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# MOLDOVAN DIASPORA MAPPING SERIES I

## MOLDOVANS IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION: socio-economic profile and policy challenges



CHISINAU 2013

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The study is the result of a research performed by the International Expert, Vladimir Mukomel, as well as the Local Expert, Diana Cheianu-Andrei, under the coordination of the International Organization for Migration, Mission to Moldova, within the framework of the IOM EU ENPI-funded project “Supporting the implementation of the migration and development component of the EU-Moldova Mobility Partnership”, with conceptual support of the World Bank and co-funding from the Trust Fund for Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development (TFESSD) grant.

The analyses and findings of this report, the interpretations and conclusions expressed herewith belong to the authors and not necessarily reflect the opinions of the World Bank, the European Commission and the International Organization for Migration.

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# **MOLDOVAN DIASPORA MAPPING SERIES I**

## **MOLDOVANS IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION: socio-economic profile and policy challenges**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The primary objectives of this study are the specification of the socio-demographic and economic profile of Moldovan migrants and representatives of the Moldovan diaspora in the Russian Federation, their adaptation issues, future personal and family plans and potential of investment in the economy of Moldova and Russia.

Due to the complexity of the objectives, the study used multi-sited research methodology with simultaneous surveys conducted both in the sending and receiving countries and was based on harmonized methodologies, including sociological surveys and qualitative studies. Overall, the study included a survey of 119 migrants and 183 household members with a migrant in the family in Moldova, 394 migrants in Russia, four focus-groups in Moldova and five focus-groups in Russia, 10 in-depth expert interviews in Moldova and seven – in Russia.

The survey carried out in the Russian Federation focused on studying the migration plans of respondents (circulation, return, and migration to a third country), change of migration patterns and their readiness to adapt/ integrate in the host community. The survey in the Republic of Moldova paid great attention to the life plans of families of migrants, influence of migration on day-to-day life of the migrant, relations with the community and opportunities to invest in the economy of Moldova. Sampling procedures in Russia and Moldova were different, but the main parts of questionnaires were identical. Respondents in Russia were selected through snowball sampling, while respondents in Moldova were selected through stratified random sampling.

The multi-sited research design allowed reaching different groups of migrants. Migrants interviewed in Moldova were primarily seasonal and circular, most often males. Their profiles coincide with those established in Moldova through previous surveys<sup>1</sup>. As a rule, these are married people with a relatively low educational level, from rural areas and who are interested in temporary departures from the country: 71.4 per cent of them reside in Russia for less than half a year and of these more than one third stay less than three months. The respondents interviewed in Russia were predominantly long-term migrants, mainly females; two thirds of whom had stayed in Russia for more than one year. These are better educated, rarely married people; most of them reside in Russia on a long-term basis.

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<sup>1</sup> *Migrația Forței de Muncă (Labour Force Migration)* (2008). National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova. - Chisinau, Republic of Moldova; IOM Mission to Moldova (2008). *How Moldovan Households Manage Their Finances. Knowledge and Practices. Survey Report 2008*. Chisinau, IOM Mission to Moldova; Luecke M., Mahmoud T.O. and Pinger P. (2007). *Patterns and Trends of Migration and Remittances in Moldova/ IOM Mission to Moldova*. – Chisinau, Republic of Moldova. – Chisinau; Luecke M., Mahmoud T.O., Steinmayr A. (2009). *Labour Migration and Remittances in Moldova: Is the Boom Over? Trends and Preliminary Findings from the IOM-CBSAXA Panel Household Survey 2006-2008/ IOM Mission to Moldova*. – Chisinau.

The employment sectors of migrants interviewed in Russia and Moldova differ drastically. The employment of migrants interviewed in Moldova, among whom male migrants predominate, shows a low level of differentiation: more than two thirds of migrants work in construction, and the second most frequent sector, with a considerable gap, is housekeeping services (8.5%). “Russian” migrants, on the other hand, are more often employed in commerce, car maintenance and home appliances repair services (43.5%), construction (19.1%), other communal services, social and public services (11.5%), transport and communications (8.6%) and housekeeping services (5.5%).

Thus, the multi-sited research allowed getting a more comprehensive picture than previous researches, executed either in the country of destination or of origin. In particular, the study was able to “catch” the “invisible” stock of long-term migrants that represents more than half of the migrants according to the results of this study<sup>2</sup>.

The key drivers of migration from Moldova are the push factors: the need to find a job and gain income, dissatisfaction with the socio-economic situation in Moldova and weak faith in its change. The pull factors are considerably less important: the level and conditions of life in Russia, as well as personal reasons. The great majority of migrants have succeeded in their objective to improve their personal and family welfare.

The differences in the socio-demographic characteristics of migrants, their initial orientation to the period of travels, determine their practices to join the labour market, work level and conditions, the possibilities to adapt and long-term migration strategies.

Legal work requires valid residence and work permits in Russia. It is, however, quite difficult to obtain work permits in Russia. Despite residing in Russia legally, most migrants have no permission to work (work permit or “patent” that allows to work for individuals). Fifty nine per cent of migrants work irregularly in Russia because they have no legal papers. Irregular work is common among migrants, especially in sectors such as wholesale and retail, car maintenance and home appliances repair services, in which 64.3 per cent of employees are irregular workers, and in construction the percentage of irregular workers constitutes 66.

Alongside irregular work is widespread informal employment, when there

<sup>2</sup> Long-term migrants, especially who left with all the family, are difficult to capture in studies conducted in the sending country. On the other hand, short-term migrants are difficult to capture in the receiving country. High rate of long-term migrants among migrant workers are recorded in the large-scale surveys conducted in Russia. See Zayonchkovskaya Zh., Tyuryukanova E., Florinskaya J. (2010) *Trudovaya migratsiya v Rossiyu: kak dvigatsia dalshe*. P. 25-26. *Zhenschiny-migranty iz stran SNG v Rossii (2011) /pod red. Tyuryukanovoj E. P. 26*. Migrants from Moldova are no exception: in the survey of 506 migrants from Moldova interviewed in Russia, long-term migrants comprised half of respondents. (Vladimir Mukomel (2012). *Circular Migration in the Russian Federation*. CARIM-East, 12/97, p.8).

is no contract between the employer and the employee. Only 13 per cent of migrant workers have written agreements with their employers. The lack of legal grounds for work and the resulting high rates of informal employment encourage extreme exploitation of migrants, with the average working week of a migrant being 65.7 hours. These long hours help migrants to earn relatively good money: the average monthly salary of all migrants interviewed in Russia and Moldova is about RUB 26,200 (a bit less than USD 900).

Upon arrival to Russia, most migrants have to change their economic activity: only a quarter of migrants do the same work in Russia as they did in Moldova. The majority of migrants work in construction, commerce, communal services and public utilities, social services, housekeeping services. These types of activities employ four out of five migrants having work experience before arriving to Russia. Only 2.6 per cent of migrants working in Moldova in the educational sector work in the same sector in Russia, and none of those previously working in the public health sector do.

The Russian labour market does not demand specific knowledge and skills of migrants who had them in a specific area of activity before arriving to Russia. First of all, the education and qualification of workers is not in demand. More than half of migrants with work experience before arriving to Russia are currently holding jobs that do not require any education or qualification. The ratio of unqualified workers is relatively high in commerce (88.6%), other communal services and public utilities, social and public services (82.3%), housekeeping services (78.9%). These are mainly “female” jobs. At the same time, there are employment sectors where qualified labour of migrants is in demand: in construction 75.8 per cent workers are qualified, and the respective ratio for transport and communication services is 82.3 per cent and 88.3 per cent of workers in hotels and restaurants.

The most negative effects on the family are connected to family disruption and loss of emotional ties. 13.7 per cent of migrants and 15.4 per cent of interviewed family members mentioned that the spousal relationships have worsened compared to the situation prior to migration. 9.2 per cent of migrants and 8.7 per cent of members of households mentioned that the relationship between children and parents has also worsened.

Children are often left behind in Moldova: only a quarter of families bring a child to Russia. The migration of parents influences the psychological state of the child left behind and the development of their personality. In the absence of parents, the place of the mentor is often vacant, and the grown-ups, who try to fill it (grandmother, aunt, others), are not always successful in establishing a relationship of trust with the child.

The migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova and members of their households plan to give their children vocational or higher education either in the Republic of Moldova (67.5%) or in the Russian Federation (10.0%). The rate

of those who choose Russia as a country to educate their children in is higher among those interviewed in the Russian Federation – 39 per cent, while the number of those who prefer Moldova is smaller – 29 per cent.

In broad terms, the migrants are interested in the socio-political life of both Russia and Moldova. Working in the Russian Federation, 77 per cent of the migrants showed interest towards the information about parliamentary election campaign in the Republic of Moldova, but only 10 per cent of them voted. The interests are unsurprisingly different for the different groups of migrants, as migrants oriented towards permanent residence in Russia focus on processes taking place in Russia and circular migrants are mostly interested in the socio-political processes in Moldova.

As for the relation with locals in Russia, the migrants from Moldova do not face any difficulties: socio-cultural gap is not so big to induce rejection by locals; moreover, the Moldovan migrants are not considered “visible minorities” in Russia.

On the one hand, fluency in Russian is an asset since it contributes to migrants' easier integration into the Russian society. On the other hand, it goes hand in hand with 'expansion' of the Russian language by which we mean gradual decrease of the situations when Romanian is used. Children of migrants growing up in Russia, even more so prefer to speak Russian, even if they understand Romanian due to their socialization in the Russian society. The bilingualism of migrants is limited by the rules adopted by migrants from the Russian society, according to which, Romanian is used in private life, and the Russian language is used in public.

Such 'expansion' of the Russian language is also due to some other factors, such as the fact that Moldovan migrants rarely work with their fellow citizens. Only 18 per cent of respondents work in a team with mostly Moldovans. But even working in purely Moldovan teams, the migrants speak most often Russian. Moreover, the Russian language has become a 'lingua franca' in multi-ethnic teams.

The distrust in Russian social institutions mirrors the distrust of a part of migrants towards the representatives of Moldovan authorities, NGOs, fellow citizens.

Moldovan migrants and Russian citizens of Moldovan origin mention clearly the need to have a place where they can meet not just sporadically and on holidays, but more often and communicate in their native language, find out about the cultural events in Moldova. Currently, the Moldovan national centres do not fulfil these functions: only each fifth person knows about the existence of Moldovan diaspora organisations in Russia, only 7 per cent of respondents have sought assistance from Moldovan ethno-cultural organisations.

Money transfers form a significant part of the family budget in Moldova. Fifty two per cent of migrants and members of households with migrants

mentioned that the remittances account for more than 75 per cent of family income, 19 per cent of respondents claimed that remittances account for 50-75 per cent of their income, 18 per cent of respondents – 25-50 per cent of their income, and only 7 per cent stated that remittances accounted for less than 25 per cent of their income.

Remittances are used in the Republic of Moldova for consumption: to increase the household's budget, house repairs, procurement of home appliances. The investments of migrant workers are limited to simple acquisitions, for instance of real estate or a car. At the same time, money is often spent on health care and education, as well as holidays. Only few households of migrants succeed in launching own businesses. Although business establishment and management have improved lately in the Republic of Moldova, the rate of migrants who launch their business is only 1.6 per cent. It is very rare when the money received from working abroad is invested in bank deposits, in community projects or used to procure or lease land.

The vast majority of migrants interviewed in Moldova see their future in Moldova. Only 5.9 per cent are planning to settle down in the Russian Federation. The respondents from Russia have other long-term strategies. Most of them have no intention to return to Moldova. The most common strategy is to stay in Russia and obtain the citizenship of the Russian Federation (37%). Less than one fourth of respondents declared their intentions to return to Moldova in the near future.

A considerable number of Moldovan migrants in the Russian Federation never give up on the idea of returning to their country of origin. But as long as the socio-economic situation in the Republic of Moldova is not improving, the migrants have no intention to return to their home country. Most migrants see their return to the Republic of Moldova only when they are old. The controversy is that the longer they live in the receiving country, the more connections they establish there: their social capital increases in Russia and decreases simultaneously in Moldova, which makes the return to Moldova less desirable and more complicated.

Presumably about one third of migrants, foremost long-term migrants, will not return to Moldova. A potential of return migration would mainly refer to young circular migrants who may not be able to adapt to Russian reality and do not find a job on the Russian labour market. Their return, if the situation on the Russian labour market gets worse, might become a serious challenge for Moldova.

A change in the emigration tendency from Moldova may only be expected if the unemployment decreases and the differentials in wages and standards of living in the Republic of Moldova shrink. Return migration and investments in the Republic of Moldova could be promoted by reforming the institutional environment and improving the business climate in Moldova.

## INTRODUCTION

After declaring its independence in 1991, the Republic of Moldova's socio-economic situation considerably worsened and Moldova became one of the poorest countries in Europe<sup>3</sup>, which stimulated migration abroad. For hundreds of thousands of citizens of the Republic of Moldova, migration has become a necessity in order to find work and provide for the family. As a result of increase of migration flows from Moldova, remittances have become a major factor in the Moldovan economy, and constituted an important share of the country's GDP (23% of the GDP, or USD 1.769 million in 2011<sup>4</sup>). At the same time migration caused serious social, demographic and economic challenges.

The necessity to minimize negative consequences of migration and develop matching migration policy is recognized by the state and society. Migration policy oriented towards specific groups of migrants should be based on reliable data about the scale and directions of migration, characteristics of migrants, their motivations and life plans.

In spite of the large scale of migration, the Republic of Moldova has no reliable data about the number of Moldovan migrants who are staying abroad. The cited numbers range between approximately 300,000 and, a clearly overestimated, 1 million, which represent in any case a considerable proportion of the economically active population and the population in general (Table 1).

**Table 1: Breakdown of Republic of Moldova's population by participation in economic activity**

| Indicators                         | Year       | Absolute data, thousand people | Relative data, % |
|------------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Permanent population, total        | 01.01.2012 | 3 559.5                        | 100              |
| Economically active population     | 2010       | 1 235.41                       | 34.7             |
| Population employed in economy     | 2010       | 143.41                         | 32.1             |
| Economically non-active population | 2010       | 733.3                          | 65.3             |
| Unemployment                       | 2010       | 92.0                           | 2.6              |

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Moldova, 2011*, page 71.

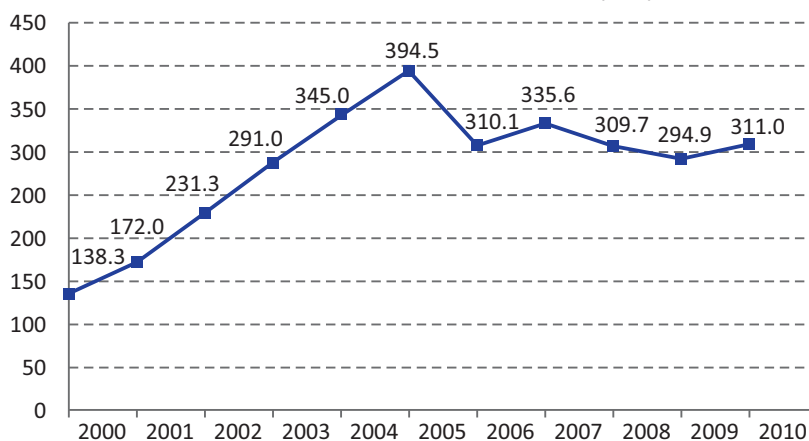
<sup>3</sup> Abbott P., Wallace C., Mascauteanu V. and Sapsford R. (2010) Concepts of citizenship, social and system integration among young people in post-Soviet Moldova // *Journal of Youth Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 5 – p. 581.

<sup>4</sup> World Bank, *Remittance Flows in 2012: An Update* (2012), [web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/0,,contentMDK:21924020~pagePK:5105988~piPK:360975~theSitePK:214971,00.html](http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/0,,contentMDK:21924020~pagePK:5105988~piPK:360975~theSitePK:214971,00.html)

<sup>5</sup> The estimates vary depending on the methods used and information sources (such as population census (2004), State Population Register, border crossing data collected by the Border Guard Service/Border Police, Labour Force Survey, and other surveys carried out by the National Bureau of Statistics or sociological companies).

According to the estimates of the National Bureau of Statistics, in the recent years the number of migrants who annually leave abroad for work is about 300,000 people (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Number of people, who went overseas either to work or to seek work, 2000-2010 (thousands people)**



Source: National Bureau of Statistics, according to the Labour Force Survey

It is unfortunate that the Republic of Moldova has no population migration reporting system at national and local level. The State Population Register provides data about Moldovan migrants who have emigrated from Moldova to other countries. But there is no relevant or detailed data on those who leave the country on a temporary basis, broken down by the purpose of their travel: work, study, family reunification, etc.

Measuring the number of migrants who are abroad (migrant stock) is a very challenging task. The representative national household surveys on labour migration and remittances carried out by International Organization for Migration in Moldova (2006, 2008<sup>6</sup>) are among the most accurate sources of stock data and are remarkably useful in forming an understanding about the number of citizens of Moldova who are abroad and especially migrant workers. The Russian reporting system of migrants is good at defining the number of Moldovan citizens staying on the territory of Russia at every moment of time but is much less accurate in the question of migrant workers as it records only migrants having work permits or so called 'patents' that allow to be employed by individuals. According to the Russian sources of

<sup>6</sup> Luecke M., Mahmoud T.O. and Pinger P. (2007) *Patterns and Trends of Migration and Remittances in Moldova*/ International Organization for Migration, Mission to Moldova. – Chisinau, Republic of Moldova.; Luecke M., Mahmoud T.O., Steinmayr A. (2009) *Labour Migration and Remittances in Moldova: Is the Boom Over? Trends and Preliminary Findings from the IOM-CBSAXA Panel Household Survey 2006-2008*/ International Organization for Migration, Mission to Moldova. – Chisinau, Republic of Moldova.



information, at the end of 2011 there were 472,000 Moldovan citizens on the territory of Russia, out of which 71,200 were regularly employed<sup>7</sup>.

The Labour Force Survey (as well as the Population Census) leads to an underestimation of the overall number of migrants due to households deserted by all the emigrated household members at the time of the survey and census execution, leading to under coverage of long-term family migration. At the same time, their number could be important. The data from panel surveys carried out in the Republic of Moldova in 2006 (Luecke, Mahmoud, Pinger, 2007) and 2008 (Luecke, Mahmoud, Steinmayr, 2009) among 4,000 households prove that about 100,000 people (not all are of working age) left Moldova in that period of time, of whom, 60,000 migrated together with their families. Thus, even if the majority of Moldovan migrants maintain connections to their households in Moldova, the number of migrants that settle down abroad has been increasing<sup>8</sup>.

At the same time, migrants who almost permanently stay in Russia with families for years and are de facto integrated in the Russian society, are regarded by the Russian statistical services as temporarily staying in Russia<sup>9</sup>.

On the other hand, in large-scale panel researches of households in Moldova based on country representative samples, the notion of 'migrant' goes wider and includes not only those who at the time of survey were residing in another country, but also, those who were present in the country during the survey but had been in another country during 12 months preceding the survey<sup>10</sup>, and also those who worked abroad during preceding 12 months and/or has intentions to migrate, either for a short or longer term<sup>11</sup>.

The main receiving regions for migrants from Moldova are CIS and EU countries, the main flow of migrants being directed to Russia. According to the survey on Labour Migration carried out in the second quarter of 2008, as an additional module to the national Labour Force Survey, 61.4 per cent of migrants who worked or looked for a job abroad, left for Russia.

<sup>7</sup> Information is provided by the Federal Migration Service at the meeting with the delegation from Moldova, 20 December 2011.

<sup>8</sup> Luecke M., Mahmoud T.O., Steinmayr A. (2009) *Labour Migration and Remittances in Moldova: Is the Boom Over? Trends and Preliminary Findings from the IOM-CBSAXA Panel Household Survey 2006-2008*/ International Organization for Migration, Mission to Moldova. – Chisinau, Republic of Moldova, p.18.

<sup>9</sup> Such migrants are to obtain migration registration and mainly, record crossing of the state border of Russia and Moldova every three months. In Russia only those who have residence permit are considered residents but the residence permit is very difficult to obtain. In 2010 about 2,000 citizens of Republic of Moldova obtained residence permit.

<sup>10</sup> Luecke M., Mahmoud T.O. and Pinger P. (2007) *Patterns and Trends of Migration and Remittances in Moldova*/ International Organization for Migration, Mission to Moldova. – Chisinau, Republic of Moldova, p.9.

<sup>11</sup> Ruggiero E. (2005) Migration and Remittances: A Micro Perspective // *Problems of Economic Transition*, vol. 48, no. 3. – page 58.



Despite the efficiency of comparative studies, which combine simultaneous field work both in the sending and receiving countries, they are rarely used<sup>12</sup>. In this regard, more attention should be paid to the receiving countries, in particular to Russia as the most popular destination among Moldovan migrants, particularly amongst the circular<sup>13</sup> and seasonal migrants; because circular migration is a productive factor for the development of the sending country (which requires further consideration).

According to the deeply-rooted views, the labour migration to the Russian Federation has the following characteristics: it has economic character, it is temporary, short-term, irregular, mostly spontaneous, based on social networks – relatives or friendship relations, is determined by the lack of visa regime and the fact that irregular labour activity in the Russian Federation does not impede the legal return to the Republic of Moldova. Moldovan migrants, who travel to the Russian Federation, are mostly unqualified workers with secondary and vocational education, which restricts the choice of the receiving country, and the economic situation of their households are worse than of those who travel to the EU. As a result, the migration to the Russian Federation is more numerous, and the per-capita income and money transfer lower than that from the EU countries<sup>14</sup>.

But the situation has changed dramatically, especially after the 2008 economic crisis<sup>15</sup>. Moldovan migrant workers, unlike migrants from other CIS countries belonging to “visible minorities” do not suffer from the xenophobia of local population. They are exclusively mobile, i.e. have huge migration

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<sup>12</sup>Basch, Glick Schiller, Blanc (1994) *Nations Unbound. Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorialized Nation-States*. Gordon and Breach Science Publishers. The usefulness of comparative studies, see Lopez-Ekra S., Aghazarm C., Kötter H. & Mollard B. (2011) The impact of remittances on gender roles and opportunities for children in recipient families: research from the International Organization for Migration// *Gender & Development* Vol. 19, No. 1. – P. 69-80.

<sup>13</sup>Circular migration is "the fluid movement of people between countries, including temporary or long-term movement which may be beneficial to all involved, if occurring voluntarily and linked to the labour needs of countries of origin and destination" (World Migration Report 2008: *Managing Labour Mobility in the Evolving Global Economy*, IOM 2008, p.492; *Migration Profiles: Making the Most of the Process*. IOM, 2011, p. 192; *Glossary on Migration*. 2nd Edition. IOM, 2011, p.19). Problems in determining and identifying circular migrants: Fargues Ph. (2008). *Circular Migration: Is it relevant for the South and East of the Mediterranean?* / CARIM Analytic and Synthetic Notes 2008/40, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, San Domenico di Fiesole European University Institute; Newland K (2009). *Circular Migration and Human Development* / UNDP - Human Development Reports Research Paper 2009/42, P. 5-8. In the framework of this study 'long-term migrants' is the term used to identify migrants who didn't leave Russia during 12 or more months, while the term 'circular migrants' is applied to those who returned during the period of a year from Russia to Moldova and mostly made such trips several times. Seasonal migrants are those who stayed in Russia less than three months.

<sup>14</sup>Cheianu-Andrei D. (coord.) (2010) *Moldovan migrants in Russian Federation in the conditions of the global financial crisis*. – Chisinau, MSU, p.26-29.

<sup>15</sup>Mosneaga V. (2010) Influence of economic crisis on international labour migration of Moldovan population. // *Regional economy*, No.1(55), p.196-201.

experience, developed migration networks, information and often working experience in other states. The recent years have registered changes in the socio-demographic features of Moldovan migrants to Russia, travel calendar and their duration, practice of inclusion into the local labour markets, labour conditions and salary, practice of integration, and communication with family members and community back home.

The phenomenon of circular migration from the Republic of Moldova, typical for the migration to the Russian Federation, has not been studied sufficiently. Even less is known about the long-term migrants in Russia. This study will specifically underline these aspects.

The main objectives of this study are to establish a specification of socio-demographic and economic profile of Moldovan migrants and representatives of Moldovan diaspora in the Russian Federation, problems related to their integration in the Russian Federation, future personal and family plans, and investment perspectives into the economy of Moldova and Russia. Taking into account the diversity of objectives, the method of simultaneous survey was applied in both the country of origin and of destination.

The study in the Russian Federation focused on studying the migration plans of the respondents (circulation, return, migration to a third country), change of travel calendar and their preparedness to adaptation/integration into the receiving country. First of all, it took into account the fact that the profiles of persons of Moldovan origin (integrated migrants and representatives of diaspora holding the citizenship of Russia or de-facto double citizenship) can be received only in the recipient country. Secondly the likelihood of more accurate answers to sensitive questions in the receiving country (the sensitive questions are questions about salary, future plans, and so on).

The study carried out in the Republic of Moldova paid special attention to the future plans of families of migrants, influence of migration on the day-to-day life of migrants' family, relations with the community and intention to invest in Moldova's economy.

## SURVEY METHODOLOGY

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To achieve the goals and objectives of the survey, a complex approach was applied from the point of view of initial data collection methodology, of quantitative and qualitative methods being used in combination.

The surveys took place simultaneously in the Russian Federation and in the Republic of Moldova; using data collection instruments that have general characteristics, which allowed the possibility to make a comparative analysis of data. The development of methodology, data collection instruments, control over the accuracy and quality of collected data were monitored by two experts, one from the Russian Federation and the other one from Republic of Moldova.

### Quantitative Study

Persons originating from Moldova (excepting Transnistria region), who are citizens of the Republic of Moldova and who work (97.2 per cent of respondents) or were looking for a job in Russia or not working at the time of survey, but worked previously in Russia, were interviewed in the Russian Federation. The type of sampling was “*snowball*”. The pilot survey based on which the questionnaire was developed, whose main blocks were the same for Russia and Moldova, took place in the city of Moscow<sup>16</sup>.

In the city of Moscow, the survey was carried out by the employees of the Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Science and volunteers, representatives of the Moldovan diaspora. The total number of respondents in the Russian Federation was 394.

The target group of the survey in the Republic of Moldova consisted of people who travel to the Russian Federation for work purposes or members of their families who stayed home (migrants' spouses; in the case when both were abroad, the interview was done with the migrant's parents, if the parents were not available, the interview was done with the migrants' children who were 21 years old and older). Based on the objective of the survey and predefined methodological requirements with regards to the quantitative plan, the survey was carried out with the target group consisting of 302 respondents, out of which 119 were home in Moldova at the time of the survey and 183 were members of migrant's family (migrants were working in Russia at the time of survey). The group did not include Transnistria region. The survey was carried out by the employees of Sociological Company CBS-AXA in Moldova.

Data recording method: standard individual interviews at the respondents' place of residence. The questionnaire used for data collection in the Republic

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<sup>16</sup> According to Central Data Bank of foreigners, as of November 2011, 22,2000 Moldovan citizens were legally working in Moscow, 19,6000 in the Moscow region. This is 58.3 per cent of all citizens of the Republic of Moldova working in Russia.

of Moldova consisted of the same questions as within the questionnaire used in the Russian Federation plus an additional block addressed to the members of households with migrants regarding the life in the Republic of Moldova and influence of migration on the household.

