



EUROPEAN CENTRE
FOR
MINORITY ISSUES

**MIGRATION AND FORCED
MIGRATION IN THE KALININGRAD
OBLAST OF RUSSIA**

Aiste Skarzinskaite

**ROUNDTABLE MEETING
FLENSBURG
22 - 23 JUNE 2001**

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I. INTRODUCTION

In February 2001, the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) initiated a project on migration matters in the Kaliningrad *Oblast* of Russia.¹ Its purpose is to draw attention to a relatively new issue of the wave of migrants that came to the Russian enclave from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) during the 1990s. After the breakdown of the Soviet system, new population movements within the CIS presented newly-born countries with a lot of challenges. CIS countries and particularly Russia had to manage political, social and economic transition and, at the same time, to deal with the inflow of newcomers, who for various political and economic reasons, opted to change their place of residence. Kaliningrad was no exception and has experienced similar demographic changes.² The integration of newcomers into society is of great importance and remains inadequately explored in scholarly literature. ECMI seeks to investigate complex ethnic and social aspects surrounding this topic and thus to contribute to the overall development of the *Oblast* and the Baltic region as a whole. Most importantly, the project aims to facilitate the dialogue between international, Russian federal and regional bodies on the topics of migration and forced migrants in Kaliningrad. The aims of the initial Roundtable that took place on the premises of ECMI in Flensburg from 22 to 23 June 2001 and that served as a starting event of the long-term project were:

- to clarify the dimensions of the problem, i.e. to explore the ethnic composition, needs and rights of the various migrant groups in the Kaliningrad *Oblast*, to obtain an overview and analysis of relevant statistics;
- to identify the concepts, strategies, and instruments adopted by international organizations, federal and regional authorities and NGOs to facilitate the newcomers' integration;

¹ Among other inspiration, the idea to carry out this project was prompted by the study of the Kaliningrad civil society carried out the Schleswig-Holstein Institute for Peace Research at Christian-Albrechts-University in Kiel: Birkenbach, H.M., Wellman, Ch. (2000). *Zivilgesellschaft in Kalinigrad: Eine Explorationsstudie zur Zusammenarbeit erstellt im Auftrag des Schleswig-Holsteinischen Landtages*, Kiel, and their personal insights and suggestions. ECMI is very grateful for their contribution and recommendations. The Centre would also like to express its appreciation of the cooperation and assistance provided by the Kaliningrad Research and Analytical Centre, when organizing the event, and in particular would like to thank Roustam Baratov and Azamat Issaev for their important contribution.

² The terms "Kaliningrad *Oblast*", "Kaliningrad Region" and "Kaliningrad" are used as interchangeable in this text. The town of Kaliningrad is referred to as the city of Kaliningrad. *Oblast* designates an administrative division of the Russian Federation.

- to start and facilitate the discussion on migration-related matters in Kaliningrad between the authorities and NGOs;
- to develop ideas and draw conclusions on how - in accordance with the needs of local actors - various national or international actors and, first of all, ECMI could contribute to the development of civil society and solution of migration-related problems in the *Oblast* in the long-term.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND MAIN ISSUES OF CONCERN

Forced migration first appeared in the USSR in the late 1980s, just prior to the collapse of the Soviet system. Already in the autumn of 1991, over 710,000 persons from Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia and Uzbekistan were registered as having been forced to leave their place of permanent residence.³ As the Soviet Union disintegrated, forced migration abruptly increased. Ethnopolitical and regional conflicts, and violations of human rights and rights of minorities in some of the newly-born states, became major factors causing mass exodus of forced migrants from those territories.⁴

Knowledge of the migrant's integration in Kaliningrad society remains poor. According to the Kaliningrad State Statistics Committee, in the period from 1990 to 1999, the number of immigrants to the enclave constituted around 389,000, and emigrants from the *Oblast* 267,000.⁵ It can be roughly estimated that due to inward migration, Kaliningrad's population increased roughly by 130,000 during this time, i.e. at least by 11 per cent. Despite these rather substantial numbers, there has been no monitoring of migration flows in the *Oblast*. It is thus hard to speculate about the

³ Mukomel, V. I. (1996). *Forced Migrants in the Commonwealth of Independent States*, A Paper presented at the Conference for CIS Migration.

⁴ The term "forced migrant" was defined in the *Law of the Russian Federation on Forced Migrants* adopted on 20 December 1995, which came into effect the same year. The law defines a forced migrant as "a citizen of the Russian Federation who left the place of residence owing to an act of violence or persecution in other forms committed against him/her or his/her family members owing to real danger of being prosecuted for reasons of race, nationality, religion, language, membership of a particular social group or political opinion that caused hostile campaigns against a particular person [...]" (Article 1). Thus, the status of forced migrant can be claimed by residents of Russia or other CIS states who moved to Russia and retain the right to Russian nationality. According to the second provision of Article 1: "as a forced migrant shall also be recognised a citizen of the former USSR who permanently resided in the territory of a republic of the USSR and who got the refugee status in the Russian Federation [...]".

⁵ These numbers were presented at the Roundtable in Flensburg, 22-23 June 2001.

ethnic constitution or status (i.e. whether they are voluntary internal migrants, internally displaced people, forced migrants or refugees) of the immigrants. Discrepancies in official and non-official estimates, in which all the numbers are put much higher, add even more confusion. A lot of differences between various estimates result from vague legal definitions of different categories of newcomers, thus giving the Kaliningrad Administration⁶ more room to decide whom to register as a forced migrant, refugee or an internally displaced person and whom not to register. Official numbers of immigrants holding the status of forced migrants in Kaliningrad are rather low, but they hardly reflect the reality, due to the fact that a lot of people who move to the enclave perceive the registration process as cumbersome and the benefits very limited and as a rule ignore it altogether.⁷ It should be added, however, that it is known that a large part of the new-wave immigrants have come from the countries of Central Asia and, as a result, this has shifted the ethnic landscape of Kaliningrad's population significantly. In one of its publications, the Schleswig-Holstein Peace Research Institute estimates the number of immigrants from Kazakhstan to be about 37,000, the Baltic States – 23,000, Uzbekistan – 9,000, Azerbaijan – 6,000, Armenia – 2,000, and Georgia – 1,500,⁸ however, again there reason to believe that the actual numbers could be much higher.

