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COUNTRY SHEET RUSSIA

**November
2008**

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Further information can be obtained at info@cri-project.eu.

The Country Sheet Russia is a product of the CRI project.

CRI-country sheets are prepared mainly on the basis of publicly available information, completed with data gathered by local partners in the specific countries, and will be updated periodically.

Our local partners in Russia are:

- Civic Assistance Committee for Forced Migrants and Refugees: a network organisation present in 46 regions, with its main office in Moscow. They act as an in-between for governmental bodies and migrants, supporting the latter with legal advice and humanitarian aid
- Centre for Independent Social Research: a St Petersburg based NGO and high profile social research institute with a wide spectrum of sociological interests. Research a.o; on ethnicity, migration, nationalism and gender studies

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1. Access to the territory (from country of asylum to return area)

Russia maintains a visa regime. Citizens of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) are deliberated from the visa-obligation.

For all others a visa-application has to be addressed personally or via a travel-agency to a Russian consulate. Necessary documents: visa-application form (accessible via websites of the Russian consulates or at the consulate itself), official invitation, passport photos (1-4, depending on the consulate).

1.1.Documentation

1.1.1. Required travel documents for returnees

The returnee needs a Russian travel passport, or – by absence of this – a temporary personal identification P-2 form issued at the Russian consulate.

In case of repatriation and in the absence of a valid passport, it is necessary to obtain a repatriation certificate at the Russian consulate or embassy. This document confirms the Russian citizenship of the returnee. In such a case, no other documents are required for entry into Russia.

1.1.2. Documents needed in the country of return

Documents confirming the identity of Russian citizens on its territory¹:

1. A Russian citizen's passport - since October 1, 1997 this is the main document that proves the identity of a Russian citizen on Russian territory.
2. An USSR citizen's passport of the type issued since 1974 counts on Russian territory as a form of personal identification. According to a Supreme Court appeal board decision from November 4, 2003, these passports have no effective expiring dates.
3. A sailor's passport is a document that proves the holder's identity both on Russian territory and abroad.
4. A birth certificate is a document that supports the identity of Russian citizens under the age of 14.
5. An identification of a member of the Russian armed forces is a document that supports the identity and legal status of a Russian serviceman.
6. A military service card is a document that supports the identities of both enlisted and drafted soldiers, sailors, sergeants and senior officers in active military service. It also applies to students of military academies and educational institutions for the duration of their enrolment.
7. A temporary personal identification of Russian citizenship, according to form No. 2-P - a document establishing a person's identity for a limited period of time.

¹ Russian Federation. Presidential decree No. 232, (Collection of legislation of the Russian Federation, 1997, No. 11, p. 1,301), from March 13, 1997, adopted by the Russian government, <http://www.garant.ru/prime/20070216/12051924.htm>, last accessed July 2008

1.1.3. How to obtain the required documents

All the documents mentioned above can be purchased via the Russian consulates in the EC.

Application for a Russian citizen's passport

According to a Russian presidential decree² - any person of 14 years of age or older who leaves the country must apply for a Russian citizen's passport, unless he is either a serviceman or a sailor. At present, the responsibility for issuing and amending passports rests with Russia's Federal Migration Service (FMS) and its subdivisions.³

All citizens of Russia, from the age of 14, must have a passport. The passports are subject to renewal on their 20th and 45th birthday.

Returnees without a valid passport are obliged to address a Russian consulate before leaving for Russia.

According to the Russian NGO "Civic Assistance Committee" (CAC), which assists returnees to Russia, there are cases of returnees which had to prove their identity in spite of the fact that they possessed a valid passport. Therefore, CAC advises returnees to collect as many documents as possible, especially those, which are confirming an official local registration. In case the returnee is not registered anywhere, he should register in his place of temporary stay. If this is not possible, then he may apply for a passport at his actual residence.⁴ Although this is fairly difficult because it remains unclear which passport agency will be responsible for the issue of such a passport. In such cases appeals must be made to the Federal Migration Service FMS in Moscow.⁵

According to Article 13 of Decree No. 1105⁶, the issue and replacement of passports is performed by FMS subdivisions at the place of residence, place of temporary stay, or the location where the citizen's application is filed.

According to Article 16 of Decree No. 1105⁷, passports must be issued to citizens:

- ↪ within 10 working days from when the FMS subdivision received all of the required documents, if the passport is being issued based on the place of residence;
- ↪ within two months from when the FMS subdivision received all of the required documents, if the passport is not being issued based on the place of residence, as well as in cases where the passport is stolen or lost.

It should be taken into account that these time guidelines are often not observed. The Russian NGO-network "Migration Rights", run by the Russian Human Rights Centre

² Russian Federation. Presidential decree No. 232, (Collection of legislation of the Russian Federation, 1997, No. 11, p. 1,301), from March 13, 1997, adopted by the Russian government, <http://www.garant.ru/prime/20070216/12051924.htm>, last accessed July 2008

³ Requirements to apply for passports are defined in: Russian Ministry of the Interior. Decree No. 1105: issued on December 28, 2006, adopted by the city of Moscow, <http://www.garant.ru/prime/20070216/12051924.htm>, last accessed July 2008

⁴ Questions may addressed to CAC, contact: see Appendix II

⁵ FMS, V.Radishchevskaja's street, d. 4, p. 1, Moscow, tel.: 495 698-00-78, office hours: Monday-Thursday: 10.00-18.00, Friday: 10.00-16.00 and Saturday: 10:00-14:00, website of the FMS with additional information: <http://www.fms.gov.ru/>, last accessed November 2008

⁶ Russian Ministry of the Interior. Decree No. 1105: issued on December 28, 2006, adopted by the city of Moscow, <http://www.garant.ru/prime/20070216/12051924.htm>, last accessed July 2008

⁷ Russian Ministry of the Interior. Decree No. 1105: issued on December 28, 2006, adopted by the city of Moscow, <http://www.garant.ru/prime/20070216/12051924.htm>, last accessed July 2008

“Memorial”, confirms that it can take two to three weeks to receive a passport from the moment when all documents were filed.⁸

According to the “Civic Assistance Committee” (CAC), these timeframes exceed the average in the Republic of Chechnya.

Securing a Russian travel passport in Russia

According to the Constitutional Court resolution No. 2-P, issued on January 15, 1998, a Russian citizen can apply for a travel passport at his place of registration, as well as in any other Russian FMS agency near his place of stay. In practice, this procedure may last for up to six months. However, this is a more secure method to obtain a passport than intermediation through private firms.

Recently the number of intermediary firms that assist in securing a passport have exploded in Russia. They charge fees that depend on the applicant’s location in Russia and the urgency of his request. Their services cost up to EUR 1.000. Some of these firms work in cooperation with the Russian FMS agencies. The documents they issue are actual passports, and the collected fees vary with the timeframes within which the order is executed. However there are also firms that issue counterfeit passports. As a rule, such firms frequently change their location and are impossible to track down in case of complaint or official sanctions.

Citizens who wish to use the services of intermediary firms must exercise extreme caution when making their selection⁹.

1.1.4. Prices of necessary documents

A Russian citizen’s passport entry into Russia, issued outside the territory of Russia, is charged with a state fee of RUB 400¹⁰ (RUB 1.000 for electronic types of identification). A passport establishing the identity of a Russian citizen under the age of 14 that is issued outside the territory of Russia is charged with a RUB 200 fee (RUB 500 for electronic types of identification).¹¹

The state tax is not the only fee paid by citizens securing a passport outside Russia; it represents only a small part of all the expenses involved in obtaining the document. The main cost is incurred with the consulate service payment, which varies from one Russian consulate to another, depending on which country it is located in. The consulates are relatively free to set their own prices. A Russian citizen pays USD 600 for a passport in a Russian consulate in the United States, which is four to six times the amount paid in Ukraine.

⁸ Website of “Migration Rights”: <http://refugees.memo.ru/homesite.nsf>, last accessed November 2008.

Contact details of the HRC Memorial in Appendix II

⁹ Interviews in March 2007 with visitors to the Civic Assistance Committee (CAC) reception office, and with staff of agencies that process the issue of passports, who preferred to remain anonymous. Information confirmed by CAC in July 2008. More information can be obtained at the local CAC offices (contact: Annex II).

¹⁰ Exchange rate in November 2008: RUB 100 = EUR 2,85 or USD 3,61

¹¹ Russian Federation Tax Code. To be consulted via <http://www.gdezakon.ru/nalog/>, last accessed July 2008

1.2. Travel to country of origin

1.2.1. By air

Russia has international airports in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Irkutsk, Khanty-Mansiysk, Novosibirsk, Sochi, Krasnodar, Saratov, Tyumen, Ufa, Samara, Rostov, Vologda, Vladivostok, Bratsk, Volgograd and Yekaterinburg.

Direct flights are possible between most European airports and Moscow. Prices for flights from Brussels to Moscow range from EUR 300 to EUR 1.000. The prices of onward connections vary greatly depending on the final destination. Tickets from Moscow to Siberia cost more than EUR 1.000. The admissible luggage weight is 20 to 30 kilograms, depending on the airline.

There are different combinations of direct and connected flights possible between St. Petersburg and most European airports, e.g. Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Riga, etc. Some examples include airline companies like SAS, KLM, Lufthansa and Air France.

Costs of the tickets can vary considerably, depending on the season and moment of booking. Depending on the airliner, it's permitted to transport personal goods of a weight of 20 to 30 kilo.

1.2.2. By land

The route to get to Russia (except the Russian enclave Kaliningrad) includes border lines with the following European countries: Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Byelorussia, and Ukraine

An extensive European railroad network makes it possible to travel to Russia by train. Train prices are almost the same as those on airlines. More information on travel to Russia by train at: <http://www.bahn.de> (available in nine languages). Information on travel in Russia: <http://www.rzd.ru>. Railroad tickets for travels in Russia can be purchased on-line on <http://www.dost.ru>.

1.2.3. By sea

The Finish company "Stella Lines" cancelled in September 2008 the only ferry connection between the European Union and St. Petersburg. Kaliningrad is linked by ferry to Klaipeda/Lithuania only. There is a ferry service between Kaliningrad and St. Petersburg in June-August, once a week. More information at the website of the "Baltiysk-St. Petersburg" line (<http://www.dfdslisco.ru/LiscoRU/EN/FerryGeorgOts.htm>)

1.3. Entry procedure

Regardless how one enters Russia, everyone must pass through passport control and customs at the border. Each person may also be forced to undergo additional checks from border control officials, as well as from the Ministry of Interior and the Federal Security Service (FSB) agents.

1.3.1. By air

A Russian citizen who returns to his homeland with a certificate issued at the Russian consulate usually arrives in Russia by plane. Under normal circumstances he passes through passport control without difficulties. However, in some cases unpleasant incidents can occur during checks of passports or replacement certificates. To prevent such incidents, it is recommended that relatives and representatives of social organisations be informed well in advance about the returnee's impending arrival.

The Russian NGO "Civic Assistance Committee" (CAC) in Moscow, as well as the "Migration Rights" network of the Memorial Human Rights Centre (HRC) provide assistance to returnees. Both organisations maintain legal counselling centres in 57 Russian regions.¹²

The chances of detention and bribe extortion decrease considerably if the border patrol service, police and customs officials are informed ahead about the fact that the returnee is monitored by a nongovernmental organisation. At the same time, it should be noted that if the returnee is suspected of having committed a crime in Russia or is wanted by the authorities, his legal arrest is possible, as are subsequent accompaniment in a police convoy and temporary detention up to a period of several days.

1.3.2. By land

Border extortion occurs more frequently when the returnee is returning by land than by air. This happens because these border controls do not occur at the final destination point but at the actual border itself, which gives more opportunity to officials to harass passengers during document and luggage checks, and carry out extortion practices. According to the Russian NGO "Civic Assistance Committee" (CAC), most victims are people from the North Caucasus, and those born in the Caucasus and Central Asian republics.

1.3.3. By sea

It is possible to ship a container of goods to St. Petersburg via Hamburg. The cost for the 20 feet container is about EUR 1.000, for a 40 feet container about EUR 1.300. However, clerks of the Sea Station of St. Petersburg do not recommend private persons to send personal belongings by sea. Custom obligations are complicated and it is recommended to hire a broker to ease the procedure.¹³

¹² Contact HRC Memorial counselling points: Appendix I, contact HRC Memorial and CAC: Appendix II

¹³ Telephone interview of Civil Assistance Committee with the Sea Station of the city of St. Petersburg, July 2008, Contacts: manager of the Sea station, tel. +7 812 303 99 11 / +7 812 322 6052, Morskoy Slavi Square 1, St. Petersburg, Russia.

1.4. Impacts of former acts and statuses upon entry

1.4.1. Impact of former refugee or subsidiary protection status

The Russian border authorities have generally not a repressive approach on citizens who applied for asylum abroad. The return of people who received a refugee status during the Soviet time is quite welcomed by the authorities. Until 2002, former citizens of the USSR who lost their citizenship as a result of emigration could easily replace it in accordance to Article 20 of the 1991 Russian federal law "On Citizenship".¹⁴ Currently, according to the 2002 law "On citizenship of the RF", the Russian citizenship is restored three years after the former USSR citizen returned to Russia and obtained a residence permit. Generally, in order to file a citizenship application, a person must have a Russian residence permit since five years.

Having refugee status in some other European country has no effect on the possibility of leaving or re-entering Russia. In addition, a refugee status - either current or past - is of no interest to Russian authorities. One may simply not bother with revealing this information to them. This applies to owners of a second citizenship, too, since in Part 2 of Article 6 of the Russian federal law "On citizenship of the RF" a dual citizenship is permitted. However, the Russian NGO "Civic Assistance Committee" (CAC) stated, that some Embassies of the RF refused the issue of a new Russian passport after its expiring to holders of a dual citizenship.

An exception may be Russian citizens of Chechen origin. In this case a continued absence from the RF can have negative effects upon entry in Russia and more so in the Chechen Republic. In Chechnya the Federal armed forces have been successively replaced by local law enforcement authorities who know Chechnya's relatively small population and structure well.

Vulnerable groups

According to the HRC "Memorial" returnees to Chechnya could be seen in this context as a vulnerable group because of the multiple suspicions they would create among members of the local law enforcement authorities. They would assume that a person who was absent for years and whose whereabouts are not disclosed, could be linked with the rebels. A further danger for returnees would arise from the fact that they are widely seen as relatively wealthy if they return from Western Europe. In the Chechen Republic - with still no legal security - this fact would make them a potential victim of all sorts of blackmail and even of kidnapping. The notion of HRC "Memorial" is backed by cases studies of members of the NGO in Chechnya.¹⁵ This position of HRC "Memorial" is so far not shared by UNHCR, which is "not aware of any cases of returnees from abroad who were persecuted upon return for the mere fact of having been abroad." However UNHCR admits that there are reports about "routinely" questioning of returnees and a certain attention of the FSB for them.¹⁶

¹⁴ Russian Federation. Federal Law "On citizenship of the Russian Federation" of November 28, 1991. To be consulted via <http://antropotok.archipelag.ru/text/a010.htm>, last accessed August 2008.

¹⁵ HRC Memorial. Svetlana Gannushkina, *On the Situation of Residents of Chechnya in the Russian Federation*, Moscow 2007, p. 10, 14-15, <http://www.memo.ru/2007/12/19/1912071eng.htm>, last accessed October 2008

¹⁶ Austrian Red Cross, ACCORD, UNHCR, *Chechnya. Summary of the ACCORD—UNHCR Country of Origin Information Seminar, Vienna, 18 October 2007, April 2008*, p. 11, http://www.ecoi.net/file_upload/432_1208870793_coi-seminar-chechnya-oct-2007.pdf, last accessed October 2008

1.4.2. Impact of former unsuccessful asylum claims

1.4.3.

Former attempts to apply for asylum should not affect the fate of a returnee. Exceptions arise in cases where the person led an active political life outside Russia aimed at criticizing the current political situation and the country's leadership: appearances in the mass media, participation in conferences, hearings in the Europe Court of Human Rights, and so on. The persecution of those who appeal to the European Court is detailed described in reports of the Memorial Human Rights Centre and other human rights organisations.¹⁷

1.4.4. Impact of former illegal exit from country of origin

Article 27 of the Russian Constitution states that a Russian citizen has the right to unhindered re-entry into the country. If his passport does not carry a stamp indicating an earlier exit from Russia, then he may be subjected to longer checks than usual. At the same time, the presence of valid Russian citizenship is sufficient for the unhindered entry into the country.

1.4.5. Impact of crime committed outside the country of origin

According to part 1 of Article 50 of the Russian Constitution, no one may be prosecuted for the same criminal offence twice. The application of the law in Russia is such that double jeopardy via a new, non-criminal case is quite possible. As article 50 uses the term CRIME rather than INFRACTION, there remains a possibility that a person may be punished twice for the same act, first under criminal and then under administrative or civil law. Example: A refugee loses his status for any crime for which he has already been convicted in any other country.

1.5. Customs regulations

Entry into Russia is conducted through official border crossings.

July 31, 2005 saw the coming into force of a July 18, 2005 amendment (law No. 90-F3) to law No. 173-F3 from December 10, 2003 "On currency regulation and currency control" that changed the way private individuals could carry Russian and foreign currencies, as well as securities, across the border.

The amendment requires a written declaration of the foreign currency brought into Russia, as well as of the Russian currency, traveller's checks, and local and foreign financial holdings if their total sum exceeds USD 10.000. At the same time, it establishes no limits on the amount of money that may be brought in. The declaration is explained by the need to keep a statistical account of the movement of large sums of cash and securities.

Early 2007, (government resolutions No. 29 issued January 21, 2006, and No. 567 issued September 16, 2006) a change was made to the "Condition for using unified customs tariffs

¹⁷ Obshestvenny Verdict Foundation, *The persecution of those who appeal to the European Court*, 21.11.2006 / <http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/library/76211106.html> , last accessed September 2008

and taxes on goods being moved across the border of the RF by private individuals for personal use” (government resolution No. 718 from November 29, 2003).