### **Sampling Strategy**

The survey used a stratified random multi-stage sampling technique. The stratification criteria used were the following: 13 geographical regions (based on former counties), living environment, and size of rural communities (three types).

The stratification used the data related to the scale of migration to the Russian Federation by regions of the Republic of Moldova, registered in the 2009 IOM – CBS-AXA study “Labour force migration from the Republic of Moldova and remittances”.

The sampling included groups consisting of five interviewed persons. The selection of communities and population was done using the probabilistic method. The selection of addresses at which the interviews took place was done through random route selection.

At the household level, the selection of interviewed persons was based on the following rules:

- If there was a bigger number of migrants to the Russian Federation, the one who returned last from the Russian Federation was interviewed;
- If there were more migrants, who returned in the same period, the interview was conducted with the migrant whose birthday was close to the date of interview;
- If the migrant(s) from the household was in the Russian Federation at the moment of interview, the spouse of the migrant was interviewed;
- If the spouse was abroad or away from the community and would be back not later than in two weeks, the interview was carried out with the parents, who knew better the situation of the migrant;
- If the migrant's parents were missing, the interview was carried out with the eldest child but not younger than 21 years of age<sup>17</sup>.

## **Qualitative Study**

The qualitative study was based on the individual in-depth interviews and group discussions after thorough analysis of the quantitative data.

The in-depth semi structured interviews with experts aimed at establishing and ranking the issues faced by the migrants and the representatives of the Moldovan diaspora and preceded the interviews in Moldova and Russia. The

<sup>17</sup> Testing the questionnaire showed that young people under the age of 21 don't hold necessary information about their migrant parents.

focus-groups, during which the problems typical to certain categories of migrants/representatives of diaspora were discussed in detail, were held after the surveys in Moldova and Russia.

Seven in-depth interviews with the following experts were held in Russia:

- Responsible employees of the Central Office of the Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation (two persons),
- Employee of the Consulate of the Republic of Moldova to the Russian Federation;
- Businessmen, representatives of Moldovan diaspora in the city of Moscow (two persons),
- Leaders of Moldovan diaspora, representatives of national and cultural centres (two persons).

Ten individual in-depth interviews with experts were held in Moldova:

- Representatives of the central public authorities: Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, National Bureau of Statistics, Bureau of Interethnic Relations (three persons);
- Representatives of the local public authorities (I and II tier) (two persons);
- Representatives of trade-unions in construction and building materials “Sindicos” and agriculture and food industry trade-unions “Agroindsind” (two persons);
- Representatives of diaspora in the Russian Federation<sup>18</sup>: Moldovan national-cultural center “Luceafarul” of Novosibirsk, Moldovan national-cultural centre “Vatra” of Krasnoyarsk, Centre of Moldovan National Culture of Sankt-Petersburg (three persons).

Five focus-groups with circular migrants, household head of migrant workers, household heads – representatives of diaspora, businessmen, as well as intellectuals and leaders of diaspora were held in Russia.

Four focus-groups with Moldovan migrants, migrants' household heads, women from households with migrants, children from households with migrants were held in Moldova.

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<sup>18</sup> Participants in International Conference “*Culture of tolerance, general values, inter-cultural dialogue: 20 years of achievements*”, organised by the Bureau of Interethnic Relations and International Organisation for Migration, Chisinau, 23-26 August 2011.

**Table 2: Composition of focus-groups**

| No. of FG                  | Categories of participants                                  | Number of participants |
|----------------------------|---|------------------------|
| <b>Russian Federation</b>  |   |                        |
| 1 FG                       | Circular migrants   | 12                     |
| 2 FG                       | Heads of households with migrants                           | 11                     |
| 3 FG                       | Household heads from diaspora (Russian citizens)            | 9                      |
| 4 FG                       | Businessmen   | 11                     |
| 5 FG                       | Intellectuals, formal and informal leaders of diaspora      | 9                      |
| <b>Republic of Moldova</b> |   |                        |
| 1 FG                       | Migrants  | 9                      |
| 2 FG                       | Women from households with migrants                         | 10                     |
| 3 FG                       | Heads of households with migrants                           | 10                     |
| 4 FG                       | Children from households with migrants (11-18 years of age) | 10                     |

The participants of group discussions were selected using the “snowball” method with the help of the representatives of local public authorities (mayors, teachers, social workers, doctors, etc.). The survey sampling was based on the following criteria: country of migration – Russian Federation; age, gender, place of residence, period of migration.

The group discussions were held on average for 1.5 hours; the audio-recording was taped with the permission of participants. The focus-groups organized in Russia were video-recorded.

## Socio-Demographic Profiles of Migrants

The results of surveys carried out in these two countries concluded that the migrants interviewed in Moldova and Russia represented different stocks. The interviewed groups from the Republic of Moldova (migrants and their family members) are homogeneous from the point of view of the duration of the Moldovan migrant's work in the Russian Federation in the past 12 months: 29.8 per cent – up to three months, 33.4 per cent – 4-6 months, and 36.8 per cent – for more than six months (for all people interviewed in the Republic of Moldova: migrants and their family members).

Another group are the “Russian” migrants. The great majority of these persons – 89.8 per cent- were residing in the Russian Federation for more than six months, including 62.4 per cent – for more than one year.

**Table 3: Socio-demographic profiles of migrants**

|   |   | Migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation |      | Migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova |      | Members of households interviewed in the Republic of Moldova |      |
|---|---|--|------|---|------|--|------|
|   |   | Number   | %    | Number  | %    | Number   | %    |
| Sex   | Male  | 175  | 44.4 | 80  | 67.2 | 47   | 25.7 |
|   | Female  | 219  | 55.6 | 39  | 32.8 | 136  | 74.3 |
| Age   | Younger than 30 years old                                   | 127  | 32.2 | 35  | 29.4 | 47   | 25.7 |
|   | 30-39 years old   | 110  | 27.9 | 34  | 28.6 | 24   | 13.1 |
|   | 40-55 years old   | 135  | 34.3 | 42  | 35.3 | 47   | 25.7 |
|   | Older than 55 years   | 22   | 5.6  | 8   | 6.7  | 65   | 35.5 |
| Education   | Primary and incomplete general/secondary                    | 45   | 11.4 | 30  | 25.2 | 31   | 16.9 |
|   | General/secondary, lyceum                                   | 75   | 19.0 | 20  | 16.8 | 38   | 20.8 |
|   | General vocational/professional                             | 186  | 47.2 | 54  | 47.1 | 89   | 48.6 |
|   | Higher, including incomplete higher                         | 88   | 22.3 | 13  | 10.9 | 25   | 13.7 |
| Marital status  | Not married (including widower/widow and divorced)          | 160  | 40.7 | 32  | 26.9 | 50   | 27.3 |
|   | Married (including life partner)                            | 234  | 59.3 | 87  | 73.1 | 133  | 72.6 |
| Period of residence in the Russian Federation in the past 12 months | Less than 3 months  | 26   | 6.6  | 41  | 34.5 | 50   | 27.4 |
|   | 4-6 months  | 14   | 3.6  | 44  | 37.0 | 57   | 31.1 |
|   | More than 6 months, including <i>for more than one year</i> | 354  | 89.8 | 34  | 28.6 | 76   | 41.5 |
|   |   | 246  | 62.4 | 1   | 0.8  | 10   | 5.5  |

At the same time, the structure of migrants interviewed in Russia is not homogenous. The migrants, permanently residing in Russia and representing the majority of respondents, include mostly persons of old age, a high rate of women (among whom many are divorced), many persons with higher education and higher incomplete education<sup>19</sup> (see Table 4).

<sup>19</sup> Analogical characteristics of Moldovan migrants were registered as a result of migration profile analysis, adaptation and integration problems of migrants, carried out in 2011 on behalf of National Research University "Higher School of Economics": long term migrants - 44.3 per cent of respondents, women's share - 52.3 per cent, persons with higher and incomplete higher education - 17.7 per cent (560 respondents were questioned; chief of the authors' team, V. Mukhomel, not published).

More than one third of migrants, who stay in the Russian Federation, are circular migrants, who repeatedly come and reside there for less than one year. As it has been expected, men represent the majority of these. The difference between the circular migrants interviewed in Russia and respondents interviewed in Moldova is that among the first there are younger migrants, who are more educated and have no families to support (less than half are married compared to 73 per cent of those interviewed in Moldova).

A special interest represents the small group of seasonal migrants residing in Russia for less than 3 months. This is the youth, often students, who travel to work during holidays and who rarely have families.

**Table 4: Socio-demographic characteristics of different categories of migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation (%)**

|   |  | Long-term           | Circular | Including seasonal |
|---|--|---------------------|----------|--------------------|
| Type of respondent  | Total  | 62.4                | 37.6     | 6.6                |
| Gender  | Male   | 38.6                | 54.1     | 42.3               |
|   | Female   | 61.4                | 45.9     | 57.7               |
| Age   | Younger than 30 years old                            | 28.9                | 37.8     | 69.2               |
|   | 30-39 years old                                      | 29.7                | 25.1     | 15.4               |
|   | 40-55 years old                                      | 35.0                | 33.1     | 15.4               |
|   | Over 55 years  | 6.5                 | 4.1      | 0                  |
| Education   | Primary and incomplete general/secondary             | 10.6                | 12.8     | 30.8               |
|   | General/secondary, lyceum                            | 20.7                | 16.2     | 11.5               |
|   | General vocational/professional                      | 55.6                | 50.0     | 34.6               |
|   | Higher, including incomplete higher                  | 23.2                | 20.9     | 23.1               |
| Civil status  | Not married (including widowers/widows and divorced) | 39.0                | 51.4     | 61.5               |
|   | Married (including life partners)                    | 61.0                | 48.6     | 38.5               |
| Period of residence in the Russian Federation in the past 12 months |  | More than 12 months | 1-12     | 1-3                |

The specific of the stock<sup>20</sup> interviewed in Russia represents the predominance of women and relatively low proportion of young migrants. Another group consists of the migrants, interviewed in Moldova, among which men are predominant, and in particular men of older age.

<sup>20</sup> Unlike the flow, the stock registers the results of migration exchange during the recent period, which sets forth certain limitations in analysing and interpreting the results.



The peculiarities of age and gender structure of Moldovan migrants in Russia can be the results of: a) different models of gender behaviours (men are mostly oriented to circular migration, women to long-term); b) better adaptation and integration of women; and c) specific feature of Moscow sampling, which is unlikely<sup>21</sup>. As it will be shown further, the civil status and peculiarities of job sectors played an important role in the selection of migration strategy of women-migrants.

The respondents who participated in the survey in the Republic of Moldova are: migrants (39.4%), parents of migrants (27.2%), spouses of migrants residing in the Russian Federation (23.5%), migrants' children older than 21 (8.9%), siblings of migrants (1.0%).

The greatest number of households with migrants in the Russian Federation, according to the Republic of Moldova surveys (migrants and members of households with migrants), are located in rural areas (80.8%), with the remainder found in townships – (14.9%) and in Chisinau and Balti municipalities – (4.3%). The sampling in the Russian Federation reflects these trends, but with certain peculiarities – considerably fewer persons from rural areas, and accordingly, more migrants from small towns (31.2%) and from municipalities – (7.6%).

**Table 5: Places of residence of migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation (%)**

|                                   | <b>Groups from Republic of Moldova (migrants and members of households)</b> | <b>Groups from Russian Federation</b> |
|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Rural areas                       | 80.8  | 61.2                                  |
| Small towns                       | 14.9  | 31.2                                  |
| Chisinau and Balti Municipalities | 4.3   | 7.6                                   |

78.1 per cent of migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova are of Moldovan ethnic background. They are followed by Ukrainians and Gagauzians – 7.6 per cent for each ethnic background group, Bulgarians – 5.3 per cent, and other nationalities – 1.4 per cent. At the same time, most migrants from the Republic of Moldova have Moldovan citizenship – 96.4 per cent, 2.3 per cent hold the citizenship of the Russian Federation, 1.0 per cent – Ukrainian citizenship, 0.3 per cent – Bulgarian citizenship.

Migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova live in households consisting of four members – 32.8 per cent, three members – 20.2 per cent,

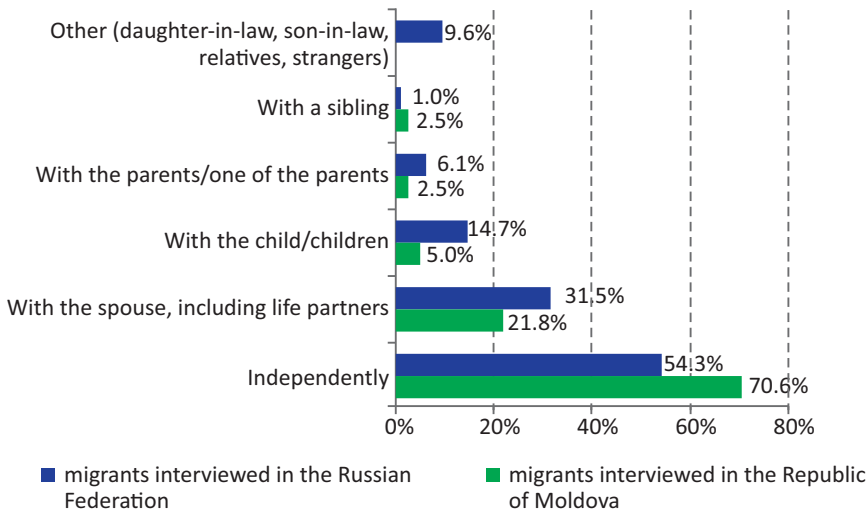
<sup>20</sup> Alongside with the above mentioned survey, the same conclusion on the predominance of women among Moldovan migrants was reached by Ye. Tyuryukanova (Women-migrants from CIS countries to Russia//Edited by Ye. Tyuryukanova. – M.: MAKs-Press, 2011, p.12).

five members – 19.5 per cent, six members – 12.3 per cent, two members – 7.6 per cent.

Seventy per cent of migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova resided alone in the Russian Federation as compared to 21.8 per cent of people who were residing with spouses (including life partners), 5 per cent with child/children, 4.2 per cent with one parent and 3.4 per cent with a sibling.

Migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation reside more often with another family member(s) or relative(s). In particular, 31.5 per cent were residing with a spouse, 14.7 per cent with child/children, 6.1 per cent with one parent or both parents, 9.6 per cent with other relatives (future daughter-in-law, cousins, etc.). This shows that from the very beginning the future plans of migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation relate to a longer working period, more often together with other family members (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Household members with a migrant in the family in the Russian Federation (%)**



Surveys in Russia and Moldova (migrants in Russia, migrants in Moldova, members of migrant households in Moldova) covered different migrant stocks.

The respondents interviewed in Russia are mostly long-term migrants. These are more educated, rarely married people, who are practically permanently residing in Russia (63.5 per cent of respondents have not left Russia for more than 12 months). The people interviewed in Russia are conditionally divided into three homogeneous categories: women (long-term migrants), men (circular migrants), and the smallest one – young women (seasonal migrants).

Migrants interviewed in Moldova are mostly circular and seasonal migrants. Collected data shows that two thirds of migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova migrate on a regular basis, spending almost an equal amount of time both at home and abroad, as stated by an interviewed circular migrant: *"I can say that I live there. I come here to visit my wife and children, as well as to bring them money. I travel three-four times a year"*. One third of them reside mostly at home and travel to the Russian Federation only during certain periods of the year (seasonal migrants); 6.6 per cent reside permanently in the Russian Federation, and visit home only once a year<sup>22</sup>, and 1.7 per cent are permanently residing abroad and come home less than once a year (Moldovan migrants who are on a long-term basis in the Russian Federation).

As a rule, the migrants interviewed in Moldova are family people with lower education level, from rural areas and oriented to temporary departures from the country: 71.4 per cent of them reside in Russia for less than half a year, while more than one third – not more than three months. Same goes with the migrant stock that was missing from the households at the moment of survey in the Republic of Moldova, except for the fact that these migrants, tend to travel for longer periods of time, and long-term migrants can be found amongst them (5.5 per cent of migrants)<sup>23</sup>.

The differences in the socio-demographic characteristics of migrants and their initial orientation to the duration of trips determine their practice of inclusion into the labour market, labour conditions and level, adaptation possibilities and long-term migration strategies.

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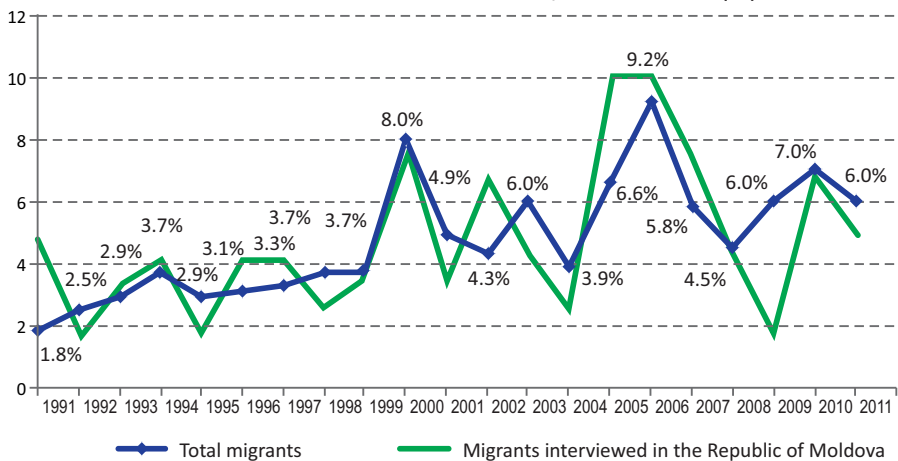
<sup>22</sup> Respondents who indicated that they reside permanently in the Russian Federation, and have been living there since the summer of 2010, over a period of 10 months.

<sup>23</sup> Social-demographic characteristics, employment profiles of circular migrants questioned in Moldova are almost similar to the analogical parameters received during the recent scale surveys in the Republic of Moldova. See for instance, Labour Force Migration, National Bureau of Statistics, 2008.

## I. MIGRATION EXPERIENCE

Travelling to the Russian Federation for work is not a social innovation that emerged after the proclamation of independence of the Republic of Moldova. The labour migration to the Russian Federation existed before this, but it had different destinations: mostly eastern not so much western regions of the former Soviet Union (the socialist “raising of new ground”, Baikal-Amour railway construction, tree felling in Siberia, etc.). After the proclamation of independence of the Republic of Moldova, the big cities and territories in the western part of the Russian Federation have become more attractive to the migrants, and the number of labour migrants has gradually increased reaching its highest point in 2006 and stabilising in the following years at the level of 295,000 – 335,000 people (see Figure 1). These trends are recorded in the results of other sociological surveys on migration carried out in the Republic of Moldova<sup>24</sup>.

**Figure 3: Breakdown of migrants by period of time of first departure to work in the Russian Federation, 1991 – 2011 (%)**



Many migrants from Moldova started their working experience in Russia in the periods of boom of departures from the Republic of Moldova (see Figure 3). It should be mentioned that the seasonal and circular migrants interviewed in Moldova, unlike the long-term migrants interviewed in Russia, react more sensitively both to the decline (1998, 2008-2009) as well as the growth of the Russian economy (1999-2000, 2004-2006).

The circular migration to the Russian Federation has its benefits, as it corresponds to the preferences of migrants, most of whom travel temporarily

<sup>24</sup> Luecke M., Mahmoud T.O., Steinmayr A. *Labour Migration and Remittances in Moldova: Is the Boom Over? Trends and Preliminary Findings from the IOM-CBSAXA Panel Household Survey 2006-2008/* IOM, Mission to Moldova. – Chisinau, 2009, p. 13.

to earn money and maintain ties with the family in case of regular trips. Seasonal migration (predominantly, but not exclusively in summer time) is also one of the methods of increasing the income of the family by working overseas, popular especially among students, teachers and other persons working in Moldova, who migrate only during vacation periods in order to increase the family budget. The downside of these migration patterns is the weak connection of the migrant to a working place. During times of economic crisis, the circular and in particular the seasonal migrants are the first to lose their jobs or are unable to find a job in the first place. The age composition of the migration flows in the years of migration boom from Moldova, which coincided with the economic boom in Russia, should be mentioned, as the highest average age of migrants was registered in 2005 (33.3 years). For obvious reasons, the representatives of older groups have bigger experience in travelling at the moment of the survey execution.

The migrants interviewed in Moldova have more migration experience than the migrants interviewed in Russia. At the same time, those long-term migrants in Russia have less migration experience compared with the permanently travelling “Russian” circular migrants.

**Table 6: Migration experience of different categories of migrants (%)<sup>25</sup>**

|  | <b>Long-term migrants, Russia (N =246)</b> | <b>Circular migrants, Russia (N = 148)</b> | <b>Migrants and household members, Moldova (N = 302)</b> |
|--|--|--|--|
| Share of people who have made 3 or more trips from Republic of Moldova | 8.9  | 32.4                                       | 84.0   |

For most “Moldovan” migrants, frequent trips and the circular nature of migration are the result of an informed choice, dictated first of all, by the professional sector and seasonal nature of the job (builders prevail among migrants), secondly, by the fact that the connection with the family isn't interrupted in case of periodic travels<sup>26</sup>. On the contrary, women are prevalent among the circular “Russian” migrants and are mostly employed in domains where seasonality is not typical.

Ninety one per cent of respondents with prior experience of migration reported their first destination country to be Russia, 9 per cent travelled for

<sup>25</sup> N refers here and throughout the document to the number of respondents.

<sup>26</sup> Among the migrants questioned in the Republic of Moldova, 16.8 per cent of migrants travelled more than 10 times, 18.5 per cent from 6 to 10 times. The majority consists of men of 40-55 years old and older than 55 years with general/secondary education working in construction. A small amount of these migrants was travelling to other countries: Romania, Turkey, and Portugal.

the first time to other countries. The travel geography amongst respondents is impressive: 14 different countries, including not only European ones, but also Turkey, and Sudan.

Human capital plays an important role: people with higher education and incomplete higher education were travelling more often – 19.4 per cent of respondents have experience travelling to other countries besides Russia, while there are only 11.3 per cent of respondents with incomplete secondary education who possess such experience. The level of education increases the diversification of migration destinations: if the persons with incomplete general/secondary education have experience going only to Ukraine and Italy, then the persons with secondary education have travelled to Ukraine, Italy and Romania, the geography of migrants with higher and incomplete higher education being even much more diversified.

From another perspective, each migration experience decreases the geographic range of the job search. Amongst migrants with prior travelling experience, regardless of their first destination, an increasing focus on travel to Russia has been registered; 91.0 per cent's first migration experience was to Russia, for 95.6 per cent the second trip was to Russia, and for 98.1 per cent chose Russia as country of destination in their penultimate trip.

**Table 7: Change of direction for migrants with migration experience (first and second trips) (%)**

| First trip            | Second trip |                 |
|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------|
|                       | Russia      | Other countries |
| Russia, 100%          | 98.3        | 1.7             |
| Other countries, 100% | 73.0        | 27.0            |

Thus, almost all those who made the first trip to Russia went there for the second trip. But the majority of migrants, who made the first trip to other countries, opted for Russia for the second trip (see Table 7).

Similarly was observed the trend of travelling to Moscow. Migrants increasingly choose Moscow as their destination: if the first trip to Moscow was made by 71.0 per cent of migrants, then the second one was made by 78.1 per cent, and the next-to-last one by 80.7 per cent.

Selection of the Russian Federation as country of destination is determined by easy entry – no visa required, knowledge of Russian language – compared to migration to EU countries, where visa is required, knowledge of foreign language is needed and compliance with other formal requirements at entry. The cost of travelling to the Russian Federation was and is accessible to all migrants. Besides there's the comforting knowledge that one can return to Moldova whenever he/ she pleases.

“...if you miss home, you can go back” “...you can return home whenever you want from there” (FG\_1, Republic of Moldova, \_Migrants).

Many Moldovans in the Russian Federation reside with relatives, friends, acquaintances, who can help in finding jobs. For many migrants, it is an important additional factor of a choice of Russia as a country of destination. Both migrants' social networks from specific areas and the so-called "gregariousness" effects<sup>27</sup> play a significant role. Such social networks are important especially for migrants from rural areas<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> Pinger P. (2010) Come Back or Stay? Spend Here or There? Return and Remittances: The Case of Moldova // *International Migration*, Vol. 48 (5). - P. 167

<sup>28</sup> Goerlich D. Trebesch C. (2008) Seasonal Migration and Networks—Evidence on Moldova's Labour Exodus // *Review of World Economics*, Vol. 144 (1). P. 122.

## II. REASONS FOR LEAVING AND EXPECTATIONS

There are a lot of reasons that prompt Moldovans to migrate and seek jobs overseas. When offered the possibility of providing multiple answers, the following represents the occurrence of the possible motivations. While the prime motivator is unemployment, mentioned by 73.2 per cent – more than one third of migrants, 34.5 per cent, never previously worked prior to their first trip to Russia – other frequently mentioned reasons include<sup>29</sup>:

- Earn money for current expenses (64.7%);
- Lack of perspectives for a normal life in the Republic of Moldova (58.9%);
- For bigger expenses (education, medical treatment) (44.8%);
- For expensive needs of other family members (37.9%);
- Economic and social instability of the Republic of Moldova (30.0%);
- To invest in own household (24.1%);
- Possibility to find a good job (13.4%).

It should be noted that the motivating factors behind the decision to migrate demonstrate distinct variations between the categories of migrants (seasonal, circular and long-term). Seasonal migrants' prime intention is typically to earn money for current expenses and big expenses in the households. The reasons of circular migrants are to earn money for current expenses, unemployment, and lack of perspective for a better life in the Republic of Moldova, earn money for bigger expenses, including investments into the household. Long-term migrants travelled to the Russian Federation because they didn't see any perspective for better life in the Republic of Moldova and had chosen the higher level of life in the Russian Federation, because of unemployment, in order to earn money for bigger expenditures of family members or to establish their own business.

The reasons for going abroad have the following structure: unemployment (17.3%), income for current expenses (15.3%), lack of perspectives to have a normal life in Moldova (13.9%), to earn money for their own bigger expenses (10.6%), to earn money for bigger expenses of other family members (9.0%), better life in Russia (7.5%), tired of political and economic instability (7.1%), many relatives and friends live in Russia (7.0%), earn money to invest in the household (5.7%), other reasons (less than 3 per cent for each line) (6.6%).

The variety of reasons can be aggregated in five groups of related motivations. The first group includes the reasons related to unsatisfactory condition of the socio-economic and political situations in the Republic of

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<sup>29</sup> Respondents could choose several answers.



Moldova: “lack of perspectives to have a better life in Moldova”, “political and economical instability in the republic”. Such reasons account for 21 per cent of all reasons. Solving the problems that become push-factors to leave Moldova due to the above-mentioned reasons requires time and practically does not depend on the personal efforts of the respondent.

