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2012: The Year of Global Reports on TVET, Skills & Jobs - Consensus or Diversity?

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01.04.2013

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Russian Perspective of the World Development Report: Jobs, Migrants and Human Capital, Pages 81-83

Keywords: jobs; migrants; the World Development Report; human capital

Summary: Nowadays Russia is experiencing all the labour challenges mentioned in the WDR in great detail. At the same time there are some peculiar traits in Russian social-economic development which are not common for other countries, in particular, migration issues. From the WDR point of view, measures taken in Russia might be considered as effective.

The *World Development Report (WDR) 2013* produced by the World Bank deals with development that happens through jobs (World Bank, 2012). It also reveals global challenges tightly linked to both labour and development (population ageing, migration flows growth, youth unemployment) as well as new traits (changing distribution of earnings in society, women transformational labour, diverse jobs agendas).

The dual function of work should be emphasized. On one hand, the level of productivity in a workforce affects a nation's living standard and level of economic development. On the other hand, having a job is a real basis for individual self-improvement, self-determination and life satisfaction.

Undoubtedly, nowadays Russia is facing all the labour challenges and problems mentioned in the WDR. Some problems are being resolved via state policies related to the labour market and employment.

At the same time there are some peculiar traits in Russian social-economic development which are not common for other countries, - in particular, migration issues.

Russia, as is mentioned in the WDR (World Bank, 2012), is the second largest recipient of migrants (12.3 million) after the USA (42.8 million). But as shown in Table 1 below, foreign labour migration in Russia is characterized by a low-qualified labour force.

Table 1. Redistribution of native workers and labour migrants in Russia in vocational education (%), 2011

Level of vocational education	Native workers in Russia	Labour migrants in Russia
Tertiary	55%	16%
Secondary	24%	27%
Elementary	21%	57%
Total	100%	100%

Huge numbers of labour migrants come from the Commonwealth of Independent States – Uzbekistan (41%), Tajikistan (21.5%), Ukraine (13.4%), and Kirgizstan (9.4%). The majority (86%) of these foreign immigrants to Russia are male. In fact, the majority of these migrants in Russia are also low-skilled (Statistics Russia, 2010).

Such a situation seriously contradicts many global trends mentioned in the WDR (p.234), that "skilled workers represent a growing share of international migration" (World Bank, 2012). However, there is one explanation. For the last two decades Russia has been involved in an overall **tertiary** vocational education revolution. In Russia in the 1980s there used to be only 40% graduates from tertiary vocational education institutions, at the end of 1990s this number rocketed and accounted for 75% (Statistics Russia, 2010). This seriously challenged the occupational-qualification structure of the Russian labour market. In 1980s USSR, there used to be one manager for every three workers; nowadays there is one worker for every three managers (The President's address to the Federal Assembly 5/11/2008)! Thus, our country has done a lot to contribute to the labour force shortage which is trying to be resolved via foreign worker immigration nowadays. Such a situation might cause serious negative outcomes, such as increasing social tensions in Russian society and human capital degradation.

Nowadays, Russia is facing two challenges: a labour force shortage and human capital downshifting. There are, however, a number of recently adopted policy documents to overcome this, for example: the "Concept on state migration policy till 2025" 13.06.2012, and the "Strategy-2020: new growth model – new social policy" 14.03.2012. Thus, Russia is currently transforming its migration policy by human capital upgrading.

Reflecting on the perspective trends for global leadership, the WDR allows us to consider measures taken by the Russian government to be effective. However, in parallel with upgrading Russian migration policy, the Russian government will have to take measures both on the development that happens through jobs as well as labour matching to contemporary human needs.

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