the RFE, some logging companies in the Amur region attempted to replace Russian laborers with Chinese laborers.\textsuperscript{211} A business belonging to Chinese owners spurred protests as striking

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{209} Larin, A., 52.
\item \textsuperscript{210} Larin, A., 53.
\item \textsuperscript{211} Sergeev, M (2008) “The crisis called the Chinese,” Nezavisimayz Gazeta (in Russian) 26 September
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Russian workers were fired.\textsuperscript{212} Chinese laborers are being used extensively in industries such as agriculture, forestry, and mining, while the primary sectors where Russian and Chinese workers compete are agriculture and blue collar urban jobs.\textsuperscript{213} Alekseev notes that Russian workers in the agricultural sectors are more likely to mobilize against Chinese workers than workers in the blue collar sectors, even though the blue collar workers receive more exposure to Chinese immigrants.\textsuperscript{214} This results from a sensitivity to land privatization and an unwillingness to see foreigners purchase Russian land.

The final economic issue leading to anti-Chinese sentiment is the issue of remittances. Russians believe that Chinese workers and merchants take the money they earn home to their families in Chinese and that this negatively affects the local economy. While this is possible, research on this topic is limited in the Far East. It is possible that remittances are hurting the local economy, although the economic benefits of having the merchants and laborers could negate this effect or possibly enhance it. Further research on economic issues need to be attempted as currently most studies focus on the view of migrants, anti-Chinese rhetoric, and whether or not the Chinese present an actual threat to Russia and the Far East.

These fears that the Chinese immigrants negatively affect Russian economic security are very similar to the ones that have existed in the region since the beginning of the two state’s relationship. Chinese economic migration in the RFE has been too small

\textsuperscript{213} Alexseev, “Migration, Hostility, and Ethnopolitical Mobilization,” 129.
\textsuperscript{214} Alexseev, “Migration, Hostility, and Ethnopolitical Mobilization,” 130.
to create a significantly negative affect on the region, but it has led to the presence of significant anti-Chinese feelings. The threat of labor market competition may be even greater when migration, no matter how large, raises the overall level of uncertainty and insecurity.\textsuperscript{215} However, local governments are realizing the benefits that Chinese merchants and laborers are capable of bringing to their regions. Overall, economic issues have the potential to benefit and to hurt the RFE. However, with regards to economic issues, the Russian view of the Chinese will depend upon the overall economic, political and demographic environment.

As in the past, there is a significant belief that the Chinese in the Russian Far East present a \textit{cultural threat} to native Russians. Many of these cultural issues are the same as migrant receiving nations across the world are facing. The primary cultural issue is that of adaptation or assimilation. Russians believe that the extreme differences between the Russian and Chinese cultures makes it very difficult for Chinese to assimilate into Russian culture; if they are even willing to assimilate. This failure to assimilate keeps the Chinese prominently in view of the Russian population and makes it easy for the Russians to identify them as an alien entity. The primary variable that Russians consider when examining if the Chinese are willing to adapt to their culture is language. However, Chinese in the RFE rarely obtain more than a rudimentary understanding of the Russian language.\textsuperscript{216} The primary reason for this lack of knowledge of the Russian language is cultural isolation, which comes from the threats to personal safety that face the Chinese.

\textsuperscript{215} Alexseev, “Migration, Hostility, and Ethnopolitical Mobilization,” 137.
\textsuperscript{216} Larin, A., 44.
These threats cause the Chinese in the Far East to join together in isolation from the rest of the general community and prevent them from needing to learn the Russian language.

Another fear surrounding the Chinese pertains to wide-scale intermarriage between Chinese men and Russian women.\(^{217}\) The Russian media has published inflammatory articles stating that in the regions of Irkutsk and Chita, around half of the men getting married are Chinese.\(^{218}\) However, these media reports are grossly inaccurate as in each of the Siberian regions during the 1990s no more than 100 intermarriages occurred. Indeed, Victor Larin shows that the stigma against intermarriages in the RFE is decreasing. The proportion of opponents of Russian-Chinese marriages in Vladivostok decreased from 61% in 2003 to 34% in 2008.\(^{219}\) However, the number of people opposed still far outnumbers the number of supporters of Russian-Chinese marriages.