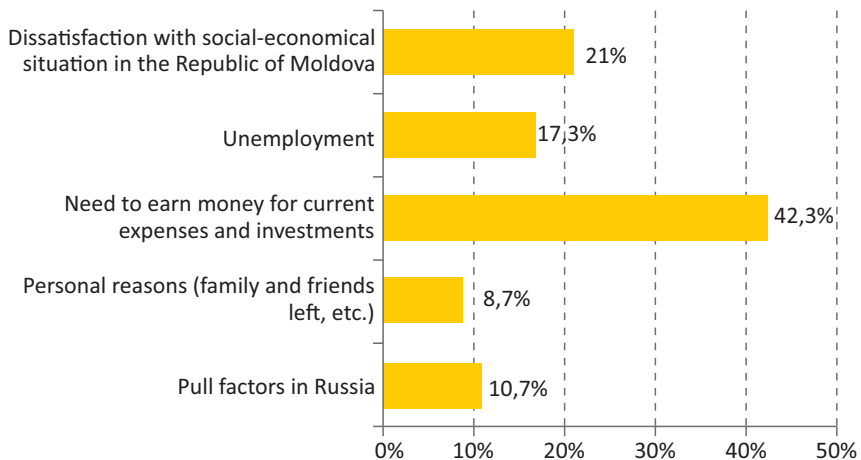
Apart from these, as being partially subject to change through personal efforts, is the reason of unemployment, which is related, on the one hand, to the current economic situation of the Republic of Moldova and, on the other hand, depends on the qualification, professional experience and education of the migrant, his/her orientation to one or another type of jobs.

The third group includes the reasons related to the ad-hoc need to earn money: current expenses, long-term and family scale projects, investment into/repair of the dwelling, business, etc.

The fourth group consists of personal reasons such as “many relatives and friends live in Russia”, “the entire family is there”, “to visit relatives that live in Russia”, “to get married”. (Latent reason for travel alongside with the unwillingness to live outside personal communication circle, some non-conformism, can also be the dissatisfaction with the general economical situation and requirement to solve some situational material problems).

The fifth group comprises the pull-factors in Russia: “the life is better in Russia”; “there is a possibility to find a good job in Russia”.

**Figure 4: Reasons for leaving Republic of Moldova (%)**



In sum, the main factors of migration from Moldova are thus the push factors, such as the necessity to find a job and income, dissatisfaction with socio-economical situation in Moldova and distrust in its improvement. Pull factors in the form of living standards in Russia or personal reasons are less

important<sup>30</sup>. It should be mentioned in this context that in spite of the prevalence of short-term factors related to income and employment, the long-term dissatisfaction with the socio-economic and political situation in Moldova as well as the gap in the standard of living in Russia and Moldova have a strong presence as well.

The migrants, irrespective of the meaning they give to their departure from the country and duration of the trips, in one way or another, plan their life in the context of migration. Personal life goals projects are diverse and include earning money for needs of their own and of their relatives (30.4%), finding an interesting job (21.0%), overcoming the difficulties in the country of origin (15.5%), putting their private life in order (7.9%), living in a megapolis (5.8%), obtaining a profession/increasing qualification (5.4%), make a quick career (4.8%), purchasing property in Russia (4.2%), obtaining a profession and increasing qualification (2.6%), establishing own business, opening a shop or other (2.6%).

The most frequent mentioned personal life goals projects were those aiming at solving economic problems faced by respondents in Moldova (earn money for needs of their own and their relatives, find an interesting job, overcome difficulties in their country, open a shop, establish business or other). In total, these account for 69.5 per cent of all life plans related to migration to Russia. The second group of life plans consists of plans, which in a way or another, are geared towards the improvement of private life (to put the private life in order, dream to live in a megapolis, to purchase property in Russia, to make a quick career). It is a total of 22.7 per cent of all personal life goals projects. Finally there are life plans related to education and improvement of qualification, 8 per cent.

When comparing the life plans of migrants and members of households with migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova and of migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation, it is noticed that they differ, even they have the same priorities – to earn money for personal expenditures and family expenses, to find an interesting job, overcome the difficulties in own country.

The respondents interviewed in the Russian Federation, first of all, are very focused regarding their plans. Secondly, they are more ambitious – their

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<sup>30</sup> The reasons for migration are examined mostly based on the push and pull factors theory (push and pull factors theory - Massey, D.S, Arango, J., Hugo, G., Kouaouci, A., Pellegrino, A. and Taylor, J.E. (1993) Theories of international migration: review and appraisal// *Population and Development Review*, 19. Pp. 431–466.). These factors include relations with family members in Moldova and other countries, perception of economic and political situation in Moldova, comparative difference in salaries, costs of integration and migrant networks. It is interesting to note that the presence of children younger than 15 years old has no considerable influence on decisions. (Pinger P. (2010) Come Back or Stay? Spend Here or There? Return and Remittances: The Case of Moldova// *International Migration*, Vol. 48 (5). - P. 167).

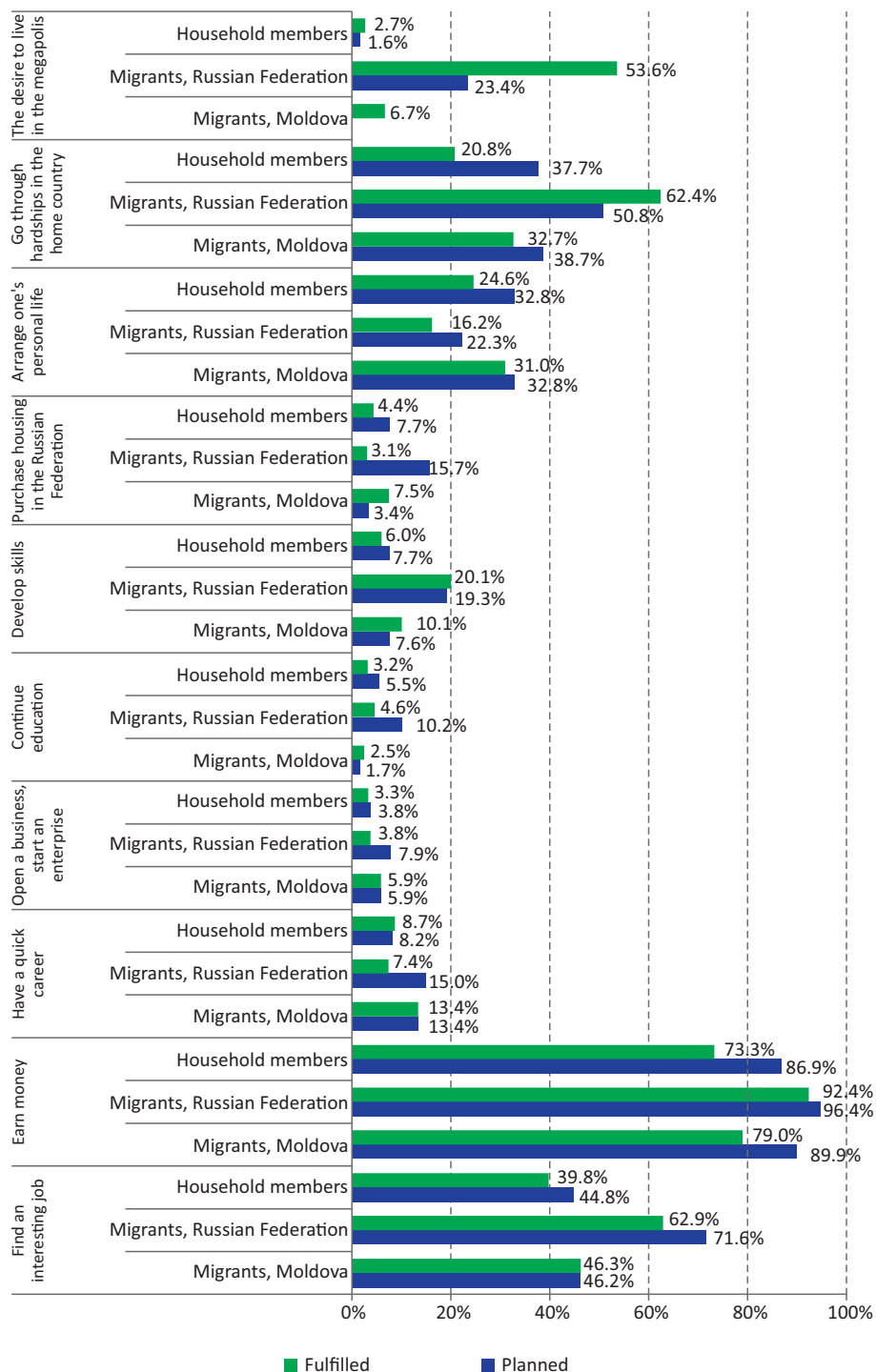
demands are higher compared to migrants interviewed in Moldova, and members of migrant households (except for the intention to put the private life in order). The gap between the “Russian” and “Moldovan” respondents is especially noticeable in the field of professional and career growth and education (see Figure 5).

The sense of perseverance together with a higher level of ambition has determined “Russian” migrants fulfil their plans related to migration to a greater extent than the “Moldovan” migrants (except for putting the private life in order, career plans, establishment of own business, and interestingly, the procurement of property in Russia).

On some points (overcoming hardships in the home country; desire to live in a megapolis), the achievement of life plans of migrants interviewed in Russia, have exceeded all expectations. One thing they do not succeed – acquiring property in Russia. (The plans related to the desire to live in a megapolis were achieved almost completely, for which achievement it was necessary only to move *temporarily* to Moscow. Permanent residence in a megapolis means either rent a flat or buy one. The high cost of property and need to save money for a long period of time were the reasons why this life goal is less frequently achieved).

In general migrants have achieved fully or partially the life plans that depend on either short-term or relatively long-term residence in Russia. Those plans that require permanent residence in the Russian Federation were achieved even less.

Figure 5: Migration plans and their achievement (%)



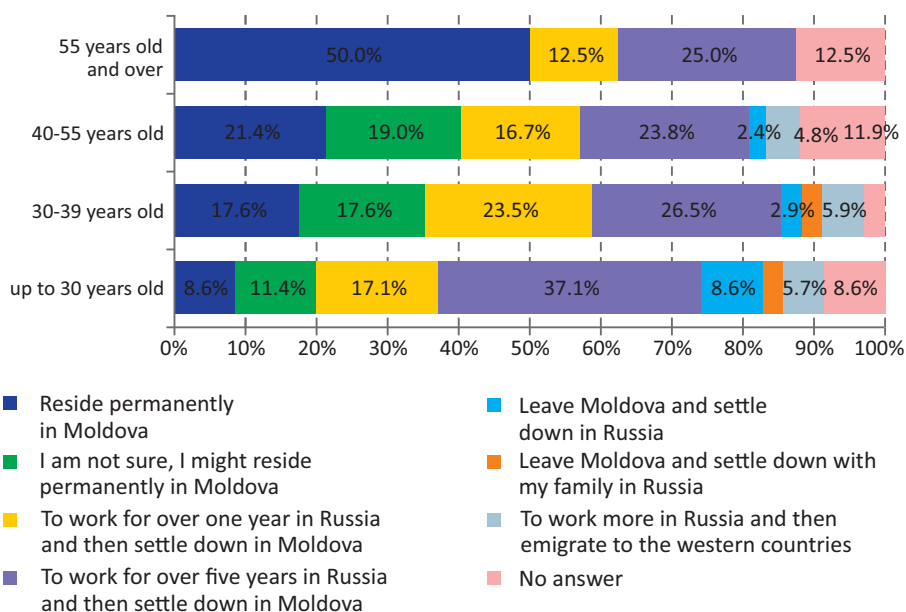
### III. LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

The analysis of the long-term plans showed that the vast majority of migrants interviewed in Moldova see their future in the home country. Almost half of migrants plan to have more trips to Russia, earn money and then settle down in Moldova (28.6 per cent of respondents plan to work in the Russian Federation for more than five years, and then permanently return to the Republic of Moldova, 18.5 per cent to work for another 1 to 5 years). A further 18.5 per cent of respondents refused to make further trips and decided to settle down in the Republic of Moldova and 15.1 per cent of respondents were undecided as to whether would travel more (*“I am not sure, I might stay for good in Moldova”*).

Only 5.9 per cent wants to settle down in the Russian Federation (alone or with their family) and 5.0 per cent – to work longer in the Russian Federation, and then migrate to EU countries; 8.4 per cent of respondents could not answer this question.

Moldovans over 55 years old want to stay for good in the Republic of Moldova, and younger migrants with higher education want mostly to travel to the Russian Federation or EU countries (see Figure 6).

**Figure 6: Future plans of migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova by age (%)**



Other long-term strategies are characteristic for the respondents in Russia. Most of them do not intend to return to Moldova in the near future. The most widely spread strategy is to remain in Russia and obtain the citizenship of the Russian Federation (37%). The number of those who want to reside long-term in Russia (more than five years) and return afterwards to Moldova is smaller (31%).

Less than one fourth of respondents declared their decision to return to their homeland in the near future: eight per cent intend to work for about a year in Russia before their return, three per cent – to work between six months to one year. Fourteen per cent of migrants who plan to work for another half a year in Russia intend to return in the near future.

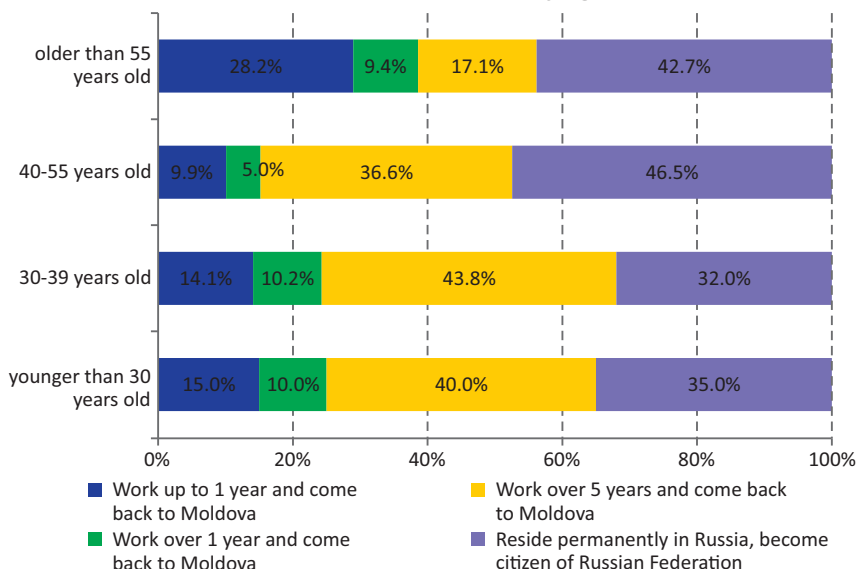
Only 1.3 per cent of respondents declared their intention to move to the EU after working in Russia, and other 7.1 per cent of respondents have not decided yet. As with the survey in Moldova, among the young people there are people who plan on trying and finding a job in Europe (although their number is not that big).

Among the respondents younger than 30 years two extreme positions are apparent: short-term residence in Russia (up to six months) or permanent residence in Russia including applying for Russian citizenship (see Figure 7). This is likely influenced by the relative lack of migration experience among many of them: a considerable proportion of these young people travelled for the first time abroad to work.

Respondents aged 30-39 years old were the most reluctant to return to Moldova in the near future with 46.5 per cent seeking to reside permanently in Russia, and 36.6 per cent to work for at least another five years. These are yesterday's young people who have adapted to Russian reality and are reconsidering their plans by delaying their return to Moldova.

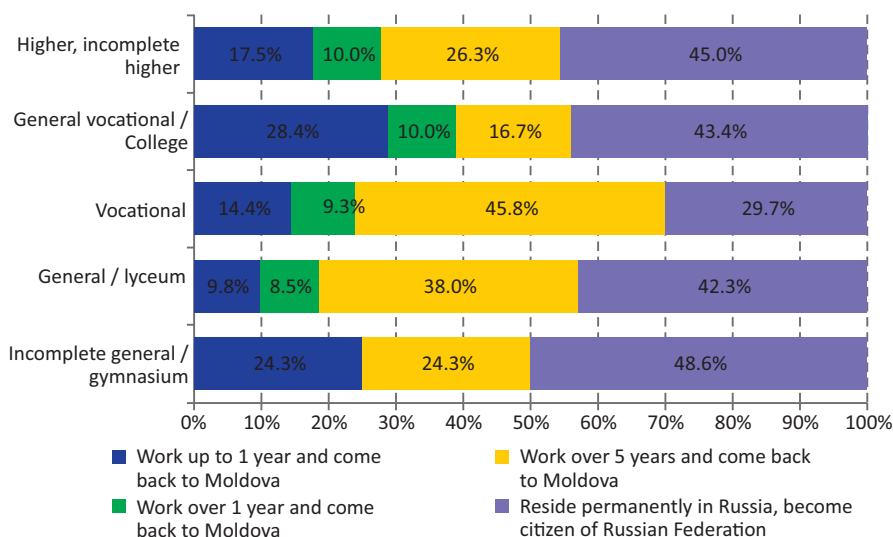
Older people (over 55 years) are also considering long-term (more than five years) or permanent residence in Russia (40 and 35 per cent respectively), among whom was registered the largest share of respondents having trouble answering the question (20 per cent).

**Figure 7: Future plans of migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation by age (%)**



Across all levels of education between 40 and 50 per cents of respondents wish to stay in Russia for good, with the exception of skilled, vocationally trained circular migrants working mostly in the seasonally conditioned constructions sector (see Figure 8). The intention to stay and work in Russia five or more years and afterwards return to Moldova is also frequently manifested, although differing by education level.

**Figure 8: Future plans of migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation depending on their education (%)**



Thus, the migration behaviour and strategy depend on the socio-demographic characteristics of migrants. The migration experience is not less important and in particular the duration of time spent in Russia. The more a migrant travels to or resides in Russia, the greater is the likelihood he or she will settle down there for a prolonged period of time.

**Table 8: Plans of migrants who travelled to the Russian Federation in different years for long-term residence in Russia (%)**

| Period of last trip to the Russian Federation | Plan to work five or more years and then return to Moldova | Plan to settle down in Russia and obtain Russian citizenship | Total |
|---|--|--|-------|
| before 1995                                   | 40.0   | 43.3   | 83.3  |
| 1996-2000                                     | 43.4   | 49.1   | 92.5  |
| 2001-2005                                     | 40.2   | 45.1   | 85.3  |
| 2006-2010                                     | 28.0   | 37.8   | 65.8  |
| 2011  | 22.4   | 25.9   | 48.3  |
| Total   | 33.1   | 39.6   | 72.7  |

Choice and change of migration strategies depend on the life plans of the migrant. The fulfilment or failure to fulfil the plans and hopes the migrant had when travelling for the first time to Russia changes considerably his/her long-term strategies. Over two thirds of “Russian” migrants, who succeeded to continue education, to obtain a profession and improve qualification, plan to settle down in Russia. The number of those who wished to stay in the Russian Federation is even higher among people, who planned to put their private life in order or had family projects (to purchase an apartment, for instance) and who succeeded this.

If there was no visa regime with EU countries, some migrants would have migrated to EU countries, but the largest portion would have stayed in the Russian Federation. This factor is determined by the ability to speak Russian language, the likelihood of finding a job and the diversity of opportunities (construction, transport, and commerce) compared to Italy, where the main economic activity is care giving for the elderly. A decisive factor for migrants born in the former Soviet Union is the historical past.

Moldovans who want a change to the migration strategy and travel to EU countries have the following reasons: the work conditions are better, workers have more rights and the rights are not infringed severely, and there are seldom cases when workers did not get paid for their work.

Members of the households who participated in the survey, for the most part, do not know about the plans of family members who work overseas (76.1%). Although, some declared their intention to travel to work together in



the Russian Federation (4.4 %), or to visit him (7.1%), to travel together with the family to the Russian Federation (2.2%). Other options such as migration to another country, marriage, and so on (10.2%) were mentioned too.

The differences between “Russian” and “Moldovan” migrant strategies are determined by the fact that the sampling from Moldova included practically circular migrants, whereas the Russian sampling included both circular and long-term migrants, the latter representing the majority.

**Table 9: Long-term migration strategies of different migrant categories (%)**

| Nr.                   | Migration strategy   | Long-term migrants, Russian Federation | Circular migrants, Russian Federation | Circular migrants, Republic of Moldova |
|-----------------------|--|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1.                    | Stay/maybe settle down in Moldova (survey in Republic of Moldova)                | -                                      | -                                     | 33.6                                   |
| 2.                    | Work for another year, and then return to Moldova (survey in Russian Federation) | 10.1                                   | 27.4                                  | -                                      |
| 3.                    | Work for more than a year in Russian Federation and settle down in Moldova       | 9.3                                    | 5.4                                   | 18.5                                   |
| 4.                    | Work for more than five years and settle down in Moldova                         | 28.9                                   | 33.8                                  | 28.6                                   |
| 5.                    | Settle down in Russia and obtain Russian citizenship                             | 44.7                                   | 23.6                                  | 5.9                                    |
| 6.                    | Work in Russia and then immigrate to other Western countries                     | 1.2                                    | 1.4                                   | 5.0                                    |
| 7.                    | No answer  | 5.7                                    | 9.5                                   | 8.4                                    |
| Total                 |  | 100.0                                  | 100.0                                 | 100.0                                  |
| Number of respondents |  | 246                                    | 148                                   | 119                                    |

Two points here are particularly interesting. First of all, the respondents have quite clear understanding of their migration strategy: few had difficulties in answering or avoided to give answers. Secondly, there are considerable differences between the circular migrants interviewed in Moscow and those in Moldova. Amongst the latter there are four times fewer of those who want to settle down in Russia; the share of those who intend to work for many years in Russia is smaller as well. Probably, this is due to different stocks. Circular migrants, interviewed in Moldova are burdened with families and have to coordinate their plans with those of other family members. 55.5 per cent of these have children who almost all live in Moldova. 35.6 per cent of circular migrants interviewed in Russia had children, but 21.2 per cent of children were living with them in Russia.

A little more than two fifths of “Russian” migrants, who have decided to settle down in Russia, are serious about their intentions and take concrete steps; a similar number of migrants are sure of their decision but have not taken any significant actions, and the remainder are unsure of their intentions.

According to the results, the decision to settle down in Russia is supported by other family members in 77 per cent of cases. In only in 2 per cent of cases was this decision not supported by the relatives. Families of 12 per cent of respondents did not know about such decision at the time of the interview; and a further 8 per cent of respondents declared lack of interest towards the opinion of other family members.

At the same time, the aspiration of the migrant to settle down in Russia was especially supported by families of circular migrants (82.9 per cent of families compared to 74.5 per cent of families of long-term migrants), but the long-term migrants are more likely to ignore the opinion of the family (10.0 per cent compared to 2.9 per cent of circular migrants).

When the migrant resides with the spouse, children or parents in Russia, the support in these cases is even greater. But even if the relatives are far away, they tend to support the migrant in his/her decision to settle down in Russia. For respondents falling into the “I was alone” category, enjoy their family's support – in 70 per cent of cases; in the situation “residing with spouse” – 88 per cent.

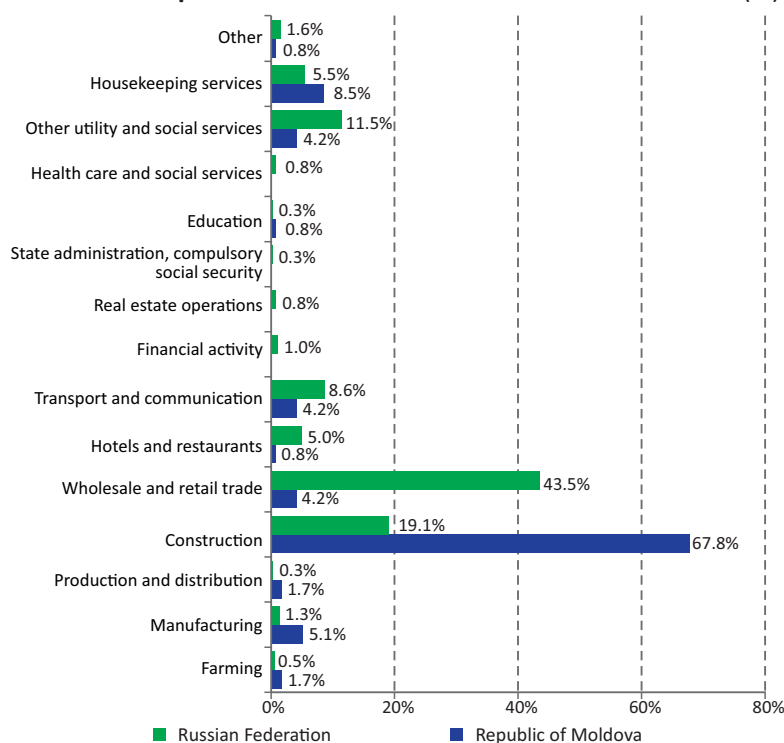
The small rate of those who declared that they were not interested in the family opinion regarding their decision to settle down in Russia together with the materials of focus-groups support the hypothesis that migration is not an individual act, but a collective one, involving the entire household/family.

## IV. MIGRANT EMPLOYMENT

The key employment sectors of migrants are: construction (38.7%), retail and wholesale, car and home appliances repair services (27.0%), utilities, social and personal services (9.1%), transport and communication (6.6%)<sup>31</sup>. Other employment sectors are covered by less than one fifth of employees.

Employment sectors of migrants interviewed in Russia and Moldova differ considerably. The “Russian” migrants are mostly employed in commerce, car and home appliances repair services (43.5% of those employed), construction (19.1%), other utilities, social and personal services (11.5%), housekeeping services (5.5%), transport and communications (8.6%), hotels and restaurants (5.0%).

**Figure 9: Types of economic activities of migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation (%)**



<sup>31</sup>Total questioned people, N= 682. The classification from the Russian Classification of Economic Activities (OKVED), the Russian analog of the Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community. The breakdown of migrant workers and migrants that look for job by types of economic activities is not that different from the types of activities of legal workers: based on data of FMS of Russia, in 2011, 16.0 per cent of migrants with work permits worked in the construction sector, 6.6 per cent in the transport sector. The considerable difference in the share of those employed in commerce is explained by the specific method used by the FMS of Russia.

Employment of migrants interviewed in Moldova is not strictly differentiated and is gender-structured: men are predominantly active in construction, while women have domestic occupations or work in social and communal services. More than two thirds of “Moldovan” migrants work in construction, followed by communal services with a considerable gap of 8.5 per cent.

Since Moldovan builders are employed mostly in qualified jobs, half of migrants interviewed in Moldova represent qualified workers, and 37 per cent work as unqualified workers, whilst the number of migrants interviewed in Russia that work as unqualified workers is 61.3 per cent of migrants.

There are differences in looking for a job and organisation of trips for migrants among the respondents from Russia and Moldova. 86.4 per cent of migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova travel knowing already that they have a job. This is very characteristic for seasonal migrants who don't have time and cannot afford wasting it looking for a job. Men, more often than women, prefer to travel to the Russian Federation and know beforehand where they will work. This is due to different areas of male and female employment. (Women are mostly employed in commerce and are able to find an open job, while the work in constructions requires a construction site where the job can be found.)

Comparatively, the degree of organised work travel is considerably lower among the respondents in the Russian Federation – only 49.2 per cent of them had some preliminary agreements regarding work.