Russia’s federal customs service explains the new customs control rules for private individuals going in and out of the country by air on its official web site.¹⁸

Upon entry into Russia

- a) One can pass through the “green corridor” without filling out a customs declaration form if:
- The person entering the country has no additional (unaccompanied) luggage, while the accompanied luggage has no objects and goods banned or limited from entry into Russia;
 - The cost of the goods does not exceed the equivalent of RUB 65.000, while the total luggage weight does not exceed 35 kilograms, or no more than RUB 650.000 for maximum 200 kilograms. Goods exceeding the stated norm are subjected to flat customs duties and taxes of 30 % of the customs cost, but no less than € 4 per 1 kilogram;
 - The total sum of the financial resources (foreign currency and roubles, foreign and local securities, as well as traveller’s checks) does not exceed EUR 10.000;
 - The amount (per person) of sturgeon caviar (in commercial packaging) does not exceed 250 grams. Entry of larger amounts requires a license from the Economic Development and Trade Ministry;
 - The arriving person is not carrying sturgeon or any kind of by-product. Import is allowed with a license from the Economic Development and Trade Ministry.
 - The amount of alcohol (per person who is 21 and older) does not exceed 2 litres and tobacco products (per person who is 18 and older) do not exceed 50 cigars, 100 cigarillos, 200 cigarettes and 0.25 kilograms of tobacco. The import of only one type of good is also allowed: 100 cigars, 200 cigarillos, 400 cigarettes or 0.5 kilograms of tobacco;
 - The arriving person is not carrying arms and munitions (unless allowed for entry with an Interior Ministry permit);
 - The arriving person carries no radio-electronic equipment (radiotelephones, radio stations, satellite communication devices and so on), except those of a temporary nature. These devices can be imported with a permit of the state communication oversight body;
- b) If the arriving person carries foreign currency, cash valuables or other goods that require a mandatory written declaration, then he must fill out two copies of the customs declaration form and enter through the “red corridor”.

In case a person disagrees with a decision made by the customs official regarding the cost of a good or another matter, the person may appeal the decision in accordance with chapter 4 of the Russian Customs Code. During the appeal hearing process, either the responsible customs official or the customs agency reserves the right to order a price evaluation of the good. The person bringing in the good covers the cost of the evaluation.

It is recommended that the arrivals learn more about the existing customs regulations at the information desks set up before entry through customs control.

Preliminary consultations may be held with the customs services you intend to use for crossing the border.

¹⁸ Federal Custom Service, http://www.customs.ru/ru/fl_info/, last accessed July 2008, Contact: e-mail of the Department: umts_kudryavtsev@mail.customs.ru

CUSTOM SERVICES

Sheremetyevo Airport ¹⁹ Moscow	Domodedovo Airport ²⁰ Moscow	Vnukovo Airport ²¹ Moscow	Pulkovo II Airport ²² St. Petersburg
+7 495 578-21-20 +7 495 578-14-30	+7 495 787-29-80	+7 495 736-90-62	+7 812 326 22 97

According to regulation 3, the intended use of goods is determined by the Russian customs service from the private individual's declaration on goods being carried over Russia's customs border, along with the nature of those goods and their number, as well as the frequency of their use. For this reason, if a good is imported in an amount that slightly exceeds the usual needs, proof must be submitted that it is not being brought in for commercial purposes.

The same regulation determines the rules for bringing automobiles into Russia.²³

1.6. Access to return area

1.6.1. Limitations of internal travel

On July 5, 2001 government resolution No. 508 of *05.07.2001* imposed restrictions on access and entry in certain Russian regions, which is still be in force. According to this resolution, administrative and territorial sites are considered closed to the public if they house facilities for: the development, manufacture, storage and utilization of weapons of mass destruction; the processing of radioactive and other hazardous materials; military and other facilities or sites that require special security protection and other regiments for securing state secrets, including their citizens' special livelihood and survival conditions.

In order to travel to the border zones a permit is compulsory.

The Federal Border Department, which is part of the Federal Security Service (FSS), has established a new border zone in accordance with the Decree of FSS N 229.

¹⁹ Website: <http://www.sheremetyevo-airport.ru/>

²⁰ Website: <http://www.domodedovo.ru/>

²¹ Website: <http://www.vnukovo.ru/rus/index.wbp>

²² Website: <http://www.pulkovo.ru/>

²³ Details on <http://pkw.ru/tamozhnya.html>, last accessed August 2008

Table: List of closed administrative-territorial sites, and settlements located on their territories²⁴

Subject of the Federation	Name of territory	Administrative centre	Name of the place
Republic of Bashkortostan	Mezhgorye	city of Mezhgorye	city of Mezhgorye
Altai Region	Sibirsky	settlement of Sibirsky	village of Sibirsky
Krasnoyarsky Region	Zheleznogorsk	city of zheleznogorsk	city of Zheleznogorsk; Dodonovo, Novy, Podgorny, Put, Tartat settlements; village of Shivera
	Zelenogorsk	city of Zelenogorsk	city of Zelenogorsk
	Solnechny	settlement of Solnechny	settlement of Solnechny
Primorsky Region	Bolshoi Kamen	city of Bolshoi Kamen	city of Bolshoi Kamen; Petrovka and Sukhodol settlements
	Fokino	city of Fokino	city of Fokino; Dunai, Putyatin settlements
Amur Region	Ulegorsk	settlement of Ulegorsk	settlement of Ulegorsk
Arkhangelskaya oblast	city of Mirny	city of Mirny	city of Mirny
Astrakhanskaya oblast	Znamensk	city of Znamensk	city of Znamensk
Vladimir Region	Raduzhny	city of Raduzhny	city of Raduzhny
Kamchatka Region	Vilyuchinsk	city of Vilyuchinsk	city of Vilyuchinsk
Kirov Region	Pervomaysky	settlement of Pervomaysky	settlement of Pervomaysky
Moscow Region	Krasnoznamensk	city of Krasnoznamensk	city of Krasnoznamensk
	Voskhod	settlement of Voskhod	settlement of Voskhod
	Molodyozhny	settlement of Molodyozhny	settlement of Molodyozhny
Murmansk Region	Skalisty	city of Gadzhiyev	city of Gadzhiyev; Kuvshinskaya Salma, Olenya Guba, Saida-Guba settlements
	Zaozersk	city of Zaozersk	city of Zaozersk
	Ostrovnoy	city of Ostrovnoy	city of Ostrovnoy

²⁴ Federal Migration Service (FMS), List of closed administrative-territorial sites, and settlements, July, 5, 2001 (according to the Russian NGO "Civic Assistance Committee" still actual) <http://www.fmsrf.ru/document.asp?did=452&cid=6&ucid=0>, last accessed November 2008

Subject of the Federation	Name of territory	Administrative centre	Name of the place
	Polyarni	city of Polyarny	city of Polyarny; Goryachiye Ruchyi and Retinskoye settlements, village of Belokamenka
	Severomorsk	city of Severomorsk	city of Severomorsk Roslyakovo, Safonovo, Severomorsk-3 settlements
	Shchukozero Snezhnogorsk	city of Snezhnogorsk	city of Snezhnogorsk
	Vidyayevo	settlement of Vidyayevo	settlement of Vidyayevo
Nizhny Novgorod Region	Sarov	city of Sarov	city of Sarov
Orenburg Region	Komarovsky	settlement of Komarovsky	settlement of Komarovsky
Penza Region	Zarechny	city of Zarechny	city of Zarechny
Perm region	Zvyozdny	settlement of Zvyozdny	settlement of Zvyozdny
Saratov Region	Shikhany	city of Shikhany	city of Shikhany
	Svetly	settlement of Svetly	settlement of Svetly
Sverdlovsk Region	Lesnoy	city of Lesnoy	city of Lesnoy
	Novouralsk	city of Novouralsk	city of Novouralsk; settlement of Murzinka, selo Naraskovo; Palniki, Pochinok, and Elani villages
	Svobodny	settlement of Svobodny	settlement of Svobodny
	Uralsky	settlement of Uralsky	settlement of Uralsky
	Ozerny	settlement of Ozerny	settlement of Ozerny
	Solnechny	settlement of Solnechny	settlement of Solnechny
Tomsk Tver Region	Seversk	city of Seversk	city of Seversk; Samus and Orlovka settlement; Kizjirovo, Chernilshikovo and Semiozerki villages
Chelyabinsk Region	Ozersk	city of Ozersk	city of Ozersk; Novogorny, Tatysh, Metlino and Bizjelyak, Selezni and Novoya Techa village
	Snezjinsk	city of Snezhinsk	city of Snezhinsk; Blizjny Beregoyoy settlement, Kluchi village
	Trekhgorny	city of Trekhgorny	city of Trekhgorny

Subject of the Federation	Name of territory	Administrative centre	Name of the place
	Lokomotivny	settlement of Lokomotivny	settlement of Lokomotivny
Chita Region	Gorny	settlement of Gorny	settlement of Gorny

1.6.1.1. Administrative restrictions

In order to travel freely on the territory of Russia one needs to have a Russian citizen's passport as well as the travel documents (tickets from the place of permanent registration to the place of destination).

A person who wants to travel by train or by air, needs to show his passport to the cashier who will write his name and the passport number on the ticket. This will permit the traveller to enter on board the train or plane. Big luggage provokes the suspicion of the police and can lead to luggage and documents checks.

The traveller is not required to register at his destination if his stay is limited to a period of 90 days. However, he needs to keep his travel ticket and show it to the police in case of control. If he stays longer than 90 days, the traveller has to appeal for the provisional registration.

1.6.1.2. Practical obstacles

Natives and residents of the North Caucasus and Central Asia who want to settle in Russia may have to deal with a local xenophobic administration or population, making it difficult and in some cases impossible to integrate. Problems starts with frequent difficulties at the registration as local resident. Ethnic minorities are often and in many ways discriminated and encountering serious problems to rent housing, especially in Moscow and St. Petersburg.²⁵

1.6.2. Territories impossible or dangerous to approach

There is a general danger of landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) at all former battlefields of World War II at the soil of the Russian Federation. In addition, large areas of Chechnya are heavily contaminated with mines and ERW's. Furthermore "Landmine Monitor" states that: *"In addition to Chechnya, mine/ERW incidents have been reported in Ingushetia, Dagestan and North Ossetia. ERW remain an acute problem in Dagestan, specifically in Novolaksk, Botlikh and Buynaks districts."*²⁶ For the Russian Federation, there are no official estimates available of the numbers of mines and ERWs. Since March 2007, an inter-service team of the Russian government is working on mine clearance of agricultural lands around Grozny/Chechnya. Progress is low due to the poor clearance capacities of the stately

²⁵ See Chapter 3.2.5.1 "Eventual obstacles for certain groups"

²⁶ Landmine Monitor, LM-Report, Russian Federation, 2007, <http://www.icbl.org/lm/2007/russia.html>, last accessed September 2008

services.²⁷ There is no public casualty data available for the Russian Federation. Landmine Monitor counted at least 62 casualties in the country due to mines ERW and IEDs in 2007.²⁸

Risks caused by environmental hazard

Several regions of the Russian Federation are heavily polluted and are practical uninhabitable. There is however no official and credible information on this danger available. Nevertheless, all regions around former “Secret Cities” - the centres of the nuclear weapon program of the former Soviet Union - should be avoided by all costs. A list of all these centres with their exact location is available at the website of “Global Security” (<http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/russia/secret-cities.htm>)

To the security situation in the North Caucasus republics: see most current reports of HRC Memorial²⁹, Amnesty International³⁰, the International Red Cross³¹ and others.³²

1.6.3. Means of internal travel

Railroads and air transport are generally the best option. However some regions can only be accessed by car. This is the case for the North Caucasus, regions of the Far North, and the abandoned agricultural settlements of central Russia.

Timetables and prices of travel inside the country are accessible via different internetsites (among others: www.spranka.net, <http://price.samoletom.ru>, www.mta.ru).

²⁷ “E-mine”, Electronic Mine Information Network, <http://www.mineaction.org/country.asp?c=20>, last accessed September 2008

²⁸ Landmine Monitor, LM-Report, Russian Federation, 2007, <http://www.icbl.org/lm/2007/russia.html#footnote-2500-44>, last accessed September 2008

²⁹ HRC Memorial, *On the Situation of Residents of Chechnya in the Russian Federation*, August 2006-October 2007, <http://www.memo.ru/2007/12/19/1912071eng.htm>, last accessed September 2008; *Report by the Memorial Human Rights Centre dedicated to the New Round of Consultations between the EU and Russia* (Ljubljana, April 16, 2008), <http://www.memo.ru/2008/04/18/1804083.html>, last accessed October 2008

³⁰ Amnesty International, *Russian Federation. Russia: Human Rights Concerns*, 19.09.2007, <http://www.amnesty.org.ru/library/Index/ENGEUR460402007?open&of=ENG-384>, last accessed October 2008; *Russian Federation. What Justice for the Chechnya's “Disappeared”?*, 23.05.2007, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR46/020/2007/en/dom-EUR460202007en.pdf>, last accessed October 2008

³¹ Austrian Red Cross, Accord, UNHCR, *Chechnya, Summary of the ACCORD-UNHCR Country of Origin Information Seminar, Vienna, 18 October 2007*, April 2008, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/publisher/ACCORD,,480dfb652,0.html>, last accessed October 2008

³² Among others, Council of Europe (COE), *Legal Remedies for Human Rights Violations in the North Caucasus*, 15.04.2008, <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/MMAH-7DW46X?OpenDocument>; last accessed October 2008

International Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), *Displacement from Chechnya to areas outside of north Caucasus* (Special report, 2008), [http://www.internal-displacement.org/idmc/website/countries.nsf/\(httpEnvelopes\)/4F9C54307DB6FFA3C1257478002C9DD8?OpenDocument](http://www.internal-displacement.org/idmc/website/countries.nsf/(httpEnvelopes)/4F9C54307DB6FFA3C1257478002C9DD8?OpenDocument), last accessed September 2008

Norwegian Helsinki Committee (NHC), *Anti-Terrorism Measures and Human Rights in the North Caucasus: A regional System of Torture, Forced Confessions and Fabricated Trials, March 2007-Mars 2008*. The text of the report is available from the Committee secretariat.

Approximate prices (September 2008) for airline tickets from Moscow to: St. Petersburg RUB 2.800; Grozny RUB 7.500-9.500, Irkutsk RUB 9.000-13.000; Vladivostok Rub 14200 -23000

Railway Tickets from Moscow to: St. Petersburg RUB 461-5.400; Grozny RUB 2.900-7.700; Irkutsk RUB 2.900-16.500; Vladivostok RUB 2.560-2.1125

Timtables and prices for busses are accessible via:
<http://www.mostransavto.ru/?page=shed>

2. Physical security (in return area)

2.1. On-going armed conflict

Several armed conflicts occurred on the territory of Russia since the collapse of the USSR.

October 1992 saw a brief armed flare-up in the ongoing Ingush-Ossetian interethnic conflict. Military activity lasted only for a few days in the Prigorodny region of the North Ossetia-Alania Republic (RNO-A) but to this day the conflict's ramifications have not been fully resolved. Although authorities are committed to provide security and to return housing to the Ingush who were forced to flee their homes, a genuine threat remains for those who return to the Prigorodny region of North Ossetia-Alania and the problem points of the Prigorodny region Oktyabrskoye, Ir and Yuzhnoye. New clashes between Ingush and Osstian occurred in the RNO-A in the aftermath of the Beslan-hostage drama in 2004.

Russian armed forces tried in two wars to re-establish the authority of the Federal government in the republic of Chechnya which declared itself independent in 1991. While the first attempt 1994-1996 failed, the second war, which started in 1999, lead since 2004 successive to a so called "Chechenisation" of the conflict, i.e. the pacification of the country by the forces of Ramzan Kadyrov, since 2007 president of the republic. Kadyrov succeeded in this task with brutal force,³³ executed by troops under his personal command,³⁴ which are often recruited of former rebels. Even if it could be stated that the darkest period of his rule - based on massive abuses of human rights including torture, kidnapping and murder - is over and reconstruction has finally began, Chechnya is far from a free development of its society. Kadyrov and his apparatus rules with uncontrolled power and still misuse it. Most basic human rights are still not granted and often violated. Legal security is still absent.³⁵

The wars in Chechnya lead as well to an ongoing destabilisation of the neighbouring republics, especially of Dagestan and Ingushetia. Meanwhile the security situation in Ingushetia is described by several Human Right groups as worse than in Chechnya.³⁶

³³ Described a.o. by several reports of HRC Memorial and the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH). Collected on: <http://hro1.org/>, last accessed November 2008

³⁴The so called "Kadyrovtyts", which are held responsible for the most severe abuses of human rights in Chechnya since 2004, are officially dissolved, i.e. legalised as part of the law enforcement authorities of the republic. In reality these forces, which are now armed as well with heavy weapons, are still the backbone of Kadyrov's power.

About the role of the Kadyrovtyts in the "pacification" of Chechnya see a.o.: HRW, *Widespread Torture in the Chechen Republic. Human Rights Watch Briefing Paper of the 37th Session UN Committee against Torture*, November 13, 2006, <http://www.hrw.org/backgrounder/eca/chechnya1106/index.htm>, last accessed August 2008

³⁵ See footnotes 28-30

³⁶ Amongst others Human Rights Watch, *"As If They Fell From the Sky" Counterinsurgency, Rights Violations, and Rampant Impunity in Ingushetia*, June 2008,

Beside of the armed conflicts on the soil of the Russian Federation, the secession wars of Abkhazia and South-Ossetia from Georgia, and of Nagorno-Karabakh from Azerbaijan in the early 1990s had negative impact on the southern republics of Russia. In all of these wars Caucasian volunteers of other republics fought for one or another party and the central government in Moscow played an active role, sometimes even in form of deployment of official troops. All three conflicts are still unsolved and the question of ethnic cleansing is untouched. The effects of the youngest five-day war against Georgia in August 2008 on the whole regions are yet unpredictable.³⁷

Russia played and still plays an active role in the Transnistria-conflict, a region which seceded 1992 in a war from Moldova.³⁸ The model of conflict is similar with those in the South-Ossetia and Abkhazia: direct military support of the secessionists by Russia, its backing of the de-facto government of a doubtful reputation, ongoing presence of Russian armed forces and massive issuing of Russian passports to inhabitants of the regions.