A. Registration, Legal Dilemmas and Political Isolation

Newcomers looking for a permanent residence in the *Oblast* face political and social marginalization. Most of the legal difficulties stem from the inadequacy of the outdated Russian residency permit system. Although under severe scrutiny and constant criticism, the residency permit system, colloquially also known as the *propiska*, is still in effect. According to Russian federal laws, in order to be given a status of forced migrant or refugee, newcomers have to provide the local authorities with the address of their permanent residence or, in other words, they have to hold the

⁶ The Administration is the regional executive body of the Kaliningrad *Oblast*. Its head, the Governor (at present, Admiral Vladimir Yegorov), is elected by popular vote.

⁷ International Organization for Migration (IOM), Technical Cooperation Centre for Europe and Central Asia (1998). *Resettlement of Refugees and Forced Migrants in the Russian Federation*, Geneva: International Organization for Migration.

⁸ At present, the total population of the Kaliningrad *Oblast* is about 950,000 people. The numbers about migrants are taken from Birkenbach, H.-M., Wellman Ch. (2000), op.cit.

propiska. However, for a lot of migrants who usually come to the *Oblast* without any money, this might create a lot of difficulties.

The notorious residence permit system has received a lot of criticism from international bodies. In one of its publications, the United Nations High Commissioner

for Refugees (UNHCR) evaluated the efficiency of the *propiska* and concluded that “discrimination relating to *propiska* gerrymandering often prevents newcomers from obtaining status, therefore cutting them off from educational and employment opportunities, as well as closing access to state-funded health care.”⁹ Indeed, the lack of *propiska* hampers access to socio-economic rights, including various social benefits and the right to be employed. A lot of newcomers end up in a vicious circle, when without having a place to live they cannot register and are deprived of a right to work and *vice versa*, not being able to work they cannot obtain permanent accommodation. Their children are not accepted for schools.

Additional difficulties related to the granting of a special status to newcomers are caused by the increasingly complex nature of migration within the territory of the CIS. People decide to move to the westernmost Russian region for manifold reasons, such as political prosecution, violence and wars as well as for economic and social reasons or a mix of both. As the International Organization for Migration (IOM) noted in one of its publications: “the changing forces behind migration mean that more and more people do not fall within the traditional definitions. [...] There is a growing number of persons within the ‘grey area’ of migration, undefined, unprotected and subject to violations of their rights.”¹⁰ Russian federal laws vaguely define the categories of various migrant groups and leave room for arbitrary decisions by public officials.

International law and various conventions, including the very basic ones such as the *European Convention on Human Rights*, the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, etc. or more specific ones like the *International*

⁹ Forced Migration Alert, May 14, 1999, <http://www.osi.hu>

¹⁰ *IOM and Effective Respect for Migrants’ Rights*; Legal Services, November 1997.

Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers entitle migrants to certain rights. So do Russian federal laws: the *Law of the Russian Federation on Forced Migrants*, adopted in December 1995, provides migrants with certain rights and obligations. As provided in Article 7, “federal executive bodies, executive bodies of units of the Russian Federation and local self-government bodies within their competence shall provide a forced migrant with the complete list of settlements recommended for permanent residence [...]; put a forced migrant in accordance with the housing legislation of the Russian Federation on the list of citizens to be provided with dwellings that are constructed (purchased) at the expense of the federal budget [...] and the local budget, etc.” Article 7 also states that it is the obligation of the federal executive bodies and bodies of the units of the Federation to “assist a forced migrant in the realization of his/her right to employment, professional training [...]”.

However, due to the above reasons, many newcomers are unable to receive the legal status of a forced migrant, and they are not entitled to enjoy the rights and protection provided by the federal laws. They are deprived not only of social and economic rights but also of political ones. With their very limited abilities for political participation, they are hardly able to defend their interests efficiently, which leads to their marginalization and isolation. The level of consolidation among the newcomers is very low, as are their financial and organizational resources.

Even those newcomers who successfully pass the registration procedure and receive a legal status (which is not likely to constitute more than 10-15 per cent of all newcomers) complain that the help provided by local authorities is very limited. A registered migrant receives about 300-350 US dollars to obtain accommodation, which is far from sufficient. Assistance to find employment has also been insufficient.

B. Crime, Disease and Stereotyping

As a result of their socio-economic marginalization, some unregistered inhabitants engage in criminal activities. Kaliningrad has already become a regional centre for crime and has a notorious international reputation for being one of the centres for drug and people traffickers, corruption and prostitution in the Russian Federation.¹¹ As

¹¹ See, for instance, Jane’s Central Europe Risk Pointers. The Kaliningrad Oblast at http://submit.janes.com/regional_news/europe/sentinel/central_europe/kaliningrad_oblast.shtml

IOM representative Richard Morris noted in his analysis of the situation in Russia, the frustration of being dispossessed can drive people to extremes and “the temptations to delve into crime, join extreme political movements promising radical political reforms are great.”¹² The increasing number of dispossessed newcomers could as well have an effect on the spread of diseases associated with poverty, including AIDS. The pace at which AIDS is spreading in Russia, and its enclave in particular, is alarming. The disease is believed to be mostly transmitted by drug addicts who often happen to be unemployed and by people who are generally poorly integrated in society. According to some of the most recent data, there are over 30,000 HIV-infected people in Russia and of all 89 regions in the Federation, Kaliningrad has the highest per capita rate – 280 virus carriers for every 100,000 inhabitants.¹³ The gravity of the health crisis in the *Oblast* has also been noted in the most recent document released by the European Commission on Kaliningrad.¹⁴

Marginalization of newcomers is also related to the emergence of negative ethnic stereotypes. Opinion polls indicate that 15 per cent of the population in Russia do not like migrants because they add competition for work places.¹⁵ Although it is hard to say how deeply the stereotypes are imbedded in people’s thinking, it is a rather common view in Kaliningrad that most Caucasians and migrants from Kazakhstan are members of criminal gangs. Given that at present and in future the largest inflow of migrants is expected to come from Central Asia (about 62 per cent from Kazakhstan), negative stereotypes are likely to increase.¹⁶

C. Involvement at Regional and International Levels

Until now, there has been no unit in the Administration that deals directly with newcomers. This could partly be explained by the absence of a regional programme or concept on migration policies in the *Oblast*. It is also due to the lack of publicity regarding migrant-related issues and insufficient recognition of the matter, both by authorities and society. Kaliningrad representatives point to particular

¹² Morris Richard, *Russia Needs More From Migrants* <http://www.friends-partners.org>

¹³ FBIS-SOV-2000-0302, *ITAR-TASS*, 2 March 2000.