The process of identifying jobs and getting employed also differs between the migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova and respondents interviewed in the Russian Federation. 80.5 per cent of migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova found a job through their relatives or friends, 8.5 per cent through intermediaries; 4.2 per cent through the employer; 2.5 per cent established their own business, and so on. As regards migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation, the practice of finding a job with the help of relatives or friends is also the most widely spread, but is named by fewer of the respondents, three quarters. Then, on the second place comes the employment found through direct contact with the employer (12.6%). There is also the practice of individual search for work through ads in the newspapers and on the streets (4.7%), private employment agencies (2.1%), via Internet and other. Some migrants established their own business in the Russian Federation and these are most often people older than 55 years with higher education.

The vast majority of migrants, irrespective of the place of interview, reported that they did not pay money for their employment (90 per cent of respondents). Employment through intermediary is not so common, but does

occur. The intermediation is often resorted to by young men with general/secondary education who work in the Russian Federation for less than three months; more often than not, these are unqualified workers. More often this practice is applied by the migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova (8.5%) as compared to respondents from the Russian Federation (2.1%).

The intermediary, who sources a job, charges 15-20 per cent of the contract amount. At the same time, a part of Moldovan migrants agree to use the assistance of an intermediary, because the latter is interested in the maximum employment of workers: he/she finds construction sites, makes sure the employer pays the salary on time, settles all the conflicts with the employer. The intermediation practice is mostly common in construction.

The income of the intermediaries is considerably higher than 15-20 per cent charged because they receive additional profit from the difference between actual salary paid to the worker and the amount agreed with the employer: *“besides the 20 per cent, the intermediary collects a big amount for the work done... 2-3 times more...”* (FG\_1\_Migrants, Republic of Moldova).

Regular employment requires valid residence and work permits in Russia. Taking into account the relatively easy registration with the migration office<sup>32</sup>, the majority of migrants hold legal papers, at least the residence permit in Russia (see Figure 10).

Only 3 per cent of the respondents from Russia and 10 per cent of those in Moldova declared that they had no valid documents. Mostly men of 40-55 years old with general/secondary education, and working in construction had no legal papers.

A considerable part of migrant workers have no legal grounds for performing their type of working activity, given that only people with permanent residence permit or Russian citizenship do not need work permit to work. A work permit or a so-called patent allows migrants to work for individuals.

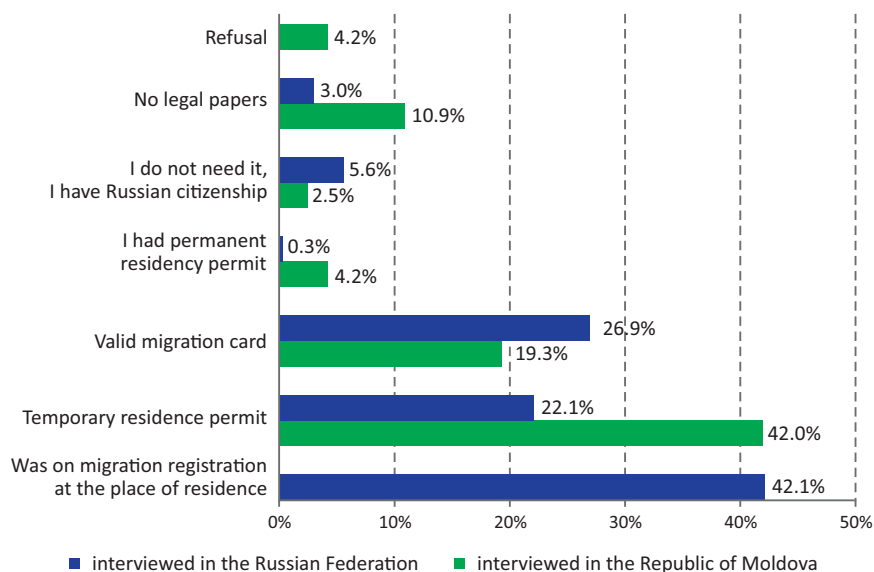
44.1 per cent of Moldovan migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova had a work permit, 2.2 per cent had work permits, but they were not in their possession, although they saw the permits, and 3.2 per cent declared that they have work permit, but these were not in their possession and did not even see it. Another 5.4 per cent had a patent, and 34.4 per cent had no work permit or patent. The women were those, who more often had no work permits or patents (45 per cent of respondents in the Republic of Moldova) compared 28 per cent of male respondents. The law-abidingness increases with age: the share of those who obtained and had a work permit grows from

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<sup>32</sup> To reside legally on the territory of Russia, the migrants have to register with the migration office, if the period of residence is longer than three months (except for people with permanent residence or Russian citizenship).

42.9 per cent in the case of migrants younger than 30 years old, up to 66.7 per cent of people over 55 years. The patent as a way of legalisation is held more often by young migrants working for less than three months.

**Figure 10: Temporary residence permits in Russia held by migrants during their last travel to the Russian Federation (%)**



Almost half of those who had no work permit or patent were located in the Russian Federation for less than three months.

A similar situation was found among the migrants interviewed in Russia. Both in Russia and in Moldova, most migrants had no work permit. The proportion of irregular migrant workers was 58.6 per cent of respondents interviewed in Russia, and 60.5 per cent of migrants interviewed in Moldova.

Irregular work is more common among circular, and especially, seasonal migrants.

**Table 10: Regular and irregular labour activity of different migrant categories (%)**

|                   | Migrant stock              |                           |  |
|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|--|
|                   | Long-term migrants (N=246) | Circular migrants (N=267) | Including located in Russia for 3 months or less (N=138) |
| Regular workers   | 43.9                       | 38.2                      | 37.0   |
| Irregular workers | 56.1                       | 61.8                      | 63.0   |
| Total             | 100.0                      | 100.0                     | 100.0  |

Women work irregularly more often than men; the percentage of irregularly working men (54.1%) is lower than the percentage of irregularly working women (63.6%). Irregular employment is marginally influenced by the age, civil status, and place of residence (rural or urban area). Education has a significant importance: migrants with higher/incomplete higher education are mostly legal – 52.5 per cent, while among those with incomplete general/secondary education this is only 39.2 per cent. For obvious reasons, the seasonal migrants work more often irregularly.

During the focus-groups meetings, the migrants declared that they do not see any considerable advantage in working regularly in the Russian Federation. Moreover, work permits are not even favourable to the employers because they have to pay taxes. As a result, a considerable proportion of Moldovans are employed without a work permit. Some of those who migrate regularly to the Russian Federation declared that they did obtain work permits in the previous years; they paid RUB 9,000, but nobody asked for the permit, and so they have decided not to apply for work permits anymore. The Moldovans with valid work permits reported during focus-group discussions situations when they had to pay fines anyway.

The most widespread irregular labour activities in the mass employment of migrants are retail and wholesale, car and home appliances repair services with 64.3 per cent of migrant employees working irregularly, and in the construction the figure is 66.0 per cent<sup>33</sup>. These two sectors account for 73 per cent of the interviewed Moldovan migrants working irregularly.

The criteria used to distinguish between regular and irregular migrant workers are more formal. 28.6 per cent of migrants with legal work permit are people with so-called patent on the basis of which foreign citizens may work in Russia for individuals, but not for individual entrepreneurs or companies. The patent is issued for one month, with a possibility of further extension, by making a RUB 1,000 (approximately USD 33) payment. A foreign citizen with a patent may only work in the region where the patent was issued. The patent is a tool to legalize the seasonal and circular migrants: *“with patent it is OK. You pay RUB 1,000 per month and you are legally there. You can walk freely in the city and the police will not fine you.”* But a number of migrants with patents work in commercial and budgetary institutions, and most of them in commerce and construction. Every fourth person with patent works as salesman/woman and overall not less than 30 per cent of migrants with patents work irregularly<sup>34</sup>.

Alongside the irregular employment, informal employment is widespread

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<sup>33</sup> The irregular migrants are considered to be all migrants, except for those who have work permits (except for those who did not see it) or patent.

and occurs when the relations with the employer are not based on a written agreement. Only 13 per cent of migrant workers have a written agreement with the employer. Formal agreements with the employer are usual for those who are employed in industry, hotels and restaurants (44.8 per cent and 27.3 per cent had long-term contract or agreement), and also in education, social insurance, but only a small per cent of migrants are employed in these sectors. Employment on the basis of a verbal agreement is widely spread in the most common economic activities (in construction, for instance, 67.6 per cent of migrants work based on such agreements, 68.7 per cent in commerce, and 81.6 per cent in housekeeping).

The use of trusted social networks is characteristic for migrants looking for a job, for legal persons looking for workers, as well as for individuals looking for a worker. Such behaviour, based on social networks and not on formal relations, is characteristic to the post-Soviet region, which creates a sense of “community” between expats and locals, and alongside with knowledge of Russian, represents pull factors for migrants from CIS countries to Russia.

Official conclusion of labour relations is not even a mandatory condition for highly qualified migrants, who also rely on trust and personal connections. Informal employment has its advantages, for instance, higher salary and many employment opportunities.

65.4 per cent of Moldovan migrants, who travel to the Russian Federation, work based on verbal agreements with employers; 19.0 per cent – based on temporary labour agreements and 13.0 per cent based on long-term contracts. The women and people with limited education who work seasonally are more frequently deprived of rights (71.8 per cent of women and 76.2 per cent of seasonal workers work based on a verbal agreement).

Men, especially those over the age of 55 years, are more likely to work on fixed-term labour agreements. The most protected are workers employed based on long-term agreements; these are persons with higher education who are residing in the territory of the Russian Federation for 12 or more months.

There is a direct connection between informal and irregular work. There are a number of irregular migrants, who work based on a written agreement, but they are no more than 37 per cent. The share of workers who work based on a verbal agreement is twice as high among the irregular migrants.

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<sup>34</sup> You can hardly imagine a courier working for an individual, but not an Executive Director – but there were indeed such situations.



**Table 11: Share of irregular migrant workers by conditions of employment (%)**

|                   | Form of work agreement/contract       |                                      |                           |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
|                   | Based on long-term contract/agreement | Based on short-term labour agreement | Based on verbal agreement |
| Regular workers   | 63.1                                  | 78.9                                 | 27.8                      |
| Irregular workers | 36.9                                  | 21.1                                 | 72.2                      |
| Total             | 100.0                                 | 100.0                                | 100.0                     |
| Total people      | 65                                    | 95                                   | 327                       |

Informal employment and irregular employment of foreigners is not only a consequence of the benefits for both the employer and employee, but also proof of the legislation's imperfection and most importantly, its weak enforcement. Strict limitation of the validity of the work permit up to three months without a written contract with the employer encourages the employees not to document their status due to the following dilemma: either, buy a work permit or waste time that one could have spent working.

Irregular employment combined with informal employment leads to the increased exploitation of migrant workers. Forced labour also exists, but the majority of migrants willingly accept to work long hours for the sake of the higher income they generate.

Migrants are mostly focused on salary irrespective of the work schedule and labour conditions. The legal vulnerability of the employee, combined with the desire to maximise earnings, leads to the intensification of migrants' labour. It is unusual for a migrant to work less than 50 hours a week: only every fifth person works eight or less hours a day and five days a week.

Average length of working week of migrants is 65.7 hours; with the migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova working on average 64.6 hours, while the migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation, 67.3 hours. Among migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation, migrants with families and over 55 years old work the longest hours.

The intensive work allows migrants to earn relatively decent money: the average salary of all interviewed migrants is RUB 26,200. The income of migrants interviewed in Russia accounts on average for RUB 25,500. Migrants interviewed in Moldova reported higher earnings: the average paid salary was RUB 30,200. Higher salaries of migrants interviewed in Moldova are explained, first of all, by the fact that a significant number of the interviewed migrants are builders, working in a sector that pays well.

**Table 12: Average labour remuneration of regularly and irregularly employed workers (respondents)**

| Status of worker, currency | All migrants |        | Migrants in the Russian Federation |        | Migrants in the Republic of Moldova |        |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------|------------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------------|--------|
|                            | People       | Salary | People                             | Salary | People                              | Salary |
| Documented                 |              |        |                                    |        |                                     |        |
| RUB                        | 155          | 27,651 | 133                                | 27,154 | 22                                  | 30,655 |
| USD                        | 13           | 1,082  | -                                  | -      | 13                                  | 1,082  |
| Undocumented               |              |        |                                    |        |                                     |        |
| RUB                        | 206          | 25,086 | 175                                | 24,252 | 31                                  | 29,794 |
| USD                        | 22           | 1,079  | 1                                  | 1,000  | 21                                  | 1,083  |
| Total                      |              |        |                                    |        |                                     |        |
| RUB                        | 361          | 26,187 | 308                                | 25,505 | 53                                  | 30,151 |
| USD                        | 35           | 1,080  | 1                                  | 1,000  | 34                                  | 1,083  |

The remuneration of irregularly employed migrants is generally lower than that of legally employed ones.

The duration of the working week and remuneration vary depending on the employment sectors. The employees in commerce work the most hours (average working week 71 hours), those working in communal services, social services, as well as those working in hotels and restaurants (67.7 hours). But the remuneration is disproportionate to labour costs: the salary of workers in commerce is by 7 per cent lower than the average salary in the area of communal services and household management, and by 20 per cent lower than that of social services workers.

The qualification and professional experience is remunerated rather than the work hours. The unqualified workers work the most and are the worst paid.

**Table 13: The duration of the working week and remuneration in different occupational categories**

| Professional category  | Average monthly salary for last 3 months, RUB | Duration of the working week, hours |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| Managers of organisations and structural subdivisions                  | 27,000  | 65.8                                |
| Highly qualified specialists   | 23,200  | 40.0                                |
| Average skilled specialists  | 31,281  | 55.4                                |
| Office workers   | 24,400  | 63.0                                |
| Qualified workers in service provision, communal services and commerce | 43,166  | 65.4                                |
| Qualified workers in agriculture and industry                          | 31,000  | 54.0                                |
| Qualified workers  | 27,060  | 65.8                                |
| Machinery and mechanism operators                                      | 31,285  | 61.4                                |
| Unqualified workers  | 24,014  | 69.6                                |

Migrants strive to earn money; that is why 5.2 per cent of respondents have a second job. (These are not the poorest migrants: two thirds of them are paid at the main job not less than RUB 25,000).

On the other hand, some migrants value the possibility to have a normal working day and week even if they are paid less, which is common for the state institutions:

*“The salary is not that high compared to the construction field..., but you work one day and you rest for two days. You work in shifts and you can relax...you don't work like a dog...You work less, but the salary is stable”* (FG\_1\_Migrants, Republic of Moldova).

Many Moldovans prefer to work independently for individuals; some prefer to look individually for work and work alone. Especially women:

*“More women are travelling now...The housekeeper is paid nowadays from RUB 40,000 to 60,000 per month”* (Expert interview, businessman, Russian Federation).

Some migrants worked permanently at the same working place for more than 11 years. Good workers are valued:

*“I worked for communal services and public utilities office and had to register the street-cleaners... And I did register them as in the mayoralty. When they saw that, they asked “who did that?”, I said that I did. I was asked where did I work previously, and when they heard that in the mayoralty, they said I need to find another job... Then I was offered to work in an elite house. I worked in two shifts, and I had 10 days off to see Moscow...the most beautiful places...I saw that beauty..., and I could not sit without work, so I planted an unusual garden, and won the 1<sup>st</sup> place. Then I was congratulated because thanks to the garden our house won the first place in landscaping contest... But since I had no citizenship of the Russian Federation, I was awarded the second place. They offered me a modern radio-recorder and tea-cup set, and the lodgers – two sets of serving plates... At first I did not want to accept the presents; I thought it was improper...I did that work from the bottom of my heart, because I was longing for my home, family, children...Planting flowers was bringing me comfort... Some flowers were planted with tears in my eyes because it was my son's birthday, and I wasn't there...”* (FG\_2\_women, Republic of Moldova).

According to Moldovan migrants, Russian employers often prefer the Moldovans to other migrants, sometimes even to locals because of their hard-working, conflict-free behaviour, as well as limited consumption of alcohol and tobacco.

As for citizens of other countries they work with, the Moldovan migrants declared that the best nationality to work with is the Uzbeks because they are very correct in labour relations. On the other hand, some Moldovans are

dishonestly “accruing benefits” from fellow Moldovan migrants' work and Russians, sometimes, pay less than the initial agreement, but nevertheless they do pay something.

The group discussions revealed multiple situations when Moldovan migrants were not paid for their work. The men who participated in group discussions confirmed that everyone went through this “at least once”; the situation is rarer with women. *“I worked for four months and came home without a penny, only 17 RUB ... The team consisted of 54 people from the rayon... But we meant nothing to them... We worked for a month and we got paid...we got upfront money to live on...for cigarettes. Then we worked more, but we were told that the boss had no money, that he had to sell the potatoes and then we would be paid for everything... And we got excited, but we were not paid. At the end, we received tickets and were told to go home and that the money would be sent later (FG\_1\_Migrants, Republic of Moldova).*

Such infringements are very often, when one of the fellow citizens advises group work in the Russian Federation: *“They took us from home. A fellow villager suggested going to harvest potatoes. We would have made lots of money. Contract-based...That fellow villager did not come back, he remained there, in Russia...All of us are waiting for him” (FG\_1\_Migrants, Republic of Moldova).*

Sometimes this is done even by the relatives of migrants: *“the onsite foreman was my cousin, who told us that he would send money; one year has passed and nothing happened... He gave us an upfront payment of USD 300, then another USD 500 and promised to send the rest. Up until today – nothing. He has to send me about USD 800 and he doesn't care” (FG\_1\_Migrants, Republic of Moldova).*

Such situations take place most often in the field of construction and agricultural works, and the main role is played by Moldovan migrants: *“Moldovans cheat each other in their own country – brother would lie to brother, godfather – godfather..., and when they travel overseas they become enemies” (FG\_1\_Migrants, Republic of Moldova).*

## V. MIGRANTS IN THE RECEIVING COUNTRY

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The majority of migrants with working experience in Moldova prior to going to Russia (65% of all migrants) worked in agriculture in the home country (24.7%), processing industries (16.7%), construction (11.4%), wholesale and retail (10.2%), education (8.7%), transport and communications (8.0%).

Once arrived in Russia, the vast majority has to change the area of economic activity: only every fourth migrant (25.3%) undertakes the same activity as he/she did in Moldova (when excluding the builders, the number is even smaller – 18.1%).

The number of those who work in agriculture has decreased among migrants; with migrants favouring constructions, commerce<sup>35</sup>, communal services and social services, housekeeping; the number of those employed in these sectors has increased by 3.5, 2.4, 4.0 and 15.5 times, accordingly. These types of activities employ currently 79.9 per cent of migrants with working experience prior to travelling to Russia.

Migrants, who worked, prior to travelling to Russia, in competitive economy sectors (constructions, commerce, transport and communications), are less inclined to work in other sectors. (82.4 per cent, 67.4 per cent and 38.9 per cent, accordingly, who worked in the homeland in these sectors are still undertaking them in Russia).

Together with few migrants who were previously employed in the mining sectors, real estate services, state administration, a considerable stock of migrants employed previously in health care and education sectors are not in demand in the Russian labour market.

Only 2.6 per cent of migrants who worked in Moldova in education are currently employed in this sector in Russia; no person employed previously in health care works in the same sector. The majority of these workers are currently employed in commerce (43.8 per cent of workers formerly employed in health care, 43.6 per cent, of those employed in education), communal services and social services (38.3 per cent of former workers in health care sector and 12.8 per cent – education), housekeeping (12.8 per cent of former employees in education and 6.3 per cent – health care).

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<sup>35</sup> During the group discussions, the Moldovan migrants declared that it is very difficult to find a job as salesman in shop and that the law on migrant work has become more severe.

**Table 14: Types of economic activities of migrants in the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation (%)**

| No. | Occupational group   | Worked in Moldova (N=449), per cent | Worked in Russia (N=682), per cent | Share of people working in the Republic of Moldova and who did not change their economic activity, per cent |
|-----|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| 1.  | Agriculture  | 24.7                                | 0.9                                | 4.5   |
| 2.  | Mining   | 0.9                                 | 0.1                                | 0.0   |
| 3.  | Processing industry  | 16.7                                | 4.4                                | 13.3  |
| 4.  | Power, gas and water production and distribution   | 2.0                                 | 0.6                                | 0.0   |
| 5.  | Construction   | 11.4                                | 38.7                               | 82.4  |
| 6.  | Retail and wholesale commerce; car repair and communal services<br>appliance reparations | 10.2                                | 27.0                               | 67.4  |
| 7.  | Hotels and restaurants   | 4.5                                 | 3.4                                | 20.0  |
| 8.  | Transport and communication  | 8.0                                 | 6.6                                | 38.9  |
| 9.  | Financial activity   | 2.4                                 | 0.6                                | 0.0   |
| 10. | Property, leasing and real estate services   | 0.2                                 | 0.4                                | 0.0   |
| 11. | State administration, compulsory social insurance  | 1.6                                 | 0.4                                | 0.0   |
| 12. | Education  | 8.7                                 | 0.4                                | 2.6   |
| 13. | Public health care and social services   | 3.6                                 | 0.6                                | 0.0   |
| 14. | Other communal services, social and personal services                                    | 2.2                                 | 9.1                                | 20.0  |
| 15. | Housekeeping services  | 0.4                                 | 5.6                                | 50.0  |
| 16. | Other  | 2.4                                 | 1.1                                | 36.4  |
|     | <b>Total</b>   | <b>100.0</b>                        | <b>100.0</b>                       | <b>25.3</b>   |

The Russian market does not require the specific skills and knowledge the migrants used to apply prior to their travel to Russia. First of all, education and qualification of workers are not in demand in Russia.

**Table 15: Affiliation of migrants to occupational categories in the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation (%)**

| No. | Occupational group   | Worked in Moldova (N=449), per cent | Worked in Russia (N =682), per cent |
|-----|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1.  | Managers of organisations and structural subdivisions                  | 1.3                                 | 1.5                                 |
| 2.  | Highly qualified specialists   | 7.6                                 | 1.0                                 |
| 3.  | Average skilled specialists  | 5.1                                 | 3.1                                 |
| 4.  | Office workers   | 3.1                                 | 1.0                                 |
| 5.  | Qualified workers in service rendering, communal services and commerce | 9.4                                 | 3.5                                 |
| 6.  | Qualified workers in agriculture and industry                          | 6.7                                 | 0.4                                 |
| 7.  | Qualified workers  | 15.1                                | 31.4                                |
| 8.  | Machinery and mechanism operators                                      | 18.9                                | 7.5                                 |
| 9.  | Unqualified workers  | 32.7                                | 50.6                                |
|     | <b>Total</b>   | <b>100.0</b>                        | <b>100.0</b>                        |

Out of migrants working in Moldova, only 41.0 per cent (184 out of 449) belong to the same occupational group as they did prior to travelling to Russia; only 10.4 per cent (8 out of 77) belong to the first four groups. More than half of migrants with working experience prior to travelling to Russia are currently employed in jobs that do not require any profession or qualifications<sup>36</sup>.

58.7 per cent (37 out of 67) of representatives of professional groups have jobs for which there are special requirements set regarding the education of the employees (higher or vocational education): managers of organisations and structural subdivisions, highly qualified specialists and average skilled workers.

<sup>36</sup> According to the National Bureau of Statistics, the rate of Moldovans holding a low-skilled job in Russia is twice lower than in other countries of destination, while the level of education is on average considerably higher among migrants to EU and other States. (Labour Force Migration/ National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova. 2008, [www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&id=2570&idc=350](http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&id=2570&idc=350) – P.11).

**Table 16: Change of affiliation of migrants to occupational categories (%)**

| No. | Occupational group, Moldova  | Occupational group, Russia |      |      |     |      |     |      |      |      | Total |
|-----|--|----------------------------|------|------|-----|------|-----|------|------|------|-------|
|     |  | 1                          | 2    | 3    | 4   | 5    | 6   | 7    | 8    | 9    |       |
| 1.  | Managers of organisations and structural subdivisions                  | 16.7                       |      | 16.7 |     |      |     | 33.3 |      | 33.3 | 100.0 |
| 2.  | Highly qualified specialists   |                            | 14.7 | 8.8  |     |      |     | 8.8  | 2.9  | 64.7 | 100.0 |
| 3.  | Average skilled workers  |                            |      | 8.7  |     |      |     | 30.4 | 4.3  | 56.5 | 100.0 |
| 4.  | Office workers   | 7.1                        |      |      |     |      |     | 14.3 |      | 78.6 | 100.0 |
| 5.  | Qualified workers in communal services and social service and commerce |                            | 2.4  |      | 2.4 | 16.7 |     | 11.9 | 2.4  | 64.3 | 100.0 |
| 6.  | Qualified workers in agriculture and industry                          |                            | 3.3  |      |     |      | 6.7 | 50.0 | 3.3  | 36.7 | 100.0 |
| 7.  | Qualified workers  |                            |      |      |     | 1.5  |     | 64.7 | 4.4  | 29.4 | 100.0 |
| 8.  | Machinery/equipment and mechanism operators                            | 1.2                        |      | 1.2  | 1.2 | 2.4  |     | 27.1 | 30.6 | 36.5 | 100.0 |
| 9.  | Unqualified workers  | 0.7                        |      | 1.4  |     | 1.4  |     | 25.9 | 4.8  | 66.0 | 100.0 |
|     | Total  | 0.9                        | 1.6  | 2.0  | 0.4 | 2.7  | 0.4 | 31.0 | 8.9  | 52.1 | 100.0 |

The unqualified workers are most often employed in commerce (88.6%), in other housing, social and personal services (82.3%), housekeeping services (78.9%). Mostly, these are jobs for women.

At the same time, there are job sectors where namely the qualified labour of migrants is demanded: qualified workers make up 75.8 per cent of those employed in construction, 82.3 per cent of those employed in transport and communications, and 78.3 per cent of those employed in hotels and restaurants.

Despite of the fact that descending labour mobility is typical, arrival to Russia can still be accompanied by employment of a foreigner in a similar job to that he/she held in the homeland. The factors that favour horizontal labour mobility of migrants include the presence of high qualification and deficit speciality along with their readiness to work long working hours and take on larger quantities of works. But only 14.7 per cent of the highly qualified specialists have kept their status; the rate of average skilled workers is even smaller (see Table 16). Along with the adaptation, a share of migrants do



manage to get jobs corresponding to their level of qualification and professional experience and quit the jobs that do not require any qualifications.

Informal employment prevails among Moldovan migrants. At the same time, a number of migrants succeed “to formalize” the labour relations with the employer. The greatest majority of Moldovan migrants who changed their workplace in Russia had started working based on verbal agreements (81.9%), temporary labour agreements (12.9%) or long-term agreements (5.2%). The current situation has improved marginally: 7.8 per cent of respondents have a long-term contract or agreement, temporary labour agreement – each fourth respondent (24.1%). At the same time, three fourths of migrants continue to work based on a verbal agreement.

All migrants face difficulties and problems, but the problems faced by migrants interviewed in Russia are not as high on the agenda for the “Moldovan” migrants. Issues related to medical assistance were mentioned by 38.3 per cent of migrants in Russia and just 16.8 per cent in Moldova; accommodation challenges were raised by 48.5 per cent and 17.6 per cent accordingly. The migrants in Moldova are more concerned with other problems. With challenges related to the employer mentioned by 18.5 per cent, and problems with the Moscow authorities by 10.1 per cent; for the respondents in Russia these problems do not factor so highly: these were mentioned only by 11.2 per cent and 2.8 per cent of respondents accordingly.