2.2. Regions with high security risk

The level of extremist violence in Russia is alarming and still on the rise. Extremist violence in the country is mostly motivated by extreme right-wing ideologies up to neo-Nazism. Russia is today home of the vast majority of the world's skinhead community. According to the Moscow Bureau for Human Rights, about 70.000 skinheads are active in Russia - this would be $\frac{3}{4}$ of the estimated numbers of all skinheads worldwide.³⁹ The SOVA-centre in Moscow, the only independent institute, which is systematically monitoring extremists violence in Russia, stated in his summary of the year 2007: *"Unfortunately, the year 2007 did not bring about any improvements in the situation with regards to racist and neo-Nazi violence. As of the time of writing this report (mid-January 2008), we know of 653 victims of such violence, including 73 deaths. In 2006, we knew of 564 victims, including 62 deaths. As such, the number of victims of xenophobic attacks in 2007 was 16% higher than the year before, and we certainly expect the absolute number and percentage of victims to grow as new facts are uncovered."*⁴⁰ Apparently the trend is continuing in 2008. According to SOVA already 58 people were killed and 197 injured in hate crimes in Russia in the first six months of 2008.⁴¹ It is to bear in mind that these data do not include victims targeted for being sexual minorities or homeless. These data are excluding as well victims of xenophobic violence in the Caucasus republics, especially in Ingushetia, where since January 2006 several attacks

<http://hrw.org/reports/2008/russia0608/russia0608web.pdf>, last accessed October 2008, HRC Memorial, *On the Situation of Residents of Chechnya in the Russian Federation*, Moscow 2007, p.46 et sqq., <http://www.memo.ru/2007/12/19/1912071eng.htm>, last accessed September 2008

³⁷ To the genesis of the Ossetian-Georgian conflict see: International Crisis Group, *Georgia's South Ossetia Conflict: Make Haste Slowly* (Europe Report No. 183, 7 June 2007), http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/europe/caucasus/183_georgia_s_south_ossetia_conflict_make_haste_slowly.pdf, last accessed October 2008

General to the legal aspects of the conflicts: Tim Potier, *Conflict in Nagorno Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia: a Legal Appraisal*. The Hague 2001.

³⁸ To the Transnistria Conflict see: Florian Küchler, *The Role of the European Union in Moldavia's Transnistria Conflict*. Stuttgart 2008.

³⁹ US daily Wall Street Journal, *Russia Becomes More Dangerous for Immigrants*, April 7, 2008, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB120752659637493575.html>, last accessed July 2008

⁴⁰ Galina Kozhevnikova, *Radical Nationalism and Efforts to Counteract it in 2007*, (14.03.2008), http://xeno.sova-center.ru/6BA2468/6BB4208/AC15D1E#r2_1, last accessed July 2008

⁴¹ SOVA, *June 2008. Monthly summary*, 01.07.2008, http://xeno.sova-center.ru/6BA2468/6BB4208/AC15D1E#r2_1, last accessed July 2008

were carried out against non-Ingush residents. Between July and November 2007 the violence reached a peak, when 24 non-Ingush were killed allegedly by insurgents.⁴²

The overall tendency is just the tip of the iceberg. A growing number of citizens admit openly to xenophobic feelings - according to a study of SOVA one in two Russians.⁴³ The deputy head of the institute, Galina Koshevnikova, blame in an interview partly the Russian media for the trend: *"Up to around 2005 the word 'immigrant' had no ethnic connotations. But over the last two years media reports about immigrants have been hostile. That's a very dangerous tendency."*⁴⁴

Nevertheless the clear tendency, the attitude of Russian officials towards the societal problem is contradictorily. Whilst the Russian Minister of Interior Alexander Tchekalin admitted in the beginning of the year 2008 a triplication of crimes of extremist nature between 2004 and 2007, he relativised the data at the same time with the reference to the overall crime statistic as negligible. The prosecutor of Moscow, Jury Semin even alleged that there would be a continuously decline of such crimes in the city, which is definite not the fact.⁴⁵ It does not surprise in this context that the SOVA-centre sees the Russian pro-governmental groups and the authorities itself more as part of the problem than as a key to its solution. In a report, the organisation stated in March 2008: *"Not infrequently, government agents, pro-governmental political parties, and groups themselves provoke massive xenophobic sentiments. In 2007, these included the anti-Estonian campaign, a series of xenophobic and often explicitly racist public actions staged by pro-Kremlin youth movements, etc. Indeed, they effectively competed with the ultra-right groups."*⁴⁶ Although, at the moment of writing, a new edition of the stately directed anti-Georgian campaign of 2006 seems in spite of the Russian-Georgian war unlikely, the law-enforcement authorities do not intervene in the case of campaigns of Russian nationalists. The newspaper "Novaya Gazeta" in St. Petersburg got reprimanded by the Federal Service for Control over Public Communications (RosSvyazComNadzor) for reporting on anti-Georgian campaigns of the radical "Movement Against Illegal Immigration" (DPNI).⁴⁷

Vulnerable groups

People with an assumed or actual descend from Central Asia and the Caucasus and coloured people are prime targets of violent racist attacks.⁴⁸ There is a high security risk for people known for their homosexuality or people who show their homosexuality in public. Homophobia is widespread in Russian society up to the political top level of the country.⁴⁹

⁴² Human Rights Watch-Report, *As If They Fell From the Sky, Counterinsurgency, Rights Violations, and Rampant Impunity in Ingushetia*, June 2008, p. 22

(<http://hrw.org/reports/2008/russia0608/russia0608web.pdf>), last accessed July 2008

⁴³ German Broadcasting Cooperation, Deutsche Welle, *Racist Violence on the Rise in Russia*, 08.06.2008, last accessed (<http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,3382347,00.html>), last accessed July 2008

⁴⁴ German Broadcasting Cooperation, Deutsche Welle, *Racist Violence on the Rise in Russia*, 08.06.2008, last accessed (<http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,3382347,00.html>), last accessed July 2008

⁴⁵ Both statements are quoted by the Russian daily 'Nezavisimaja Gazeta', www.ng.ru/ng_politics/2008-04-01/21/xenophobia.html (01.04.2008) , last accessed July 2008

⁴⁶ Galina Kozhevnikova, *Radical Nationalism and Efforts to Counteract it in 2007*, (14.03.2008), http://xeno.sova-center.ru/6BA2468/6BB4208/AC15D1E#r2_1, last accessed July 2008

⁴⁷ Glasnost Defense Foundation, Digest No. 395, 28.08.2008, available at: <http://www.gdf.ru/digest/index.shtml>, last accessed October 2008

⁴⁸ Article 19, Global Campaign for Free Expression, *Reporting on Conflicts in the North Caucasus in the Russian Media*. May 2008, p. 4 (www.article19.org/pdfs/publications/russia-conflict-report.pdf), last accessed September 2008

⁴⁹ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada , *Russia: Treatment of Homosexuals by Society and Government Authorities; Legal Recourse and Protection available to Homosexuals who have been Subject*

The mayor of Moscow, Luzhkov is known for his harsh homophobic statements and repeatedly banned a planned “Gay Pride”-parade in Moscow. Russian courts approved the bans in spite the fact that Russia is as a member of the Council of Europe obliged to allow demonstrations. Gay-protests against the ban in 2006 and 2007 were accompanied by violence of skinheads and police members against the protesters.⁵⁰ Homophobic violence is quite common in Moscow and St. Petersburg, especially around known Gay bars.

Table: Statistic of racist and neo-Nazi attacks in Russia between 2004 and February 2008 by cities (victims targeted for being sexual minorities or homeless are not included).⁵¹

year	2004			2005			2006			2007			January, February 2008		
	Killed	wounded	Total victims	Killed	wounded	Total victims	Killed	wounded	Total victims	Killed	wounded	Total victims	Killed	wounded	Total victims
Moscow	18	62	80	16	179	195	38	219	257	44	216	260	18	40	58
St. Petersburg	9	32	41	4	45	49	6	53	59	10	111	121	3	1	4
Abakan	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	2			
Archangelsk	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	3	4			
Astrakhan	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0						
Barnaul	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	3	4	4	8			
Belgorod	0	5	5	0	4	4	0	18	18	0	1	1			
Birobidjan	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Blagoveschensk	0	2	2	0	7	7	0	1	1	0	0	0			
Bryansk	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	2	3	0	8	8
Vladivostok	5	9	14	0	3	3	2	18	20	1	3	4			
Vladimir Oblast	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5			
Volgograd	0	2	2	0	1	1	2	9	11	0	5	5			
Vologda	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	3	3			
Voronezh	1	2	3	1	21	22	1	6	7	0	15	15	0	8	8
Ivanovo	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4			
Izhevsk	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	6	7			
Irkutsk Oblast	3	0	3	2	5	7	0	8	8	1	53	54			
Yoshkar Ola	0	1	1	0	15	15	0	5	5	0	0	0			
Kazan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	8	0	1	1	0	4	4
Kaliningrad	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	11	11	0	1	1	0	7	7
Kaluga	0	0	0	0	11	11	1	3	4	0	0	0	1	1	2
Kirov	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Kostroma	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	10	10	0	2	2			
Krasnodar	2	32	34	1	3	4	0	7	7	0	11	11			
Krasnoyarsk	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	3	3	0	3	3			
Kurgan	0	0	0	0	6	6	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Kursk	0	5	5	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0			

to ill-Treatment (2006-2007), <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/topic,4565c22547,,46fa538223,0.html>, last accessed September 2008

⁵⁰ Russian News Agency “RIANovosti”, *Russian Gay Community asks President to allow Parade*, 16.05.2008, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20080516/107610153.html>, last accessed September 2008

⁵¹ Galina Kozhevnikova, *Winter 2007-2008: Epidemic of Murder on the Background of the Elections* (23.03.2008) http://xeno.sova-center.ru/29481C8/ACE046A#r5_1, last accessed July 2008

Lipetsk	0	1	1	0	3	3	1	0	1	0	3	3			
Maikop	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Murmansk	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	5	5			
Nizhny Novgorod	1	5	6	4	12	16	0	36	36	1	41	42	0	1	1
Novgorod	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Novosibirsk	2	12	14	1	9	10	0	9	9	1	5	6	1	0	1
Omsk Oblast	0	3	3	0	0	0	1	3	4	1	1	2			
Oryol	0	8	8	0	0	0	0	9	9	0	0	0			
Orenburg	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	2			
Perm	0	1	1	3	2	5	0	0	0	0	3	3			
Petrozavodsk	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Pskov	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Rostov-on-the-Don	0	0	0	0	10	10	0	2	2	1	7	8			
Ryazan	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	4	4	0	6	6			
Samara	1	3	4	4	5	9	0	2	2	2	9	11			
Saratov	1	0	1	0	0	0	4	4	8	0	1	1			
Sverdlovsk Oblast.	1	7	8	6	6	12	0	6	6	3	16	19	4	6	10
Smolensk	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Stavropol	0	0	0	0	21	21	0	0	0	0	7	7			
Syktvykar	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	4	4	0	0	0			
Tambov	0	3	3	0	6	6	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Tver Oblast	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	2	2			
Tomsk	0	3	3	0	6	6	0	4	4	0	5	5			
Tula Oblast	1	0	1	0	3	3	1	2	3	0	0	0	1	0	1
Tyumen Oblast	3	1	4	1	0	1	0	15	15	0	0	0			
Ulan Ude	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1			
Ufa	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	1	1			
Khabarovsk	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Cheboksary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6	0	0	0			
Chelyabinsk	1	4	5	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	11	11	0	4	4
Chita Oblast	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	3	3			
Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Yaroslavl Oblast	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	7	0	3	3			
Yakutia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2			
Total	50	218	268	47	418	465	62	503	565	74	583	657	28	80	108

According to SOVA-centre, the number of regions engulfed by interethnic tensions continues to grow. This is especially the case in the whole North Caucasus, the Krasnodar Region, the cities of St. Petersburg and Moscow, the Moscow region and Voronezh. Up-to-date data and analyses are available at the website of SOVA-centre (<http://www.sova-center.ru>).

2.3. Crime

The offenders

Some 436.200 offenders were detected by the police or 4.4% less than in the same period of 2007.

From a sociological point of view it is interesting that the percentage of offenders who does not dispose of a steady source of income is on the rise: between January and April 2008 the percentage of this group reached 60,2% of all registered offenders.

Almost every third of all offenders (29,4%) were recidivists and every eight of all offenders (13,2%) committed their crimes under alcoholic intoxication. Every fifteenth of all offenders (6,6%) were minors.

More details about the official crime statistics of Russia are available on the official site of the Russian Ministry of the Interior.⁵²

A special and significant group of offenders appear rarely in official statistics: it is claimed by many Human Rights organisations that the Russian police, militia or paramilitary units like the OMON-troops of the Ministry of Interior are more part of the security problem in Russia than the key to its solution. The range of complains reach from widely reported corruption of all ranks, violation of citizen rights to arbitrary violence up to widespread torture of detainees.⁵³ Russian citizens may address their complaints about the misuse of power by law-enforcement authorities at the country's human rights ombudsman. In 2006 the most complaints about police brutality were reported to the ombudsman from the republics of Komi and Mordoviya, the Krasnoyarsk kray, the regions of Amur, Kirov, Sverdlov and Tyumen.⁵⁴ It can be assumed that the estimated number of unreported cases is significant. Press-reports about abuses by the Russian police are legion.⁵⁵ Russian Minister of the Interior, Rashid Nurgaliyev, ordered in July 2008 a "programme of moral purification" to improve the miserable public image of the Russian police forces.⁵⁶

The victims - Vulnerable groups

The number of victims of severe crime is significant: in 2007 nearly 30.000 murder victims were registered. A considerable number of women fell victim of domestic violence, although these crimes do not appear in official statistics. Russia has still no laws that specifically address domestic violence, despite the fact that several surveys stated that between 56 and 70 percent of all female respondents experienced abuses by their husbands or partners.⁵⁷

⁵² Russian Ministry of the Interior, *Data, Statements, Messages and other Information On the Law-Enforcement Bodies*, <http://www.mvd.ru/files/u281KzbmtHplrXo.pdf>, last accessed October 2008

See as well: *The Global Peace Index 2008, Russia*:

<http://www.visionofhumanity.org/gpi/results/russia/2008/>, last accessed October 2008

⁵³ A.o.: Amnesty International, *Report 2008 on the State of the World's Human Rights - Russian Federation*, <http://thereport.amnesty.org/eng/regions/europe-and-central-asia/russian-federation>, last accessed August 2008.

⁵⁴ U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2007 - Russian Federation*, 11.03.2008, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2007/100581.htm>, last accessed August 2008

⁵⁵ Russian daily "The Moscow Times", *Traffic Police Reflect Russia's Value System*, 28.08.2008, <http://www.moscowtimes.ru/article/1039/42/369238.htm>, last accessed August 2008, see more in detail chapter 2.3.4.1 "Police Forces"

⁵⁶ Uk daily "The Telegraph", *Russian Police told to improve their Image*, 4.07.2008, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/russia/2241214/Russian-police-told-to-improve-their-image.html>, last accessed September 2008

⁵⁷ Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, *Russia: Domestic Violence; recourse and protection available to victims of domestic violence (2005-2007)*, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,COI,IRBC,,RUS,,474e89561e,0.html>, last accessed August 2008

According to Russian Human Rights activists 14.000 women⁵⁸ and 2.000 children⁵⁹ are killed each year in acts of domestic violence. Especially vulnerable regarding domestic violence are partners of alcohol- and other drug-addicts. Russian NGO's which are providing juridical and psychological aid for victims of domestic violence are "ANNA"⁶⁰ and "Sjostrii".⁶¹ Information about further, more regional active organisations provides the specialised website "womnet"⁶² In Moscow there are two shelters for victims of domestic violence: 1) the "Nadesha"-Centre, which provides first of all help for pregnant women and mothers. Nadesha has 33 places but a registration in Moscow is as well necessary as a referral by the Moscow branch of the Ministry of Family and Youth. 2) The "Spasenije"- Crisis Centre for Women. Here, as well, an official registration in Moscow is necessary.⁶³

A particular vulnerable group of being victims of crimes are conscripts of the Russian armed forces. The Russian Federation maintains a system of general conscription which is obligatory for men between 18-27 years with the exception of students, PhD-students, doctors, teachers and fathers of children younger than 3 years old. The duration of the service was reduced in 2007 from 24 months to 18 months and in 2008 further to 12 months. According to the Russian ministry of defence just 10% of an age group is actually conscripted.⁶⁴ In 2007 the Russian General Staff planned to enlist 132.300 men.⁶⁵

These group of young men are collectively exposed to an informal system of violent hazing, which is such commonly known in the society that it is labelled in the Russian language by a own word - dedovshchina.⁶⁶ Abuses ended in many cases fatal although there is no verified total number of victims available.⁶⁷

In 2005, the case of the conscript Andrei Sychov led for the first time to national consternation about the practice of dedovshchina and attracted as well international

⁵⁸ The Russian NGO ANNA, http://www.owl.ru/anna/index_ru.htm, see as well: NPR (National Public Radio)

Radio Feature by Gregory Feifer: *Domestic Violence: A Silent Crisis in Russia*, 17.07.2008, to be listened at: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=92621334>, last accessed October 2008

Amnesty International, *Violence against Women in the Russian Federation*, http://www.amnesty.org/russia/womens_day.html, last accessed August 2008

⁵⁹ German weekly "Die Zeit", *Das Tier im Muttersöhnchen*, 27.09.2007, <http://www.zeit.de/2007/40/Russen?page=all>, last accessed September 2008

⁶⁰ NGO ANNA, http://www.owl.ru/anna/index_ru.htm, last accessed October 2008, contact: annamosc@rol.ru

⁶¹ NGO Syostri, www.owl.ru/syostri, last accessed October 2008

⁶² www.womnet.ru/db/russian/organiz/contents/area/main.html, last accessed October 2008

⁶³ Information provided by the German "Information Centre Asylum and Migration" (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees) ZIRF-Counselling question, 31.01.2008 (ZC23), https://milo.bamf.de/llde/livelink/fetch/2000/702450/698578/704870/698704/698619/12393808/Unterku_nft,_soziale_Belange_und_gef._Personengruppen_in_Moskau,_31.01.2008?nodeid=12393485&vernum=0, last accessed September 2008

⁶⁴ Website of the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence, <http://www.mil.ru/eng/1862/12069/index.shtml>, last accessed September 2008

⁶⁵ Russian weekly "The Moscow News", *Military Looks to Tackle Draft-Dodging*, 4.10.2007, <http://www.mnweekly.ru/news/20071004/55280364.html>, last accessed September 2008

⁶⁶ F. Dauce and E. Sieca-Kozlowski (Ed.), *Dedovshchina in the Post-Soviet Military: Hazing of Russian Army Conscripts in a Comparative Perspective* (=Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society 28), 2007.