¹⁴ *Communication from the Commission to the Council: The EU and Kaliningrad*, Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 17.1.2001, COM (2001), 26 final.

¹⁵ Vitkovskaya G. (1998). *Vynuzdenye Migranty iz Novykh Nezavisimyykh Gosudarstv Na Rossiskoi Rinke Truda* in *Migracija I Rinki Truda v Postsovetskoj Rossii*, Moskva, Dekabr, p. 31.

¹⁶ Interviews with the Lithuanian diplomatic staff in the Kaliningrad *Oblast*, Russia.

problems caused by the enclave status of the *Oblast*. Being just one of the eighty-nine regions of Russia and far from Moscow, both physically and psychologically, Kaliningrad lacks the attention of Kremlin officials and their awareness of the difficulties faced by the Region.

Thus far, international involvement has been rather limited. The Programme for Action of the long-term CIS Migration Conference starts from the expectation that the countries to which newcomers from the CIS arrive will organize a programme for their integration and that the international community takes responsibility to assist in financial, technical and moral terms in the country's efforts to implement the programme. However, international involvement (UNHCR, IOM, OSCE) in the *Oblast* remains low and mainly takes the form of small donations. Since 1993, IOM has been carrying out the Direct Assistance Project, providing the migrant communities with small-scale equipment, but there has been no substantial and direct involvement in the *Oblast* on its part.

III. SESSIONS

DAY ONE

A. OPENING SESSION

ECMI Director **Marc Weller** greeted the participants and opened the Roundtable on the premises of the European Centre for Minority Issues. He gave a brief overview of the tasks of ECMI and its current projects, especially the ones concerning the Baltic region. He stressed that one of the main principles of ECMI is to act in agreement with the interests of the local governments and communities concerned. Mr Weller then outlined the principal aim of this ECMI initiative, which is to contribute towards the development of the Kaliningrad Region by facilitating dialogue and debate between international, federal and regional bodies as well as local NGOs on the topics of migration and various challenges and problems caused by population movements in the *Oblast*. The second speaker, **Christian Wellmann**, Deputy-Director of the Schleswig-Holstein Peace Research Institute (SCHIFF), briefly spoke about the main areas of SCHIFF research and activities, and introduced the projects that his institute has been carrying out in Kaliningrad.

The participants of the Roundtable proceeded to briefly introduce themselves and the organization or institution they represented (see Annex C).

DAY TWO

B. FIRST SESSION

Federal and Regional Migration Policies in Kaliningrad

Presentations

In the introductory note to the First Session of the Roundtable, **Priit Järve**, ECMI Senior Analyst, once again emphasized that, first of all, the organizers are interested in finding out what the representatives of Kaliningrad had to say about their Region. Among the main objectives of the Roundtable, he underlined the need (1) to define the extent to which there exists a challenge for policy concerning migrants and

migration; (2) to discuss and clarify some concepts and terms used in migration debate; (3) to hear the opinion of participants regarding the existing institutional network and legislative framework dealing with migration affairs and to develop ideas on what could be improved; (4) finally, to formulate proposals on the topics to be addressed in future meetings as well as to provide suggestions for areas of future research.

Evgeny Kuldyshev, representative of the Russian Federal Ministry on Federation Affairs in Kaliningrad, started out by saying that the population movements during the 1990s have significantly altered the numerical strength as well as the age and gender composition of the population in the various Russian regions. According to the estimates concerning the share of external and internal migration in the total number of the able-bodied population, immigrants make up the bulk of the workforce in most regions of Russia and play a special role in the shaping of the labour market. The federal official noted that, as a rule, newcomers are better educated than the indigenous population, and thus, one of the results of their inflow is often the increased competition for jobs in the regions in which they decide to settle. He noted that the Kaliningrad *Oblast* has the highest migration load on the labour market in Russia, which is over 10 workers per 1,000 economically active citizens (from 1996 through to 1999), which testifies to the Region's great attractiveness in terms of migration. However, Kaliningrad's geographical position and economic situation do not invite unlimited migration, and the Region has virtually exhausted its potential for receiving migrants in mass numbers. Therefore, local migration control programmes should envisage the creation of new work places in the rural sector of the Region's economy.

Mr Kuldyshev also provided some explanatory notes regarding the terminology and federal legislation on migration. He noted that Russian laws distinguish between (1) refugees, (2) forced migrants and (3) voluntary migrants. According to the legislation, refugees and forced migrants are entitled to the protection and guardianship of the state. A refugee is defined as a person who is not a citizen of Russia and who had to flee his or her native country because of well-grounded fears of persecution for racial, ethnic, religious, social or political reasons and therefore cannot or does not wish to have the protection of his or her country. Similarly, a

forced migrant is a citizen of Russia who had to flee the place of his or her permanent residence because of persecutions or violence committed against this person or members of his or her family, or because of a real danger of being discriminated against for racial, ethnic or social identity, religion, language or political convictions used as a pretext for hostile campaigning against an individual or a group of individuals. He informed the participants that, at present, there are no people in Kaliningrad who have applied for or received the status of a refugee. Among the measures envisaged by the Russian legislation to support forced migrants, he mentioned one-time re-adjustment allocations to persons who have received a forced migrant's or refugee's status; housing and property damages to forced migrants from the Chechen Republic; long-terms housing loans for forced migrants as well as their temporary accommodation; relief and social promotion of underage migrants; one-time allowances to children attending school.