Moscow migrants, most of whom reside with families, are concerned about day-to-day issues whilst the circular migrants from Moldova are more concerned about issues related to work and communication with the police and authorities.

Circular migrants, who reside in Russia, as a rule without families, feel like they are temporary and as such are not very concerned about daily issues in Russia. When they come to work, they save money on many things, including on accommodation<sup>37</sup>. Rent is expensive and often there were cases when a 3 bedroom apartment was inhabited by as many as 14-16 people, the focus being on saving money. Some Moldovans live in groups, especially when undertaking organised travel to work in construction for less than three months. At the same time, as it was mentioned by the participants of focus-group discussions, the smaller the migrants group, the better as it leads to fewer conflicts.

Among the circular migrants interviewed in Moscow, 18.9 per cent were renting separate accommodation, while 24.8 per cent of long-term migrants

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<sup>37</sup> More often the accommodation is rented in Podmoskovie, outside of the city: *“Even if they work in Moscow ...they rent the accommodation in Podmoskovie because it is cheaper there; it is more convenient. They would get up earlier to save money”* (Interview, businessman, Russian Federation)

were renting or had their own accommodation. 14.2 per cent of circular migrants were living at their working place (market, construction site etc.) compared to just 10.2 per cent of long-term migrants. 8.8 per cent of circular “Moscow” migrants were living in the shed, basement or barn, but none of the long-term migrants lived in similar conditions.

Social exclusion of Moldovan migrants drastically decreases their possibility to solve certain problems. Circular migrants, whose social circle is very small, are less for assistance in critical situations. “Moldovan” migrants are very suspicious compared to the “Russian” migrants. While staying in Russia the “Moldovan” migrants rarely ask for assistance from their relatives, friends and acquaintances or their neighbours in Russia. But they also rarely ask for help from their relatives, friends and acquaintances from Moldova. The distrust of these migrants towards Russian social institutions is mirrors the distrust towards the representatives of Moldovan authorities, NGOs, and fellow nationals. Similarly, only 8.6 per cent of “Moldovan” migrants seek assistance from Moldovan diplomatic missions, as opposed to almost 60 per cent among the more settled “Russian” migrants.

**Table 17: Breakdown of answers to the question “Who did you seek assistance from, if you had difficulties/problems when living in the Russian Federation?” (%)**

|     |   | Respondents in Russia | Respondents in Moldova |
|-----|---|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1.  | Relatives, friends, acquaintances in Russia                     | 92.1                  | 63.8                   |
| 2.  | Relatives, friends, acquaintances in Moldova                    | 72.1                  | 37.9                   |
| 3.  | Neighbours (locals)   | 33.5                  | 10.3                   |
| 4.  | People of my nationality  | 47.0                  | 31.0                   |
| 5.  | Representatives of our national community, diaspora             | 21.6                  | -                      |
| 6.  | Human rights organisations                                      | 16.5                  | 6.9                    |
| 7.  | Non-government, international, charitable organisations, church | 15.7                  | -                      |
| 8.  | Consulate, Embassy of the Republic of Moldova to Russia         | 59.1                  | 8.6                    |
| 9.  | Police, other law-enforcement bodies in Russia                  | 38.8                  | 3.4                    |
| 10. | City (sector, rayon) administration                             | 13.2                  | 3.4                    |
| 11. | Employer  | 50.5                  | 22.4                   |
| 12. | Trade Unions  | 5.3                   | 5.2                    |

Circular migrants reservedly view Moldovans' solidarity and readiness to provide assistance to fellow nationals. 92.5 per cent of migrants interviewed in Russia mentioned that it is common among the Moldovans in Russia to help newcomers with finding a job in a company where there are Moldovans already working; 86.3 per cent stated that it is common to provide material assistance or money to fellow citizens who are facing difficulties; 82.4 per cent declared that it is common for Moldovans in Russia to live close to each other, in the same neighbourhood. The circular migrants interviewed in Moldova, on the other hand, are less sure about the cohesion of Moldovans: 63.7 per cent, 65.7 per cent, and 73.5 per cent of the interviewed answered positively to these questions.

Contrary to the common belief, mono-ethnic Moldovan work teams are not that widespread, with less than 18 per cent of migrants working in this manner. More commonly are work teams with migrants from other CIS countries (28.5%); mixed work teams (20.5%); work teams with Russian citizens from regions other than the Moscow area (19.3%). 7.8 per cent of Moldovans worked together with Muscovites mostly, and 6 per cent work individually.

At the same time, the share of irregular workers is maximal in purely Moldovan work teams.

**Table 18: Migrant work teams by legal status (%)**

| Team structure   | Legal status |           |
|--|--------------|-----------|
|  | Regular      | Irregular |
| Mostly Moldovans   | 31.5         | 68.5      |
| Mostly migrants from other CIS countries                   | 52.8         | 47.2      |
| Mostly citizens of the Russian Federation, not from Moscow | 43.8         | 56.3      |
| Mostly citizens of the Russian Federation, from Moscow     | 35.9         | 64.1      |
| Mixed structure, a bit of each                             | 36.3         | 63.7      |
| Work alone   | 43.3         | 56.7      |
| Total  | 42.0         | 58.0      |

It is the circular migrants who work most often in purely Moldovan mono-ethnic groups. Thus, the migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova work in teams consisting mostly of Moldovans (31.4%), mixed (22.9%) consisting of migrant workers from CIS countries (16.9%), in groups consisting of Russian Federation citizens but not from Moscow (11.9%), with Moscow residents and citizens of the Russian Federation (10.2%), individually/alone (6.8%). To compare – migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation work in groups consisting of persons travelling from CIS countries (31.9%), citizens of

the Russian Federation, but not Moscow residents (21.5%), mixed teams (19.6%), teams with Moldovan majority (13.6%), Moscow residents, citizens of the Russian Federation (7.1%), individually (5.8%). Women and people older than 40 years, irrespective of the interviewed group, prevail among the migrants who work individually.

**Table 19: Migrant work teams interviewed  
in the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation (%)**

| No. |  | Migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova | Migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation |
|-----|--|---|--|
| 1.  | Mostly Moldovans   | 31.4  | 13.6   |
| 2.  | Mostly migrants from other CIS countries                   | 16.9  | 31.9   |
| 3.  | Mostly citizens of the Russian Federation, not from Moscow | 11.9  | 21.5   |
| 4.  | Mostly citizens of the Russian Federation, from Moscow     | 10.2  | 7.1  |
| 5.  | Colectiv mixt  | 22.9  | 19.6   |
| 6.  | Work alone   | 6.8   | 5.8  |
| 7.  | No answer  | -   | 0.5  |

Some Moldovans have problems with law-enforcement bodies of the Russian Federation. Usually, people who have no experience in working in the Russian Federation and those who travelled for the first time have these problems. Problems are often due to the lack of information. In part, if they register legally in the Russian Federation, they have to know the address of registration. If they do not know the address, they are apprehended by the police. Besides, there is the issue of false registration, practiced by *“moldovans who have settled down in Russia a long time ago...”* (FG\_1\_Migrants, Republic of Moldova).

Police apprehension results in fines between RUB 100 - 1,000. Usually these are fines for exceeding the period of stay. At the customs, Moldovans pay RUB 1,500 – 3,000 for such infringements in order not to be deprived of the right to use their passport.

Other problems arise at the railway stations, when migrants have to take the train and return to Moldova: *“when they see you with a bag... You keep the ticket and look at the leaving train... If you want to leave, you have to give him money to get rid of him ... He quickly puts the money in the pocket and goes to the next one.”* But lately, as the respondents mentioned, there are less representatives of law-enforcement bodies at the railway stations these days compared to the previous years.

Many conflicts arise due to alcoholic beverages abuse. Some Moldovans live a life of entertainment and debauchery when they are abroad. As a rule, they tell their wives that they got robbed during their trips, but in reality they spend everything they earn on parties: *“I saw it with my eyes. They travel by train and drink a lot while telling stories that they got robbed of everything, but they had nothing”* (FG\_1\_Migrants, Republic of Moldova).

Moldovans appreciate quite highly the quality of medical assistance provided in the Russian Federation. The attitude of the emergency workers towards migrants was correct, positive, non-discriminating. At the same time, the Moldovans mentioned in the group discussions that the attitude of doctors towards the patients in the Russian Federation was more professional compared to the Republic of Moldova, but very often the circular migrants cannot afford the treatment, so they wait until they are back to Moldova.

Social security related issues are more stringent for those migrants who work in Russia than for those who work in the EU because they often do not have health insurance, the opportunity to make contributions to their own pension fund or access to paid leave<sup>38</sup>.

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<sup>38</sup> Labour Force Migration / National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova, 2008, [www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&id=2570&idc=350](http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&id=2570&idc=350) – P. 12

## **VI. MIGRANTS' FAMILIES AND HOUSEHOLDS**

89.1 per cent of migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova returned home in 2011, the remaining 10.9 per cent having returned already in 2010. In 45.4 per cent of cases, the reason for return were problems in the family, for 33.6 per cent the legal period of stay had expired, 7.6 per cent were home for a holiday and only 7.6 per cent had returned to avoid problems with immigration authorities and other authorities.

When they are home, the returned migrants plan the following: find a job (21.8%), develop agricultural activity (19.3%), work (17.6%), undertake reparations in the household (12.6%), no plans (8.4%), live on earned money (6.7%), go on vacation (6.7%) and so on. Obviously, these plans vary between different categories of migrants. For instance, most seasonal migrants continue their labour activity in the Republic of Moldova, mostly in agriculture, or look for another job. Circular migrants are mostly focused on helping in the household, reparations etc. Long-term migrants and those who are almost permanent residents of the Russian Federation want to do reparations or go on vacation.

A mere quarter of migrants have no intention to leave again, whilst three quarters plan to travel in the following months. Obviously, this is a statement of intent. Nevertheless, the intention to return relates to family plans, future of children, plans to acquire property, etc. The intention not to travel at all is mentioned most often by seasonal migrants older than 55 years. In part, these plans are due to difficulties in finding a job in the Russian Federation for older people.

70.6 per cent of returned migrants interviewed in Moldova, maintain their relations with persons they met in the Russian Federation. Mostly these are women over 40 years old with higher education, who are married, and persons who resided in the Russian Federation for more than 6 months. These situations are the result of new friendships (70.2%), possibility to find a job upon return to the Russian Federation (17.9%), to meet friends at the next stage of migration (11.9%).

Positive effects of migration on the family are, first of all, an increase in the economic possibilities for the family, and secondly, though considerably less obvious an increase of social and cultural possibilities.

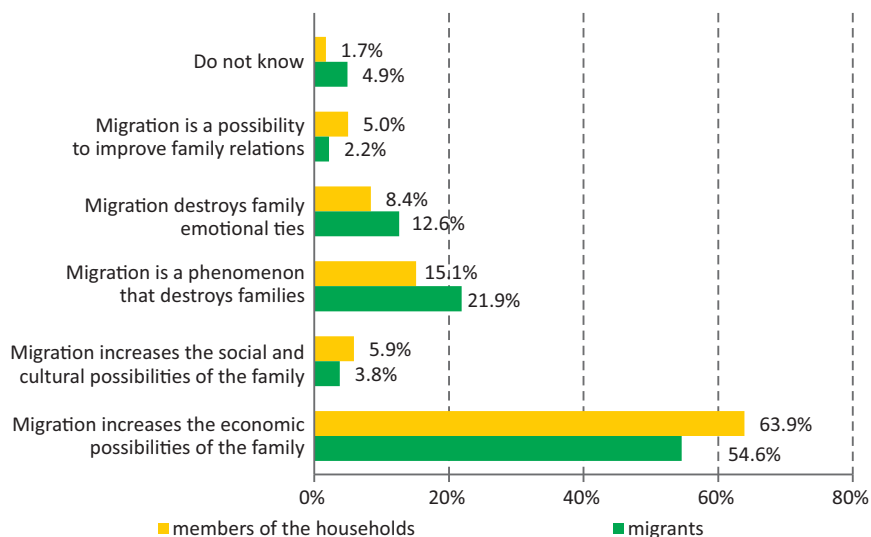
The core negative effects on the family are its disintegration and the break of emotional relations in the family<sup>39</sup>. Members of migrant households

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<sup>39</sup> The survey carried out under the aegis of IOM mentioned the issue of migrant children who are left behind without parental care as the key problem (45.7 per cent respondents mentioned that), IOM Mission to Moldova (2008). *How Moldovan Households Manage Their Finances. Knowledge and Practices. Survey Report 2008*. Chisinau, IOM Mission to Moldova, 2008, p.8

mention that migration disintegrates the family and its emotional relations (see Figure 11). This opinion is more often than not offered by women from migrant families aged older than 55, who travel for work for more than six months.

**Figure 11: Impact of migration on the family (%)**



As a result of migration, the relations between spouses, children and parents are changing. 13.7 per cent of migrants and 15.4 per cent of interviewed family members mentioned that marriage relations have deteriorated compared to how they were before the migration. 9.2 per cent of migrants and 8.7 per cent of household members mentioned that the relations between children and parents have also declined. The relations between family and relatives haven't changed significantly, although 8 per cent of migrants and household members do report that these have worsened.

It is apparent that in some families, remittances have contributed to an improvement in the relations between spouses, children and parents, family and relatives, but they remain the exception.

68.7 per cent of participants in the survey in the Republic of Moldova are satisfied with the fact that a member of the family works abroad (19.9 per cent "fully satisfied" and 48.7 per cent "satisfied") compared to 28.1 per cent who are dissatisfied (20.2 per cent "dissatisfied" and 7.9 per cent "completely dissatisfied"). Compared with other members of household, the migrants themselves are more satisfied with the migration process. However those migrants who are married and have children, whom they have to leave in the care of their parents, are less so.

Last but not least, migration leads to feelings of jealousy and distrust between spouses. As a result, there is a tendency to check on the behaviour of wife or husband while they are away from their household, which often leads to conflicts and a deterioration of relations between spouses. In some cases these feelings/suspicions are prompted from outside of the immediate family by relatives, friends, and acquaintances.

Migration brings on jealousy, alienation and heart-ache:

*"When my husband came back ...we were like two strangers... like two stones...and it required a long period of time to return to what we had before migration"; "Money cannot pay for this...sometimes I do not need money...just him next to me...so we can be a family. Sometimes I have difficulties that I cannot overcome alone ..."* (FG\_2\_Women, Republic of Moldova).

Divorces happen among migrants in the Russian Federation. But, as participants in the focus-groups admitted, the number of divorces is higher among migrants in EU countries because of longer period of separation. The migrants interviewed in Russia declared that in 84 per cent of cases the civil status has not changed at all while they lived in Russia; 10 per cent of respondents got married; 5 per cent got divorced. The latter may be related to the fact that it is difficult to hide adultery in the Republic of Moldova. People know each other in the rural area, and information is passed around very quickly.

Migrants also mention that they are being missed at home:

*"We are being missed at home...by wife and children. They want me to come back as quickly as possible. You can return even without money. You are the husband, and she is waiting anyway..."; "Sometimes you think that you can earn money again, but never get back your youth ...it goes with time"* (FG\_3\_household heads, Republic of Moldova).

The positive effect mentioned by men is *"migration brings money"*. But women declared that men become more skilful abroad; they learn new skills: *"they have become good specialists in construction"* (FG\_2\_women, Republic of Moldova).

And women become more self-reliant while the husbands work abroad, this however to an overburdening with activities and responsibilities in some cases. They take care of the households, children, and so on: *"I took care of wood and coal...harvested the corn ...I have two hands, two children, a cow, a horse, a calf, sheep, pigs...How can I manage all these? I have to go to work as well... Indeed, it is very difficult..."* (FG\_2\_women, Republic of Moldova).

Women who remain alone suffer from loneliness and lack social interaction:

*"When I was arriving closer to the house, I was starting to cry ...you come home and watch the same shows on TV... Always alone...no one to talk to..."*



*After he calls, you analyse each word and phrase – why did he say that? It was better when the children were visiting on Saturday and Sunday” (FG\_2\_women, Republic of Moldova).*

To avoid these situations, many families migrate together. The advantage of these situations is that the family relations and values are maintained. Being together prevents health problems, such as lack of stress, prevention of gynaecological conditions due to lack of sexual relations. Usually these migrant families strive to settle down in the Russian Federation and bring the children with them. But the actual number of migrants living in Russia together with a family member is smaller than a half of respondents: 55 per cent of respondents in Russia were living alone; this figure increases to 59 per cent in the entire mass of respondents. About one third of respondents were living in Russia together with the spouse or partner (32 per cent of respondents in Russia, 29 per cent in general); 15 per cent of respondents in Russia were living with their child/children.

The ease of travel between Moldova and Russia has already been identified as an attractive advantage, but additionally it can be seen to contribute to the maintenance of familial ties. As compared to those who travel to Europe, migrants leaving for the Russian Federation are able to return home easily in case of a family event: wedding, funeral etc.

*”Try and return from Europe; many travel there irregularly, it is very expensive to go there legally. So for the person to leave, yes one leaves the country but cannot go back. ...Here it is easier” (FG\_2\_family, Russian Federation).*

The respondents are aware of the cases when migrants, who have a family in the Republic of Moldova, start a family in the Russian Federation:

*”There are men who say: I have found a girl here and I am going to live with her for a while, and then I will go home and live with someone else...”*

*”There are men who have one family in Moldova and another one in Russia... He calls the wife from Moldova to send him beans, cheese, because he has nothing to eat, but actually he supports another family in Russia...”*

*”Daughter of my god mother ...She went through this. She was staying at home with children. He was coming home saying that the money will be sent later...but money was not coming... So the wife had to borrow money to send him back to work... He promised to send money, but he did not... In the end, the Russian wife came to take him back and everything came out – he had a child there as well” (FG\_3\_head of the household, Republic of Moldova).*

64,3 per cent of migrants, living in Russia together with their spouses, left their children and household in the care of relatives, most often of the grandmothers and grandfathers. There are studies focusing on other members of households, who are left behind in Moldova: children<sup>40</sup>, youth<sup>41</sup>,

and elders<sup>42</sup>. The studies pay special attention to the needs of children and elderly members of families, who are left without the care of their family members working abroad, as well as to the social policies of the Republic of Moldova aiming to diminish the negative impact of migration on this category of people<sup>43</sup>. During the focus-group discussions, it has also become clear that the left-behind family members are concerned about the migrant who is overseas. They are constantly worried that the migrant faces different problems – labour accidents, aggression by bad people (criminals, drug addicts, drunkards, and so on). Indeed, the focus-group discussions revealed cases when the husband was injured at work. In these cases, the lack of communication, answers to calls and so on, increases the fear which results into chronic fear of the left-behind wives.

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<sup>40</sup> UNICEF Moldova and Child Rights Information Center (CRIC), Moldova (2008) *The Impact of Parental Deprivation on the Development of Children Left Behind by Moldovan Migrants*. Working Paper.

<sup>41</sup> Abbott P., Wallace C., Mascauteanu V. and Sapsford R. (2010) Concepts of citizenship, social and system integration among young people in post-Soviet Moldova // *Journal of Youth Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 5. – Pp. 581-596.

<sup>42</sup> Report on Role of grandparents of HelpAge International in Moldova (2008) *Grandparents and grandchildren: impact of migration in Moldova* / HAI/UNICEF Project – Findings and Recommendations.

<sup>43</sup> Cheianu-Andrei D., Gramma R., Milicenco S. etc. (2011). *Specific needs of children and elderly left behind as a consequence of migration*. Chisinau: IOM.

## VII. MIGRANTS' CHILDREN

Fifty three per cent of Moldovan migrants who participated in the survey have children younger than 18 years (55.5 per cent of migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova, and 38.6 per cent of respondents interviewed in the Russian Federation). The biggest group of the migrants with children fall into the age range 30-39, and are long-term migrants. This survey shows that 25 per cent of children of the families with migrants are brought up by one parent in incomplete families.

**Table 20: Migrants having children younger than 18 years old (%)**

|              |   | Migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova | Migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation |
|--------------|---|---|--|
|              |   | 55.5  | 38.6   |
| Gender       | Male  | 36.2  | 37.1   |
|              | Female  | 56.6  | 39.7   |
| Age          | Younger than 30 years old                     | 48.9  | 27.6   |
|              | 30-39 years old                               | 87.5  | 74.5   |
|              | 40-55 years old                               | 31.9  | 25.0   |
|              | Older than 55 years                           | Too little to count                             |  |
| Civil status | Not married (including widowers and divorced) | 26.0  | 24.4   |
|              | Married (including life partners)             | 60.9  | 48.3   |

The data obtained from the migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation shows that children are often left in Moldova: every fourth migrant family take a child to Russia, but seldom does a family migrate with two children or more (see Table 21). Parents with many children were also amongst those interviewed (five people had three children; in the sampling no parents of four and more children appeared), but no one brought the third child to Russia.

**Table 21: Children of migrants who live in the Russian Federation and have citizenship of the Russian Federation (persons, %)**

| Birth order  | Total children | With citizenship of the Russian Federation |    | Residing in the Russian Federation |    |
|--------------|----------------|--|----|------------------------------------|----|
|              |                |  |    |                                    |    |
| First child  | 152            | 21   | 14 | 39                                 | 26 |
| Second child | 62             | 5  | 8  | 11                                 | 18 |
| Third child  | 5              | 0  |    | 0                                  |    |
| Total        | 219            | 26   | 12 | 50                                 | 23 |

Generally, if there are two (or more) children in the family, they are not separated: if the first child lives in Russia, then the second child will also be brought to Russia (in 84.6% of cases); but if the first child is in Moldova, then the second is left behind as well. Children up to the age of 6 are most likely to reside with parent migrants in Russia (29%) (see Table 22).

**Table 22: Rate of children living in the Russian Federation with their parents, by age groups and birth order (%)**

| Birth order  | 0-6 years | 7-12 years | 13 years and older | Total |
|--------------|-----------|------------|--------------------|-------|
| First child  | 33        | 21         | 26                 | 26    |
| Second child | 28        | 15         | 0                  | 18    |
| Third child  | 0         | 0          | 0                  | 0     |
| Total        | 29        | 19         | 22                 | 23    |

Practically all migrant children living in Russia live in complete families; many parents have life partner relations, (8.2 per cent of children obtained the citizenship of the Russian Federation). Three quarters of families with children have a salary equal to the average in the host community (not less than RUB 25,000) and half live in decent conditions: they either have separate accommodation or rent one. But there are also poor families with children who live in adapted premises: there are also situations when the child lives where the parents rent apartments together with other friends or colleagues, or at the working place of the parents.

Residing in Russia from a young age makes it easier for the child to adapt. The phenomenon of children who are transferred to a new environment at the age of 7-15 years has received the name of “one and a half generation” as the adaptation is more difficult. Children coming to Russia as teenagers go through a more difficult adaptation process:

*“My son wants to go back; he says that he cannot adapt...I brought him to Moscow when he was in the seventh grade. He cannot live here; he wants to go back, because all his friends are there. Up to the seventh grade he was studying there, he knew where to go, but here he does not know anything”* (FG\_2\_family\_Russian Federation).

The majority of kids in their school-years attend school in Russia<sup>44</sup>. Younger children, go less frequently to kindergarten and nursery schools due to a higher accessibility of schools than of kindergartens. This shortage of premises at kindergartens is an issue for Russian citizens also and it should therefore be noted that it is not evidence of discrimination against migrants.

<sup>44</sup> Failing to attend school occurs sometimes and is related to certain specific situations: temporary departure of children in Moldova, transfer to another school in Moscow.

**Table 23: School attendance of Moldovan migrants' children in the Russian Federation by age groups (%)**

|                                     | Age groups |            |                    |
|-------------------------------------|------------|------------|--------------------|
|                                     | 0-6 years  | 7-12 years | 13 years and older |
| Yes (nursery, kindergarten, school) | 41         | 81         | 65                 |
| No, they are at home                | 47         | 19         | 18                 |
| Other                               | 12         | 0          | 18                 |
| Total                               | 100        | 100        | 100                |

The availability of schools (which is understood first of all as a possibility to enrol the child in school for free and without paying bribes) was also discussed in the focus-groups:

*"We were always frightened that we have to save money to enrol in school; it is not important that in the first grade...We don't pay anything except for money collected for gifts for Teacher's Day, New Year and so on. But we got frightened here. How did you manage to enrol, how much did you pay?"* (FG\_2\_family\_Russian Federation).

Similarly, there were no issues related to medical services for children:

*"All children are treated equally in schools, it does not matter that you are from Azerbaijan or Moldova. They receive everything: vaccines and shots as all children, i.e. without charge for children. But I don't know about the grown-ups. We did not pay anything up to the fifth grade"* (FG\_2\_family\_Russian Federation).

Residence of family together with children in Russia is the best option, which actually is not always possible due to financial reasons:

*"I have three children. Two daughters and a son...I would like to have them here...But I cannot afford this, I need to earn a lot of money to support them ..."* (FG\_2\_businessmen\_Russian Federation).

Moreover, the age of children is important: *"If the children are grown ups...there is no reason [to bring them]"* (FG\_2\_family\_Russian Federation).

The reason why it is preferable to have the children in Russia is that the family can be preserved and the relation between children and parents is maintained, plus the infrastructure for children is more developed in Moscow:

*"The play grounds and extra-curriculum activities. The extra-curriculum activities are free of charge in Moscow for families with many children; three children – and the activity is free of charge. A lot is being done for children in Moscow. We have nothing of this kind"* (FG\_2\_family\_Russian Federation).

If the children are left behind in Moldova, a number of parents prefer to bring the children to the Russian Federation during holidays (especially summer vacation): *"I am travelling each year in summer. We have fun together and I like it very much"* (FG\_4\_children, Republic of Moldova).

To help the child learn quickly the Russian language, the parents prefer to speak Russian language at home (48%) or to keep the bilingualism (46%):

*“They speak both Russian and Moldovan languages: one word of each language in a sentence”* (FG\_2\_family\_Russian Federation).

Only 2 per cent of parents living in Russia prefer to speak Romanian language to their children; 4 per cent had difficulties to answer. According to half of the parents, children speak better Russian language; about one fourth of parents (26%) mention equally good Russian and Romanian language skills of their children; 14 per cent of parents mentioned that the children speak more confidently Romanian language; 10 per cent could not answer the question. According to some statements, children sometimes choose the language they want to speak; they can understand both languages, but they prefer to speak Russian:

*P1: “My relatives have a child at school; the children speak at home both Russian and Moldovan language, but the oldest son understands everything in Moldovan language but replies in Russian.*

*P2: He doesn't want to. Yes, there are children who don't want to answer in Moldovan. My friends have the same situation”* (FG\_2\_family\_Russian Federation).

Only 13 per cent of the parents mentioned that their children have difficulties with Russian language; 80 per cent reported that there are no such problems (see Table 24). Troubles with language were listed as the third in the list of issues faced by the children of parents-migrants. The most difficult were the social aspects of children adaptation related to change of environment and social networks: away from friends and relatives in Moldova (21%) and longing for the usual environment in Moldova (15%). On the other hand, there were no problems to establish new contacts with local peers. The parents mentioned during the focus-groups that their children do not look differently compared to majority of local children (they have a light skin complexion), and more problems are faced by the children who are “darker”, first of all, from Azerbaijan:

*“Children are very cruel at school. Very cruel. Mine has a light skin complexion. But you can spot the children from Azerbaijan, because they are a bit darker. But when all children are together, as I say, the herd of these children, then the conflicts start. They say: “don't play with that girl because she is not Russian. I am telling her that she is lucky because she is blond, but she is not Russian as well”* (FG\_2\_family\_Russian Federation).