⁶⁷ The Russian NGO *Committee of Soldier's Mothers* estimates that yearly 3.000 conscripts die in cause of abuses but does not name the base of its estimation. This - very high - estimation of the "Committee" is adopted by the German NGO *Internationale Gesellschaft für Menschenrechte* (IGFM), 23.02.2008, <http://www.openpr.de/pdf/190993/Russland-23-Februar-Tag-der-Russischen-Armee.pdf>, last accessed August 2008

attention. Sychov was such brutally abused by his comrades that he had to undergo the amputation of his legs and his genitals. His case was made public by the Russian NGO "Committee of Soldier's Mothers" and led - as a rare exception - to a criminal case in which two of the four offenders were sentenced. The journalist Ana Politkovskaya claimed during the trial that a FSB agent unsuccessfully tried to bribe the mother of the victim to drop the case. If the increased public awareness of dedovshchina leads to a real improvement of the precarious situation of conscripts in the Russian Forces, is unclear. At the moment, there are no new reports on hazing in Russia available. However, 341 Russian servicemen committed suicide in 2007, which is a much higher level than in any other Army in the West a far above the average in the Russian society.⁶⁸

In 2008 the Levada-Centre did a representative poll amongst members of the Russian middle-class and asked among other questions: "Imagine you have a son in your family. Will you not mind it if he goes to the army or will you do everything possible for him to avoid military service?" For the second option voted 60% of the respondents and another 13% found the question "difficult to answer".⁶⁹

A high risk regarding their physical security face journalists which work on investigations towards power abuses and corruption of the militia, politicians and other members of the state authorities or rich businessmen. Journalists which are working on background stories about the security problems in the Caucasus are a vulnerable group as well. Intimidations and physical assaults against such journalists are quite common. Offenders are not seldom members of the law enforcement authorities whilst committer of severe crimes are remaining mostly anonymous. The Russian NGO "Glasnost Defence Foundation" (GDF) runs a monitoring service about abuses and attacks against journalists in the country (www.gdf.ru). GDF publishes a weekly digest (Russian and English versions) of incidents directed against the freedom of speech in the Russian Federation (<http://www.gdf.ru/digest/digest/digest403.shtml>).

2.3.1. Regions with extremely high level of crime

The only providers of information about the level of crime in the certain regions in Russia are the Ministry of the Interior of the Russian Federation (MVD)⁷⁰ and the Federal Service for State Statistics (Rosstats).⁷¹

According to the two stately services the ten most dangerous regions regarding committed crimes are:

Table: The 10 most dangerous regions of the Russian Federation in aspect of committed crimes according to the Russian Ministry of the Interior⁷²

⁶⁸ Uk daily "The Independent", *Bullying blamed for high level of suicides in Russian Army*, 30.05.2008, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/bullying-blamed-for-high-level-of-suicides-in-russian-army-836765.html>, last accessed August 2008

⁶⁹ Russian Opinion Research Centre "Levada-Centre", *Views of the Russian Middle Class about their Country and Europe*, 3.07.2008, <http://www.levada.ru/eng/press/2008070301.html>, last accessed August 2008

⁷⁰ Russian Ministry of the Interior, <http://www.mvd.ru>, last accessed October 2008

⁷¹ Russian Federation. Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), <http://www.gks.ru/wps/portal/russian>, last accessed September 2008

⁷² Russian Ministry of the Interior, <http://www.mvd.ru/files/u281KzbmtHplrXo.pdf>, last accessed September 2008

	Rates registered crimes in 2007 of growth/decrease, in % by 2006	Quantity of crimes on 1.000 citizens in 2007
Khabarovsk Territory (krai)	-5,8	58
Perm Region (oblast)	-13,4	56
Tyumen Region (oblast)	-12,2	54
Primorsky Territory (krai)	-7,1	53
Republic of Buryatia	+2,1	52
Irkutsk Region (oblast)	+4,6	52
Ust-Orda Buryat Autonomous Area (okrug)	-7,6	48
Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area (okrug)-Ugra	-14,7	46
Republic of Altai	-1,0	46
Novosibirsk Region (oblast)	-0,7	46
Republic of Khakasia	-14,6	45

However, the official sources should be handled with care. Caution is first of all indicated in respect of the southern regions and republics of the Russian Federation. The very same statistics say that the three safest regions of the country under the aspect of committed crimes would be the republics of Chechnya, Dagestan and Ingushetia - regions, which are according to several Human Rights groups characterized as high risk regions, also in aspect of committed crimes.⁷³ It can be assumed that the official statistic does not reflect the real situation in these three republics, where security forces often acting arbitrary, where the autonomy of the legal apparatus is not given and the readiness of the population to file crime-charges is low.

Table: The official crime statistics of the Russian Ministry of the Interior per region (2007)

	registered crimes in 2007		Quantity of crimes on 1000 citizens in 2007
	total crimes	Rates of growth (decrease), in % 2006	
Central Federal District	764203	-5,5	27
Belgorod Region (oblast)	21184	-12,1	18
Bryansk Region (oblast)	28097	-2,9	27
Vladimir Region (oblast)	33779	-8,7	28
Voronezh Region (oblast)	40322	-1,5	21
Ivanovo Region (oblast)	24990	-7,4	28
Kaluga Region (oblast)	23058	-11,2	29

⁷³ See footnotes 28-30.

An compilation of articles about the security situation in the region offers the European Country of Origin Network (ECOI.net) at the site: <http://www.ecoi.net/190001::russian-federation/328798.325062.9429...hl/security-situation.htm>, last accessed September 2008

Kostroma Region (oblast)	13779	-15,4	24
Kursk Region (oblast)	28612	-8,7	30
Lipetsk Region (oblast)	20020	2,3	22
Moscow	230631	-2,8	33
Moscow Region (oblast)	127714	-0,9	23
Oryol Region (oblast)	20032	-2,4	31
Ryazan Region (oblast)	13839	-14,9	15
Smolensk Region (oblast)	24555	-12,2	30
Tambov Region (oblast)	20316	-12,4	24
Tver Region (oblast)	38927	-6,7	34
Tula Region (oblast)	19592	-6,7	15
Yaroslavl Region (oblast)	34756	-14,1	32
North-Western Federal District	323258	-6,6	30
Republic of Karelia	14505	-17,9	26
Republic of Komi	28358	-20,3	38
Arkhangelsk Region (oblast)	35283	-3,6	36
Nenets Autonomous Area (okrug)	804	-3,7	27
Vologda Region (oblast)	34299	-2,2	35
Kaliningrad Region (oblast)	21682	-7,5	30
Leningrad Region (oblast)	35816	-1,9	28
St.Peterburg	99776	-3,7	27
Murmansk Region (oblast)	20813	-4,2	30
Novgorod Region (oblast)	15325	-6,8	29
Pskov Region (oblast)	16597	-11,1	28
Southern Federal District	365994	-0,9	23
Republic of Adygei	5165	-17,4	16
Republic of Dagestan	14730	-10,7	11
Republic of Ingushetia	2104	9,9	13
Kabardin-Balkar Republic	10790	9,8	21
Republic of Kalmykia	5435	-7,6	27
Karachaev-Circassian Republic	5602	-0,3	19
Republic of North Ossetia-Alania	8468	7,1	18
Chechen Republic	5696	-9,2	10
Krasnodar Territory (krai)	82360	-2,1	22
Stavropol Territory (krai)	45968	1,3	24
Astrakhan Region (oblast)	31707	6,7	42

Volgograd Region (oblast)	55453	-13,0	28
Rostov Region (oblast)	92516	7,4	28
Volga Area Federal District	793388	-12,1	34
Republic of Bashkortostan	89109	-5,0	31
Republic of Mariy-El	22958	2,6	41
Republic of Mordovia	14201	-10,5	22
Republic of Tatarstan	81251	-22,7	30
Udmurt Republic	53035	-18,7	44
Chuvash Republic	27690	-20,3	29
Kirov Region (oblast)	29257	-19,1	26
Nizhni Novgorod Region (oblast)	106007	-2,5	39
Orenburg Region (oblast)	49824	-11,2	30
Penza Region (oblast)	28367	-18,6	25
Perm Region (oblast)	117198	-13,4	56
Samara Region (oblast)	97633	-6,6	39
Saratov Region (oblast)	49132	-12,7	25
Ulyanovsk Region (oblast)	27726	-18,0	26
Urals Federal District	388642	-11,1	42
Kurgan Region (oblast)	33820	-8,8	44
Sverdlovsk Region (oblast)	142269	-11,2	41
Tyumen Region (oblast)	54240	-12,2	54
Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area (okrug)-Ugra	47393	-14,7	46
Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Area (okrug)	11823	-11,5	33
Chelyabinsk Region (oblast)	99097	-9,2	37
Siberian Federal District	593877	-3,3	41
Republic of Altai	6326	-1,0	46
Republic of Buryatia	35828	2,1	52
Republic of Tyva	7781	-22,9	44
Republic of Khakasia	17540	-14,6	45
Altai Territory (krai)	70860	-11,7	36
Krasnoyarsk Territory (krai)	91518	-6,6	43
Irkutsk Region (oblast)	91566	4,6	52
Ust-Orda Buryat Autonomous Area (okrug)	3655	-7,6	48
Kemerovo Region (oblast)	60665	7,5	29
Novosibirsk Region (oblast)	94858	-0,7	46
Omsk Region (oblast)	48637	-7,4	31

Tomsk Region (oblast)	31655	-5,7	43
Chita Region (oblast)	31596	-5,1	43
Agin-Buryat Autonomous Area (okrug)	1392	3,6	31
Far East Federal District	219938	-7,9	47
Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)	23075	-4,4	41
Primorsky Territory (krai)	76636	-7,1	53
Khabarovsk Territory (krai)	60593	-5,8	58
Amur Region (oblast)	24470	-7,9	37
Kamchatka Region (oblast)	8305	-30,6	31
Magadan Region (oblast)	4835	-18,6	40
Sakhalin Region (oblast)	15214	-5,6	39
Jewish Autonomous Region (oblast)	5777	-7,1	44
Chukot Autonomous Area (okrug)	1033	-5,1	28
Department of the rule of law in closed areas	29084	-9,2	
Total in Russia	3582541	-7,1 1786211	33

2.3.2. Risk of becoming a victim of human trafficking

*“Russia is a supply, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children being trafficked for various purposes.”*⁷⁴ The concept of human trafficking implies not only processes of kidnapping, holding, and selling of human beings, but also associated forms of exploitation which is the ultimate aim of the kidnappers. *“According to experts, the use of slave labour has been the most widespread form of human trafficking in Russia”*, says the local office of the “International Organisation on Migration” (IOM) in Moscow.⁷⁵ IOM defines the most common forms of exploitation as follows:

- Forced labour, compulsion to rendering sexual or other services;
- No-charge work, or work with unclear prospects for payment, non-payment of the money earned;
- Deprivation of freedom of action and of the right to use the results of his own work;
- Compulsion to work without labour contract, extended working day, exceeded intensity of work etc.;
- Unlawful rejection of person’s will to quit job (retaining a worker by force);
- Tampering with workers (transfer of workers to other employers without any consent of the former, engagement in different works (in addition to direct labour) without worker’s consent etc).

⁷⁴ William Alex Pridemore (2007). *Ruling Russia: Law, Crime, and Justice in a Changing Society*. Rowman & Littlefield, p. 167.

⁷⁵ Instruction leaflet on human trafficking of IOM Russia, <http://no2slavery.ru/files/pamyatka.pdf>, last accessed August 2008.

Human trafficking to and from the Russian Federation is a highly profitable branch of the organised crime, well structured and often performed with utmost brutality.⁷⁶ The methods of bringing a person in a position of helplessness by offenders are many-sided: from the taking away somebody's documents, debt bondage, any form of violence, blackmailing, limitation of freedom of movement and communication up to total isolation of the victim. The scale of human trafficking from or to Russian Federation is unknown. Just single spectacular police successes, like the freeing of some 600 forced prostitutes of Russian origin in Spain, gives a vague idea of the dimension of the crime.⁷⁷ In 2006 the UN Human Rights Commissioner for Human Rights reported that more than half million Russian women have been sold into the sex industry since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.⁷⁸ The "International Labour Organisation" (ILO) fears that an estimated one million illegal migrant workers may be victims of labour trafficking in Russia.⁷⁹

IOM-Russia manages an internal statistic on victims of human trafficking to and from the Russian Federation. Although the statistic is not representative, it represents a certain tendency in human trafficking to and from Russia.

Table: Victims of human trafficking between the years 2002 and 2006, identified by IOM⁸⁰

Russia as country of destination of Human Trafficking	Russia as country of origin of Human Trafficking
1331 victim of trafficking were identified on the territory of the Russian Federation	170 victims of trafficking from the Russian Federation were identified abroad
65 % - female, 35 % - male	99 % - female
95 % - from Belarus and Ukraine	46 % - in Turkey; 23 % - in Bosnia and Herzegovina
45 % - between 18 and 25 y.o.	70 % - between 18 and 25 y.o.
10 % - minors	8 % - minors
90 % - self-identified poor and very poor	56 % - self-identified poor and very poor
43 % have intermediary professional education	8 % have intermediary professional education
10 % have higher education	12 % have higher education
50 % were exposed to sexual exploitation, 50 % to labour exploitation	50 % were exposed to sexual exploitation, 50 % to labour exploitation

Since 2003 human trafficking, both for commercial sexual exploitation and forced labour, is prohibited by the Articles 127¹ and 127² of the Federal Law No. 162-FZ (amending Criminal Code) which provides punishment of up to five years of imprisonment - under

⁷⁶ See collected cases in: E. Tyurykanova, (2005) *Forced Labour in the Russian Federation Today*, International Labour Office, Geneva

⁷⁷ UK daily "The Telegraph", *Russian Sex Slaves Freed by Police in Spain*, 11.08.2008, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/spain/2539472/Russian-sex-slaves-freed-by-police-in-spain.html>, last accessed October 2008

⁷⁸ Press Agency "RAI Novosti", Press release, 7.04.2007, <http://en.rian.ru/world/20070407/63281460.html>, last accessed August 2008.

⁷⁹ US State Department, *Trafficking in Persons Report*, June 2008, p. 215, available at: <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2008/>

⁸⁰ IOM-Russia, (2008) *Analytical Report on the Research about Human Trafficking in the Astrakhan Oblast, Moscow Oblast and the Republic of Karelia*, <http://www.no2slavery.ru/ru/issledovaniya/>, last accessed August 2008

certain conditions even up to 15 years.⁸¹ However, according to a report of the US State Department in 2007, the Russian police conducted only 139 trafficking investigations. 104 of these investigations were sexual exploitation cases and 35 were forced labour cases. 47 traffickers were convicted by Russian courts in 2007.⁸² The Russian authorities reported via the Ombudsman of the Russian Federation only ten criminal cases under Article 127¹ during the last five years which led to just six convictions.⁸³ In the light of the ineffective prosecution it is not to expect that the already announced tightening of the relative law will have a positive effect on the struggle against human trafficking in Russia.⁸⁴

Vulnerable groups of becoming a victim of human trafficking

In general, any person who is compelled to work informally without any guarantees of payment and social protection can be exposed to labour forms of exploitations resembling slavery. This group is significant regarding the fact that the shadow economy in Russia plays a prominent role in the national business life - according to an estimation of the Russian Ministry of the Interior it reaches 40% of the GDP.⁸⁵ In a recent research of IOM-Russia in three region or republics of the Russian Federation (Astrakhan region, Moscow region, republic of Karelia), the principal causes to become a victim of human trafficking are described as following:⁸⁶

- low standards of living, especially in regions which are remote or poorly developed: in consequence limits of access to education and legal employment for many groups of the population;
- the existence of shadow economy which raises the demand for migrants' cheap labour and expands opportunities for labour exploitation;

⁸¹ The text of the law is accessible via the specialised website "Legislation online", <http://www.legislationline.org>, last accessed October 2008.

⁸² US State Department, *Trafficking in Persons Report*, June 2008, p. 216, available at: <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2008/>, last accessed October 2008

⁸³ Ombudsman of the Russian Federation, Newsletter No.42 (07.03.2008), www.ombudsmanrf.ru/dad_2008/dad03/dad764/04.doc, last accessed October 2008

⁸⁴ Increase of the maximum punishment under article 127¹ and 127² to six years - thus human trafficking and slave labour would be seen as "grave crimes". Ombudsman of the Russian Federation, Newsletter No. 92, 21.05.2008, www.ombudsmanrf.ru/dad11/dad_163/r04.doc, last accessed October 2008

⁸⁵ Russian daily "Rosijsky Gazeta", *The Shadow Reaction of Business*, 1.03.2007, <http://www.rg.ru/2007/03/01/nalog.html>. last accessed October 2008

Other estimations vary widely from a minimum of 25% (estimation of the Russian Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat) up to 80%. See in detail the online publication of the "Open Company - International Centre of Research Projects", 2008, No. 1 (13), <http://uecs.mcnip.ru/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=99>, last accessed October 2008

⁸⁶ IOM-Russia, (2008) *Analytical Report on the Research about Human Trafficking in the Astrakhan Oblast, Moscow Oblast and the Republic of Karelia*, <http://www.no2slavery.ru/ru/issledovaniya/>, last accessed August 2008

See as well the older reports of Yelena Tyuryukanova (Institute for Urban Economics for the UN/IOM Working Group on trafficking in human beings, *Human Trafficking in the Russian Federation. Inventory and Analysis of the Current Situation and Responses*, Moscow 2006 http://www.cflr.org/Unicef_EnglishBook.pdf; last accessed August 2008

A.N. Sukharenko, (2005) *Transnational Aspects of Russian Organized Crime Activity: Organized Crime, Terrorism, Corruption, their Manifestations and the Fight against them*, in "Russian Criminological Association", pp. 35-49.

- the existence of illegal and often criminal intermediaries offering services for employment both for Russian citizens and for migrants, i.e.: assistance to migrants in getting necessary permits, registering documents etc.;
- insufficient official information about existing legal opportunities concerning the issue of migration and employment;
- crisis of the institution of family (the growth of domestic violence, disregard for children etc.)

