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**REGIONAL MIGRATION IN TERMS OF EURASIAN TRANSIT**

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***Abstract***

Migration is the most important factor in the dynamics of modern society. Researchers disagree on the unambiguous assessment of migration processes, their influence on demographic, economic, political processes, the formation of territorial-settlement structures. The Russian Federation is characterized by the differentiation of regional socio-cultural space. Therefore, the study of regional migration processes is highly relevant. This is especially important in regions with a historically established multi-confessional and multi-ethnic composition of the population. These regions include Astrakhan region. Astrakhan region occupies a special geopolitical position in the Caspian region, located on the border of East and West. The indigenous population is only about 60%. There has been an increase in the scale of migration processes in the Astrakhan region in the last decade. This is especially true of international migration both to and from the region. The growth rate of interregional and internal migration is slightly lower than the average for the Russian Federation and the Southern Federal District, which is most likely due to economic reasons and the quality of life in the region. A typical migrant in the region is a young man, unmarried, not having children, receiving a higher education and identifying himself with the well-off and wealthy segments of the population. Migration within the region affects to a lesser extent women, the elderly, married, families with many children, “beggars”, “unsecured”, “well-off”, as well as residents of small towns. On the contrary, residents of workers' settlements, widowers and “rich” migrate somewhat more often within the region.

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## 1. Introduction

Migration has always been a significant factor in shaping the sociocultural space of countries and regions, including the social structure, political, economic and cultural life. Modern researchers analyze migration in the course of various, often opposite, theoretical and methodological approaches: as global integration (Porumbescu, 2015); as a manifestation of social conflicts, struggles and transformations (Gray, 2016). The subject field of researchers include: the impact of economic processes on migration processes (Janos, 2016); conditions of origin and reception, migration dynamics, motivation, gender, racial, ethnic characteristics of migrants (Paul, 2015; Cerrutti & Parrado, 2015), analysis of the impact of the material situation on the adaptation of immigrants, migration policy (Cerrutti & Parrado, 2015); the impact of structural migrations on life satisfaction (Switek, 2016). Migrants are considered as objects and subjects of territorial transformations that influence the systems of territorial settlement, the processes of urbanization and localization (Sassone, 2016). Under their influence, a new phenomenon of modern reality is being formed – transnational urbanism (Reyes, 2016). In particular, it is important how they contribute to the process of building the area, because they have a strong sense of solidarity within the community. This social cohesion is associated with transnationalist relations, which imply a new profile of a postmodern migrant who responds to the dynamics of globalization with high flexibility and forms the landscape of the city, transnational urbanism (Sassone, 2016).

The role of migration is only strengthened as a consequence of the processes of globalization, and on the territory of modern Russia – after the collapse of the USSR. This is especially true of border regions. Among the positive aspects of the impact of migration on the sociocultural space of modern Russia, we should mention the fact that immigration is not only the most important labor (Mishuk & Khavinson, 2010; Riazantsev, Khramova, & Bezverbnyi, 2017), but also a demographic resource, since the demographic development of the country is still extremely controversial. On the one hand, from the mid-2000s. and up to the present time there have been noticeable positive trends in the processes of natural reproduction of the population. On the other hand, “there is no doubt that our country, which for many years has been living in conditions of a restricted reproduction regime, will experience depopulation and negative structural changes in the population in the coming decades” (Eremin, 2013, p. 171). Thus, the expansion of the migration process will help to compensate for the natural population decline (Nemirova, 2006).

In addition, increasing the mobility of the population has a beneficial effect on raising the cultural level of people under the influence of the influx of qualified personnel (Nemirova, 2006), tourist (Gataullina, 2016) and educational (Luchko & Mukhametdinova, 2017) migration. As for educational migration, for example, the Presidium of the Presidential Council for Strategic Development and Priority Projects approved the priority project “Development of the Export Potential of the Russian Education System (Protocol No. 6 of May 30, 2017), which aims to increase the share of non-resource Russian exports by increasing the attractiveness of Russian education in the international educational market” (Luchko & Mukhametdinova, 2017, p. 100).

But for the proper management of migration processes, appropriate institutional structures are required. In their absence, the criminal component is enhanced, which happened after the collapse of the USSR. “In the territories of the former countries of the socialist camp, a new migration situation has emerged, the main features of which were: weakening of migration control, transparency of the borders of

the CIS member states, partial removal of administrative prohibitions and restrictions on the entry of foreign citizens. The consequence of the current migration situation in Russia, especially in its border regions, is that they turned not just into transit points for migrants, but into territories in which the organization of illegal migration was “taken to the assembly line” (Chernyi, 2014). This leads to the expansion of the “grey” economy, drug trafficking, smuggling, exacerbation of the situation on the labor market and increased social tension inside the country (Mishuk & Khavinson, 2010; Nemirova, 2006; Chernyi, 2014). In addition, migration requires the creation of additional conditions for the adaptation and development of the individual, in particular, “solving housing problems and creating additional services in the socio-cultural sphere. Migration of the population of retirement and working age increases the burden on the budget through the provision of additional social services” (Nemirova, 2006, p. 83).

## **2. Problem Statement**

Thus, it is difficult to give an unambiguous assessment of the impact of migration on the socio-cultural space and a comprehensive analysis of the dynamics of migration processes is required, taking into account the specifics of the geopolitical situation, the historical, socio-economic and cultural development of individual regions.