The federal representative noted that the registration of refugees and forced migrants has been going on in Kaliningrad since 1992 and has proved to be an extremely sensitive issue. Newcomers tend to cluster in Kaliningrad city and its environs despite being registered in the rural areas. Another feature of forced migration into the Region has been its relative homogeneity in terms of ethnicity. According to his knowledge, Slavs made up the bulk of all newcomers, with Russians accounting for 76 per cent, and Ukrainians about 12 per cent. As for Belarussians, they have been leaving in greater numbers than entering the Region. Ethnic Germans comprise about 5 per cent of the forced migrants, Caucasians 1.7 per cent and Tatars, 3.2 per cent.

Before turning to migration-related questions, the Vice-Governor of the Kaliningrad *Oblast*, **Galina Yankovskaya**, first sketched the context of the current debate, emphasizing the peculiar geopolitical location of the *Oblast*. Although in terms of its territory the Kaliningrad Region is among the smallest federal territorial units, it nevertheless deserves special attention of federal and international bodies due to its enclave nature and prospective encirclement by the European Union. The Deputy of the highest ranking official at the regional level noted that the two most necessary prerequisites for the successful adjustment to the awaited political changes are (1) adoption of a legislation reflecting the unique status of Kaliningrad; (2) infrastructural reforms that will improve the state of the communication networks, roads, etc. In the

eyes of the regional official, the successful management of migration will also significantly affect the development of the *Oblast* in the future. According to Ms Yankovskaya, the demographic changes that Kaliningrad has experienced due to inward migration require some policy-oriented action from regional as well as federal authorities. At present, the Administration of Kaliningrad is carrying out the activities with regard to forced migrants in three main areas: (1) legalisation of their stay in the Region; (2) assistance with regard to their settlement, accommodation and employment; (3) assistance with regard to social issues. At the same time, the Vice-Governor admitted that there are still more problems than solutions encountered when dealing with migration in the Region. Among the most acute ones, the presenter mentioned the legalization of the newcomers, their accommodation and employment. However, Ms Yankovskaya noted that for the most part the problems could be explained by the grave economic situation in the country rather than by flawed policies. Among the future initiatives that might provide some solutions, several new legislative initiatives were mentioned, among them the adoption of a regional migration programme.

Finally, **Roustam Baratov** from the Kaliningrad Research and Analytical Centre put forward the view of non-governmental organizations. According to Mr Baratov, there are several reasons why people from other CIS regions choose to move to the westernmost part of Russia. Firstly, people count on a comparatively tolerant attitude towards immigrants on the part of the local population, since the “natives” themselves have no deep roots there. In his view, however, the Kaliningrad Region is unlike certain other Russian regions notorious for extremist manifestations of xenophobia. Secondly, the mild climate and certain geographic features of the Kaliningrad Region make it attractive for immigrants from Asian countries. Thirdly, the special economic zone established in the *Oblast* offers many privileges to private businessmen, and so migrants who have the necessary capital for starting a business find it an ideal place for their activities. Finally, some of the relocating people come over to join their relatives and friends who emigrated some time before. The immigrants include ethnic Germans, mostly from Kazakhstan, who, for various reasons, do not want to, or cannot, go and live in Germany.

Evaluating the effectiveness of migration management, Ms Yankovskaya regretted, however, that during the last years neither the federal nor regional or international bodies have paid the necessary attention to migration-related affairs. One of the main flaws in the federal approach is the lack of balance between the commitments undertaken by the state and its ability to fulfill them. In Mr Baratov's view, the federal powers have to follow rather strict legal guidelines in their work, whereas the regional authorities enjoy much more room to manoeuvre. Despite that, the regional government has neglected tackling migration-related affairs in any form in the last ten years. Two previous regional administrations regarded them as a drag on top of a mass of more important macroeconomic problems that had to be addressed. A regional migration programme drawn up by various non-governmental organizations was rejected - first by the Governor and then by the regional parliament.

Discussion

In the discussion, Mr Kuldyshev emphasized that at present some tensions around the *Oblast* could be observed. However, there is no reason to talk about any sort of internal conflict in the Region, especially with regard to nationalities. He also denied any possibility that there could reside around 100,000 illegal migrants in the enclave.¹⁷ As an answer to a request to clarify some terms used in the debate, he noted that the terms "forced migrant" and "internally displaced person" (IDP) are not interchangeable when they are applied to Russia. He referred to the definition of a forced migrant provided in his presentation¹⁸ and noted that after the Russian withdrawal from the Bishkek Agreement in October 2000¹⁹, the term IDP can only be applied to persons moving within the Russian Federation and when their decision to change their place of residence is not caused by persecution or violence directed against them. Mr Baratov also added that the only common feature of an IDP and a forced migrant is that they hold or are entitled to hold Russian citizenship. However, the reason for their actions is fundamentally different. According to the existing laws, the Russian state has no legal commitments to IDPs.

¹⁷ This number has been provided and quoted by some unofficial sources in the Kaliningrad *Oblast*.

¹⁸ See page 10 of this report.

¹⁹ In the Bishkek Agreement, the CIS countries agreed upon free movement of persons in their territory.

Galina Vitkovskaya, an independent scholar and a consultant with the International Organization for Migration, added several important points to the discussion. Firstly, she stressed that according to the results of her investigation, there is no link between the general living standard and unemployment in a region on the one hand and the intensity of migration flows on the other. However, there is strong evidence to suggest that there is a correlation between the opportunities for private business and shadow economy and migration. Ms Vitkovskaya also expressed her disagreement with the idea of creating new work places for newcomers in the rural areas, which was expressed by one of the participants. According to her, the current tendency to concentrate settlements of migrant communities in rural areas is the result of deliberate federal policies; however, this decision might involve some major fallacies. One of the risks of pushing newcomers to rural areas is the lower level of their acceptance there. As a rule, the ratio of unsuccessful adaptation in agricultural areas is rather low, and constitutes 42 per cent on average in Russia. In small towns, this number stands at 33 per cent and in cities at 20 per cent. Also, according to other data, the percentage of people who encountered unfriendly attitudes in towns makes up 10 per cent, in small towns - 14 per cent, in rural areas - 16 per cent.