Moreover, in general positive terms, 51 per cent of respondents do not agree that the children have no problems. There are two explanations to this: first of all, the respondents could not find an answer, which would describe their real situation, to chose from the provided samples of answers, but such

serious problems could be discovered during the focus-groups, which did not happen; second, it is possible that the respondents say “no” meaning that there is no problem.

**Table 24: Difficulties faced by migrants' children in the Russian Federation (according to migrant parents) (%)**

| No. |  | Yes | No   | No answer |
|-----|--|-----|------|-----------|
| 1.  | Detachment from friends and relatives in Moldova                   | 21  | 69   | 10        |
| 2.  | Longing for the usual environment in Moldova                       | 15  | 72   | 13        |
| 3.  | Insufficient knowledge of Russian language                         | 13  | 80   | 7         |
| 4.  | Bad relations with local children                                  | 2.6 | 89.7 | 7.7       |
| 5.  | Isolation in the Moldovan environment of children living in Russia | 0   | 90   | 10        |
| 6.  | No specific problems exist   | 39  | 51   | 10        |

The opinion of migrant parents that the residence of children without parents in Moldova is more problematic than joint residence in Russia is backed up by previous surveys, which mention the psychological, social, and economic influence of migration of adults on children and underlines effects at family and society level, in particular, and the society, in general<sup>45</sup>.

Even if the migration of parents to the Russian Federation, compared to the migration to EU countries, allows them to go home more often, according to the survey, the social and psychological effects are not really different.

The migration of parents affects the psychological state of the child and the development of his/her personality. The absence of parents creates a state of insecurity for children, which is worsened by the inability to communicate face-to-face with parents. Children need guidance and advice, and this is not possible in cases of long distance communication with parents, even if it is done every day. In the absence of parents, the place of the advisor is often vacant; the grownups who attempt to fill the void (grandmother, aunt, and so on) are not always successful in establishing a trustworthy relation with the child: *“When mother is home, I talk to her...but not that much with my grandmother or aunt...I don't feel like. I don't know how to talk to them openly ...”* (FG\_4\_children, Republic of Moldova). As a result, children whose parents are working abroad face an increased risk of becoming shy, shut-in or insecure.

The absence of one or both parents is significantly noticed by children at

<sup>45</sup> Cheianu-Andrei D., Gramma R., Milicenco S. etc. (2011). *Specific needs of children and grownups left behind without parental care by the family members working abroad*. Chisinau.

their birthday parties, school parties which parents do not attend: *"All our birthday parties are being celebrated in the same month, but he doesn't come to any..."* (FG\_4\_children, Republic of Moldova).

This emotional vulnerability is compounded by the fear that something could happen to their parents, which would prevent them from ever coming home. These fears grow when there is news about tragic accidents in the Russian Federation and when the parents, for one reason or another, do not answer their phones.

The departure of parents often brings about new tasks and responsibilities which require children to become more independent: *"I take my little brother from kindergarten at 6 PM. My father used to pick him up before, now this is my task..."*, *"compared to my classmates, whose parents are in the country, we are more independent... We have more respect for our parents...once you lose them you understand the value..."* (FG\_4\_children, Republic of Moldova). The new tasks are accepted by the children as their contribution to family development. Nevertheless, when the parents leave, some hazardous issues like reparation of a socket are solved by relatives.

Children think that if the parents were home, they could know their problems, could see the difference in their behaviours, which would help them see the successes or failures at school. Parents who are working in the Russian Federation have limited control over the school performance of their children, who do not tell their parents about their school performance.

The representatives of local public authorities mentioned the existence of educational challenges amongst children left behind as a result of parents' migration. Often the grandmothers who take care of children cannot cope with the educational process. These challenges are particularly evident in teenagers and children from socially-vulnerable families who are left behind with one parent or with relatives and who display anti-social behaviour.

Children see the advantage of their parents working abroad as improvement of the material conditions of their lives. They listed the following advantages of parents' working abroad: financial, possibility to buy the desired things, improved nutrition, more freedom, additional activities – foreign language courses, extra-curriculum activities, sport, entertainment; possibility of access to further education in higher education institutions of the Republic of Moldova or abroad.

Irrespective of the age, children expect gifts from parents who return and usually their expectations are met. Older children prefer to receive money from parents and choose independently what to buy. Nevertheless, gifts do not compensate for the absence of parents: *"the gifts will not replace a person...it doesn't speak with us or doesn't make us feel better, it doesn't have a soul, who would help"*, *"the gifts will never replace my mother..."*, *"eight years*



*is a way too long time*" (FG\_4\_children, Republic of Moldova). Thus, the great majority of children prefer the return of their parents and having them close over the gifts they receive.

Future plans of children whose parents are working in the Russian Federation follow two main trends: some want to continue their education, but a great majority wants to work abroad. Those who want to go to their parents abroad hope to put their life in order there.

Children often take part in the discussion of family plans. Besides the immediate aim to produce the optimal strategic decision for the family, the family "round tables" also play the role of psychological assistance by levelling possible difficulties in children-parents relation:

*"We discuss directly, we even count the money and expenses together. I say that I can stay but your dad will not be able to pay for your college education. Let us decide together: I don't want to leave you, but we have more expenses and I want you to study...And they tell us that they are grownups and they understand"* (FG\_2\_family\_Russian Federation).

Looking at options of different migration strategies, the participants of group discussions chose more often male migration, when the mother stays with the children:

*"You can earn money every day, but not the children. I cannot give the child the knowledge given by the mother...", "Mother should stay with the children, even if she doesn't work...", "Children can feel our absence and these are the years you cannot get back"; "When I was away, the children could feel my absence...Children fall under the influence of other children...If I wasn't home, my child would never graduate...Every evening when she had to write comments she would ask my help...What if I wasn't there? Who would have helped her? The grandmother cannot do this..."* (FG\_1\_Migrants, Republic of Moldova).

Migration has influence both on children and parents, especially on mothers: *"The child was 1.5 years old when I went to the Russian Federation, and when I came back after 1.3 years my child did not call me "mother" but "aunt"...It was very difficult. I think it took him about one month to get used to me"* (FG\_1\_Migrants, Republic of Moldova). Another mother said: *"For 20 years nobody reproached me anything, but last year my youngest daughter asked me where was I when they were small?"* (FG\_2\_women, Republic of Moldova).

The tribulations of some children left without parental care have determined some mothers to stop migration:

*"I came back and brought him two Carnival outfits – of Spiderman and Zorro... At the beginning my son was happy, then he put them away... I asked him what was wrong, and he answered that he would not wear them, and he would not go to school, if I leave again... He asked me whom he should show the outfits if there is no mother or father to see, and the grandmother is too sick to*

come to school... Then my mom was writing me letters saying that if I am not coming back, the child will get sick because he cries all night long... And when I came back, my mom showed me the rag saying that it was wet every night from my son's tears" (FG\_2\_women, Republic of Moldova).

Other children confessed that they were still waiting for their parents to return for good: "She promised that this time is the last one... She has so many problems with her health..." (FG\_4\_children, Republic of Moldova). Within the focus-group discussions, some children said that if they were in the same situation as their parents, they would have gone with the entire family and would not have left the children behind.

Children also express the expectation that the government takes measures that would bring back their parents, seeing solutions such as the creation of new jobs and increase of the salaries. If these measures are not taken, in their opinion, it is necessary to establish some mechanisms for taking care of children who are left behind without parental care.

The representatives of local public authorities expressed a need to track children who are left without parental care as a result of migration in order to have some control over the situation, to be aware of the children's needs and to establish services in schools or community centres (educational services, assistance in doing homework).

The examination of educational plans of parents showed that migrants prefer that their children continue their education in Moldova. Migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova and members of their households plan to give their children higher or vocational education in the Republic of Moldova (73.5%). Only 10.9 per cent prefer their children to be educated in the Russian Federation, and the remainder believe their children should decide independently. On the contrary, the migrants interviewed in Russia are more often convinced that their children have to continue the education in Russia (43.4%) rather than in Moldova (32.4%) (see Table 25).

**Table 25: Supposed country of education of children after school graduation depending on the country of survey (%)**

| Supposed country of education              | Place of interview |                | Total (N=283) |
|--|--------------------|----------------|---------------|
|  | Moldova (N=147)    | Russia (N=136) |               |
| Moldova                                    | 73.5               | 32.4           | 53.7          |
| Russia                                     | 10.9               | 43.4           | 26.5          |
| Other countries                            | 1.4                | 1.4            | 1.4           |
| Don't plan/child will decide independently | 14.3               | 22.8           | 18.4          |
| Total                                      | 100.0              | 100.0          | 100.0         |

Education plans for children are considerably different among long-term and circular migrants interviewed in Russia. Long-term migrants generally intend to continue their children's education in Russia, whilst circular migrants either plan to continue their children's education in Moldova or are undecided; roughly 40 per cent of respondents not having concrete plans in the sense of planning to give the opportunity to their children to choose the place of their education.

**Table 26: Supposed country of education of children after school graduation by different categories of migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation (%)**

| Supposed country of education             | Category of migrants |                 |
|---|----------------------|-----------------|
|   | Long-term (N=88)     | Circular (N=48) |
| Republic of Moldova                       | 28.4                 | 39.6            |
| Russian Federation                        | 56.8                 | 18.8            |
| Other countries                           | 1.1                  | 2.0             |
| Don't plan/child will decide individually | 13.6                 | 39.6            |
| Total                                     | 100.0                | 100.0           |

Choosing the place for their children's education is not the same as choosing a country for future residence. But the parents understand that they predetermine the future of their children: social capital gained during the education is easier to preserve in the country of education. The question "Where is the best to get education?" was answered by one participant of the focus-group with the following: "*In the country where one would work according to this profession*" (FG\_3, citizens of the Russian Federation).

Migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova and members of their households largely consider that their children would have a better life in Moldova (69 per cent of respondents), out of which, 92.1 per cent think that children should get the future education in Moldova. Conversely, among migrants who think that it is better for their children to live in Russia, 40 per cent think that it is better to get education in Russia.

## VIII. COMMUNICATION, SOCIAL RELATIONS AND NETWORKS

The current level of development of communications means is not an issue for communicating with family and relatives. Only a minority of respondents of this study mentioned the impossibility to communicate with their families, as being a problem, because of migration to Russia (see Table 27).

**Table 27: Difficulties in communication with family/relatives when living in the Russian Federation, compared to places of polling (persons,%)**

|   | Country |        | Total |
|---|---------|--------|-------|
|   | Moldova | Russia |       |
| Faced the problem of impossibility to communicate with the family/relatives when in Russia        | 15      | 47     | 62    |
|   | 5%      | 12%    | 9%    |
| Did not face the problem of impossibility to communicate with the family/relatives when in Russia | 268     | 345    | 613   |
|   | 89%     | 88%    | 88%   |
| No answer   | 19      | 2      | 21    |
|   | 6%      | 1%     | 3%    |
| Total   | 302     | 394    | 696   |
|   | 100%    | 100%   | 100%  |

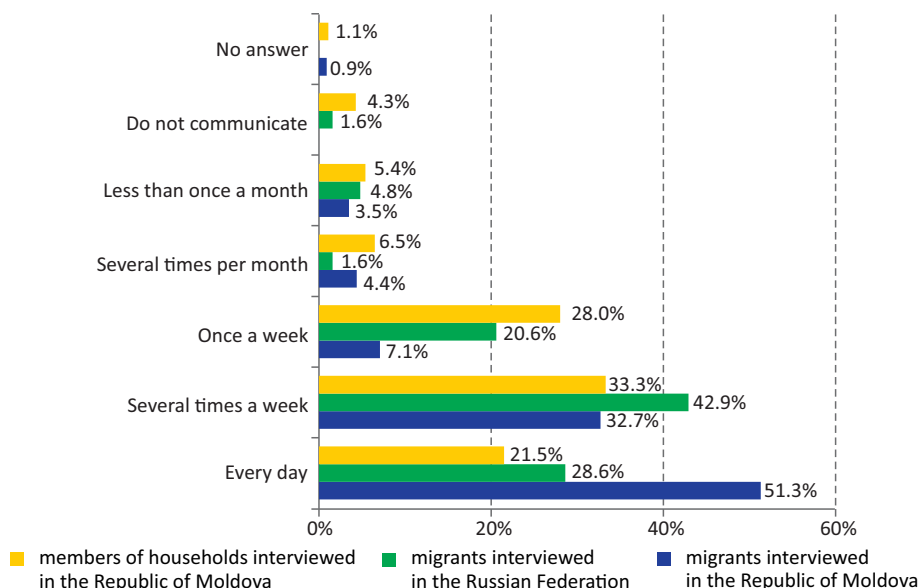
Migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova are communicating regularly with their family: 31.9 per cent – daily, 36.1 per cent – several times a week, 23.5 per cent – once a week, 10.6 per cent – several times a month. Young people less than 30 years old, who are not married, and people who travel for seasonal work, communicate less often with their families.

Long-distance communication is often the only way to maintain the relation between children and parents. More than a half of respondents in Russia communicate their children every day, one third of respondents – several times a week and there were no respondents identified to have never communicated with their children (see Figure 12). The frequency of communication differs depending on the category of respondents: migrants interviewed in Russia show more frequent communications; migrants interviewed in Moldova seem to communicate more seldom, according to the members of households. It can be assumed that the effect of “socially approved answers” worked in this question because the lack of communication with children is socially condemned.

Most children communicate with parents who reside in Russia by phone (mobile or landline) or Skype every day or two-three times a week (see Figure

13). Children tell their parents news that makes them happy, but don't want to talk about problems at school or related to their health. Children try to solve these issues independently, and if they succeed, the parents do not find out about them. But if the problems cannot be solved, then these are communicated to the parents. The distance sometimes makes children to be less frank about their problems: *“When I need an advice, I tell them...When something is bothering me, sometimes I tell them, but sometimes not...”* (FG\_4\_children, Republic of Moldova).

**Figure 12: Frequency of communication between parents and children who reside in the Republic of Moldova (%)**



Mothers tend to communicate more frequently with children than fathers do: out of all respondents, 47 per cent of women talk to their children every day compared to 26 per cent of men. Respondents from Russia, mostly women, communicate more often with children than those interviewed in Moldova.

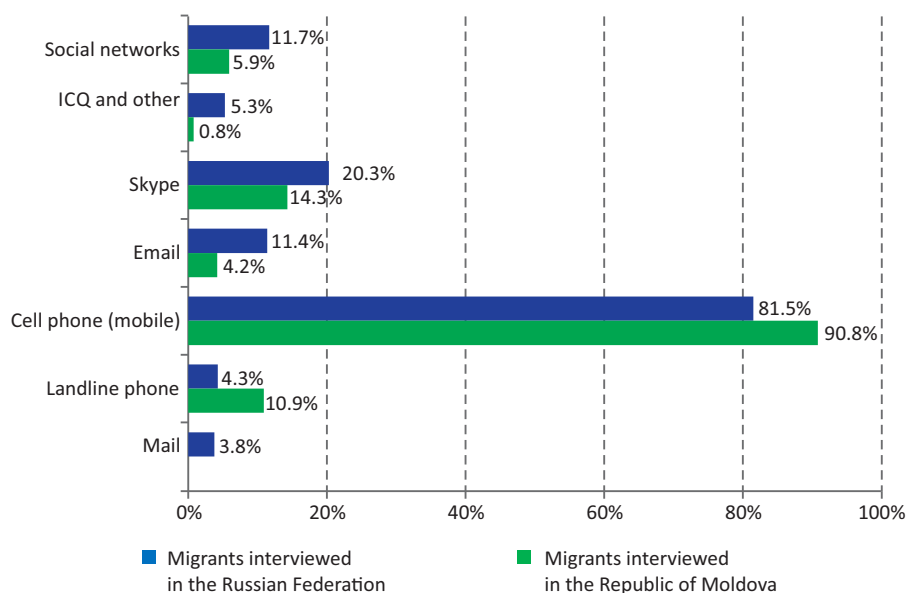
Communication with relatives is not as frequent as with children. 2.5 per cent – every day, 22.7 per cent – a couple of times a week, 21.8 per cent – once a week, 21.0 per cent – a couple of times a month, 16.0 per cent – once a month, 7.6 per cent – a couple of times a year, 8.4 per cent – no communication. Men older than 55 years don't communicate at all with relatives.

Communication between migrants and friends/acquaintances is also limited: 2.5 per cent – every day, 6.7 per cent – a couple of times a week, 16.8 per cent – once a week, 23.5 per cent – a couple times a month, 22.7 per cent – once a month, 12.6 per cent – a couple of times a year, 15.1 per cent – have no communication at all.

Migrants who work up to three months in the Russian Federation communicate very seldom with family members, relatives or friends. This is explained by the fact that the migrant is not being absent for a long time and does not feel the need to communicate frequently to maintain the relation with family, relatives, or friends.

There is no considerable difference between the communication means used by the migrants surveyed in Moldova and those surveyed in the Russian Federation (see Figure 13). The communication means used by migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova are the cell phone (90.8 per cent – always), Skype (14.3 per cent – always), landline (10.9 per cent – always), social networks (5.9 per cent – always), e-mail (4.2 per cent – always). Compared to these, migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation use most often Skype, social networks, ICQ and email.

**Figure 13: Communication means used by Moldovan migrants (%)**



Communication means differ between socio-demographic groups. The cell phone is used by all categories of migrants (less frequently by persons older than 55 years). The landline is used predominantly by the migrants older than 40 years who are married, but Skype and social networks are more often used by young people up to 30 years old, who are typically not married (see Table 30).

34.5 per cent of Moldovan migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova use the Internet: 82.9 per cent of them use it for communication – email, Skype, ICQ; 63.4 per cent – communication through social networks in

Republic of Moldova and 51.2 per cent – communicate through social networks in Russian Federation. Among the migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation, 42.4 per cent have used the Internet, out of which 96.4 per cent – use it to communicate through email, Skype, ICQ, 83,8 per cent – to communicate in social networks in Republic of Moldova and 87.4 per cent – to communicate in social networks in the Russian Federation. Most Moldovan migrants have Internet connection at their place of residence in the Russian Federation – 31.4 per cent (22.7 per cent of migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova and 34.0 per cent interviewed in the Russian Federation). The remainder: at their working place or school – 4.5 per cent, friends – 4.3 per cent, Mobile internet – 4.3 per cent. Internet usage in Russia is heavily dominated by the younger generation and typically those with higher education who are not yet married.

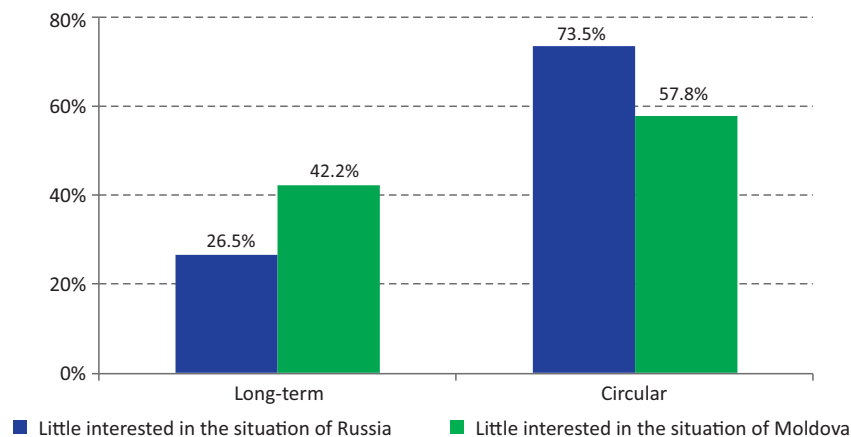
**Table 28: Socio-demographic characteristics of migrants, who use means of communication (interviewed in the Republic of Moldova) (%)**

|              |   | Cell phone | Landline | Skype | Social networks |
|--------------|---|------------|----------|-------|-----------------|
| Gender       | Male  | 90.0       | 12.5     | 15.0  | 6.3             |
|              | Female  | 92.3       | 7.7      | 12.8  | 5.1             |
| Age          | Younger than 30 years old                           | 97.1       | 5.7      | 28.6  | 20.0            |
|              | 30-39 years old                                     | 88.2       | 8.8      | 2.9   | 0               |
|              | 40-55 years old                                     | 90.5       | 11.9     | 11.9  | 0               |
|              | Older than 55 years old                             | 75.0       | 37.5     | 12.5  | 0               |
| Civil status | Not married ( <i>including widowers, divorced</i> ) | 87.5       | 6.3      | 21.9  | 15.6            |
|              | Married ( <i>including life partners</i> )          | 92.0       | 12.6     | 11.5  | 2.3             |
| On average   |   | 90.8       | 10.9     | 14.3  | 5.9             |

Moldovan migration to Russia creates a transnational informational space and the migrants can't make up their minds as to which country's news to follow. The data from the questionnaire prove that the migrants in general are interested equally in the cultural and political life of Russia and Moldova: 40 per cent each are always interested, and 37 per cent each are interested from time to time in the news in one or the other country.

The degree of interest depends on the categories of migrants: migrants who are focused on permanent residence in Russia are more likely to maintain relations and networks with both countries. The survey also evidences that compared to seasonal and circular migrants, their interest is a bit more focused on Russia (see Figure 14) and that circular migrants tend to be more apolitical.

**Figure 14: Interest in social and political life of the Russian Federation and Republic of Moldova by migrant categories (%)**



News about the social, political and economic situation of Russia is important both to circular and long-term Moldovan migrants in Russia (especially for businessmen and those with citizenship of the Russian Federation). For the circular migrants the Russian news has importance chiefly because of possible amendment of Russian laws that bear a direct influence on their lives and those of their families in Moldova.

*”Moderator: How interested are Moldovans, migrants and Russian citizens in the socio-political life of Russia?”*

*P1: They are very interested.*

*Moderator: These are citizens of Russia... How about the migrants?”*

*P1: I think it is the same.*

*P2: Even more interested.*

*P1: Because every new law covers all of us.*

*Moderator: New law on migration...”*

*P1: Of course.*

*P3: Today many of the questions are discussed directly in the Government. And this is of interest to everyone, and they are hoping that some improvements will be made regarding their situation in Russia“ (FG\_4\_Diaspora activists in Russian Federation).*

The news in Moldova is followed by Moldovan people because their relatives live there:

*“We have relatives there, we do care. I have a grandmother there, so you understand...” (FG\_2\_family\_Russian Federation).*

*“Of course we have many relatives who live in Moldova, we are concerned about them, we care; that is why, we always follow the news“ (FG\_3\_citizenship of the Russian Federation).*



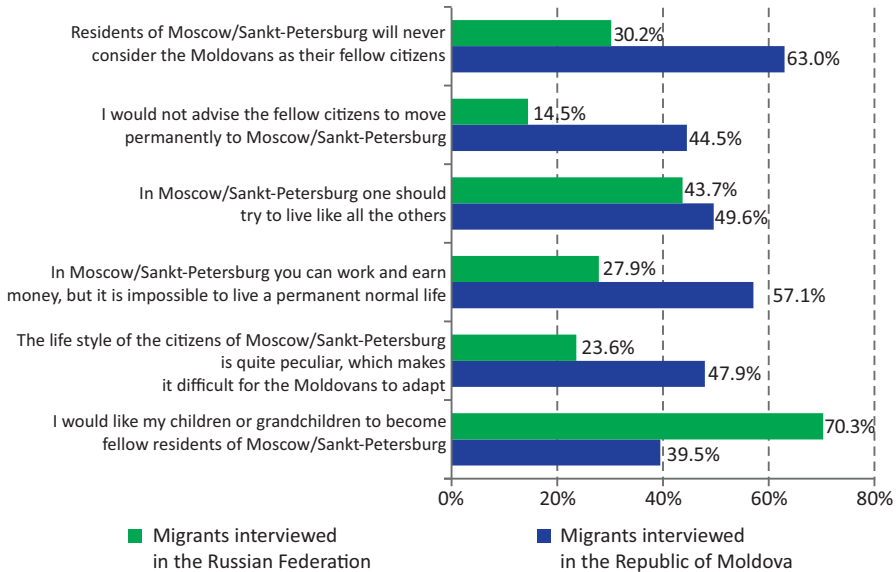
Moldovan migrants working in the Russian Federation are interested to find out what happens in the Republic of Moldova, but the information resources used by the migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova and Russian Federation are different. 53.8 per cent of Moldovan migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova receive information from Russian television, 21.8 per cent – from Internet, 21.8 per cent – Republic of Moldova television, 13.4 per cent – Russian Federation radio, 8.4 per cent – Republic of Moldova radio. But the migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation use the Russian television as information resource about the Republic of Moldova in 70.6 per cent, Internet in 32.5 per cent, Russian Federation radio in 31.0 per cent, newspapers and magazines published in the Russian Federation – 28.2 per cent, i.e. only the Russian mass media.

For the migrants interviewed in Moldova, communication with relatives and friends from the Republic of Moldova represents the main information resource about the situation in the country. Whilst for migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation, discussions with fellow citizens in the Russian Federation are an additional source. Migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation rarely use the mass media of the Republic of Moldova. This shows the trend of integration of migrants in the Russian Federation and the loosening of the social, political and cultural ties with the country of origin.

For businessmen of Moldovan origin, the news on economic life of Moldova is the most important component for analysing the conjuncture, including in the context of investment decisions. The migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova prefer to receive information on the situation in the Republic of Moldova in Russian language (55.5%), in Romanian language (27.7%) and in both languages (16.6%). The migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation seldom use only Romanian-language sources of information (8.9%), preferring to receive information in both languages (62.7%) and in Russian language (26.4%).

The tendency of migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation to integrate is also proved by the agreement of 70.3 per cent (full and partial agreement) of migrants with the following statement *“I would like my children or grandchildren to become fellow residents of Moscow/Sankt-Petersburg”*.

In comparison Moldovan migrants agree also with the following statement: *“residents of Moscow/Saint-Petersburg will never consider the Moldovans as their fellow citizens”* (63.0%), *“In Moscow/Saint-Petersburg you can work and earn money, but it is impossible to live a permanent normal life”* (57.1%), *“the life style of the citizens of Moscow/Saint-Petersburg is quite peculiar, which makes it difficult for the Moldovans to adapt”* (47.9%), *“I would not advise the fellow citizens to move permanently to Moscow/Saint-Petersburg”* (44.5%) (see Figure 15).