The same report describes in detail risk groups by certain criteria as follows:⁸⁷

Criterion	Groups of risk
Age	Children and teenagers (under 18 years), adolescent persons (18-25 years), young women (under 30 years)
Place of residence	Newcomers from provincial towns and villages to bigger cities
Education	Low education level, terminated school education (secondary incomplete), absence of professional education (higher or intermediate) or incomplete professional education;
Employment	People without a permanent source of income, including graduates from secondary and boarding schools; prostitutes; people, who are engaged in entertainment and modelling business; students, especially non-residents living in dormitories; seasonal workers from Russia and abroad; Migrants working as employees for private persons, mostly in the sphere of construction, agriculture, the fish-industry, sellers in small shops and domestic services
Behaviour	People with intentions to migrate from the Russian Federation. Especially: people to intend to migrate illegally, work migrants, migration with the intention of an arranged marriage People with intentions to migrate to the Russian Federation. Especially: seasonal worker
Social groups	Children in precarious situations: children of poor families, of alcohol- and other drug-addicts, inmates of state orphanages or borstals, etc. Adults in precarious situations: young single mothers, victims of domestic violence, mothers of large families, drug addicts, migrants from poorer CIS-states, migrants from the North-Caucasian republics, HIV/AIDS-infected people, homeless people, etc.
Ethnic groups	Ethnic minorities; ethnic groups from the poorer CIS-countries (especially Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova) and from the North-Caucasus republics - especially if they live isolated from other members of their ethnic group;

According to IOM, personal contact with recruiters (in 78% of the identified cases), announcements in the mass-media (in 16% of the identified cases) or personal contacts with familiar persons, mostly a friend or the partner (in 15% of the identified cases) were the most common forms of recruiting of victims of human trafficking in the Russian Federation. Recruiters are active mostly in modelling agencies, agencies for employment assistance, international marriage agencies and agencies for international student exchange and language courses.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ IOM-Russia, (2008) *Analytical Report on the Research about Human Trafficking in the Astrakhan Oblast, Moscow Oblast and the Republic of Karelia*, <http://www.no2slavery.ru/ru/issledovaniya/>, last accessed August 2008

⁸⁸ IOM-Russia, (2008) *Analytical Report on the Research about Human Trafficking in the Astrakhan Oblast, Moscow Oblast and the Republic of Karelia*, <http://www.no2slavery.ru/ru/issledovaniya/>, last accessed August 2008

A resource book edited by the Russian NGO “Angel Coalition” and the Swedish NGO “Kvinnoforum” provides information on aid-organisations for victims of human trafficking.⁸⁹

2.3.3. Risk of becoming a victim of forced prostitution

According to Human Rights groups there is in Russia a growing number of prostitutes. This is especially the case in Moscow, where the ongoing economy growth leads to an increasing demand for cheap labour - including prostitutes.⁹⁰ The number of prostitutes in Moscow alone is estimated at 130.000 of which a quarter are minors - a rise of five times between the year 2000 and 2007. Every sixth prostitute would be working against her/his will.⁹¹ The NGO “Prostitucii”, which counter prostitution in Russia, blame mainly the authorities for the steady rise of forced prostitution by writing in their mission statement: “*The market of sexual services in Russia not only has increased. It became part of the organised crime, a well adjusted business in which power structures and law enforcement bodies accept the most active participation in the profits. They provide protection for dealers of “live goods” from prosecution.*”⁹²

Vulnerable groups

Russia is both a donor country and a recipient country of people used for sexual exploitation. Newcomers to Russian cities- both with Russian nationality and without - belong to the high risk group, especially if they have not an official registration. A press release of “News.ru” in 2006, based on scientific polls and studies stated that nearly a third of all female illegal migrants in Russia become victims of forced prostitution. 80% of all prostitutes in Moscow would be newcomers from abroad or elsewhere in Russia.⁹³

The risk of becoming a victim of forced prostitution is connected with the social situation of newcomers to bigger Russian cities. Because the system of social protection of socially vulnerable groups of the Russian population is ineffective, especially newcomers without social networks, registration, stable source of income and higher education are more vulnerable than others. A special case are children of socially declassed families which are the main resource of the growing number of street children in Russia, especially in Moscow. In 2007 the law enforcement authorities in Moscow detained more than 13.000 children on the due to vagrancy and begging. According to the annual report 2007 of the “Representative (Ombudsman) for the Children Rights in Moscow”, Alexej Golovan, 30% of the street children in Moscow would be involved in prostitution or other parts of the sex industry. The presentation of the annual report in the Moscow City Council by Golovan in April 2008 provoked a scandal by blaming the responsible authorities to worsen the

⁸⁹ Anti-Trafficking Coalition “Angel Coalition”, *Resource Book for Working Against Trafficking in Human Beings in the CIS and the Baltic Sea Regions*, 2005 (the information is mostly still actual) <http://www.angelcoalition.org/pdf/2005ResourceBookENG.pdf>, last accessed August 2008

⁹⁰ US broadcasting company CNN, Reportage: *Russia's Sex slave industry thrives, rights groups say*, 18.07.2008, <http://edition.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/europe/07/18/russia.prostitution/index.html>, last accessed August 2008

⁹¹ Russian daily “Work”, *Girls of Hard Behaviour*, 5.07.2007, <http://www.trud.ru/issue/article.php?id=200707051170601>, last accessed July 2008

⁹² NGO “Project of Counteraction of Prostitution”, *Mission Statement*, <http://prostitucii.net/>, last accessed July 2008

⁹³ Russian News Agency “Newsru.com”, *Russia is Seen as a Centre of Human Trafficking*, 27.04.2006, <http://www.newsru.com/russia/27apr2006/rabstvo.html>, last accessed September 2008

problem by neglecting it. The report blamed especially the Moscow courts by stating: "There is the impression that the judges of Moscow either do not know the specific federal laws or simply refuse to execute them." In consequence of the critique, the Moscow City Council refused to adopt for the first the report of the ombudsman.⁹⁴

2.3.4 Effectiveness of protection

2.3.4.1. Police forces

Reliability of the Police Forces

The public perception of the law enforcement authorities in Russia is shattering. Since many years, Russian Human Rights groups are collecting evidences of a wide range of duty violation up to human rights violations by different agencies of the Ministry of the Interior.⁹⁵ Ill treatment up to torture especially of suspects, detainees and social vulnerable people (particular homeless) is common practice.⁹⁶ The death of the Ingush journalist and politician Magomed Yevloyev, who was shot in the head by "accident" while in police custody, is just one of the more prominent cases of police violence in the Russian Federation.⁹⁷

According to several polls, the public trust in the Russian militia, as the police is still called, is generally low: two thirds of the Russian population have no trust at all in members of the militia. Fear of arbitrariness of the police is as prevalent as the general fear of acts of terror.⁹⁸ In a poll in the city of St. Petersburg in 2005, 21.3% of the respondents approve the question: "Do you remember any case in your life when

⁹⁴ Russian daily "Gazeta", Moscow City Council Refused the Report of the Representative for Children Rights, 3.04.2008, <http://www.demoscope.ru/weekly/2008/0329/gazeta02.php>, last accessed November 2008

⁹⁵ The NGO "Public Verdict" is systematically collecting human rights abuses by the law-enforcement authorities, www.publicverdict.org, last accessed October 2008

⁹⁶ Beside the information collected by Public Verdict, see:

BBC, Russian Forces 'Using Torture', 21.11.2008, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7741064.stm>, last accessed November 2008

Radio Liberty, Russia: *My Only Thought Was To Escape the Torture*, 24.10.2007, <http://rfe.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/10/2B0C6A68-453A-4AF9-8586-8BC997C3AB81.html>, last accessed September 2008

Amnesty International, Russian Federation: *Torture and forced "Confessions" in Detention*, 22.11.2006 <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR46/056/2006/en/dom-EUR460562006en.pdf>, last accessed September 2008

⁹⁷ News Agency Reuters, *Russian police in standoff over journalist's death*, 01.09.2008, <http://www.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUSL143138920080901>, last accessed September 2008

⁹⁸ Public Verdict- http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/research/reform_police.html, last accessed July 2008

The overall results are confirmed by a survey of the opinion research centre "Levada-Centre", *Views of the Russian Middle Class About their Country and Europe*, 3.07.2008, <http://www.levada.ru/eng/press/2008070301.html>, last accessed October 2008 and by a research of the Sociological Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, *Sociology of Violence. Arbitrariness of Law Enforcement Bodies I the Eyes of Russian Citizens*, 2006, <http://www.pytkam.net/web/files/sociology.doc>, last accessed October 2008

*militiamen applied violence toward you, which you would define as unlawful?*⁹⁹ A recent representative survey of the renowned Levada-Centre documented that there is no change for the better during the last three years. In this poll which was carried out in spring 2008 among the Russian urban middleclass, 76% of the respondent answered “no” to the question: “Do you feel protected against possible arbitrariness of the authorities, the militia or other government bodies?”¹⁰⁰

In 2007, two thirds of all adult Russians were convinced that the efforts of the militia are mostly aimed on own private interests and only 21% believes that the militia aspire to secure the safety of the population. Although the efficiency of militia’s work in 2007 was estimated a little higher than formerly (17% respondents argued that “the situation has changed for the better,” whereas in recent years this figure did not reach 10%), 39% believed that over the year the situation has taken a turn for the worse, and 36% considered that it has not changed at all. For the last two years about a fourth of the respondents applied to the militia for help. The majority of them (55%) proved unsatisfied with the results of their applications, 43% being either satisfied or more likely satisfied. One fifth of the respondents who applied to the militia consider that their claims were actually ignored.¹⁰¹ Questioned about the most urgent problem which a possible reformed Russian police should approach, 74% of the Russian adults chose for: “The reformed militia should serve the interests of the citizens, defend their rights and safety and watch over the public order.” A further 22% chose the option: “The militia should become an effective force in the struggle against criminality and should work in the interest of the state.”¹⁰²

In another representative poll the majority (55%) of the respondents would not address the police if someone would have stolen their purse with their monthly salary, pension or grant. Only 34% would do so.¹⁰³

2.3.4.2. Judiciary

Russia has a well developed judiciary system, which has, however, no tradition of being independent of the political apparatus. According to the Vice-president of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Rachenkov, more than 5% of the Russian population address annually in court.¹⁰⁴ Both, governmental and non-governmental institutions organising polls to elicit public trust to the judiciary system. Although they come to similar figures, the interpretation of it is quite different. According to governmental data, 19% of the Russian adults have trust in the

⁹⁹ Poll and associated research for Public verdict, 2005, supervised by Jacob Gilinsky (Sociological Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences.), data provided in August 2008 by the Russian NGO “Center for Independent Social Research” (CISR), contact: see Appendix II

¹⁰⁰ Russian opinion research centre “Levada-Centre”, *Views of the Russian Middle Class about their Country and Europe*, 3.07.2008, <http://www.levada.ru/eng/press/2008070301.html>, last accessed September 2008

¹⁰¹ Public Verdict, *The View of the Population on the Militia Reform*, 19.03.2008, http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/research/reform_police.html, last accessed September 2008

¹⁰² Public Verdict, *The View of the Population on the Militia Reform*, 19.03.2008, http://www.publicverdict.org/ru/articles/research/reform_police.html, last accessed September 2008

¹⁰³ Russian daily “Noviye Izvestia”, *Crisis of Mistrust: Sociologists Researched the Relations between Russian Citizens and the Militia*, 14.07.2008, <http://www.newizv.ru/news/2008-07-14/93854/>, last accessed September 2008

¹⁰⁴ Website of the Russian Supreme Court, *The Negative Public View on Our Courts is Not Quite Fair*, (without exact date, 2007), http://www.supcourt.ru/news_detale.php?id=4883, last accessed July 2008

judiciary system of their country, according to the Levada-Centre 15%. For Vladimir Rachenkov this low level of trust reflects a normality in democratic societies and would not be lower than in some member states of the EU, like Italy.¹⁰⁵ The Levada-Centre came to another conclusion: *“The court is not perceived as the independent power in Russia. People think that the judiciary depends first of all on the power of politics or wealth, therefore the reputation occurs that courts are corrupt. (...) More than half of interrogated consider, that today there is nowhere in Russia a protection of individual rights.”*¹⁰⁶ The former judge of the Russian Constitutional Court, Tamara Morshchakova sees the main structural problem of the Russian judiciary system in a absence of sufficient appeal possibilities and the lack of independency of the decisions due to the predominant influence of the chairmen of the courts on the judges.¹⁰⁷

The establishing of independency of Russian courts is declared by the Russian president Dimitry Medvedev as a top priority of his term in office. Medvedev addressed especially the widespread problem of corruption and political influence on jurisdiction.¹⁰⁸ Indeed corruption is still a major problem of the Russian society as a whole. The Global Corruption Report 2008 of Transparency International attest the Russian government just *“minimal progress in establishing and enforcing effective anti-corruption mechanisms compared to other Soviet Union successor states.”*¹⁰⁹ Till now, corruption and other exercise of external influence is common in Russian courts up to fabricated evidences used against accused persons.¹¹⁰ According to Civic Assistance Committee the employment of middlemen is as common as paying direct bribes. The organisation collected cases in which both practices did not let to the intended result.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁵ Website of the Russian Supreme Court, *The Negative Public View on Our Courts is Not Quite Fair*, (without exact date, 2007), http://www.supcourt.ru/news_detale.php?id=4883, last accessed July 2008

¹⁰⁶ Radio Freedom, 18.07.2008, *Roars of Lions: The Competent Minority is Interested Only in Juridical Reform*, (without exact date, 2008) <http://www.svobodanews.ru/Article/2008/07/18/20080718122048313.html>, last accessed November 2008

¹⁰⁷ Radio Freedom, 18.07.2008, *Roars of Lions: The Competent Minority is Interested Only in Juridical Reform*, (without exact date, 2008) <http://www.svobodanews.ru/Article/2008/07/18/20080718122048313.html>, last accessed November 2008

¹⁰⁸ Russian weekly “The Moscow News”, *Medvedev gets Tough on Corruption*, 22.05.2008, <http://www.mnweekly.ru/national/20080522/55330030.html>, last accessed September 2008

¹⁰⁹ Transparency International, *Global Corruption Report 2008*, p. 308, http://www.transparency.org/publications/gcr/download_gcr#7.4, last accessed September 2008; At the annual Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) of Transparency International the Russian Federation 2008 ranks position 147 out of 180 countries and is, according to the index together with Belarus the most corrupt industrialized country. http://www.transparency.org/news_room/in_focus/2008/cpi2008/cpi_2008_table

¹¹⁰ HRC Memorial, Civic Assistance Committee, *Fabrication of “Islamic Extremism” Criminal Cases in Russia: Campaign Continues*, 15.04.2007, <http://www.memo.ru/2008/09/04/0409082.htm>

OHCHR Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. *Russian NGO Shadow Report on the Observance of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment by the Russian Federation for the period from 2001 to 2005*, Moscow, May 2006 / <http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cat/docs/ngos/joint-russian-report-new.pdf>, last accessed July 2008

¹¹¹ CAC and Memorial describe the situation on the base of their experience in the «Migration Rights»network. They do not want to disclose names and details of the cases, in order to protect their sources. More information is however available at their offices (contact: see Annex II).

The analysis of the rising number of complaints received by the Ombudsman for Human Rights in the Russian Federation Commissioner reveals several weak points of the judiciary.¹¹²

- I) *Disrespect of legal time limits:* The most common complaints are those referring to the court's failure to meet the time limits set for trials of civil cases. Time limits are not observed because of the backlogs of cases faced by all branches of the court system, the shortage of personnel, and sometimes the inadequate competence of judges. Unreasonably long trials undermine the confidence in the judiciary. It is notably that the disrespect of legal time limits did only in exceptional cases let to disciplinary measures taken against judges.
- II) *Lack of direct participation in court hearings:* In many cases individuals are not able to execute their right to participate in a court hearing as accused or witness.
- III) *Rights of victims:* The ombudsman received frequently complaints of victims both of crime and abuse of power, which could not execute their legal right of access to justice and of compensation. The ombudsman stated that, "...there is still no effective protection of victims by the state."
- IV) *Non-Executions of judgments:* The ombudsman stated that many judgments of Russian courts remained unexecuted and undermine by this way the public trust in the judiciary. The public and even the authorities would court judgments routinely regarding as some kind of "unbinding recommendations".
- V) *Lack of compensations:* The misuse of authority by judges lead so far not to a compensation of the victim. This problem is that common that the ombudsman "...deems it extremely important to find a legislative solution..."

Vulnerable groups

The Russian NGO's "HRC Memorial" and "Civic Assistance Committee" states that Russian judges are often prejudice to witnesses and defendants of Caucasian, Asian or African origin.¹¹³ As mentioned above, a fair trial is in the Russian Federation not taken for granted. This is especially the case if the culprit is a governmental institution, a staff member of such one or a wealthy person. Political motivated trials - as many cases against journalists,¹¹⁴ environmental activists, pacifists or alleged terrorist - do not follow international juridical standards as such.

3. Social security and integration

3.1. Regions with no reintegration and return opportunities

The Chechen Republic must certainly be listed among those that are unsafe for return, not only for Chechens but also for about 250.000 ethnic Russians, which fled in the 1990s from anti-Russian violence and which have not been returned yet. Ethnic Russians fled not alone from Chechnya en masse from the whole region but as well.

¹¹² Ombudsman for Human Rights in the Russian Federation, *Annual Report 2007*, http://www.ombudsman.gov.ru/doc/ezdoc/07text_eng.doc, p. 61-78, last accessed September 2008

¹¹³ CAC and Memorial did not make the cases public in order to protect their sources. More information is however available at the offices of CAC and Memorial (contact list in annex)

¹¹⁴ Monitored and updated weekly by the NGO Glasnost Defence Foundation, <http://www.gdf.ru/index.shtml>, last accessed September 2008

The situation in the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania is among those in the North Caucasus most suitable for the Russian population's return, according to information from official sources.

The Republic of Ingushetia has developed its own program for the Russian population's return. However it is impossible to recommend this program for use, since returnees were directly attacked by extremists. Since January 2006, HRC Memorial human has recorded a number of attacks on Russian families in Sunzhenskaya district settlements: there have been attempts at arson, grenades have been thrown, and one family was simply shot dead.¹¹⁵

On the other hand, the integration or reintegration of natives of the Caucasus in other regions of Russia is also meeting resistance because of local anti-Caucasian attitudes.