## **3. Research Questions**

Consider the features of the territorial mobility of the population on the example of the Astrakhan region – one of the regions that received the status of border in modern Russia. It is necessary to note the historically established transit mission of the Lower Volga region as the “gates of the peoples”, the confrontation points of the East and the West. And in modern Russia, the Astrakhan region is a conductor for the realization of the geopolitical interests of Russia in the Caspian region, and the Caspian region of our country is of key importance in the development of Eurasian transit. Migration processes continue to be the most important factor in the formation of the sociocultural space of a multi-ethnic and multi-religious region, and we have repeatedly turned to their study (Kargapolova & Dulina, 2015; Kargapolova, Dulina, & Strizoe, 2017).

## **4. Purpose of the Study**

Purpose of the study: to study the migration processes in the Astrakhan region – the region of the Russian Federation, which occupies a strategically important Eurasian position.

## **5. Research Methods**

To solve the problems of the study, the analysis of statistical information and the results of the monitoring sociological research conducted under the leadership of E. V. Kargapolova in the Astrakhan region by the method of interviews at the place of residence according to the standard methodology of the all-Russian program "Socio-cultural evolution of Russia and its regions".

The first stage was held in January 2010 (N = 1000), the second - in May-June 2012 (N = 600), the third in April-May 2016 (N = 1000). The sample is stratified, quota route. Quoted characters are "gender", "age", "type of settlement", "ethnic structure". Sampling error is 3%. Data processing and analysis was performed using SPSS 17.0. The matrix was developed by the specialists of the CSSC IP RAS.

## 6. Findings

According to the statistical information in the Astrakhan region for the period 2010-2016, migration growth was observed in 2011, 2013 and 2014 (39, 0.2 and 24 people per 1000 people, respectively), on the contrary, migration decline was in 2010, 2012, 2015 and 2016 (-20, -36, -49 and -17 people per 1000 people, respectively) (Rosstat, 2017). The share of those who left the Astrakhan region outside the country increased significantly: in 2010 and 2011 it was 5-6%, in 2012-2016 – from 16 to 30% of the total number of departures, while in the whole of the Russian Federation in the same period, this figure was recorded at the level of 3-8%, in the southern Federal district – 1-8% of the total number of departures. But at the same time, the region is also growing the scale of immigration from abroad: so if in 2010 the share of arrivals from outside Russia was 11%, in subsequent years, this figure has increased significantly and its value in different years ranged from 23% to 37%. This is significantly higher than the average for the Russian Federation and the southern Federal district, where the same figure was 10-13% and 9-16%, respectively.

The share of those who entered the Astrakhan region from other regions of the country since 2010 is fixed at the level of 25-40% of the total number of arrivals, which is slightly inferior to the same indicator for the Russian Federation and the southern Federal district (40-44% and 47-51%, respectively). The share of those who left the region to other regions of Russia decreased slightly and since 2010 ranged from 41% to 51% of the total number of those who left. The country and district also recorded a decline in the rate of inter-regional migration, but its scale is higher than in the region – 44-47% and 47-50% of the total number of departures, respectively.

Internal migration in the Astrakhan region also significantly decreased: from 49% in 2010 to 32% of the number of arrivals in 2016, while in Russia – from 49% to 43%, in the southern Federal district – from 46% to 38% of the total number of arrivals, respectively. The share of departures within the region is also decreasing: in the Astrakhan region – from 45% to 30%, in the Russian Federation – from 53% to 46%, in the southern Federal district – from 52% to 45% of the total number of departures.

These figures show a significant scale of migration turnover and are confirmed by the results of monitoring sociological research in the Astrakhan region. Thus, only a little more than 60% of Astrakhan residents are indigenous to the region. Every fourth person from Astrakhan changed the place of residence inside the region approximately. About one in ten came to the region from another region of the Russian Federation or the CIS.

According to the results of the third wave of monitoring in 2016, among those who live within one settlement less than 5 years, men are slightly more than women (11% against 6%); 14% of young people aged 15 to 29 years, while adults – 5%, representatives of the older generation – 1%. The share of young people in comparison with 2010 increased by 4.5 times, which with a high probability determines the prevalence of persons with incomplete higher and secondary basic education (13% and 11%, respectively) in this category.

Among those who live in the village for less than five years, 15% are unmarried, 8% each are in unregistered cohabitation and divorced, 6% are widowed, 5% are married. Not having children (14%) and having three or more children (12%) prevail in this category, while 4% of the respondents each have one and two children.

The higher the level of financial position – the higher the proportion of those who live in the village for less than five years (5% "beggar", 7% "poor", 8% "unsecured" and "secured", 10% "well-to-do", 17% "rich").

Among the indigenous population of the Astrakhan region from the first wave of monitoring to the third, an increase in the proportion of women married and with a decrease in the proportion of men and young people was recorded. The proportion of "well-off" and "rich" also decreases with an increase in the share of "poor" and "unsecured". On the one hand, the proportion of those with three or more children is increasing. But, on the other hand, in 2016 the largest (69%) share among the indigenous population are those who have no children.

Migration within the region has affected women to a lesser extent, married people, people with three children and more, "beggars", "poor", "well-off", as well as residents of small towns. On the contrary, residents of workers' settlements, widowers and "rich", began to migrate more often within the region. Among those who came to the Astrakhan region from another region of the Russian Federation or the CIS countries there was a significant (from 12% to 22%) increase in the proportion of elderly and a slight increase in the proportion of young people (from 4% to 7%). The share of "well-to-do" and "rich", divorced, unmarried and residents of small cities also increased.

## 7. Conclusion

Thus, in general, there has been an increase in the scale of migration processes in the Astrakhan region in the last decade. International migration flows are increasing both into the region and from the region. The rates of interregional and internal migration are also growing, although these rates are slightly lower than the average for the Russian Federation and the Southern Federal District, which, in our opinion, is due to economic reasons and the quality of life in the region. Young migrants in the region are dominated by unmarried young men, children without children, receiving higher education and identifying themselves with the well-to-do and rich strata of the population.

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