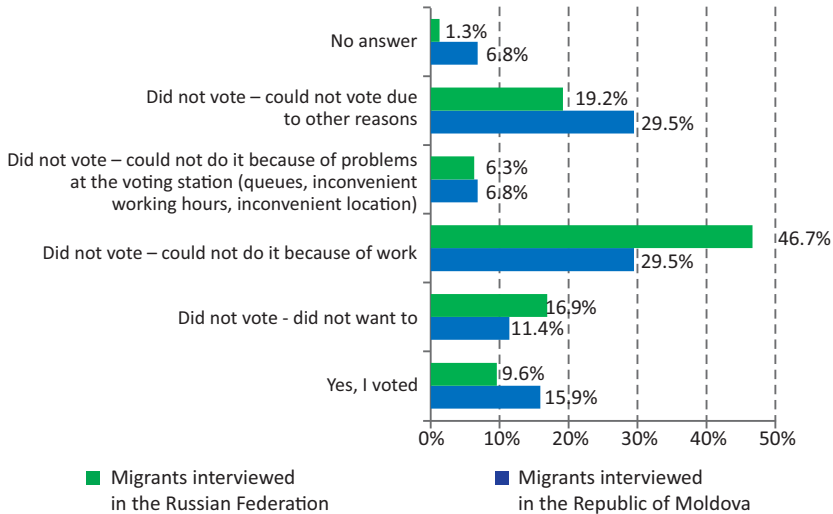
**Figure 15: Perception of the Russian social environment (%)**

These two categories differ also in their interest in political life. 46.2 per cent of migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation expressed a permanent interest in the political life of the Russian Federation, and 42.6 per cent show similar interest in the political life of the Republic of Moldova. The Moldovan migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova are less interested in the political life, in particular only 18.5 per cent show permanent interest in the political life of the Russian Federation and 36.9 per cent are interested in the political life of the Republic of Moldova.

Of those migrants working in the Russian Federation, 77 per cent showed interest in the information on pre-election campaign during the last Parliamentary elections in the Republic of Moldova, but only 10 per cent voted while in the Russian Federation. The percentage of this participation is higher among the migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova (15.9%) as compared to the respondents in the Russian Federation (9.6%) (see Figure 16). Those who voted are persons older than 40 years, married, and those who are residing on the territory of the Russian Federation for more than three years.

Both categories surveyed also differ in their way of living. For instance, the Moldovan migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova are more inclined to observe national traditions. It appears also that they are less inclined to marry a citizen of the Russian Federation, to help a fellow citizen find work or solve other problems as compared to Moldovans interviewed in the Russian Federation, who have partly integrated in the receiving country.

**Figure 16: Participation of Moldovan migrants in the Russian Federation in the last Parliamentary elections in the Republic of Moldova (%)**



In their relations with the local population, migrants from Moldova do not face any difficulties. Moldovan migrants in the opinion of participants of focus group discussions are respected and valued by Russians as compared to migrants of other ethnic groups<sup>46</sup>. This is confirmed by mass interviews: Russians are tolerant to Ukrainians and Moldovans. Respondents show annoyance, dislike, distrust and fear towards other ethnic groups. The participants in focus-groups with working experience in eastern and western countries mentioned that the Russians compared to Europeans value more the Moldovan migrants.

Moreover, the external outlook differences are important: migrants say that their children are accepted as 'theirs' by Russians as a result of European type of looks.

*“It does not mean that what is good for a Russian is bad for a Moldovan; it is like a whole. Same people, same culture, same religion”* (FG\_5\_businessmen\_Russian Federation).

The social status of the worker is important: *“If it is, for instance ... a simple worker who cleans the streets, he/she will be treated differently anyway. If one works as a teacher, for instance, may be in a higher position, ... i think the attitude is more loyal, more adequate”* (FG\_3\_citizens of the Russian Federation).

Closeness to “locals” often occurs on the basis of the contrast with the Azerbaijanis, Asians: *“We are Orthodox as Russians; we have same traditions, not like these Asians”* (FG\_3\_citizens of the Russian Federation).

<sup>46</sup> 11,800 respondents were interviewed. See: Mukomel V. (2011). Integration of migrants: challenges, policy, social practice // *Mir Rossii*, 2011, N1, p.37

Fluency in Russian language makes it easier for the migrants to integrate into the Russian society, but gradually the Russian language is being expanded amongst migrants and the level of Romanian language usage is reducing. The bilingualism of migrants is limited to “norms of decency”, according to which, the Romanian language is used in private, whilst the Russian language is used in public:

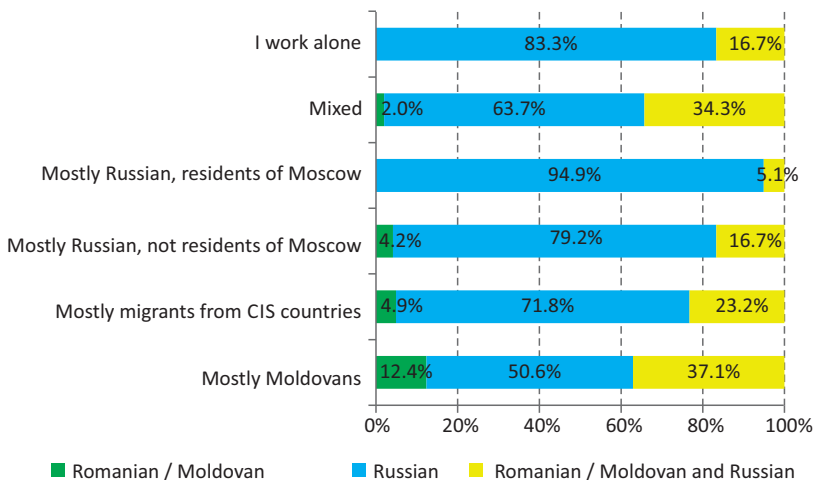
*Focus Group Participant1: “For instance, I talk to my sister. We are in a public transport, and we speak on the phone. I speak Moldovan language, she answers in Russian. I speak Moldovan language, she answers in Russian.*

*Focus Group Participant2: Because she is more well-mannered than you. It is not nice to speak Moldovan language being on a bus in Moscow. <...> In the public transport, in Moscow, one has to speak Russian language” (FG\_2\_family\_Russian Federation).*

*“If we are on a bus, and there are three people there, we try to not speak too loud; what would people think if they hear us speaking, or we are trying to speak Russian to each other” (FG\_1\_circular\_Russian Federation).*

Such expansion of Russian language is due to other factors. But even working in purely Moldovan work teams, the migrants communicate more often in Russian language: 78.8 per cent of cases among Moldovan migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova prefer to communicate in Russian language at work, 18.6 per cent – in two languages: Russian and Romanian, and only 2.5 per cent – in Romanian language. Mostly women and people older than 40 years, with general and higher education, speak Russian at work (see Figure 17).

**Figure 17: Predominant languages of communication in different work teams (%)**



In mixed families the communication is not always in Romanian. Children who grow up in Russia often prefer to speak Russian, even if they understand Romanian. As a result of their socialization in the Russian environment: *“they are already Russians”* (FG\_3\_citizenship of the Russian Federation). Thus, the next generations do not try to maintain the Romanian language.

This leads to the fact that the migrants find fewer possibilities to speak Romanian:

*“When you see one Moldovan in the bus, you think that you are in Heaven because you always speak Russian, even at home; I have started to forget Moldovan language”* (FG\_1\_circular migrants, Russian Federation).

Since the Moldovan migrants do not see any special socio-cultural barriers between them and the local population, marriages and romantic relations with Russians are considered normal. The participants of focus-group discussions in Moldova said: *“our men can drink, next day they go to work and fulfil their male duty”, “Russian women love our men. And Russian men love Moldovan women”* (FG\_1\_Migrants, Republic of Moldova).

Marriages with Russian citizens, besides others, can solve some pragmatic issues such as legalization. Many do get divorced after they obtain the citizenship as a result of marriage, others keep the new family: *“My sister married a Russian drunkard only for papers. She took him to rehab and now he is a good husband”* (FG\_1\_Migrants, Republic of Moldova).

## IX. DIASPORA ORGANIZATIONS

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Diaspora in the Russian Federation is marked by certain particular features which make it different from Moldovan diasporas in the Western countries. First of all, in the Russian discourse, “diaspora” is seen as a public organisation of people of certain ethno-cultural affiliation with established structure and regional hierarchy, with mutual obligations and membership<sup>47</sup>. Secondly, such organisations tend to have been established by Russian citizens with Moldovan origin who immigrated to Russia during the USSR times and now have families and work there. They meet to speak the Romanian language and to remember the traditions and customs of Moldova.

Events conducted by such organisations include the Martisor Festival, showcasing and promotion of national traditions, national cuisine and goods<sup>48</sup>. Beyond these, activities conducted by these organisations, for Moldovan migrants, are sporadic and limited to familiarization with the Russian legislation.

Moldovan migrants who took part in the survey know little about the existence of diaspora organizations. In focus-group discussions in Moldova, only one person had heard about the diaspora association “Țarina”, but has never contacted it.

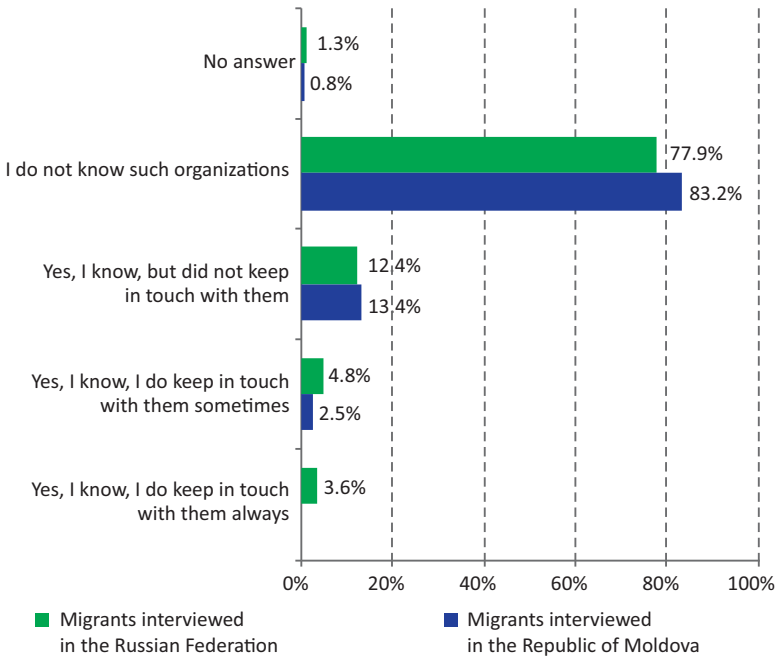
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<sup>47</sup> According to the Russian legislation, the institutional establishment of ethnical organizations shall be done in the form of national-cultural associations, national-cultural autonomies, non-commercial and public organizations. The official list of national organizations of Moscow includes two Moldovan organizations: National Public Organization (NPO) Moldovan cultural-educational organization “Speranta” and Inter-regional Non-government organization (INO) “Congress of Moldovan diasporas” see :

[http://www.mdn.ru/cntnt/blocksleft/menu\\_left/sotrudnistvo/noogr.html](http://www.mdn.ru/cntnt/blocksleft/menu_left/sotrudnistvo/noogr.html)

<sup>48</sup> The webpage of the Moldovan Non-government Organization “Congress of Moldovan diasporas” gives information on the assistance in migration registration and procurement of patents. But even the short analysis of the content of the activities of this organization concludes that the main activity of the “Congress of Moldovan diasporas” is participation in different meetings and conferences, organization of folkloric events and concerts of Moldovan artists, and other events.

**Figure 18: Migrants' level of awareness about Moldovan diaspora organisations in the Russian Federation (%)**



A relatively small total of 19.7 per cent of respondents know about the existence of the Moldovan national organisations or diaspora associations in Russia. During the focus-groups in Moscow, when the moderator asked the participants to name at least one organisation, it was difficult for them to give an answer.

One of the explanations, why the Moldovans are not that eager to establish national-cultural organisations as compared to representatives of other diasporas, is their integration: *“Moldovans find it easier to integrate, that is why they are so dispersed that they are not even noticed”* (FG\_3, citizens of the Russian Federation).

Focus-group discussions show that Moldovans who are temporarily or permanently residing in Russia are nostalgic for Moldovan culture, especially everyday features (the possibility to speak native language, culture of feasting, etc.). There is a necessity to maintain the ethno-cultural contacts: *“What do you mean no need? What do you mean no need? We very gladly gather to celebrate our holidays...We are always together during these cultural events and we are very happy”* (Interview, Diaspora Association Representative, Russian Federation). The question *“How the need to gather at the “same Moldovan table” is achieved?”* was left without a clear answer, though.

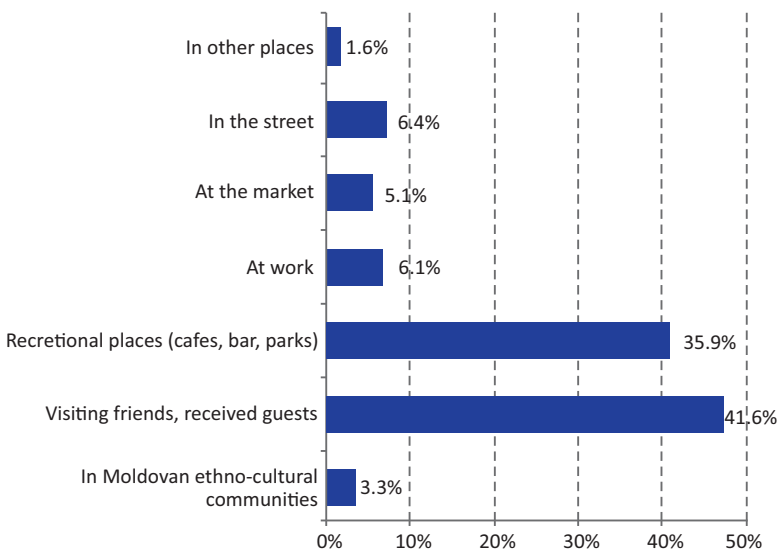
The contradiction is apparent, because on the one hand, there is a sufficiently developed network of Moldovan national organisations with

representatives at the level of Council of National Affairs under the government of the City of Moscow, and on the other hand, these organisations do not seem to fulfil the need of those Moldovans residing in Russia to maintain ethno-cultural contacts. The issue can be the insufficient informational support and outreach capacities of these organisations which communicate with their “target group” mostly through the Internet, while less than a half of Moldovan migrants report having regular internet access.

It could be that the *real* current activities of these organizations are not in sync with the *real* needs of the majority of Russian Moldovans and citizens of Moldova working in Russia. The participants in the focus-groups were sceptical regarding the idea of receiving any assistance from Moldovan national-cultural organisations: “*we did not need to seek assistance from communities*” (FG\_3\_citizens of the Russian Federation). According to the survey, only 7 per cent of all respondents actively sought assistance from Moldovan national-cultural organisations.

Both Moldovan migrants (long-term and circular ones) and the Russian citizens of Moldovan origin have articulated a clear need for spaces where they can meet not just sporadically, on holidays and speak native language, but to also get news about the cultural life of Moldova. (“*The society is necessary anyway. In the past...we used to meet often during different events, holidays, but now it is not quite the case...We do have the need to communicate with fellow citizens. At the end of the day, to boast about what we have achieved*” – Interview, businessmen, Russian Federation). Today however, the Moldovan national-cultural centres do not fulfil these functions.

**Figure 19: Breakdown of answers to the question  
“Where did you often meet with your fellow-nationals?” (%)**





As it is shown in the Figure 19, the national-cultural community is among the least popular places where the meetings with fellow citizens take place.

The Bureau of Interethnic Relations of the Republic of Moldova cooperates with some Moldovan national organisations in the Russian Federation – from Saint-Petersburg, Krasnoyarsk, and Novosibirsk, to help these organisations consolidate their activities. The representatives of the Bureau of Interethnic Relations mentioned the need to appoint an Honorary Council from the fellow citizens living in the Russian Federation.

Moldovan national-cultural organisations in the Russian Federation mentioned that they need also the support of the government entities of the Republic of Moldova. They expressed their desire to have a tighter collaboration with the Ministry of Education which would pass them manuals in Romanian language, children textbooks; with the Bureau of Interethnic Relations, who would provide them with national costumes and other national symbols, and provide moral support.

The organisations of Moldovan diaspora in Russia are mostly focused on contact and work with the Russian citizens of Moldovan origin and Moldovans permanently residing in Russia. The “Moldovan” migrants and their daily necessities are not of particular interest to these organisations and their influence on circular migrants is very limited.

## **X. INCOME, REMITTANCES AND SAVINGS**

The average salary of the surveyed migrants accounts for RUB 26,200 (about USD 875). The earnings of migrants interviewed in Russia account on average for RUB 25,500. The earnings of migrants interviewed in Moldova – RUB 30,200.

The practice when other cohabiting members of the family work with the migrant in Russia is very common, and their average income accounts for RUB 29,100 in Moscow. The average salary of cohabiting members of the family of migrants interviewed in Moldova is considerably lower – RUB 16,100, but the number of cohabiting family members in Russia is lower as well.

Correspondingly, the budgets of different groups of migrants differ. Long-term migrants interviewed in Russia spent about RUB 12,700 on daily needs, circular migrants – RUB 11,600. The migrants interviewed in Moldova earn more and spend more – about RUB 13,000.

Money transfers/remittances play an important role in the budget of migrants and their families, especially those left behind in Moldova.

**Table 29: Rate of people who remit money to the Republic of Moldova (%)**

|  | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>No answer</b> |
|--|------------|-----------|------------------|
| Migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation           | 73.1       | 24.9      | 2.0              |
| Migrants interviewed in Moldova                          | 68.1       | 31.9      | -                |
| Migrants' households, respondents interviewed in Moldova | 64.5       | 35.5      | -                |

The survey data shows that, the longer is the period of residence of Moldovan migrants in the Russian Federation, the more likely they are to transfer money back to immediate family/relatives. The migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova, who transfer money, are more often those who are married and reside in the Russian Federation for more than three months.

Long-term migrants, especially those who reside with their families, understandably are more likely to spend higher amounts in Russia, and send less back to Moldova<sup>49</sup>. The analysis of answers of migrants showed that about 5 per cent of Moldovan migrants transfer money to other relatives in the Republic of Moldova, but that members of their immediate family do not know about it.

<sup>49</sup> As a rule, the remittances of temporary migrants typically earning less than long-term migrants exceed those sent by long-term migrants. Goerlich D. Trebesch C. (2008) Seasonal Migration and Networks—Evidence on Moldova's Labour Exodus // *Review of World Economics*, Vol. 144 (1), Pp. 164-166).

**Table 30: Remittances of different categories of migrants**

|  | Average amount of RUB transferred | Average amount of USD transferred | Average amount of EUR transferred | Average in USD of transfers, all currencies |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Migrants in Moldova                              | 17.600                            | 947                               | 1.640                             | 960   |
| Members of households in the Republic of Moldova | 10.478                            | 395                               | 1.279                             | 483   |
| Migrants in Russia                               | 11.478                            | 435                               |                                   | 411   |
| including long-term migrants                     | 10.100                            | 391                               |                                   | 366   |
| Circular migrants                                | 14.152                            | 517                               |                                   | 497   |

**Table 31: Remittance recipients in the Republic of Moldova (%)**

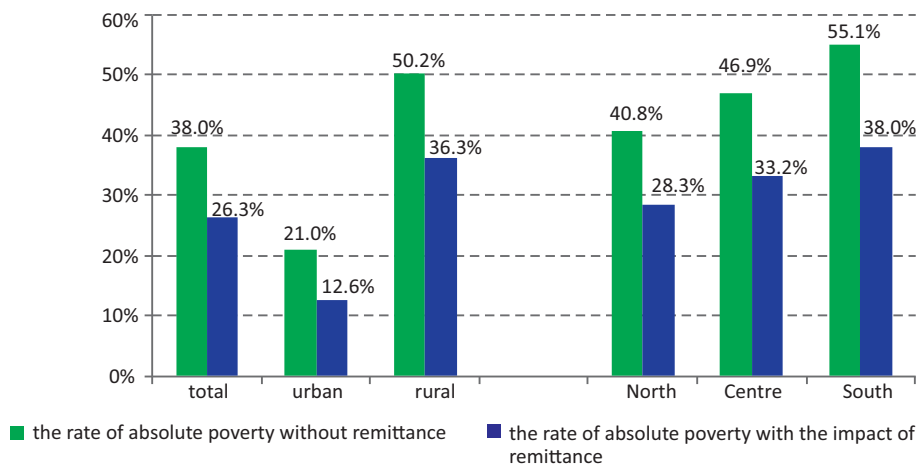
| Respondents who either transfer or receive money           | Family members | Relatives | Bank accounts | No answer |
|--|----------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
| Migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation             | 91.2           | 4.7       | 0.7           | 3.4       |
| Migrants interviewed in Moldova                            | 95.1           | 4.9       | -             | -         |
| Members of households with migrants interviewed in Moldova | 99.2           | -         | 0.8           | -         |

Migrants who do not transfer money to Moldova are of special interest. Most are young migrants with no profession or qualification, who travelled for the first time from the rural area and plan to work for a couple of months and then go back to Moldova. They are still getting accustomed in Russia and cannot help their families.

Another group is the long-term migrants, 80 per cents of which intend to settle down in Russia and want their children or grandchildren to become fully naturalised citizens of Russia.

According to the data of Household Budgets Surveys (HBS), the revenue received from remittances has direct influence on the welfare of households in Moldova. Money transfers account for 22 per cent of monthly income per person in rural areas and 12.6 per cent of free income per person in urban areas<sup>50</sup>. The data of HBS show that in 2009 the remittances have reduced the level of absolute poverty in the rural area by 13.9 p.p., in the urban area by 8.7 p.p., and on average by 11.7 p.p. The analysis of the influence of remittances on poverty by geographical areas shows the decrease of share of absolute poverty by 17.1 p.p. in the Southern region, by 13.7 p.p. in the Central region, by 12.5 p.p. in the Northern region and by 3.6 p.p. in the Chisinau Municipality.

**Figure 20: Impact of remittances on the income by residence and geographic zones of the Republic Moldova, 2009 (%)**

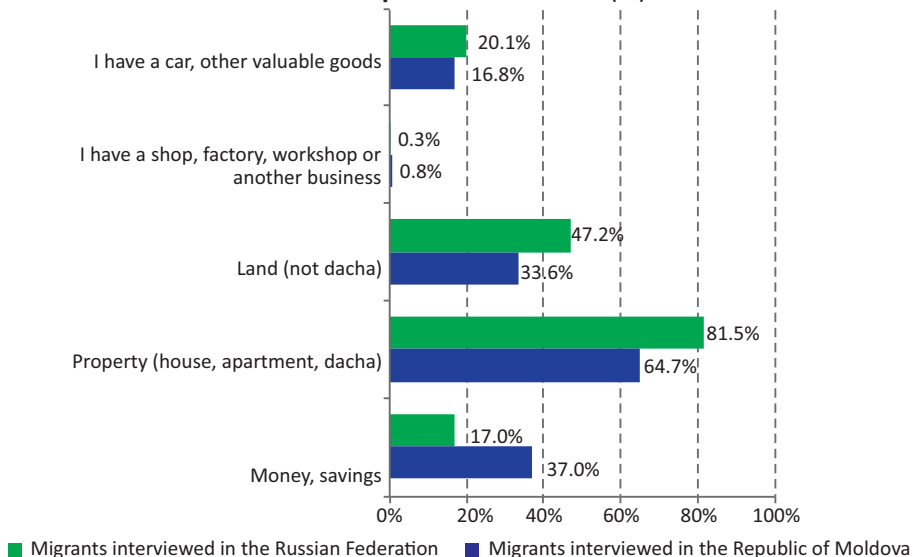


Moldovan migrants, who work overseas and have children left behind in the Republic of Moldova, transfer more money to the households, and correspondingly they make a greater contribution to poverty reduction (-14.4 percentage points), as compared to migrants with no children (-8.1 percentage points).

There is a difference between the properties owned in the Republic of Moldova by the migrants surveyed respectively in Moldova and Russia. The migrants interviewed in the Russian Federation have a higher standard of living: in 81.5 per cent of cases they have their own house/apartment/holiday house, in 47.2 per cent – land, 20.1 per cent – cars and other valuable property. Compared to them, the migrants interviewed in the Republic of Moldova have savings in the Republic of Moldova – 37 per cent, money deposits to procure another residential space (see Figure 21).

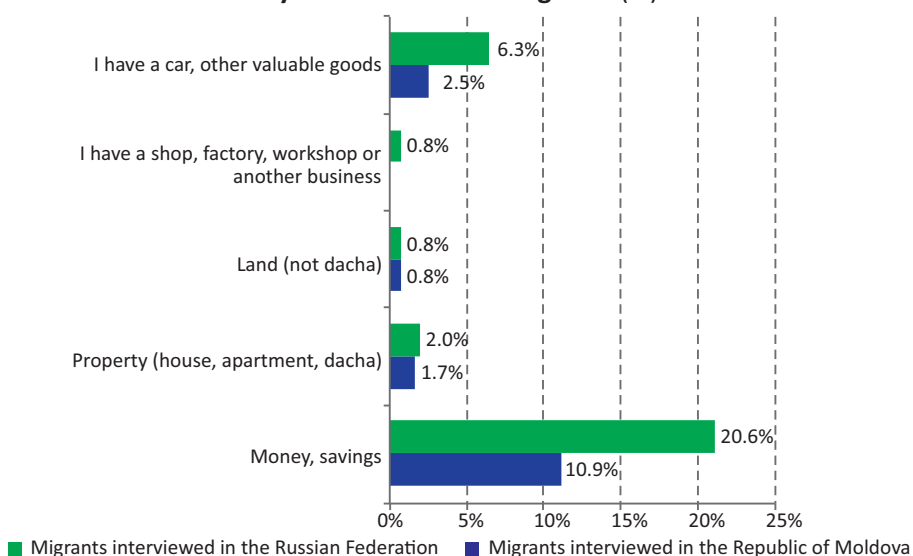
<sup>50</sup> Report on poverty and policy impact 2009, Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Moldova, 2010, p.36, URL: <http://www.mec.gov.md/saracia-si-impactul-politicilor/>

**Figure 21: Property owned by households with migrants in the Republic of Moldova (%)**



At the same time, the analysis of the property owned by Moldovan migrants surveyed in the Russian Federation shows the tendency of migrants interviewed in this country to integrate into the Russian Federation. 20.6 per cent of them save money in the Russian Federation, 6.3 per cent purchased a car or other valuable goods, 2.0 per cent purchased an apartment or a holiday house (see Figure 22).

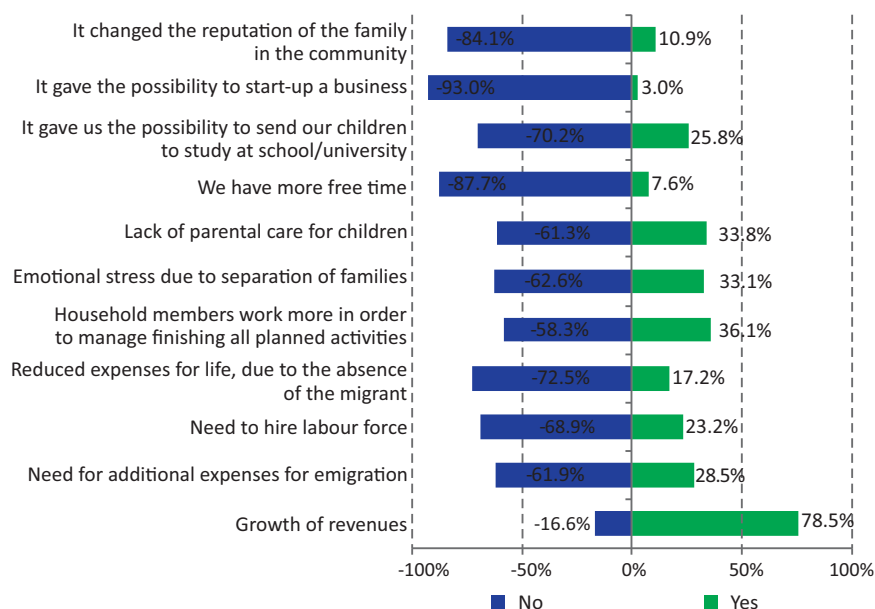
**Figure 22: Property owned in the Russian Federation by households with migrants (%)**



Money transfers/ remittances form a significant part of the family budget in Moldova. Fifty two per cent of migrants and members of households with migrants mentioned that the remittances account for more than 75 per cent of family income, 19 per cent of respondents claimed that remittances account for 50-75 per cent of their income, 18 per cent of respondents – 25-50 per cent of their income, and only for 7 per cent stated that remittances accounted for less than 25 per cent of their income. The use of money received from abroad is decided in most cases by both spouses (38.2%), by the migrant (38.2%) and rarely, by the spouse who stayed in the county.