From the ecological point of view, 10 years of war have turned the mountain regions of Chechnya unsuitable for inhabitation. Problems are also arising with farmlands due to the persistent danger from landmines and the ruinous state of the soils.

In addition, the ecological situation in Russia's north poses a subsistence problem even for the peoples who traditionally populate this land. With the onset of new post-Soviet times, where many of the administrative prohibitions on residence movement have been abolished, the rush of people from Siberia and the northern territories into European Russia has intensified.

Other regions: In autumn 2006 the Karelian town Kondopoga has been hit by violent racial riots which led to the expulsion of its small Chechen community. It is still not advisable for Chechens and other Caucasians to settle in and around Kondopoga. The same applies for all other towns where racial riots took place, for example the region around the village of Jandyki in the Astrachan okrug. The region around the village Moschob in Dagestan or the city of Natschik in Karbadiono-Balkaria, where anti-Chechen riots broke out in 2005 is still not advisable for resettlement of Chechens.

More information about the wave of racist violence in 2006 is accessible via SOVA-centre.¹¹⁶ SOVA-centre offers via its website a current update on racial violence in the Russian Federation (<http://xen.sova-center.ru/>).

3.2. Housing, accommodation

The problem of housing has been traditionally one of the most difficult to resolve in the Soviet Union. It has survived, in a slightly altered form, in Russia to this day.

The lack of housing, and the poor quality of that which already exists, is an Achilles' heel for the country. The overwhelming burden of housing problems falls on the shoulders of ordinary citizens. The law "On the privatisation of the housing fund"¹¹⁷ from April 7, 1991, No. 1541-1 (December 29, 2004 edition, with June 15, 2006 alterations), classified the property that people were already using as their official holdings. This was the tiny part of state property actually obtained by ordinary citizens during the privatisation push.

At the same time, each person was only given one single opportunity to privatise his property. Citizens who had been living in dilapidated housing and were in line to receive new

¹¹⁵ HRC Memorial, A. Chercasov, *Terror against the Return of the Russian Population to Ingushetia*, published September 6, 2006 / <http://www.hro.org/war/2006/06/09-1.php>, last accessed March 2007

¹¹⁶ SOVA-Centre, Galina Kozhevnikova, *Autumn 2006: Under the Kondopoga Banner* (Reports and Analyses), 04.01.2007, <http://xen.sova-center.ru/6BA2468/6BB4208/884A3C7>, last accessed October 2008

¹¹⁷ Russian Federation. Federal law, *On the Privatisation of the Housing Fund* from December 29, 2004, with amendments made on June 15, 2006. Accessible via the specialised website <http://www.consultant.ru>, last accessed October 2008

state housing never privatised their old homes. People who lived in dormitories or public residences found themselves the worst off, since they had nothing to privatise at all. In this way, the principle of people's equality before the law was violated.

The process of providing shelter for the least protected (most vulnerable) segments of society continue to grind to a halt. During a December 15, 2006 government meeting, former Regional Development Minister Vladimir Yakovlev reported that some 4.5 million families were waiting in line to receive better housing. At the same time, the government had a legal obligation to provide better housing for 1.2 million families. He noted that the expected wait for better housing stood at 15-20 years.¹¹⁸ It must be taken into account that in many regions, a family may only be placed in line for housing after having received permanent registration there for a period of 5-10 years.

The last years brought no sustainable improvement so far. However, the Russian government announced on October 14, 2008 a RUB 50bn housing fund, which has the primarily goal to relocate tenants from dilapidated housing.¹¹⁹

In 2004, Russia adopted a new edition of the Housing Code (Housing Code)¹²⁰ that entered into force on March 1, 2005.

The new Housing Code allowed property owner to expel people living on his property regardless of whether they have residence permits or other housing. This regulation also applies to the property owner's former family members. This regulation is stipulated by point 4, article 30 of the Housing Code: *"In the event of the cessation of family relations with the property owner, the former family member does not retain the right to use the given property, unless otherwise stipulated by agreement between the proprietor and the former family member. If the former family member of the property owner lacks the means to obtain or gain the right to other housing, and also if the proprietor's former family members property status and other worthy considerations do not permit them to secure other housing, the right to use housing that belongs to the stated owner may be retained by the former family member for a limited period of time determined in court. At the same time, the court may obligate the proprietor to provide different housing to a former spouse and other family members on whose behalf the proprietor is making alimony payments, if they so desire."*

It is clear from the above text that the property owner may demand that his former wife leaves his dwelling after a divorce. For this to happen, it is only enough that she has some other form of housing, no matter how poor its quality. The obligation to provide housing for a wife or parents appears only in case when they receive his alimony payments - on other words, are unable to work for themselves. Moreover, if the divorce court awards underage children to the wife and she receives alimony payments for their upkeep, then the children too are considered to be former family members and may be expelled together with their mother.

The family members may avoid such a fate by signing a contract or some other agreement with the proprietor.

Another innovation that upset the population was a time limit set on a person's right to privatise a property. In 2004, that deadline was set at March, 2005. After long and furious debates, the original deadline was extended by five years. Thus, proprietors who receive their housing prior to March 1, 2010 will be able to register it as their property. And those

¹¹⁸ Russian News Agency. RIA Novosti, *Gov't approves new Housing Program*, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20051215/42504262.html>, 15.12.2006, last accessed October 2008

¹¹⁹ News Agency Interfax, *Housing Fund should allocate 50bn Rubles to Regions*, 14.10.2008, <http://www.interfax.com/3/436326/news.aspx>, last accessed October 2008

¹²⁰ Russian Federation. Federal Law: *Housing Code of the Russian Federation*, December 24, 2004, accessible via <http://www.consultant.ru>, last accessed October 2008

who live in unacceptable housing longer than others and obtain their new dwellings after that date won't be able to own that property.

The government is thus compelling citizens to own property. At the same time, the mortgage system is only coming into existence. Banks are charging huge percentage points for housing loans while also demanding large down payments, making it impossible for most people - earning low wages while renting property at exorbitant rates - to obtain their own homes.

Vulnerable groups

Practical all returnees with insufficient financial resources are a vulnerable group regarding housing in the Russian Federation, especially if they are reliant to the rental market. The most vulnerable group among returnees are Caucasians without sufficient financial resources which intend to settle in the bigger cities of the Russian Federation. In this case they are confronted with difficulties of proper registration (which hinder their chances to receive housing considerably), high rental prices and widespread discrimination against all non-Russian ethnicities.¹²¹

3.2.1. Property restitution and/or compensation (in former zones of conflict or disaster)

Russia has no property restitution law. There are at the moment (November 2008) several appeals before the European Court concerning the denial of restitution of property that was taken away by authorities or the various government agencies. No verdicts have yet been reached in these cases.

As for restitution itself - or the return of property whose chain of transfer from one proprietor to another had been interrupted - one must note a Constitutional Court ruling made April 2005. It said that if the last proprietor was an "innocent purchaser," then the property may not be returned to an owner who had been cheated at an earlier stage. Instead of restitution, that person should be seeking compensation from the cheating party.

Russian courts have turned down every single case concerning restitution for lost or seized property in the Republic of Chechnya. The main basis for these denials was a Russian government resolution on compensation payments, which fail to cover even a minor portion of the lost property.

The compensation is awarded only to residents of the Republic of Chechnya, but the payment sum is small, not paid to everyone, and drawn out over extended periods of time.

An April 20, 1997 government resolution No. 510¹²² set the limit of property compensation payments to RUB 120.000, which prior to the 1998 default equalled about USD 20.000. Today it is worth about USD 4.000-5.000—, a too small amount for a family to obtain housing.

¹²¹ Information by the NGO's "Civic Assistance Committee", Moscow and "House of Peace", St. Petersburg. July 2008. Confirmed by the Russian migrant organisation in Belgium, "Solidariteit", July 2008. Contact: Appendix II

¹²² Russian Federation. Government resolution No. 510 from April 30, 1997, *On the Rules for Paying Compensation for Lost Property or Belongings to Citizens who Suffered as a Result of the Resolution to the Crisis in the Chechen Republic, who Permanently left the Republic*. Accessible via the specialised website: www.consultant.ru, last accessed October 2008

A July 4, 2003 government resolution No. 404¹²³ set compensation for completely destroyed housing in the Republic of Chechnya at RUB 300.000 plus an additional RUB 50.000 for lost property. It should be underscored that this decision concerns only people who continue to live in Chechnya. Families whose housing is deemed to be less than 80 % ruined are not eligible for compensation. The Russian NGO “Civic Assistance Committee” (CAC) believes that the new level set for compensation payments is enough for a family to gain new housing if that sum is paid in full (in other words, if the family is not forced to pay bribes to secure the payment), and if the family is not forced to use the money to pay off debts and cover their daily expenses.

Point 10 of resolution No. 404 gave several ministries a two-month timeframe in which to make required changes to resolution No. 510, concerning the size of compensation payments for lost and seized property and the procedures under which they are paid. People waited for these changes - for two years, rather than two months. Things came to an end on August 4, 2005 when through point 19 of resolution No. 489, the government rescinded point 10 of resolution No. 404, among many of its other decisions.

Vulnerable groups

In addition, the payments based on resolution No. 505 are made excruciatingly slow. All in all, only 39.000 families have received compensation.¹²⁴ Moreover, as it is mentioned in a report of 2005 of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, returnees have often to pay bribes amount up to 50% of their compensation on officials in the administration of the Chechen Republic.¹²⁵ This phenomenon is according to the Russian NGO “Civic Assistance Committee” (CAC) still common practice.

As a result, thousands of families that once lived in the Republic of Chechnya, no matter their nationality, remain scattered without any housing throughout various regions of Russia.

Another worrying factor is the difference in size of compensation payments made to those who returned to Chechnya and those who preferred not to do so. After 2003, IDPs who stayed on in Chechnya began receiving payments between two and two-and-a-half times higher than those living in other regions of Russia.

In line with compensations paid by the federal government, a series of international organisations and NGO’s (UNHCR, “Dutch Council for Refugees”, “International Committee of the Red Cross”, “Doctors Without Borders”, and others) offer home-building assistance to IDPs. For the most part, these organisations provide tents for temporary housing, repair dormitories and organize living quarters in the destroyed housing sector.

The Ingush, the former residents of the Prigorodny district of North Ossetia-Alania, who were banished from their homes in 1992 during the armed stage of the Ingush-Ossetian

¹²³ Russian Federation. Government resolution No. 404 from July 4, 2003, *On the Rules for Paying Compensation for Lost Property or Belongings to Citizens who Suffered as a Result of the Resolution to the Crisis in the Chechen Republic, who are Permanently living in the Republic*. Accessible via the specialised website: www.consultant.ru, last accessed October 2008

¹²⁴ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). *Struggling to integrate: Displaced people from Chechnya living in other areas of the Russian Federation*, June 2008, p. 24, [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/\(httpInfoFiles\)/CCF543EDC690430EC12574780040863B/\\$file/Russia_SCR_Jun08.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/CCF543EDC690430EC12574780040863B/$file/Russia_SCR_Jun08.pdf), last accessed October 2008

¹²⁵ IDMC, *An Uncertain Future: The Challenges of Return and Reintegration for Internally Displaced Persons in the North Caucasus*, October 2006, p. 13, [http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/\(httpInfoFiles\)/AB9962E52FC79BB3C1257203002C35AA/\\$file/russia_report.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/AB9962E52FC79BB3C1257203002C35AA/$file/russia_report.pdf), last accessed October 2008

conflict, receive compensation if they agree to return to their homes or – as authorities are not able to secure returnees in some villages – to settle in a new place.

These compensations are several times higher than those paid to the residents of Chechnya. They range from RUB 700.000 to RUB 2 million per family, a sum that enables a family to obtain real, acceptable housing.

3.2.2. Housing programs by return areas

Each region has its own program for construction of housing that envisions share participation by the citizens. The system is inherited from the Soviet era and should provide the citizens with basic accommodation. However, the system is chronically underfinanced by the government and it is not fulfilling its purpose any more. Currently the program is limited only to civil servants. It is not yet replaced by a modern system of bank loans which would be affordable for the majority of the Russian citizens.

All regional programs are accessible only for so called “permanent inhabitants”. In many cities, like in St. Petersburg and in Moscow there are further more waiting lists with restricted conditions of inscription (e.g. in St. Petersburg just for inhabitants with minimum 10 years registration in the city¹²⁶ - details about the programs in Moscow are accessible via the newspaper “Version”¹²⁷). In consequence, all returnees are excluded unless they still dispose of a permanent registration of the respective region.

More information on regional housing programs are accessible via the websites of the several regional administrations.

In February 2008 the World Bank signed a partnership with the Russian Federation to improve housing and communal services in at least ten Russian cities. The five year ‘Housing and Communal Services Project’ (HCS) is financed by a USD 200 million loan by the World Bank. All Russian cities ranging in population from 90.000 - 600.000 people and meet the defined minimum criteria of financial performance of its administration and communal service providers are invited to apply for the program. The selection process is ongoing. The program is accompanied by a USD 10 billion infrastructural program of the Russian government.¹²⁸

“The state program for assisting volunteer repatriation into Russia for compatriots living abroad.”¹²⁹

The beginning of 2006 saw the announcement of a new program to repatriate Russians returning from abroad, according to the 1999 law *“On the state policy of the RF in relation to compatriots living abroad.”¹³⁰*

¹²⁶ Information desk of the Administration of the Central District of St. Petersburg, July 2008

¹²⁷ Russian daily “Version”, *Who is Here Extreme?*, 28.04.2008, http://versia.ru/articles/2008/apr/28/ochered_na_kvartiru, last accessed July 2008

¹²⁸ The World Bank, Projects Database, *Housing and Communal Services Project*, Project ID: P079032 <http://web.worldbank.org/external/projects/main?Projectid=P079032&theSitePK=40941&pagePK=64283627&menuPK=228424&piPK=73230>, last accessed September 2008

¹²⁹ The program was launched by presidential decree No. 637 on June 22, 2006, called *On Measures to Provide Assistance for the Volunteer Repatriation into the Russian Federation of Compatriots living abroad.*

¹³⁰ Russian Federation. Federal law No. 99-F3, *On State Policy of the Russian Federation in Relation to Compatriots who are Abroad.* issued May 24, 1999, accessible via the specialised website “consultant”, www.consultant.ru, last accessed September 2008

Russian NGO ‘Civic Assistance Committee’ (CAC) report, that the authorities in the Kaluga region offered insufficient housing to returnees which were furthermore located in an environmentally hazardous zone.¹³⁶ The annual report of the Commissioner of Human Rights in the Russian Federation confirmed these corresponding reports and stated: *“One of the key criteria for deciding whether a subject of the Russian Federation should be included in the state program was its need to attract additional labor resources from the outside. It is all the more surprising, therefore, why the only program participant who relocated to the Krasnoyarsk Territory was not provided with a job there. The “guaranteed” jobs were never made available to six out of the seven program participants who moved to the Irkutsk Province, members of 10 out of the 12 families who resettled to the Lipetsk Province, and 44 of the 61 families currently residing in the Kaliningrad Province.”*¹³⁷

The program is hindered as well by unclear responsibilities for information providing. For example could the reception department of the government of the Leningrad region not respond to a demand to name an institution or person which would provide information for candidate resettlers.¹³⁸

A general problem of the program seems to be the fact that it is mainly addressed to so-called “Volga Germans”, an ethnic minority in the former Soviet Union which members emigrated en masse after 1991. These 2,5m migrants represents the major group of the approximately 3-3.5m former Soviet citizens who left the territory of the present Russian Federation alone.¹³⁹ The Volga Germans have been considered by the German authorities as German citizens and are in consequence passport holders of that country. The efforts of the Russian Federation to stimulate this group to re-emigrate are seen by the migration organisations in Germany with growing criticism.¹⁴⁰ Nevertheless the Russian government maintains an own information-website addressed to “Russians in Germany” with the name “Remigrant” (<http://www.remigrant.de>)

3.2.3. Opportunities of building a house

Opportunities to build a house depend naturally on two factors: the presence of property and financing. Building ground in the cities of the Russian Federation is just affordable for the very rich, especially in the case of Moscow and St. Petersburg. Private loans are difficult to get given a just poorly developed modern credit system. The financial crisis in 2008, which has hit the Russian Federation hard, makes it even more difficult to receive a loan under acceptable conditions. In remote rural areas building a house may be affordable for returnees with savings. The possibilities depend on the individual situation and the region.

¹³⁶ Contact Information in Appendix II

¹³⁷ Annual Report of the Ombudsman for Human Rights in the Russian Federation for the Year 2007, http://www.ombudsman.gov.ru/doc/ezdoc/07text_eng.doc, last accessed July 2008

¹³⁸ Interview of Ms Elena Smirnova (staff of the NGO ‘House of Peace and Non-Violence’, contact: Appendix II) with an official in the reception department of the Government of Leningrad region who refused to present herself (the name and family name), 2007

¹³⁹ ORNIS, *Russlanddeutsche verstimmt*, February 2008 <http://ornis-press.de/russlanddeutsche-verstimmt.785.0.html>, last accessed September 2008

¹⁴⁰ ORNIS, *Russlanddeutsche verstimmt*, February 2008 <http://ornis-press.de/russlanddeutsche-verstimmt.785.0.html>, last accessed September 2008

3.2.3.1. Conditions of obtaining land property

Russia's Land Code¹⁴¹ allows people to obtain land as private property.

Chapter 15 of the Land Code states:

- a) The property of citizens and legal entities (private property) is recognized as land that is obtained by citizens and legal entities based on principles determined by the laws of the Russian Federation.
- b) Citizens and legal entities have equal rights to obtaining land and property. Land properties that are in state or municipal hands may be offered for purchase to citizens and legal entities, except for plots of lands that according to this Code may not be in private hands, as per corresponding federal legislation.
- c) Foreign citizens, people without citizenship and foreign legal entities may not have ownership rights to land plots that are located on border territories whose list is determined by the president of the Russian Federation in accordance to the federal law "On the state border of the Russian Federation," nor on other specially designated territories of the Russian Federation, in accordance to federal laws.