C. SECOND SESSION

Political participation and NGOs

Presentations

Irina Kosheleva from the NGO *Nadezhda* noted that the history of resettlement organizations in Kaliningrad dates from 1992, when the Kaliningrad branch of the Russian Fund for Assistance to Refugees, *Compatriots*, was registered in the Region. The staff of the branch and its voluntary workers take part in compiling the regional migration programme, as well as in the work of the Council of Resettlement Associations under the Chairman of the State Duma of the Russian Federation. Together with this organization and other NGOs, the Russian parliament drew up a draft resolution concerning the use of vacated cantonments for the benefit of forced migrants. At present, there are over twenty NGOs registered that deal with migration questions; however, only half of them are truly active. Ms Kosheleva also noted that after the change of political powers in November 2000, when rather isolationist and

backward-looking powers were replaced by more progressive ones, there has been a significant shift in the attitude of the regional authorities with regard to migration affairs. The Administration has started paying more attention to the problems voiced by resettlement NGOs and has showed willingness to start a constructive dialogue.

The speaker also informed the Roundtable participants about some plans and programmes proposed by Kaliningrad's non-governmental organizations. Among the actions planned for the years 2001 and 2002 concerning resettlement programmes she mentioned:

(1) monitoring the migration situation in the Region and potential migration flows from the CIS countries; (2) drawing up a regional migration programme, lobbying it in the regional Duma; (3) establishing a *Migratsiya* personnel agency; (4) establishing a Resettlement Bank with mixed capital in the Kaliningrad Region. Concerning the development of the third sector in the *Oblast*, she emphasized the following plans: (1) expanding the activity of the Centre for Supporting Public Initiatives by extending the range of the services rendered to NGOs as well as by consolidating its material base; (2) setting up a network of consultation offices in five districts of the Region; (3) lobbying in the regional Duma the bill *On the Activity of Public Organizations in the Kaliningrad Region*; (4) taking part in the establishment of a regional public charity fund for rendering support to public initiatives.

Roustam Baratov briefed the participants on the main issues and problems concerning the registration of migrants. The legal basis for the procedure was established in October 2000, when the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs introduced stricter rules of registering foreign citizens at their places of residence, and in January 2001 - the procedure of granting Russian citizenship. Thus, at present, all CIS citizens without exception can acquire the Russian citizenship only through the procedure of obtaining a residence permit envisaged for foreign citizens. The only way to avoid this procedure is to formalize the granting of citizenship at the Embassy of the Russian Federation in the country which one is leaving. In Mr Baratov's opinion, however, the problem stems from the fact that stricter rules violate people's rights, since until the mentioned procedural matters are settled, some groups of citizens who come to Russia for permanent residence run into additional difficulties. They find it impossible to exercise immediately some of their rights stipulated by certain other

Russian laws. For instance, a pensioner who is a citizen of a CIS country and arrives in Russia for permanent residence cannot realize his right to a pension until he is registered at his place of residence. Meanwhile, he can only get registered after having been granted citizenship or having received a residence permit, which, according to the law, may take up to six months to formalize. Thus, after his arrival in Russia and until he gets his residence permit, a pensioner who is a foreign citizen cannot get his pension. The same applies to able-bodied foreign citizens: without being registered at one's place of permanent residence, one cannot legally get a job. As for the state, according to the speaker, it provides for a lump-sum aid of up to 350 US dollars, given only to persons who have registered their application for being granted the status of a forced migrant with the appropriate territorial Ministry for the Affairs of the Federation body. Thus, a certain contradiction is observed between the state-declared policy of supporting Russian speakers in their desire to come and live in Russia and the requirements for the registration and naturalisation of such people.

Finally, the last speaker, **Azamat Issaev**, from the Kaliningrad Research Analytical Centre, gave a short overview of recent ethnic processes. He noted that considering the magnitude of migration flows that have taken place in the Region during the last fifty years, the Russian enclave could even be compared to the United States during the time of its immigration peak. At present, there are representatives of over one hundred nationalities living in the *Oblast*, five cultural autonomies (Russian, Lithuanian, Belarussian, Ukrainian, German) and fifty-eight ethnocultural organizations. Most of the settlers who arrived before the 1990s represented Slavic nationalities; however, the new wave of migrants mostly brings very different - as a rule Asian - cultural traditions to this westernmost unit of the Federation. In Mr Issaev's view, given recent population shifts, the day-to-day small-scale conflicts are hard to avoid however, there is no reason to talk about ethnic conflict of any kind. In his opinion, what can be observed could be simply called 'migrant phobia', which is a rather usual and definitely non-violent clash of interests between the local population and newcomers. Mr Issaev listed several potential areas for action, which should be addressed in order to improve the state of inter-communal relations: (1) regardless of whether it concerns traditional, established minorities or more recent diaspora communities, there should be clear measures for protection of ethnic languages provided by the federal Constitution; (2) promotion of cultural values and traditions of

different ethnic groups should be supported by the authorities and/or carried out by the communities themselves and NGOs; this would help to strengthen ethnic tolerance and to avoid stereotyping;²⁰ (3) the monitoring of the current state of interethnic relations should also be carried out; (4) mass media should pay more attention to ethnic issues and for the purpose of publicity an Internet site providing information about different ethnic and diaspora communities could be created.

Discussion

In the debate that followed several statements were made:

- Responding to the issue of prejudices against the newcomers, Galina Yankovskaya noted that according to her knowledge, there are no registered cases of violence against the immigrants (“the population accepts them normally”). According to the speaker, the lack of understanding between the locals and the newcomers stems from overall poverty. Over 37 per cent of the population in Kaliningrad live under the poverty line, and it is quite common among Kaliningraders to hold the view that the regional budget should only be spent on the local population, whereas the newcomers should be supported from the federal funds. **Roustam Baratov** added that so called ‘migrant phobia’ shows no signs of growing into serious ethnic tensions; however, he mentioned that there have been several cases in the *Oblast*, where people were refused jobs just because of their migrant status or ethnic origin.