There is a belief in the Russian Far East that all Chinese in the region are criminals and thus, are a threat to Russian culture and society. This is similar to the view of the Chinese held by the Russians in the pre-Soviet period, and like this period of time, this view is based on the fact that a significant number of the Chinese in the RFE are there illegally. Most of the Chinese in Russia are either unable or unwilling to procure the necessary documents for their stay or to return home when required. During the mid-1990s Chinese utilized the streamlined documentation process available to tourists to enter Russia. Approximately 65-70% of these “tourists” entered in order to work illegally.

\(^{217}\) Datsyshen, 32.  
\(^{218}\) Datsyshen, 32.  
or to conduct trade.\textsuperscript{220} 30-50\% of the Chinese entering as so-called tourists remained in Russia after their visa had expired. In 1999, Primorskii Krai’s migration services identified 1486 foreign citizens illegally involved in trade, consumer services, and construction in the border areas.\textsuperscript{221} In addition, the Primorskii Krai Police Department deported 3,430 Chinese citizens for violation of Russian legislation.\textsuperscript{222} Overall, a significant number of the Chinese in the RFE have committed some type of infraction, which though often minor, allows the Russian population to view them as a criminal threat to the Russian culture.

The main reasons that so many Chinese were in Russia illegally were the high levels of corruption and bureaucratic inefficiency and ineffectiveness of officials along the border. The physical violence and extortion the Chinese in the RFE face from the police and other officials makes the Chinese fearful of interacting with authority in the region. In an effort to survive in this environment many Chinese are drawn into the shadow economy that permeates Russian society, often being forced to pay bribes and unofficial taxes. The Chinese then adapt to this shadow economy and learn how to use it to benefit themselves. The Chinese justify their participation in the shadow economy as a response to their rights being violated by corrupt officials.\textsuperscript{223} By adapting these criminal methods, Chinese businesses have developed a habit of illegally obtaining Russia’s natural resources through illegal logging, overfishing and poaching.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{220} Larin, V., 70.
\item \textsuperscript{221} Larin, V., 71.
\item \textsuperscript{222} Alexseev, Event-Data System. 1999. Event #370.
\item \textsuperscript{223} Larin, A., 45.
\end{itemize}
While some Chinese are involved in illegal activities, the Chinese are actually the victims in a majority of the crimes with which they are associated. Using social research surveys from 2007, Alexander Larin shows that 82% of respondents complained about being extorted by the police, 42% about racketeering, 49% about corruption among tax officials, and 45% about corruption among other officials. The Chinese in the RFE also face a significant threat of physical violence as 1/3 of the respondents have faced physical violence involving beatings, looting and arson. In fact, almost every Chinese respondent indicated that they have experienced some type of rude, hostile or dangerous encounter. Alexeev notes that even with a drastic increase in the number of Chinese large scale, organized anti-Chinese violence would not likely occur without at least one of several triggers. These triggers are an increasing sense of isolation from the center, the advancement of territorial claims upon parts of Russia by China, if the economic effects of Chinese immigrants fail to generate benefits for a majority of Primorskii residents, or if the number of Chinese immigrants suddenly increases. Overall, Chinese in the Far East face a high level of intolerance and often physical violence from both Russian authorities and society in general. This has negative implications for the potential to utilize Chinese immigrants in mitigating the Far East’s demographic problems.

There may actually be a correlation between the level of tolerance and trust a Russian has towards the Chinese and a high level of interaction between members of the two groups. Inhabitants of the city of Blagoveshchensk who are very close to the Chinese

---

224 Larin, A., 43.
225 Larin, A., 43.
226 Alexseev, “Migration, Hostility, and Ethnopolitical Mobilization,” 143.
and interact with them almost every day have the most positive responses within Siberia about the Chinese. Among survey respondents, fear of China was most pronounced in Khabarovsk, which has relatively fewer Chinese immigrants that the other regions in the Far East. Therefore this seems to suggest that ignorance of the Chinese will increase the level of intolerance among the Russians. While this is true, the level of economic interdependence is also important in determining Russia’s views of Chinese immigrants. Cities such as Blagoveshchensk, where the local economy is interconnected with China, seem to have fewer fears of Chinese expansionism. By contrast, however, people in regions close to the border have a higher level of dislike of China, than those far from China. For example, a poll conducted by the Russian Public Opinion foundation in December 2002 found that dislike of China was 12% in Russia, 17% in Siberia, and 29% in the Russian Far East. This likely results from the lack of interaction and economic interdependence among the residents of many cities in the region that are not located near the border. The residents of these cities also have high level of exposure to anti-Chinese rhetoric from the media and political leaders.