A December 29, 2006 federal law altered Chapter 20 of the Land Code, which now bans the permanent sale of land:

- a) Land properties are offered permanently (without time limits) to state municipal establishments, state enterprises, and also state government and local government agencies.
- b) Citizens are not granted the right to use land properties permanently (without time limits).

If a citizen inherited the right to own state or municipal property for life before the new Land Code rules went into effect, then he will retain such rights to this property in accordance to Chapter 21 of the code.

However the Land Code also offers the emergency use of land, without compensations.

Excerpts from Chapter 24 state:

Citizens may be issued emergency, non-compensated use of plots from lands that belong to citizens or legal entities, in accordance with an agreement or service allotment.

In addition the state executive branch or municipal government agencies may offer plots from lands in state or municipal holdings to people with whom they reached state or municipal contracts for the construction of real estate, which is carried out entirely at the expense of the federal budget, budgets of the subjects of the Russian Federation or the local budgets, based on an order made in accordance with the federal law on placing orders on the delivery of goods, completion of works, or performance of services for state or municipal needs, for the period of construction of said property.

Service allotments are offered without compensation in emergency order, for the use of workers in specific sectors of the economy, including transportation, forestry and timber industries, hunting, state nature reserves and national parks.

¹⁴¹ Database under the legislation of Russia "Consultant plus"
<http://www.consultant.ru/online/base/?req=doc;base=LAW;n=78693>, last accessed July 2008

Service allotments are presented to workers of these organisations for the duration of the establishment of labour relations, based on applications made following the decisions of the corresponding organisation on properties belonging to them.

Based on part 3 of Chapter 30.1 of the Land Code, it is possible to offer land that belongs to state or municipal agencies under a rent agreement for individual housing projects. This is done based on applications from citizens interested in such property.

Within two days of receiving such an application, the state executive branch or municipal government agency may reach a decision on holding an auction for the sale of such property, or the right to reach a leaser's agreement, or to publish an announcement on it accepting offers for the rent of such property, with indication of its location and area, in a periodical print publication that has been authorized by the Russian government, the highest executive agency of the Russian government, or the head of the municipality, and also to issue an announcement on accepting said applications on the official Internet site of the Russian government or municipality (if it has one).

It is also possible to offer land for specific use to selected groups of citizens in accordance with a special instruction from the Russian government and regional authority.

According to Chapter 46, the rent of property may be halted on the initiative of the leaser, in case the renter does not use the land in accordance with the renter's agreement specifications.

Thus, rent may be halted if the renter fails to build housing or to reach a required level in its construction within the agreed timeframes.

Vulnerable groups

Ingush who intend to obtain land property in North-Ossetia, especially in the Prigorodny-district are hindered in many ways effectively to do so by the local authorities.¹⁴²

3.2.3.2. Relevant approximate prices

The price ranges between EUR 100-1.000, and depend both on the region and the specific situation, which changes relatively quickly. The prices for the land grow on the average on 20-25 % a year.¹⁴³ The prices for land in the suburbs are increase in 2007 on 20-40%, whereas the prices for apartments in the city itself grown "just" on 12-15%.¹⁴⁴ A reasonably presented catalogue of various building materials and construction plans may be found on the site <http://roszem.ru> .

¹⁴² Human Rights Watch, *As If They Fell From the Sky" Counterinsurgency, Rights Violations, and Rampant Impunity in Ingushetia*, June 2008, <http://hrw.org/reports/2008/russia0608/russia0608web.pdf>, last accessed October 2008

¹⁴³ Real estate site for the city of St.-Petersburg <http://www.bsn.ru/news/market/russia/13896>, last accessed July 2008

¹⁴⁴ News site for investors <http://www.rokf.ru/realty/2008/07/08/100834.htm>, last accessed July 2008

3.2.3.3. Available credits, subsidies and other forms of help

It is fairly difficult to receive credits for construction, but the system of lending is slowly developing. Some banks, like the Moscow Credit Bank¹⁴⁵ offers credits for the construction of a dacha (small summer home) or cottage on security of the land under the proposed construction site.

Loans are issued in both US dollar (USD) and rouble (RUB) terms. The loans range from USD 40.000 to USD 1.000.000, or from RUB 700.000 to 10 million. The credit term runs up to 15 years. For dollar loans, the annual mortgage rate is set at 13.5 %, after income is confirmed by the 2-NDFL (Tax on Income of a Private Individual) form, or at 15 % in case income is confirmed by some other means. On rouble loans, the annual rates are 14 % and 15.5 %, respectively.

The program allows a maximum volume of private loans of 75% of the land property value. For preliminary calculations of the loan size, an applicant can use the mortgage calculator available on the bank's website. A permanent registration in the Moscow region is not necessary in order to get a loan from the Moscow Credit Bank. The aggregate family income is taken into account in available credit calculations.

The bank promise a quick review of loan applications and states that inert four days after a decision all necessary documents are filed in. The Moscow Credit Bank offers as well home service for the client to pick up the completed application package.

The program permits early loan repayment without fines, starting from the seventh month from the date of the credit issue. The minimum early payment sum is USD 500 or RUB 15.000 (depending on the credit currency).¹⁴⁶

There is no information available yet in which way the current financial crisis which hit a.o. the Russian Federation hard, will influence the future conditions for private loans.

Vulnerable groups

Returnees with difficulties concerning a proper registration have no access to whatever private (bank loans) or governmental financial aid.

3.2.4. Opportunities of buying real estate

3.2.4.1. Legal conditions

Russian citizens usually encounter no problems in most regions. Exceptions occur in the Krasnodar region and Kabardino-Balkaria, where there are local limits set on the amount of property that may be obtained by a person who does not have local registration based on place of residence.

¹⁴⁵ Moscow Credit Bank, *Information on private loans*, http://mkb.ru/facility/private_person/mortgage_lending/immovable_property.php, last accessed July 2008

¹⁴⁶ All data given by "Moscow Credit Bank", July 2008. More information provides the specialised website: "All credits in Russia", <http://www.allcredits.ru/>, last accessed July 2008

3.2.4.2. Eventual obstacles for certain groups -

Vulnerable groups

There are no legal obstacles. The resettling of the last remaining 10.000 Ingush IDP's to the Prigorodny district of North Ossetia is however still suspended. Ingush who are willing to settle in North Ossetia may undergo administrative hinder and even refusals to do so.¹⁴⁷

Further difficulties in the aspect of housing purchases may arise as a result of lawless actions on the part of authorities, or due to xenophobia addressed toward Roma-people and citizens from the Northern Caucasian-, Central Asian- and the Far Eastern-Republics of the Russian Federation.

There is also prejudice against various types of minorities, which may also cause problems when attempting to buy real estate.

3.2.4.3. Relevant approximate prices

Housing prices are subject to great volatility but they have raised over the last 10 years steadily. According to Rosstat (Russian State Statistics Service) the average actual value of one square meter of residential buildings have been RUB 22.612 in the first six months of 2008. These average value indicates a considerable increase in prices in comparison with the fist six months of 2007 when the average value for one square meter have been RUB 18.536. The most expensive region is the far-eastern autonomous okrug Chukotka due to extreme climate conditions (average price sq.m: RUB 131.841).¹⁴⁸ After the decision to held the 2014 Winter Olympic games in Sochi, the prices for housing sky-rocketed in the whole region.¹⁴⁹ For so called "elite" apartments prices per sq.m range form USD 6.000-15.000 (RUB 136-407.000)for the cheapest category ("economy" between USD 2.000-3.000 (RUB 54-81.000) (info: <http://realsochi.ru>).

In Moscow prices are still in a stiff rise and the average cost per sq.m has grown between January and August 2008 alone by 35% and reached a record bench of USD 6.000 (RUB 136.000). The construction of less luxury houses (apartments "economy"-class) has come in the last years to an actual standstill. Even apartments build in the

¹⁴⁷ Human Rights Watch, *As If They Fell From the Sky" Counterinsurgency, Rights Violations, and Rampant Impunity in Ingushetia*, June 2008, <http://hrw.org/reports/2008/russia0608/russia0608web.pdf>, last accessed October 2008

Swiss Peace and Fewer-International, Fast update, *Russia/North Ossetia/Trends in Conflict and Cooperation*, No.1 August 2007 http://www.fewer-international.org/images/lib/FAST_Update_North_Ossetia_1_2007_197.pdf, last accessed September 2008

Jamestown Foundation, *Leading Rights Activist Meets with Zyazikov*, in: North Caucasus Weekly, Vol. 9, Issue 35 (September 19, 2008), http://www.jamestown.org/chechnya_weekly/article.php?articleid=2374421, last accessed September 2008

background information offers: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). S. Gannushkina, *Climate of fear: the challenges of return and reintegration in the North Caucasus*, September 2006, p.23; For up-to date information contact the author via HRC Memorial (contact information in appendix)

¹⁴⁸ Regnum News Agency, Press release, 04.09.2008, <http://www.regnum.ru/news/1050175.html>, last accessed October 2008

¹⁴⁹ Regnum News Agency, *Stock-jobbing Growth of Real Estate Prices in Sochi came to a Halt*, 18.07.2008, <http://www.regnum.ru/news/1029458.html> , last accessed October 2008

1960s are seldom offered below USD 5.000 per sq.m.¹⁵⁰ In the summer of 2008 a two-room apartment had costed in Moscow an average of USD 294.000 (RUB 8million).¹⁵¹ Current prices can be inquired at the real estate agencies, e.g. for Moscow: “Moscow Lights - Megapir” Ltd (<http://www.ogni.ru/>), “Makosha International” (<http://www.makosha.ru/>), or “Income Realty Cooperation” (<http://www.incom-realty.ru>)

In St. Petersburg as well real estate prices continue to grow fast. The average price per sq.m has reached in the summer of 2008 a record of USD 4.400 (RUB 119.000). Square meter prices below USD 3.000 are rare. More details on prices in St. Petersburg are accessible via the “Bulletin of Real estate St. Petersburg” (<http://www.bn.ru>).

Other average prices per sq.m:

Ekaterinburg: USD 2.650 (August 2008) (local real estate website “UPN”:
<http://www.upn.ru/>)

Krasnoyarsk: USD 2.550 (May 2008)

Novosibirsk: USD 2.550 (June 2008)

Barnaul: USD 1.800 (June 2008)¹⁵²

The price level reached levels which are unattainable for the vast majority of the Russian population - this is even the case in provincial towns.

3.2.4.4. Available credits and subsidies

Like mentioned before, the institutionalized private credit market in the Russian Federation is poorly developed. The numerous credit programs offered by Russian banks may be found on the site <http://www.ipohelp.ru/queries.html>. It lists all Russian banks that offer mortgage loans, and the criteria by which they may be obtained. The program of the Moscow Credit Bank is already described in chapter 3.2.3.3. It should keep in mind that the initial mortgage rates quoted by the banks are, as a rule, lower than those actually available to consumers. In mid-March 2007, the Russian daily “Kommersant” conducted an investigation into the discrepancy.¹⁵³ The article came to the following conclusion: the actual cost of credits taken out by customers is far higher than the percentage rates indicated by the banks when they initially issue the loans. Using methodology employed by Russia’s Central Bank, the newspaper calculated the actual percentage rates paid on loans issued by 19 banks. The “Kommersant” report¹⁵⁴ claims that while the stated and actual percentage figures diverge for housing mortgages by only 0.6-2.4 % and for car loans by 0.2-24.1 %, the actual costs – after including hidden commissions – on personal emergency

¹⁵⁰ Real estate magazine “Kvadroom”, http://www.kvadroom.ru/statei/article.phtml?a_id=3710, last accessed July 2008

¹⁵¹ Real estate magazine “Portal IRN-RU”, *Rent Prices Grow Prompt Rates - Approximately 10% per Month*, 14.08.2008, <http://www.irn.ru/articles/15948.html>, last accessed October 2008

¹⁵² Real estate agencies “Metr” (<http://www.kmetr.ru/>) and “Reforum” (<http://reforum.ru/>), last accessed July 2008

¹⁵³ Russian daily “Kommersant”, *Business Real Estate Breaks Investment Record in Russia*, No. 42, 16.03.2007, http://www.kommersant.com/p-10329/Estate_record_/, last accessed October 2008

¹⁵⁴ Russian daily “Kommersant”, *Business Real Estate Breaks Investment Record in Russia*, No. 42, 16.03.2007, http://www.kommersant.com/p-10329/Estate_record_/, last accessed October 2008

need and commercial express-credits diverged by 54 % and 71 % respectively. Bank leaders for diverging stated and actual loan rates among the various sectors were Soyuz bank (mortgage), Russkiy Standard (car loans), Alfa Bank (emergency needs), and SKB-Bank (commercial express-credits).

As part of their investigation “Kommersant” also published a chart of stated and actual interest rates charged by the banks. This chart shows that mortgage rates claimed by various banks range between 10 and 14 %, while in reality it ranged between 10.6 and 15.1 %.

Vulnerable groups

Like in subchapter 3.2.3.3: Returnees with difficulties concerning a proper registration have no access to whatever private (bank loans) or governmental financial aid.¹⁵⁵

3.2.5. Opportunities of renting house or apartment

Prices have risen considerably in recent years. On average, over three years, rent price has doubled and even tripled. In Moscow alone, rental prices of apartments have grown on 30% during the last 12 months.¹⁵⁶

3.2.5.1. Eventual obstacles for certain groups

Vulnerable groups

The most prominent vulnerable group concerning opportunities of renting housing are low-income families in any major city of the Russian Federation, especially in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Krasnodar and Sochi. Low-income families are disproportional families with more than one child: according to the Federal State Statistics, half the families with two children and even two thirds of the families with three or more receive an average per capita income below subsistence level.¹⁵⁷ Even more vulnerable are single mothers.

Prejudice against various types of ethnic minorities are common in the Russian Federation. These groups of the population - Roma, North-Caucasians, people from the Central- and Far East, etc. - are hindered seriously in their attempts to rent housing in other regions than their region of origin, especially in the major Russian cities. For example, it is quite common in St. Petersburg and Moscow that announcements to rent apartments are provided with annexes like “only for Russian families”, “no Kavkaz”, etc.¹⁵⁸

There is a considerable lack of housing suited for the disabled. Most apartments in the Russian Federation are not equipped with lifts - even buildings up to eight floors

¹⁵⁵ Information by Civic Assistance Committee, July 2008, Contact: Appendix II

¹⁵⁶ Real estate magazine “Portal IRN-RU”, *Rent Prices Grow Prompt Rates - Approximately 10% per Month*, 14.08.2008, <http://www.irn.ru/articles/15948.html>, last accessed October 2008

¹⁵⁷ The Bear Trust, *Standard Family Needs to Have three Children*, 23.09.2008, <http://www.bearr.org/en/node/1566>, last accessed October 2008

¹⁵⁸ Interview with Ms Elena Vilenskaya, Member of the NGO “The House of Peace and Non-Violence”, St. Petersburg, August 2008, contact: see Appendix II

Research of “Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen” in Moscow and St. Petersburg, May and August 2008

high - or any other relieving facilities. For all housing outside the city centres applies furthermore that the public transport is generally not suitable for disabled.

3.2.5.2. Relevant approximate prices

The prices of rented homes and apartments have been growing steadily over recent years. Currently in Moscow, the monthly rent of a one-room apartment in a remote city district costs at least USD 1.000. The rent for a two-room apartment in a remote district is at least USD 1.200 a month. In St.-Petersburg, the monthly rent of a one-room apartment in a remote city district costs at least USD 500. The rent for a two-room apartment in a remote district is at least USD 600 a month.¹⁵⁹

At the same time, real estate firms note that each apartment has several potential bidders. In major cities, the prices are lower than those in Moscow, but still high regarding the average income.

Renting housing in rural districts are however affordable, except for regions in the Far East and the periphery of larger cities.

Currently there is a growth of a relatively wealthy category of people who are prepared to purchase or rent property outside the city in order to live under beneficial ecological conditions. The trend provoked a steady rise of prices in these areas and initiated a crowding-out effect concerning lower income classes. A special case is the region of Sochi where the announcement that the city will host the Olympic Winter Games of 2014 initiated a vigorous growth of prices.¹⁶⁰

Table: average prices (September 2008) for Soviet-style apartments in different Russian cities (outside the city centre) in USD¹⁶¹

Remarks of the website “Flatmates.ru” to the given prices: *“If an apartment is located far from a metro-station, the given prices may go down about 30%, if an apartment is situated in the city centre, the price will go up at least 30-50%. If an apartment is renovated, prices will go 30-50% further up. If the apartment is “western standard” the given prices should be at least doubled.”*

City:	1 room ap'ts in USD	2 room ap'ts in USD	3 room ap'ts in USD
Moscow	1.000	1.200	1.500
St. Petersburg	800	1.000	1.200
Novosibirsk	500	600	700
Ekaterinburg	600	700	800
Rostov na Donu	500	600	800

¹⁵⁹ Real estate magazine “Portal IRN-RU”, *Rent Prices Grow Prompt Rates - Approximately 10% per Month*, 14.08.2008, <http://www.irn.ru/articles/15948.html>, last accessed October 2008

¹⁶⁰ Regnum News Agency, *Stock-jobbing Growth of Real Estate Prices in Sochi came to a Halt*, 18.07.2008, <http://www.regnum.ru/news/1029458.html>, last accessed October 2008

¹⁶¹ Specialised website “Flatmate.ru”, *How to Rent an Apartment in Russia*, October 2008, given data based on information of the most relevant Russian real-estate companies and research of “Flatmate.ru” <http://www.flatmates.ru/renteng/index.html>, last accessed October 2008

Nizhny Novgorod	500	700	850
Irkutsk	450	650	800

Vulnerable groups

All returnees without a local network and without savings and/or an employment.

3.2.5.3. Available subsidies

The governmental resolution No. 865 of December 31, 2005 adopted a new edition of the “Housing” special federal program. This resolution embraced a national project for the issue of housing accommodations to all categories of citizens for which the government is obligated to provide under federal law.

It planned to secure housing for servicemen, for participants of radiation accidents and catastrophes cleanup operations, those relocated from the Baikonur space launch facility, and to the benefits-eligible categories of forced migrants. It also foresees payment of subsidies to citizens being relocated from the Far North and its surrounding regions. Finally, it planned to finance complete construction, reconstruction and modernization of housing assigned to people being relocated from shabby or disaster-state housing. According to this intention it is not foreseen for returnees. High administrative barriers make the program nearly unreachable for the majority of low income families: It is necessary for an applicant to be recognised officially as family with a high need of improvement of housing. Somewhat contradictable, it is furthermore necessary for an applicant to demonstrate a financial capability to pay 80-90% of the future rent by own sources.