From the perspective of influences of migration on households perceived by migrants, for 78 per cent of households migration brings revenues and in 26 per cent of cases it provides the opportunity to invest in school or university education of children<sup>51</sup>. Negative effects are also quoted: for 36 per cent of respondents the responsibilities of the household members increase; in 34 per cent of households there is a lack of parental care and emotional stress due to the absence of the spouse – 33 per cent; the need for additional expenditures for migration – 28 per cent, employment of labour force – 23 per cent (see Figure 23).

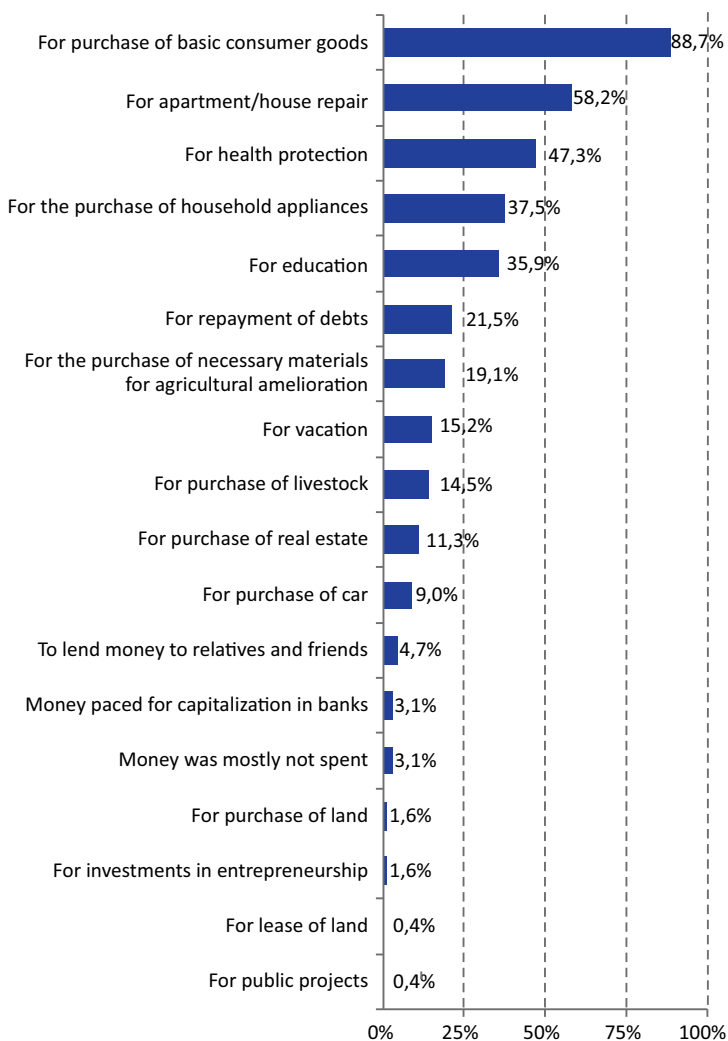
**Figure 23: Impact of migration on households (%)**



<sup>51</sup> Educational contracts are quite expensive: "MDL 5,000-6,000 costs to pay for children's education...Where should the rural parents take this money from?" (FG\_3\_household head, Republic of Moldova).

In the Republic of Moldova, remittances are used for current consumption, to increase the family budgets, pay for the maintenance of the property, and purchase of home appliances. A small portion of the transfers is invested in education, and very few migrants decide to invest the money received from abroad into business, bank deposits, and so on. In most cases, the investments of migrant workers are limited to primitive scopes, for instance: procurement of property or car. One fifth of the remittances are used by Moldovan migrants in the Russian Federation for liquidation of debts (see Figure 24).

**Figure 24: Use of remittances received from abroad in the last 12 months (%)**



The Republic of Moldova has recently improved the procedures for business organization and operation. However the share of migrants who have established a business in Moldova remains low at just 1.6 per cent. More evident are the expenditures of the Moldovan migrants for construction (“renovation of houses”, “new beautiful fence”, and so on) or procurement of property, which is perceived as the most reliable investment. This type of consumption can be explained by the traditions of Moldovans and social pressure on behalf of the family of migrant; and also by the lack of any clear investment ideas/opportunities.

The classic patterns of reasons motivating the sending of remittances, which rely on economic models<sup>52</sup>, do not work satisfactorily in the case of Moldova. Therefore researchers suggest examining the motivations that drive remittances in the social context, including examination of such factors as social prestige and responsibility of migrant, status of the migrant in the household<sup>53</sup>.

Despite the fact that remittances have indeed increased the general level of welfare for many households, and correspondingly, increased their purchasing power, nevertheless, remittances have increased inflation-rates and put pressure on salary payment in some sectors<sup>54</sup>. Generally, from a short-term perspective the remittances can influence positively the economic development, in the long-term perspective however, the possibility of considerable positive influence is low<sup>55</sup>.

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<sup>52</sup> See the review: Hagen-Zanker J., Siegel M. (2008) *A Critical Discussion of the Motivations to Remit in Albania and Moldova* // Centre of Migration Research Working Papers, # 30/88. - P. 5-9; Ruggiero E. (2005) *Migration and Remittances: A Micro Perspective* // *Problems of Economic Transition*, vol. 48, no. 3. – P. 55-57.

<sup>53</sup> Hagen-Zanker J., Siegel M. (2008) *A Critical Discussion of the Motivations to Remit in Albania and Moldova* // Centre of Migration Research Working Papers, # 30/88. - P. 32-33.

<sup>54</sup> Ruggiero E. (2005) *Migration and Remittances: A Micro Perspective* // *Problems of Economic Transition*, vol. 48, no. 3. – P.55.

<sup>55</sup> UNDP (2006) *The Quality of Economic Growth and Its Impact on Human Development. The Republic of Moldova: National Human Development Report* / UNDP. – Chisinau, Moldova. – P. 37; Cuc M., Lundback E., Angelovska-Bezoska A., Ruggiero E., Bouton L. and Sandu M. (2005) *Republic of Moldova: Selected Issues* / International Monetary Fund. - IMF Country Report No. 05/54. – P. 8.



## **XI. PERSPECTIVES OF RETURN TO THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA AND INTEGRATION IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

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The movement of migrants is determined by three factors: dissatisfaction with the social and economic situations of the country of origin, attractiveness of social and economic situations of the country of destination, and personal reasons. Ongoing comparison of standards of life and work, revenues, public services in the country of destination and country of origin overlap with the long-term plans of the migrant family; the decisions of migrants are not final and can be subject to change under the influence of the above factors.

There are some groups of migrants who stand apart from the point of view of the level and readiness for adaptation and integration. 21.8 per cent of migrants would like to settle down in Russia. Not all can be considered integrated or even striving to integrate. Firstly, for a part of them obtaining citizenship or a residence permit is only a way to legalize their irregular status. Secondly, the projective assessments, as a rule, are not fully materialized.

The greatest majority of those who plan to settle down in Russia are migrants interviewed in Russia, about 36.8 per cent of respondents. Out of 145 migrants who mentioned this intention:

- 82.5 per cent agree for their children, grandchildren to become residents of Moscow, another 14.7 per cent – are ready to agree;
- 42.7 per cent take real measures to settle down in Russia, another 40.6 per cent have made up their mind, but did nothing to accomplish this;
- 77.6 per cent of migrants declare that their family supports their decision to settle down;
- 70.4 per cent plan to give education to their children in Russia (13 per cent – in Moldova, one – in France and one – anywhere but Moldova).

The greatest majority have decided to choose Russia. The main reason that made them to migrate to Russia is the social and political instability in Moldova. Today, they earn quite good money (35 per cent receive more than RUB 30,000), but the property they own is located mostly in Moldova, and their main problem in Russia is the lack of living space. If the social and political situation in Moldova improves, they might return.

But this stock of migrants includes two groups: long-term migrants who are the majority (110 people) and circular migrants (35 people). These are completely different groups that are different in their social and demographical characteristics and motivation.

**Table 32: Family status of migrants who want to stay permanently in the Russian Federation (%)**

|                    | Long-term | Circular |
|--------------------|-----------|----------|
| Total number       | 110       | 35       |
| Never married      | 18.2      | 28.6     |
| Officially married | 35.5      | 40.0     |
| Life partner       | 14.5      | 11.4     |
| Divorced           | 28.2      | 17.1     |
| Widow/widower      | 3.6       | 2.9      |

The share of divorced people and of those with life partners is very high in both groups. The majority is represented by women – 64.5 per cent of long-term and 60 per cent of circular migrants. The share of divorced is extremely high among the long-term migrants, 1.5 times higher than of those never married. The divorced people, people in civil marriage and widowed are almost half of this stock<sup>56</sup>.

Many long-term migrants came to Russia many years ago: two thirds of them have lived in Russia for more than five years and had integrated a long time ago. For many migrants, the most important factors in making the decision to integrate in Russia were most probably the personal reasons related to a relatively unresolved personal life and preference to live in a megapolis, with its atomized social environment as opposed to the little urbanised life-style of the sending country (the majority of them come from the rural area). The chance of their return to Moldova is very small.

Another group of migrants that want to integrate in Russia is the circular migrants, who were interviewed in Moldova. Their number is relatively small – a few people (5.9 per cent of respondents in this group). Mostly, these are men who were never married or who are divorced, who are quite educated and qualified, and earn enough money. But their conviction that they are going to settle down in Russia is not that high as those interviewed in Russia:

- 38.5 per cent agree that their children and grandchildren should become residents of Moscow, same percentage – mostly agree;
- two thirds plan to give their children education in Russia, one third – in Moldova;
- 83.3 per cent consider that their children would be better off in Russia.

It can be declared with certainty that minimum 80 per cent of long-term

<sup>56</sup> For comparison, according to the 2004 census data, Republic of Moldova's population aged 15 and older accounted for 10.1 per cent widowed, divorced officially - 4.2 per cent and separated - 1.2 per cent. (Results of the 2004 Census, Demographic, ethnic, linguistic, cultural characteristics. National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova, <http://www.statistica.md/newsview.php?l=ru&id=2358&idc=168>).

migrants and a great majority of the circular migrants (both interviewed in Moscow and Moldova) declared their intentions to settle down in Russia and are very sure about their intentions to integrate.

One can notice a considerable potential of integration in Russia – each third migrant doesn't plan to return to its country of origin in the following five years. The pull factor impacting their return plans will be their “rootedness” in the Russian social life, which increases progressively as they reside in Russia.

Their plans are considerably depending on their income and savings, which they intend to invest in own household in Moldova, social and economic situation in the Republic of Moldova, beneficial social and institutional environment in Moldova:

*“It [Moldova's economy] is very unstable; if there was stability, I could have invested money there”* (FG\_5\_businessmen\_Russian Federation).

*“We are like a balance, if somewhere is better, then we go there”* (FG\_5\_businessmen\_Russian Federation).

The dissatisfaction is due, first of all, to the institutional environment in the Republic:

*“I know very few people who have good business in Moldova and they want to come here ...compared to Moldova, it is better here. It is spacious here, and the laws are more [breaks off]... Who has extra money invests it in Moldova. I hope that in time it will be there as good as in Russia. Of course in time, it will be the same. It cannot last forever”* (Interview, businessmen, Russian Federation).

*“What business? They are coming here”* (FG\_3, citizens of the Russian Federation).

Medium and large businesses avoid investing in Moldova. Another issue is the small business: *“they hope that they would save money and would open a small shop or bar... But it is more complicated for them to open a plant or unit”* (Interview, businessmen, Russian Federation).

The question “What should be done to attract investments in Moldova?” was answered as follows during the focus-groups:

*“What should be done? First of all, adopt a competent economic system that will work.”*

Another participant of the focus-group added: *“And one needs to have money”* (FG\_3, citizens of the Russian Federation).

People are offended by the callousness of civil servants: *“What do we need? Human attitude towards everyone who arrived here, and not to be regarded as a cash cow supplementing Moldova's treasury”* (Interview, Diaspora association representative, Russian Federation).

During the in-depth individual discussions, the representatives of local

public administration authorities declared that a couple of years ago the migrants had the intention to return, especially the qualified migrants. The situation was explained by the construction boom in the urban area, establishment of companies with foreign investments or establishment of own business in rural area by the migrants. But the global financial crisis put an end to the activity of building companies, and the qualified workers had to start again the migration process.

The survey data showed that a considerable part of the Moldovan migrants to the Russian Federation still have the idea to return to the country of origin. If the socio-economic situation of the Republic of Moldova does not improve, the migrants have no intention to return to the country of origin. *“I earn there in half a month what I earn here in five months. There, you receive a lump of money, while here you spend what you haven't got yet”* (FG\_1\_Migrants, Republic of Moldova)<sup>57</sup>.

A part of Moldovans do not want to migrate, but affirm that they have no possibilities to support their families. The Russian Federation is *“the source of our existence...I don't know what would have happened to the families in the Republic of Moldova, if there was no possibility to travel to Russia to work”* (FG\_1\_Migrants, Republic of Moldova).

The young people say that it is very difficult to find a job in the Republic of Moldova, because previous work experience is required, which they don't have. Then a part of them choose the possibility to integrate into the Russian Federation, because *“it is easier to live there”, “I've had it both good and bad in Russia, but after so many years, I am attracted to that country; I have nothing to do here”; “many were deceived, instead of USD 2,000 they were paid USD 1,000...They come home insulted, but then, this money cannot be earned here, they go back...”* (FG\_2\_women, Republic of Moldova).

The young people more often do not want to go back to the Republic of Moldova than the elders. The side effect is that the persons of army recruitment age, who are abroad to work, cannot be recruited to serve the country in the provided period. At the same time, these people cannot be qualified as avoiding serving in the army. Sometimes the young people are recruited not at 18 years old as it is stipulated by law, but at the age of 20-21 years or later.

The young people find more perspectives in the Russian Federation. A

<sup>57</sup> See the paper on returning migrants to Moldova: Borodak D. and Piracha M. (2011) Occupational Choice of Return Migrants in Moldova // *Eastern European Economics*, vol. 49, no. 4. - Pp. 24–46; Mosneaga V., Rusu R. (2007) Moldovan diaspora overseas in the context of international labour // *Immigrants and ethnical diasporas in the regional political processes in the Russian Federation and foreign countries*. Collection of reports on International Scientific and Practical Conference. – Yekaterinburg, Express-design, p.109-117.

number of migrants in the Russian Federation want to migrate to the EU countries such as Italy and Spain, but many have no real grounds for this – most of them are young, with no profession and qualification, with no possibility to get employed in the West. Although, it cannot be denied that the working experience gained in Russia would help them to implement their plans in the future.

The return to the Republic of Moldova is considered by the majority of migrants when they are old. The contradiction is that the longer they live in Russia, they become more familiar in the country of destination, and their social capital in Russia increases at the same time it decreases in Moldova, which makes it difficult to return to Moldova. For many this is a dream that will never come true: *“I love Russia very much, but I have always known that tomorrow I would leave. I am here for a long time now, and I love everything about it: people, traditions, everything, but nevertheless, I had this dream to return. Now, I cannot because of my wife and children”* (FG\_3, citizens of the Russian Federation).

Probably, about one third of migrants, first of all, long-term migrants, will not return to Moldova, the re-emigration potential is basically represented by the young circular migrants, who will not be able to adapt to Russian realities and will not find a job on the Russian labour market. Their return – if the situation on Russian labour market gets worse – can become a serious challenge for Moldova.

The migration phenomenon can be stopped, if the unemployment decreases and the life and existing conditions in Russia and Moldova are not so different. The re-emigration and attraction of investments to the Republic can be done by reorganisation of institutional infrastructure and development of business environment in Moldova.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Migration from Moldova is an important component of the social, political and economic development of the country. Whilst providing relief from a number of daily individual and family issues of citizens, migration nevertheless generates serious social, demographic and political challenges associated with the outflow of the population in the most active ages, weak social relations, especially at micro level, degradation of certain social institutions, including family and education.

The Russian Federation has become one of the principal countries of destination for Moldovan migrants. The key factors of migration from Moldova are the push factors: the need to find a job and gain income, dissatisfaction with the socio-economic situation in Moldova and weak faith in its change. The pull factors are considerably less important: the level and conditions of life in Russia, as well as personal reasons. Taking into account the socio-economic development trends of Moldova and the principal destination countries, the Russian Federation will continue to be an important destination for migration from Moldova in the near future, successfully competing with Western European countries. Furthermore the sectors of employment of Moldovan migrants in Russia will continue to diversify.

Migrants from Moldova reside in Russia in relatively privileged conditions compared to migrants from other post-Soviet countries, which is due to lack of significant cultural barriers, religious affiliation of migrants, and the fact that Moldovan migrants do speak a good Russian language and do not belong to “visible minorities”. Nevertheless, they still face major obstacles stemming from their legal status in the Russian Federation.

Most Moldovan migrants have no legal grounds to work in Russia. Alongside this, informal employment is also widespread. There is a direct connection between informal employment and irregular labour activity. Although informal employment prevails among Moldovan migrants, some migrants manage to “formalize” their labour relations with the employer. But three out of four migrants have been working based on verbal agreements with the employer since the beginning. The lack of legal grounds for work and informal employment practices contribute to the non-observance of the fundamental rights of the employees.

Top-down labour mobility is typical amongst migrants; the education and qualifications of employees are in little demand within the Russian labour market. In conjunction with the absence of decent labour opportunities and incidences of forced labour, many migrants find themselves in difficult real-life situations.

The social exclusion of a number of Moldovan migrants significantly decreases their possibilities to solve certain problems. First of all, these are

often circular migrants whose social communication circle is very small and they do not tend to ask for assistance in critical situations. Distrust in the Russian social institutions is a product of the distrust these migrants have towards the representatives of Moldovan authorities, NGOs, and fellow citizens.

A great part of Moldovan migrants are circular migrants, who travel periodically to Russia for work. Many of these are builders working in qualified jobs. However, most of the Moldovan migrants reside permanently in Russia; many live with their families and actually have been integrated into the Russian society.

Migration, especially circular, has a number of negative consequences on the families: family disintegration, weaker emotional connections in the family, etc., largely stemming from the fact that in most cases one of the parents leaves the rest of the family and travels alone to find a job abroad. Amongst long-term migrants there is a practice whereby children are often left in Moldova or, in the case of families with just one child (particularly if the child is young), the child migrates with the parents.

In those cases when the child (children) lives with the family in Russia, they rarely face serious problems. Fluency in Russian language makes it easier to set up contacts with other children; it is important to note though that their knowledge and use of Romanian tends to diminish. Most families with children earn good money and have adequate accommodation. However, a number of migrant families with children have little to no financial security and their children live in improper conditions such as the working place of the parents.

The narrowing of Romanian language use among long-term migrants has become a serious problem. Fluency in Russian language makes it easier to integrate in the Russian society and because of this Russian is spoken amongst Migrants with increasing frequency. The bilingualism practiced by the migrants leads to the fact that Romanian language is spoken only in the private sphere, whilst Russian language is spoken in public areas.

The expansion of Russian language is also due to the fact that Moldovan migrants rarely work with their fellow citizens. But even when working in purely Moldovan collectives, migrants tend to speak mostly Russian. Within mixed working collectives or in collectives with a majority of Russian Federation citizens or foreigners from other countries, Russian dominates as the working language.

The role of diaspora's organisations in the day-to-day life of both citizens of Russia of Moldovan origin as well as citizens of Moldova residing in Russia is insignificant. The current activity of these organisations does not meet the real needs of most Russian Moldovans and citizens of Moldova who work in

Russia, who need to have a place where they can meet not just sporadically and on holidays, but on a regular basis, to communicate in their native language and find out about the cultural events in Moldova. At present, the Moldovan national-cultural centres do not fulfil these functions. The organisations of Moldovan diaspora in Russia are mostly focused on establishing contacts and working with Russian citizens of Moldovan origin and Moldovan residents. Moldovan migrant workers and their daily needs are not seriously taken into account and the influence of diaspora associations on migrants is very limited.

The choice and change of migration strategy depend on concrete life plans, which the migrants make. The successful or unsuccessful achievement of plans and hopes the migrant has when arriving for the first time to Russia may transform considerably his/her long-term strategies. More than two thirds of migrants, who succeeded to continue their education and get a profession or improve their qualifications, intend to remain in Russia. The rate of those intending to remain in Russia among those who successfully pursued plans of putting order into their personal life or on marriage projects is even higher. The long-term plans of long-term migrants are notably different from those of circular migrants. The vast majority of migrants interviewed in Moldova see their future in Moldova. Almost half of migrants plan to travel for some more time to Russia to earn money, and then settle down in Moldova. A number of migrants abandoned further travels and have decided to settle down in the Republic of Moldova. Only 5.9 per cent would like to settle down in the Russian Federation.

Other long-term strategies are characteristic to respondents interviewed in Russia. The majority have no intentions to return to Moldova in the near future. The most common plan is to stay in Russia and obtain citizenship, whilst the number of those who intend to stay long-term, for more than five years in Russia, and then return to Moldova, is slightly smaller. Less than one fourth of respondents declared their intentions to return to their country in a foreseeable period of time.

A considerable number of long-term migrants and some circular migrants interviewed in Moscow, do not just speak of their intentions to settle down in Russia, but have undertaken concrete steps towards this. The potential of integration into the Russian society of the migrants who do not want to return to Moldova in the near five years is also significant. The factor constraining their return will be their “rootedness” in the Russian society, which is increasing alongside with their stay in Russia.

The plans of migrants are influenced to a certain extent by their salaries and the savings they intend to invest in their households in Moldova, the socio-economic situation as well as the social and institutional environment in the



Republic of Moldova. Money transfers/remittances are used currently for consumption, mainly to increase the household budget, to pay for real estate and its maintenance, procurement of communal services appliances. Only a small number of migrants are willing to invest the money earned abroad into entrepreneurial activity, bank deposits, etc.

A considerable number of Moldovan migrants to the Russian Federation keep in mind the idea of returning to the country of origin; though it depends mostly on the improvement of the socio-economic situation in the Republic of Moldova.

The permanent return to the Republic of Moldova is envisaged by most migrants only for when they are old. The contradiction is that the longer they stay in Russia, the more connections they build there, and the more their social capital increases in Russia, all the while it decreasing in Moldova, which makes it increasingly difficult to return.

Probably about one third of migrants will never return to Moldova; the re-emigration potential consists mainly of young circular migrants, who will not be able to adapt to the Russian reality and will not find a job on the Russian labour market. Their return – if the Russian labour market gets worse – can become a serious challenge for Moldova.

The emigration trend can only be reversed by the decline of the unemployment rate in Moldova and lower levels of differentiation in living conditions in Russia and Moldova. The attraction of return and making investments in the country can be possible through reorganisation of the institutional environment, improvement of business climate and diversification of investment instruments in Moldova.

To solve the problems faced by migrants in the Russian Federations and their family members, recommendations are made in the following areas:

#### LEGAL FRAMEWORK REGULATING MIGRATION

- To negotiate and conclude the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Moldova and the Government of the Russian Federation on issues related to the employment of the citizens of the Republic of Moldova on the territory of the Russian Federation.

#### AWARENESS OF PUBLIC AUTHORITIES: IMPROVEMENT OF STATISTICS, REGISTRATION, MONITORING

- To include more questions related to migration issues, including circular migration to the Russian Federation in the annually survey "Labour Force Survey", conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics.
- To use the potential of the Population Register in order to improve the registration of Moldovan migrants.

- To establish cooperation with the Central Bank of Russia to improve the registration and information exchange methods with respect to money transfers of a natural person of one state in favour of a natural person of another state.
- To establish cooperation with the corresponding Russian services and agencies regarding the statistical registration of labour accidents with Moldovan citizens when working in the Russian Federation.
- To organise studies on positive practice of long-term migration in certain employment sectors of Moldovan migrants in Russia as part of the promotion of different types of labour force migration.
- To organize the on-site local registration of children and elderly who are facing difficult situations due to the migration of their breadwinners.

#### PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF MIGRANT WORKERS

- To establish cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Development of the Russian Federation, with the corresponding services and agencies of the Russian Federation in order to enforce the control over the observance of labour law of the Russian Federation by the Russian companies with regard to Moldovan employees who work on legal grounds.
- To ensure the cooperation between trade-unions of Moldova and Russia; to recommend to key sector trade-unions of the Republic of Moldova (construction, trade, communal services and public services) to conclude framework agreements with corresponding trade-unions of the Russian Federation.

#### SOCIAL PROTECTION OF MIGRANTS AND MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILIES

- To consider the issue of compulsory social insurance of Moldovan citizens leaving for work to the Russian Federation.
- To organise on site social assistance to children and elderly facing difficulties due to the migration of their breadwinners.
- To develop a methodology of identifying socially vulnerable groups of Moldovan citizens in Russia, paying special attention to families with infants.

#### POPULATION AWARENESS

- As part of the support and ongoing development of the informational system of the labour market, to organise the monitoring of labour conditions and salaries in the key employment sectors of migrants in the

largest regions of Russia (Moscow, Moscow Oblast, Sankt-Petersburg, Leningrad Oblast). To ensure the translation into Romanian of the references to respective informational resources on Russian web pages.

- To inform the youth of the Republic on the rights and obligations, labour and residence conditions of the Moldovan migrants in Russia by paying special attention to graduates of schools as a target audience.

#### COMMUNICATION WITH THE DIASPORA

- To initiate the establishment and support of Moldovan Sunday schools under the aegis of organisations of the Moldovan diaspora (national-cultural autonomies, national-cultural centres) in the Russian Federation.
- To provide the Moldovan Sunday schools and national-cultural centres in the Russian Federation with Romanian language manuals.
- To initiate the establishment of the National Centre of the Republic of Moldova in the Moscow City jointly with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration<sup>58</sup>.
- To establish cooperation with the organisations of the diaspora in order to monitor the situation of children, as well as of socially vulnerable strata of Moldovan citizens who reside in Russia.

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<sup>58</sup> As a possible model of such cultural centre, the Hungarian cultural centres can be used, the activity of which is not limited to contacts with the representatives of the diaspora, and hence, has become a newsmaker in the cultural and social-political life of Moscow. The Centre hosts musical concerts, literary evenings, scientific conferences, lectures, movie-showings; it has a library and it provides language courses.

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