- Upon the initiative of Council of Europe representative **Piotr Walczak**, the question of a correlation between the number of illegal migrants and the level of crime, as one of the indicators of the newcomers’ integration into the host society, was raised. He also noted that the question of migration and forced migration cannot be discussed regardless of the issue of illegal migration and human trafficking. The representative of the Council of Europe also expressed his criticism regarding the restrictions that the federal authorities have imposed on the free movement of persons within the country and noted that the freedom of movement is one of the basic rights of a person.

²⁰ The examples of stereotyping included labelling most Central Asian settlers as drug-dealers or Caucasians as terrorists.

D. THIRD SESSION

International Organizations Working in the Field of Migration and International Involvement in Kaliningrad

Presentations

Council of Europe representative, **Piotr Walczak**, emphasized that the CoE considers human rights issues to be of particular importance in connection with migration, the integration of immigrants and community relations. The Council of Europe seeks to respond to the concerns of the member states about significant movements of migrants, refugees and issues related to the integration of migrants and demographic trends and proposes solutions which are in conformity with the humanitarian values and high protective standards of the organization. He further noted that in Central European countries, the adoption of migration and integration policies has often followed or coincided with the accession to international treaties. European Conventions are incorporated into national law (e.g. the *European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*) or used as reference documents containing international standards to be adopted at a later stage (such as the *European Social Charter*). In his view, other European Conventions such as the *European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers* and the *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* are equally important for the promotion of community relations. Mr Walczak finished his presentation by listing several normative frameworks containing the human rights standards that should be taken into account by governments when devising integration policies at the European level: (1) the *European Convention on Human Rights and Migrants*; (2) the *European Social Charter*; (3) the *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*; (4) the *European Convention on Nationality*; (5) the *European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers*; (6) the *Convention on Participation of Foreigners in Local Public Life*.

Nina Adamova from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) admitted that despite their active involvement in the Russian Federation and CIS states in general, IOM has not carried out a single project in Kaliningrad. However, she noted that the decision of the organization to participate in the Roundtable is a clear sign

that IOM is willing to learn more, to establish the necessary contacts and, possibly, to expand their activities to Kaliningrad in the future. Although Russia is not a member of IOM and only has the status of an observer, the organization has been operating in the countries of the CIS (at present, it has eleven offices there) since the signing of the cooperation agreement with the Federation in March 1992.

The enormous size of Russia, the wide range of problems, competing priorities and its complicated federal structure all combine to create a difficult environment in terms of migration management. In addition, the Ministry of Federation Affairs and Nationality and Migration Policies still has to develop a new migration programme and to come up with an overall concept of migration management as well as to secure resources to implement the existing programmes. The flow of newcomers to Russia has stabilized; nevertheless, the integration problems of resettlers remain, in particular the social ones. In the opinion of the IOM representative, another factor complicating the control of migration processes in the country is that Russia is the largest CIS country and a substantial part of its newly established borders remains poorly monitored. Transparency of borders, visa-free regime with some CIS countries, as well as underdeveloped legislation regulating the legal status of the Russian borders (e.g. the law on the status of foreigners in the Russian Federation has still not been adopted), add further difficulties. All these loopholes are used by a significant number of immigrants for staying in Russia in transit in hope for a further escape to the West. Among IOM priority areas in Russia, the speaker mentioned: (1) capacity-building of migration management programmes; (2) assisting and strengthening the national borders and migration control, which relates to both policy and operational levels (Federal Border Guard Service, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior); (3) strengthening institutions concerned with migration issues by providing expert advice, assisting with research, organising workshops as well as supporting local NGOs.

Discussion

During the discussion, the following issues were raised:

- the lack of international involvement in Kaliningrad;
- possible involvement of the UNHCR in future Kaliningrad projects;
- Kaliningrad's future development scenarios in the context of European Union enlargement;

- possible inclusion of Kaliningrad in the CIS Migration Conference follow-on process.

E. CONCLUDING SESSION

During the last session of the Roundtable, the participants – representatives of the federal and regional authorities, NGOs and international organizations – expressed the need for further cooperation and further contact. The IOM representative, Ms Adamova, proposed that, in her view, with regard to IOM competence areas it would seem worthwhile to consider future activities in the following areas: (1) border management opportunities in the Kaliningrad *Oblast*; (2) support for practice-oriented research on migration issues; (3) monitoring of the migration situation, transit migration, interethnic relations, medical issues (drug abuse and AIDS) in the Region; (3) promotion and support for other initiatives surrounding the integration of newcomers. Ms Kosheleva noted that the event was very rewarding for the NGOs invited; however, one of the main issues to be faced by all the participants is how to attract financial and intellectual capital to the Region.

In addition, a declaration in the form of conclusions was adopted by consensus of all the participants of the workshop.²¹

Mr Weller thanked all the participants for their active and fruitful work and invited them for further cooperation. Ms Yankovskaya, on behalf of the Kaliningrad Administration, and Mr Kuldyshev, on behalf of the Russian Federal authorities, expressed their gratitude to ECMI for initiating the project and inviting them; they also confirmed their readiness for further cooperation on follow-ons of the meeting.

²¹ The text of the Conclusions is attached as Annex A.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORK PLAN

As the discussions of the participants demonstrated, there is a true commitment to finding ways of overcoming the difficulties facing the officials and non-governmental activists working within the field of migration and its management as well as the willingness to work together to achieve common aims. Evaluating the Roundtable meeting, several conclusions can be drawn.

Firstly, it has to be said that the Kaliningrad Region remains a very sensitive and complex topic in international as well as Russian internal politics. Its importance for Brussels and Moscow has been confirmed by the inclusion of the Kaliningrad question in EU – Russian talks as well as by its recent consideration in the Security Council of the Russian Federation.²² As the Roundtable discussions further confirmed, all future follow-ons and projects concerning the Russian enclave have to be undertaken with careful consideration of the internal dynamics of the federal affairs within Russia²³, equally involving the officials from all governmental levels and thus keeping a fair balance between the federal, regional and international representation.

