



## *Project Brief*

### **Towards Sustainable Partnerships for the Effective Governance of Labour Migration in the Russian Federation, the Caucasus and Central Asia**

**Countries:** Russian Federation, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan

**Target groups:** Migrants and their families, national governments, trade unions, employers' organizations, NGOs.

**Partners:** National governments, trade unions, employers' organizations

**Budget:** EUR 2,433,508

**EC Contribution:** 80%

**Duration:** 2007 to 2009

### ***Background***

The majority of the policy and research activities in the CIS region in recent years have focused on countering human trafficking, with far less attention on issues of labour migration, including other forms of irregular migration. Yet there is a pressing need to re-examine current approaches to the governance of migration for three principal reasons.

First, although there are important variations between the project countries, in the next decade they will all be confronted with a reduction of native labour forces because of a decline in fertility rates. In the Russian Federation, for example, it is estimated that up to 1.5 million workers per year are being lost to the labour market through demographic transitions. Although each of these countries currently has significant unemployment levels, in the medium term labour market demand will outstrip labour supply and undermine potential economic growth across the region. Labour migration is an important element in a suite of policies required to address this challenge.

Second, the presence of large populations of irregular workers, especially in certain key sectors of the Russian Federation, is symptomatic of the need for better policies and systems. The over-reliance of certain sectors on migrant workers may not be economically sustainable. There are also very pressing concerns about the human and labour rights of the workers themselves. An immediate challenge is to regulate the situation of irregular workers. A longer-term challenge is to regulate the labour market so as to reduce demand for migrant workers while recognizing demand that will persist and legally recruit workers to meet it.

Third, important disparities mean that there are likely to be increasing incentives for migration across the region for the foreseeable future. Disparities in economic development and particularly the availability of work combine with the historical legacy of past migrations which may no longer make sense in the light of the current economic geography and growing demographic gradients across the region to encourage migration. Most migrants in the region move to the Russian Federation – it is estimated for example that some 420,000 Tajiks migrate to the Russian Federation each year. It is also important to note that there is also significant migration from the Russian Federation, particularly of the educated and skilled, at the estimated scale of some 50,000 per year at the same time. In this context all countries in the region face the challenge of maximising the benefits of migration for both origin and destination countries, while minimizing its potentially negative consequences. Specifically, more effective regulation of immigration needs to be combined with longer-term and more proactive initiatives to reduce disparities and ensure that those who move do so voluntarily, in a legal manner and because their labour is required.

## Objectives

The **overall objective** of the project is to promote a sustainable, participative and equitable approach to the governance of labour migration in the Russian Federation, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

The project will promote national and regional dialogue among the social partners on more effective and equitable forms of governance of migration, including initiatives of governments, trade unions, employers' associations, civil society, the ILO and other organisations in the region. These will be supported by close examination of changing labour market conditions and requirements resulting from growth and structural change, the challenges faced at the level of national policy down to local administration in protecting migrant rights, and the opportunities for maximizing the beneficial impacts of migration on economic development through appropriate policies and programmes in origin and destination countries.

The project has **five specific objectives**, each focusing on one or two countries: (1) To develop practical methods for assessing and forecasting labour market requirements with a view to improving migration governance; (2) to promote decent work and enhance the protection of migrant workers' rights; (3) to develop a system of earned regularisation and introduce sound regularisation policies and procedures; (4) to contribute to the productive utilization of the region's human resources by developing systems for the portability of qualifications and reducing bureaucratic obstacles to recruitment; and (5) to develop policies that enhance the positive impact of migration on development in origin countries.

## Activities

### Capacity building in Labour Market Assessment for Migrant Workers, Russian Federation

Intervention	Activity
Studies	Review of current approaches to assessing and forecasting labour market requirements, reviewing skills gaps, design of an on-going monitoring system for foreign labour demand.
Workshop	National – to share findings
Training/Capacity building	Advisory mission by labour market expert Study visit to two EU member states (MS) by policy-makers and specialists and social partners Establishment of advisory boards Operations manual

### Capacity building - Regularization/Review and Implementation of New Migration Legislation, Russian Federation

Intervention	Activity
Studies	Review of migration management policies with a focus on regularization and employer sanctions
Workshop	National – to share findings
Training/Capacity building	Study visit to two EU MS by policy-makers and specialists and social partners Strengthening of social dialogue Operations manual
Other	Documentary

### Promoting Decent Work and Protection of Migrant Workers, Kazakhstan

Intervention	Activity
Studies	Employment of migrants in informal sector and protection of MWs; policy review

Workshop	National – to share findings
Training/Capacity building	Awareness – raising (TUs) Operations manual

### **Facilitating the Productive Utilization of Human Resources, Kyrgyz Rep.**

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Study	Manpower profile and occupational classification Review of portability of qualifications for KR workers
Workshop	National – to share findings
Training/Capacity building	Human resource development and promotion strategy for foreign employment Operations manual

### **Enhancing the Development Impact of Migration, Armenia and Tajikistan**

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Studies	Emigration and return patterns and development potential of return Impact of emigration of skilled human resources Financial intermediation and remittances
Workshop	National – to share findings
Training/Capacity building	Migration and development strategy Operations manual Pilot on financial intermediation and remittances(Armenia) Pilot on migrant associations (Tajikistan)

### **Regional Activities**

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Consultations (4)	Decent work and migrants rights; Productive utilization of human resources; Migration and development; Admission policies
Training/Capacity building	Support to migrant programs among TUs