However, a caveat to the view that increased interaction among the Russians and the Chinese leads to an increase in tolerance is the high level of intolerance among the youth in the RFE. Youth, especially those under the age of 20, possess the most intense and categorical intolerance against the Chinese. A 2008 survey showed that 41% of the respondents under the age of 20 categorically opposed the Chinese presence, while 37%
replied that they felt superior to the Chinese. These youths grew up during the period of chaos following the collapse of the Soviet Union and saw numerous Chinese enter into the border regions. Economic crisis hurt the RFE more than the Russian economy as a whole. High levels of unemployment and lack of experience place Russian youths in the position to be the most likely group supplanted by Chinese migrant workers. This high level of intolerance among Russian youths in the RFE does not bode well for an increase in tolerance in the future.

In conclusion, the presence of the Chinese population in the Far East is here to stay. With the exception of Sino-Soviet split, Chinese and Russians have been moving across the border and interacting in numerous ways since the two countries first began interacting. Insecurity due to political and demographic factors, economic interactions and cultural conflict are only several of the reasons there is a high level of intolerance against Chinese immigrants. Political figures have utilized anti-Chinese rhetoric and promoted the view that the Chinese are a threat to the region as a means of obtaining various subsidies and other concessions from the center. Though Putin’s “vertical tower” has recentralized power within Russia and significantly reduced the threat of fragmentation other factors such as demographics and the economy are raising insecurity in the Far East. Russian intolerance against the Chinese has actually increased since the period of chaos following the collapse of the Soviet Union, particularly among youths who compete most directly with Chinese migrant workers. If the demographic crisis in the region continues, it is likely that intolerance will also continue, and possibly increase.
It will be very difficult for Russia to successfully implement the 2012 Concept of Migration Policy that seeks to utilize Chinese immigrants to solve the labor force and demographic issues in the Russian Far East.
Conclusion

The possibility of utilizing Chinese immigrants to mitigate demographic problems in the Russian Far East is essential in understanding the potential effectiveness of Russia’s 2012 Concept of Migration when applied at the regional level. Russia is facing demographic problems that have led to a decline in total population. In response, Putin has signed the 2012 Concept of Migration, which plans to use immigrants as a way to partially solve Russia’s demographic and labor force issues. The Russian government believes that population decline is the most significant threat that Russia currently faces. The failure of the “Compatriots” program to entice ethnic Russians back to Russia has shown Russian officials that they will have to attract non-Russian immigrants into Russia if the 2012 Concept of Migration Policy is to be successful. This Concept of Migration Policy will be applied in separate regions, each with their own unique environment, and will affect each region differently. This thesis has examined the potential effectiveness for Chinese immigrants to mitigate the demographic problems in the Far East. While there is a large immigrant movement from multiple countries into Russia, Chinese immigrants are the most likely source for the RFE.

Overall, it will be very difficult for the 2012 Concept of Migration Policy to utilize Chinese immigrants in the Far East as tool in the effort to overcome the region’s population decline for two main reasons. First, the concept of replacement migration is
flawed. Russia will not be able to use immigrants to maintain the current population-support ratio, though it may be possible for the government to maintain the overall size of the population through immigration. Depending upon the study, Russia needs to import approximately 500,000 immigrants per year until 2050 in order to maintain a stable population. Second, the historical relationship between the Russians and the Chinese and the current high level of intolerance toward the Chinese means that a significant increase in the number of Chinese in the Far East will most likely lead to increased conflict and xenophobia. These cultural and historical variables will make it very difficult for the 2012 Concept of Migration Policy to be successful in the region.

However, it is not sufficient to simply say that Russia’s 2012 Concept of Migration Policy is doomed to failure. This is a national policy and the RFE will be required to implement it. When implemented, Chinese immigration is likely to increase levels of xenophobia and potentially lead to conflict in the RFE. Therefore, this thesis will provide recommendations for Russian policymakers and officials to increase the probability of successfully implementing the Concept of Migration Policy in the RFE and to decrease the level of xenophobia and the potential for conflict in the RFE.