Secondly, the knowledge of exact numbers of migration flows and integration of the migrants in Kaliningrad society remains very poor. The statistics available and presented at the Roundtable were vague and hardly credible as the official estimates do not take into account the increasing numbers of illegal migrants who, for various reasons, fail to register with the authorities. Non-official estimates cannot be relied upon either as they are based on pure speculation. Migration terms applied in Russia vary significantly from international concepts and sometimes cause some confusion even among the experts dealing with the matter on a daily basis. To summarize, in the future, more research and practice-oriented investigation need to be done concerning

²² See *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, July 27, 2001.

²³ An interesting example could include the usage of the word ‘conflict’ in the Roundtable, which was employed as a scholarly and rather neutral term by Christian Wellmann in order to describe both the current tacit tensions regarding the international status of the *Oblast* and one of the possible, though, very remote development scenarios of ethnic relations in the Region. The mentioning of the term ‘conflict’ in connection with Kaliningrad sparked a clearly negative reaction from the side of the officials participating in the Roundtable.

the migration flows in the Region, the ethnic constitution and diasporic communities in the *Oblast* as well as possible alternative policies to manage migration better, etc.

Thirdly, the interest of regional authorities in the issue of migration management and the integration of resettlers in the *Oblast* remains modest. However, it has to be noted that since the change of political powers in November 2000, when isolationist political parties in the Kaliningrad Duma were replaced by more progressive ones, the attitude of the Administration has been shifting. More attention is now given to migrant-related matters and there are plans to adopt a programme (as well as a concept) on migration policies in the *Oblast*. The regional executive body is also planning to establish a special unit that will deal with migration matters.²⁴ It is not easy to predict the efficiency of the actions under way as there is a clear lack of relevant expertise by Kaliningrad officials. With regard to federal policies, as it was noted at the Roundtable, it seems at present that the commitments of Moscow authorities, made under various federal laws, are not in agreement with their actual capacity to fulfil them, especially when it comes to the social and economic rights of the migrants. It should also be emphasized that the year 2001 is likely to bring about a number of changes in the field of migration control as the federal Government is in the process of drafting new laws on naturalization, on immigration, on forced migrants and evacuees, on refugees, on the legal status of foreign citizens in the territory of the Russian Federation, which are going to bring a lot of changes to the current legislative and institutional framework.

Fourthly, the interaction between Kaliningrad resettlement NGOs and regional authorities still seems to be limited and the impact of NGOs on decision-making in the *Oblast* relatively modest, and thus remains an area for improvement. Despite the fundamental achievements made since 1991, significant obstacles still hinder full contribution of NGOs to addressing migrant and migrant-related issues at the decision-making level, to granting necessary assistance, and to strengthening civil society as a whole. The sense that considerable improvements are required was expressed by all representatives of the non-governmental sector. Some NGOs referred

²⁴ As the communication with the participants after the Roundtable indicated, the Flensburg event even increased the determination of the officials to start such an administrative unit.

to the need of technical and financial support and guidance from international actors as well as exchange of information and expertise.

Finally, the involvement of international bodies working in the field of migration in the *Oblast* remains limited. This can be said particularly about the UNHCR and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which were invited to the Roundtable but eventually did not participate. However, to end on an optimistic note, it can be said that the interest of European states in the *Oblast* is increasing, which gives rise to greater hope that more attention be paid to migration matters as well.

At the Roundtable, it was proposed to consider a series of initiatives that might be taken in the future. These could be launched at a larger roundtable to be held with the encouragement of the federal and regional authorities in the Kaliningrad *Oblast* either later in 2001 or early in 2002, subject to funding being available. Such initiatives would be pursued through a series of specialist workshops or training events covering issues like:

- how to ensure a longer-term integration of migrant populations, including the provisioning of jobs, education (also in the respective mother tongue where appropriate) and health services: This also includes taking of measures aimed at preventing the emergence of prejudices and other disadvantageous developments in the future, including the overall economic development. It could include specialist policy-oriented training workshops for regional or federal officials (if they expressed a need for such an event) carried out by experts in the field.
- how to improve the capacities of NGOs to assist in this process: This includes the development of an Internet website offering advice on registration requirements and procedures, entitlements, job opportunities and social and educational services, etc. The need to develop strong layers of cooperation between local, regional and federal authorities and the NGO sector was stressed.
- how to improve the awareness of their economic, social and political rights among the migrant population and how to increase their participation in the

political life of the *Oblast*: This could be done through specialist training sessions for the members of resettlement NGOs.

- how to better monitor and analyse the numbers of migrants and their movements over the time and how to initiate and carry out practice- and policy-oriented investigations.

V. ANNEXES

ANNEX A

CONCLUSIONS OF THE ECMI WORKSHOP ON “MIGRATION AND FORCED MIGRATION IN THE KALININGRAD OBLAST OF RUSSIA”, FLENSBURG 23 JUNE 2001

1. This workshop was attended by representatives of the Russian Federal Organs, the Kaliningrad *Oblast* regional authorities and Duma, and NGOs and research centres from the Region. It was also attended by representatives of international agencies, including IOM and the Council of Europe, and by centres of research on migration issues elsewhere. The meeting was facilitated by the European Centre for Minority Issues.²⁵

2. The meeting noted that the Kaliningrad *Oblast* had been subjected to significant population movements, also as a result of the changes connected with the post-Soviet transition and the establishment of the CIS. While this trend had decreased in the second half of the 1990s, further migration is likely to continue to occur, also due to economic factors.

3. The meeting noted the benefits that migratory movements are producing, especially given the demographic shift that is occurring in the Kaliningrad *Oblast* where deaths outnumber births. However, it was also noted that migration flows need to be accompanied by appropriate and supportive policies, including the particular attention that needs to be paid to those having been subjected to forced migration.

4. The various relevant concepts and respective legal entitlements and procedures were introduced, relating to migrants, forced migrants and refugees. It was noted that at the federal level, significant legal changes are being introduced. However, it was also noted that not all aspects of migration were at present being covered. The issue of unregistered migrants was also noted. It was noted that there has not yet been a very significant level of involvement by international agencies in this issue. The value of international advice and, where appropriate and requested, international expertise and resources, was noted. It was stressed, however, that the principal authority in this matter rests with the Russian Federation, and at regional level, the Kaliningrad *Oblast*.