The first recommendation is that Russia should officially combine the 2012 Concept of Migration Policy with policies to lower Russia’s high mortality rate. Russia has the possibility of greatly improving their current demographic situation through lowering their mortality rate that is not available to many developed countries. A combination of immigrants and a slowly improving mortality rate may be a more
effective policy, and potentially lead to less conflict, than a policy depending totally upon immigrants.

Second, Russia needs to provide relevant agencies with the authority and resources necessary to accomplish the tasks they are given. In addition, the federal government needs to hold the designated agencies responsible for their actions. If they are successful they should be rewarded, but if they fail they should be held accountable for their failures. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia has a relatively poor record of effectively implementing immigration policy. Often the problem has been lack of funding and lack of accountability. By providing the agencies with funding and authority and measuring their effectiveness through performance metrics the potential success for the 2012 Concept of Migration Policy will be greatly increased.

Third, the Russian Government needs to implement a communication campaign to increase the level of transparency surrounding the immigration processes. A simple transparent process will decrease the level of illegal immigration and opportunities for businesses to take advantage of immigrants. A communication campaign needs to be implemented, both nationally and internationally, to ensure that immigrants know the necessary procedures. The 2012 Concept of Migration is eliminating work quotas and implementing a point system, which may possibly be more transparent. Additionally, a communication campaign and increased transparency will incentivize immigration from regions and people that may have been reluctant to immigrate to Russia previously.

Fourth, a communication campaign focused on lowering the levels of intolerance and xenophobia needs to be implemented at the regional level in the RFE. The high level
of intolerance towards Chinese immigrants in the Russian Far East will make it very
difficult for the government to successfully implement the 2012 Concept of Migration.
The campaign needs to focus on educating Russians on the realities of Chinese
immigration and the actual effects Chinese immigrants have on Russian culture and the
economy. In particular, this campaign needs to focus on educating the youth of the
region, who have the highest level of intolerance, and may carry this intolerance with
them throughout their lives. The communication campaign needs to show the level of
economic interdependence between the Russians and the Chinese, as well as the effect
that the Chinese, whether immigrants, merchants, or temporary labor migrants have on
the labor market. This will require significant, unbiased research into the effect Chinese
immigrants have on the local Russian economies, which to this point has not been
thoroughly researched. It will be very hard to implement a successful communication
campaign without accurate data.

Fifth, Russia needs to increase the high level of corruption in the RFE. Corruption
among public officials needs to decrease. High levels of corruption among Russian
officials are driving Chinese immigrants into close-knit communities separate from the
rest of Russian society. A crack-down on the high level of corruption will decrease the
level of uncertainty among the citizens in the Far East, which may lead to a decrease in
the view that the Chinese present a threat to the region. In addition, decreased corruption
will make it easier to implement the 2012 Concept of Migration Policy as officials will
not be looking simply for ways to individually profit.
Overall, the implementation of the previous recommendations will increase the probability of success for Russia’s 2012 Concept of Migration Policy and to decrease the demographic problems the Russian Far East is currently facing. The demographic problems the RFE currently faces are a significant problem, or are at least perceived to be a significant problem. Russia has been slowly developing experience in implementing immigration and refugee policies since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Hopefully, Russian policy makers and administrators will have learned from their prior successes and failures, and the 2012 Concept of Migration Policy will be a success, or at least a partial success. However, the problems inherent in the concept of replacement migration and the high level of intolerance Russians have towards the Chinese immigrant will make it very difficult for Russia to successfully implement the 2012 Concept of Migration Policy in the Far East.


Bijak, Jakub, Dorota Kupiszewska, and Marek Kupiszewski. "Replacement Migration Revisited: Simulations of the Effects of Selected Population and Labor Market


Coleman, David A. "Does Europe Need Immigrants." Special Issue: The New Europe and International Migration, 1992, 413-61.


Paine, Sarah C. M. *Imperial Rivals: China, Russia, and Their Disputed Frontier*. Armonk, NY [u.a.: Sharpe, 1996.