5. In view of this background, it was proposed to consider a series of initiatives that might be taken. These might be launched at a larger roundtable to be held with the encouragement of the federal and regional authorities in the Kaliningrad *Oblast* later in 2001 or early in 2002, subject to funding being available. Such an initiative would be pursued through a series of specialist workshops covering issues like:

- how to improve and ease the process of registration of migrants and forced migrants and how to monitor and analyse their numbers, characteristics and movements over time;
- how to assess the immediate needs of the relevant populations and to assist in making available better provision for their needs. This includes measures to ensure a better uptake of the assistance that is already available at present.
- how to ensure a longer-term integration of migrant populations, including provisioning of jobs, education (also in the respective mother tongue where appropriate) and health services. This also includes the taking of measures aimed at preventing the emergence of prejudices and other disadvantageous developments in the future, including the overall economic development.
- how to improve the capacities of NGOs to assist in this process. This includes the development of an Internet resource offering advice on registration requirements and procedures, entitlements, job opportunities and social and educational services, etc. The need to develop strong layers of cooperation between local, regional and federal authorities and the NGO sector was stressed.

6. The participants expressed their thanks to the organizers and agreed to remain in contact through ECMI with a view to participating in the follow-on activities described above.

²⁵ The generous cooperation of the Schleswig Holstein Institute for Peace Research in conceiving this event and its organization is gratefully acknowledged.

ANNEX B

AGENDA OF THE WORKSHOP

FRIDAY 22 JUNE

18.00 – 19.00	Introduction to the activities of the European Centre for Minority Issues and the Schleswig-Holstein Institute for Peace Research (<i>Marc Weller, Christian Wellmann</i>)
20.00	Welcome dinner (<i>Bellevue, Caf und Restaurant, am Gästeyachthafen, Hafenspitze</i>)

SATURDAY 23 JUNE

	Opening and introductory remarks
9.00 – 10.45	<p>First session: Overview of Federal and Regional Migration Policies in Kaliningrad Chair: Priit Järve, ECMI Presenters: <i>Roustam Baratov, the Kaliningrad Association for NGOs for Human Rights, RIAC and Evgeny Kuldyshev, Russian Federal Ministry on Federation Affairs</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. General trends and statistical overview 2. Federal migration policies with regard to Kaliningrad 3. Regional migration policies of the <i>Oblast</i> authorities
10.45 – 11.00	Coffee break
11.00 – 12.45	<p>Second Session: Political participation and NGOs Chair: Farimah Daftary, ECMI Presenters: <i>Irina Kosheleva, Head of the NGO Nadezhda and Azamat Issaev, RIAC</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Migrant NGOs – evaluating their capacity 2. Ethnic affiliation of the newcomers; dealing with ethnic prejudices 3. Registration of the newcomers; political and social rights
13.00 – 14.30	Lunch break (<i>Hansens Brauerei, Schiffbrücke 16</i>)
14.30 – 16.15	<p>Third Session: International involvement in Kaliningrad Chair: Hanne-Margret Birckenbach and Christian Wellmann, SCHIFF Presenters: <i>Nina Adamova, the International Organization for Migration, Piotr Walczak, the Council of Europe</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Activities of international organizations (the Council of Europe, International Organization for Migration) 2. Evaluating the Follow-Up to the 1996 Geneva Conference on the Problems of Refugees, Displaced Persons, Migration and Asylum Issues with regard to Kaliningrad
16.15 – 16.30	Coffee break
16.30 – 19.00	<p>Fourth Session: Conclusions and recommendations Chair: Marc Weller, ECMI</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identification of potential risks (political, social, security) stemming from the current situation 2. Formulation of conclusions and recommendations on priority areas to be addressed in the follow-ons organized by ECMI with international and local partners
20.00	Farewell dinner (<i>Eckener Haus, Restaurant, Gosch & Stein GbR, Norderstrasse 8</i>)

ANNEX C

PARTICIPANTS OF THE ROUNDTABLE

KALININGRAD *OBLAST*, RUSSIA

Ms Yankovskaya, Galina	The Kaliningrad Administration	Vice-Governor of Kaliningrad
Mr Kuldyshev, Evgeny	Russian Federal Ministry on Federation Affairs	Representative in Kaliningrad
Mr Bagalin, Vladimir	Kaliningrad Regional Duma, Committee for Law, Order and Security	Chairman
Ms Kosheleva, Irina	Migrant NGO ‘Nadezhda’	Head
Mr Baratov, Rustam	The Kaliningrad Association for NGOs for Human Rights; Kaliningrad Resource and Information Analysis Centre RIAC	Head
Mr Issaev, Azamat	Kaliningrad Resource and Information Analysis Centre RIAC	Analyst

REPRESENTATIVES OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, EXPERTS

Ms Adamova, Nina	International Organization for Migration	Senior Project Development Assistant, Moscow
Mr Walczak, Piotr	The Council of Europe, Migration and Roma/Gypsies Division, Directorate of Social Affairs and Health	
Ms Willer, Astrid	The Schleswig-Holstein Refugee Council	Head
Ms D’Hooghe, Emma	Centre for Documentation of Asylum Agencies, Brussels	
Ms Vitkovskaya, Galina	International Organization for Migration	IOM consultant, Coordinator of IOM Research Programme
Ms Magnusson, Marta-Lisa	Expert; freelancer with ECMI	

THE SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN INSTITUTE FOR PEACE RESEARCH

DR Wellmann, Christian	Deputy Director
Dr Birckenbach, Hanne-Margret	Senior Researcher

THE EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MINORITY ISSUES

Mr Weller, Marc	Director
Järve, Priit	Senior Analyst
Ms Daftary, Farimah	Senior Research Associate
Ms Mooney, Erin	Visiting Fellow, the Brookings Institution CUNY Project on Internal Displacement
Ms Skarzinskaite, Aiste	Visiting Research Associate