The application procedure for the program is confusing and varies form region to region. More information for St. Petersburg is available at the website of the “Information Centre of Reform of the Habitation Service” (http://www.gkh-reforma.ru/notices_106.html) and for Moscow at the online magazine “Our Money” (<http://www.nashidengi.ru/issues/2059/kakpoluchitsubsidiyu/>).

Vulnerable groups

In consequence, returnees should not rely on state support for receiving housing in the Russian Federation.¹⁶² If returnees undergo difficulties concerning their registration the access to subsidies is generally blocked.

3.2.6. Other middle-term accommodation possibilities (shelter, NGOs, church, etc.)

Practically absent.

¹⁶² Assessment of the “Centre for Independent Social Research”, St. Petersburg, July 2008 contact: see Appendix II

3.2.7. Temporary shelters while awaiting long-term accommodation

Absent.

The cheapest hotels are too expensive for most budgets to live in for more than several days. Moreover hotel prices in the regions are often even more expensive than those in the capital. There is a possibility to spend the night in a hostel. In St.-Petersburg, one berth per day costs around RUB 140.¹⁶³

Vulnerable groups

All returnees without local network and savings.¹⁶⁴

3.3. Livelihood - basic "survival"¹⁶⁵

The continuous rise of the real monetary income (all sources of income) of the Russian population slowed down in 2007 in comparison to 2006 but was nevertheless considerable. The population's average per capita monthly income made up RUB 12.490 (about EUR 350) for all Russia, which is a 10.4% growth in comparison with 2006. The real monthly wages increased even by 16.4% in comparison with 2006 and made up an average of RUB 17.034 in March 2008 (about EUR 480).¹⁶⁶ Naturally the income differences between the regions remained considerably: residents of the Moscow-region, the richest of the country have had in 2007 a 6.1 times greater income than residents of the Ivanovo oblast, the poorest region of the country. In the aspect of wages only, the gap between the leading region (autonomous okrog Yamal-Nenets) and the outsider one (Republic of Dagestan) made up in 2007 6.7 times.

The differences between the region are nevertheless in a constant decline. The differences in the richest regions of Russia remained on the other hand to grow, especially in the city of Moscow, where the gap between the income of its 20% wealthiest inhabitants and its 20% poorest is more than 20-fold.

Table: Structure of the Population's Monetary Incomes in 2000-2007 (as %)

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Monetary incomes, total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Incomes from entrepreneurial activities	15.4	12.6	11.9	12.0	11.7	11.4	11.2	10
Labor compensations	62.8	64.6	65.8	63.9	65.0	64.8	66.4	70.3
Social payments	13.8	15.2	15.2	14.1	12.8	12.9	13.2	11
Property-based incomes	6.8	5.7	5.2	7.8	8.3	8.9	7.2	6.7
Other incomes	1.2	1.9	1.9	2.2	2.2	2.0	2.0	2.0

¹⁶³ Tourist forum <http://forum.nov.ru/index.php?act=attach&type=post&id=92032>, last accessed July 2008.

¹⁶⁴ Assessment of the "Centre for Independent Social Research" and "Civic Assistance Committee", July 2008, contact: Appendix II

¹⁶⁵ All given figures and data except footnote 166 by "Institute for the Economy in Transition, *Russian Economy in 2007: Trends and Outlooks* (Issue 29), chapter 4.1: *The Population's Finance and the Consumer Market*, p. 349 et seqq, Moscow 2008", <http://www.iet.ru/en/russian-economy-in-2007-issue-29.html>, last accessed October 2008

¹⁶⁶ Russian Federation. Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), May 2008 www.gks.ru/bgd/free/B08_00/IssWWW.exe/Stg/d05/6-0.htm, last accessed September 2008

Source: Rosstat.

The table shows a continuous descent of incomes for, entrepreneurial activities in the last years and an increased importance of wages for the income of the Russian population. The given data demonstrate as well, that social payments like pensions, are not sufficient to secure the necessary income in Russia.

In the aspect of the subsistence minimum the “cheapest” regions of the Russian Federation are Dagestan, Tambov Oblast, Kabardino-Balkaria, North-Ossetia, Kursk Oblast and Karachaevo-Cherkessia. For these regions Rosstat set the subsistence minimum on RUB 2.900-3.000 per capita per month (about EUR 80). The most “expensive” regions of the Russian Federation were the Evenk Municipal District and the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, where Rosstat set the subsistence minimum at RUB 9.600 (about EUR 270) and 8.900 (about 250€) per capita per month.

The highest level of poverty in the Russian Federation was registered in the Republic of Ingushetia, where about 60% of the population lives under the official poverty line (2nd quarter 2007) of RUB 3.809 per capita per month (about EUR 108). Poor regions were further more the Republic of Kalmykia (about 50% of the population under the poverty line), the Republic of Tyva (over 40%), the Altay Republic, Ivanovo Oblast, the Republic of Adygea, and Amur Oblast (30-37%). Regions, where less than 10% of the population lives under the official poverty line were St. Petersburg, the Republic of Tatarstan, Yamal-Nenets, Khanty-Mansy, and Nenets Autonomous Okrugs. In the city of Moscow 13.2% of the population lives under the poverty line and in the Moscow Oblast 12.5%.

Vulnerable groups

The most prominent segment of vulnerable persons in the aspect of livelihood are pensioners, which could not take profit from the overall positive development. The correlation between the average pension and the averages wages worsened in a constant row since 2002. An average pension made up only 22.8% of an average wage in 2007¹⁶⁷ and 20% in the first half of 2008.¹⁶⁸ In correlation with the rising average prices for housing, energy, food and medicines, the economical situation of Russian pensioners is worsening substantially.

Another large group of vulnerable persons in this aspect are people employed in the prominent informal business circuit. The sector knows exploitation up to the scale of slave work without any legal or social security. This is especially the case in the informal construction and seasonal worker-industry.

3.3.1. Employment

According to the Institute for the Economy in Transition (IET), the leading Russian research centre of research in economics, the Russian labour market does not fit in the traditional western concepts of dynamic changes of employment and relatively

¹⁶⁷ Russian NGO “Institute for the Economy in Transition” (IET), *Russian Economy in 2007, Trends and Outlooks*, (Issue 29), Moscow 2008, p. 368 et sqq. (www.iet.ru/files/text/trends/2007-eng/2007-eng.pdf), last accessed October 2008

¹⁶⁸ According to Arcady Dvorkovich, counselor of the Russian President, provided by the Centre for Independent Social Research, St. Petersburg, July 2008, contact: Appendix II, see as well chapter 3.1.1, “Employment”

rigid fixed salaries and wages.¹⁶⁹ By contrast, Russia's model of labour market, is reacting on economical crises not with mass-dismissals but with a drastic fall in real salaries and wages and other sorts of benefits. Consequently the subsequent period of economic growth since the collapse of the financial system in Russia in 1997 led just to a meagre rise in employment, while the salaries and wages climbed considerably and even outpaced the real growth of labour productivity.

Table: Main indicators of the Russian labour market, published by IET, based on governmental data (Rosstat)¹⁷⁰

	2005	2006	2007
The average annual number of employed in the economy, in thousands	68.603	69.189	70.500
Growth rates in the average number of the employed	102.2	100.9	102.4
Number of unemployed, in thousands	5,208	4,999	4,660
Level of unemployment in percent	7.6	7.2	6.2
Number of unemployed registered at the public employment agencies (end-of year), in thousands	1,830	1,742	1,774
The average nominal salaries due to organisations' employees, in RUB	8.554.9	10,633.9	13,518

In spite of the inflexible nature of the Russian labour market, the growing demand of labour together with the demographic factor - a negative birth rate and high mortality especially of men - offers possibilities for returnees, in particular for those with a higher education. Official data of Rosstat, that in May 2008 just 53% of the population at working age, support the positive perspective of skilled returnees.¹⁷¹

Obstacles of access to the labour market for returnees are mostly created by difficulties of individual registration. The years 2007 brought a clear increase of salaries and wages in Russia. The trend continues in the first months of 2008: In May 2008 the average monthly wage in the country rose according to official sources to RUB 17.034 - which is a annual growth of 31.8% in absolute data and still 9.4% in effective purchasing power.¹⁷² However the discrepancy of wages and salaries between urban and rural regions, state- and private sector, high skilled and unskilled workers and employees are immense. There are still many workers and employees, especially civil servants, which are not able to live on their salary alone. Especially for returnees, the still poorly developed legal small-scale business sector is an obstacle to find work outside the industry and the state-sector of the economy. The legal small-scale business sector is hampered administratively in many regions of

¹⁶⁹ The IET is a Russian NGO, directed by the former Russian Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar, *Russian Economy in 2007, Trends and Outlooks*, (Issue 29), Moscow 2008, p. 368 et sqq.
www.iet.ru/files/text/trends/2007-eng/2007-eng.pdf, last accessed October 2008

¹⁷⁰ IET, *Russian Economy in 2007, Trends and Outlooks*, (Issue 29), Moscow 2008, p. 368, table 3,
www.iet.ru/files/text/trends/2007-eng/2007-eng.pdf, last accessed October 2008

¹⁷¹ Russian Federation. Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), Employment and Unemployment, May 2008, http://www.gks.ru/bgd/free/B08_00/IssWWW.exe/Stg/d05/7-0.htm, last accessed October 2008

¹⁷² Russian Federation. Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), May 2008
www.gks.ru/bgd/free/B08_00/IssWWW.exe/Stg/d05/6-0.htm, last accessed October 2008

Russia or by the widespread tradition of shadow economy, particularly in the Caucasus-region.¹⁷³

Table: Economical active Population, 2000-2007¹⁷⁴

	2005	2006	2007
Economically active population, total, in thousand	73,811	74,187	75,200
Proportion to the overall number of the population, in percent	51.7	52.2	59.9

Vulnerable groups (official labour market)

According to Mrs Tatyana Maleva, director of the Russian Independent Institute for Social Policy (<http://www.socpol.ru/index.shtml>) discrimination on the labour market concerns first of all people younger than 29 years, due to a preference of employers for work experience. This preference would have its roots in the dwindling trust in the quality of the Russian education system which does not meet the requirements of the employers any more.

Other vulnerable group on the labour market:

I) Women. The differences in salaries of men and women in Russia is increasing continuously. Whilst the difference in salaries between the sexes amounts to 26-27% in the end of the 1990s, in 2007 the gap widened to 37-39%. These data reflect both the decreasing number of women working in leading positions and the increase of women who are working in low-income sectors. There is as well a male dominated societal and political discourse ongoing to promote motherhood and housekeeping work as female activity. In spite of the fact the Russian Constitution forbids discrimination of all kinds, job advertisement ignores often the law giving restrictions on age, physical appearance for female aspirants and their civil status. In a recent poll 81% of the female respondents considered it as “very difficult” to simultaneously work and to bring up a child. 30% of the female respondents considered it as necessary to wait at least three years after the birth of a child before restart work.

II) According to the director of the Centre for Labour Market Studies at the Higher School of Economics in Moscow, Vladimir Gimpelson, people which received their professional education in Soviet times may have severe difficulties to find work. This is especially the case if they stayed longer time abroad or if they were not employed in high skilled positions during the last years. For the same reasons, pensioners may as well face severe difficulties to find adequate work - work which is a necessity for the majority to compensate the dramatic loss of purchasing power a pension in Russia implies. According to Arcady Dvorkovich, counsellor of the President of the Russian Federation, pensions cover today 20% of the average salary and will cover maximal 15% in the coming years.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ Institute of Demography, State University, Higher School of Economy, Research: *Regional Labour Markets of Russia: Similarity of the Unlike*, published in the professional journal “Population and the Society”, May 2008, Summary at “Polit.ru”, <http://www.polit.ru/research/2008/06/30/demoscope337.html>, last accessed October 2008

¹⁷⁴ Institute of Demography, State University, Higher School of Economy, Research: *Regional Labour Markets of Russia: Similarity of the Unlike*, published in the professional journal “Population and the Society”, May 2008, Summary at “Polit.ru”, <http://www.polit.ru/research/2008/06/30/demoscope337.html>, last accessed October 2008

¹⁷⁵ Information provided by the Centre for Independent Social Research, St. Petersburg, July 2008, contact: Appendix II

III) Caucasians and people from Central- and Far-Asian origin outside their home republics and regions, due to widespread discrimination and difficulties concerning official registration.¹⁷⁶

IV) Disabled, due to the non-existence of programs of positive discrimination and the lack of suitable workplaces. The practise is in obvious conflict with the Russian Labour Law, which bind companies of more than 30 employees/workers to employ not less than 3% employees/workers with physical disabilities. At the moment there is no effective control of abidance. The Russian NGO Perspektiva (<http://rabota.perspektiva-inva.ru/>) is active on advocacy, monitoring and providing information on the working situation of disabled.¹⁷⁷

3.3.1.1. Unemployment

The total number of unemployed people in Russia was estimated by the authorities in the end of May 2008 at about 4,8 million people, or 6.4 % of the economically active population.¹⁷⁸

The unemployment level changes however considerable as well in the different regions, especially there, where the transformation process of outdated industry has not sufficiently or successfully taken place. In this aspect, industrial zones in Siberia are in particular affected. The unemployment rate in the mining city of Baly, Chita oblast amount for example more than 50%. The city has already lost over half of its Soviet time population due to mass migration.¹⁷⁹

The financial crisis in 2008 which effects the Russian economy more than other industrialised countries has already led to mass layoffs, first of all in the financial sector but as well in the heavy industry.¹⁸⁰

3.3.1.2. Labour market programs

In the light of the urgent need of experts in certain key industries in Russia, the Russian government recognises the need for specialisation programs. Companies like “Gazprom”, “United Power Systems” and “Lukoil” refer to the fact that recent investment projects are delayed to the lack of qualified workers. Other complaints come from the construction business.

In spring 2008, the Federal Service of Work and Employment has implemented in several regions of the Russian Federation a number of training courses aimed to

¹⁷⁶ Information of the Russian NGO Civic Assistance Committee, Moscow, contact: Appendix II

¹⁷⁷ Information provided by the Centre for Independent Social Research, St. Petersburg, Russian Federation in July 2008, confirmed by the Russian migrant organisation in Belgium “Solidariteit”, contact: Appendix II

¹⁷⁸ Russian Federation. Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), Employment and Unemployment, May 2008, http://www.gks.ru/bgd/free/B08_00/IssWWW.exe/Stg/d05/7-0.htm, last accessed October 2008

¹⁷⁹ Russian Regional Environmental Centre (RREC), *Annual Report 2007*, p. 23, http://www.rusrec.ru/files/RREC_annual_report_2007.pdf, last accessed October 2008

¹⁸⁰ German daily “Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung”, *Putin kneift die Augen zu*, 27.10.2008, <http://www.faz.net/s/Rub117C535CDF414415BB243B181B8B60AE/Doc-EE2BBEC7DA74C4A4E985927AE01FC16EE-ATpl-Ecommon-Scotent.html>, last accessed October 2008

ameliorate the reintegration of mothers in the labour market. More information is available at the website of the Federal Service of Work and Employment. On the same site an overview of other stately training programs is available.¹⁸¹ However, there are no independent evaluations of those programs available so far.

3.3.1.3. Labour conditions

Labour conditions for most workers are fairly difficult despite the liberal reforms adopted by the Russia's Federal Labour Code.¹⁸² The law allows a five-day, 40-hour work week, overtime and holiday work compensation, 28 working days vacation, payment for days off due to illnesses, benefits for pregnant women, underage children and disabled. However, many employers do not adhere to the law. High level of unemployment in certain regions of Russia, low wages paid in particular in the state sector and insufficient stately controls facilitate abuses.

Despite the fact that the Labour Code protects workers from illegal employer practices, workers rarely work the courts to protect their rights and legal interests. Court proceedings drag out over extended periods of time and attorney costs are very high. Often a large portion of the wage is paid "in envelopes," i.e. off the accounting books, since the wage tax as calculated through the unified social tax is very high - 26.2 % of the official wage. The employer pays this sum to the government, after which point the employee pays 13 % as income tax. It thus becomes impossible to resolve conflicts through the courts.

Overtime work

Duration of the working day under the legislation may not exceed 40 hours per week. However, "white collars" frequently spend 50-55 hours per week on work. The Russian legislation offers many loopholes for employers. The "normal" schedule can be considered unnecessary or inefficient. Although unpaid overtime is common, the practice meets seldom resistance from the employees and workers. Three quarters of Russians employees and workers consider unpaid overtime work as normal.¹⁸³

Safety measures are often not properly followed. In hazardous industries, filters are often inexistent, inaccurate installed or remain unchanged.

The minimum wage, as established by federal law, stood at RUB 2.300 per month on April 20, 2007.¹⁸⁴ In some regions the minimum wage is increased to subsistence level. (more information on Chapter 3.3.5)

At the same time, the minimum subsistence level in Moscow for 2008 stood at RUB 6.624¹⁸⁵

¹⁸¹ Federal Service for Work and Employment of the Russian Federation, http://www.rostrud.info/press/reviews/?act=show_news&id=674, last accessed October 2008

¹⁸² Russian Federation. Russian Labour Code. December 31, 2001 No. 197-F3 (TK RF) (with amendments on July 24, 25 2002; June 30, 2003; April 27, August 22, December 29 2004, May 9, 2005). Accessible via the specialized website "consultant.ru": www.consultant.ru, last accessed October 2008

¹⁸³ News agency "Newsland", *Three quarters of Russians consider Overtime as normal*, 24.10.2007, <http://www.newsland.ru/News/Detail/id/103610/cat/37/>, last accessed October 2008

¹⁸⁴ Russian Federation. Russian Labour Code. December 31, 2001 No. 197-F3 (TK RF) (with amendments on July 24, 25 2002; June 30, 2003; April 27, August 22, December 29 2004, May 9, 2005). Accessible via the specialized website "consultant.ru": www.consultant.ru, last accessed October 2008

¹⁸⁵ Public Service of Employment, city of Moscow, Statistics, published on the specialised website "Labor": <http://www.labor.ru/pics2/marketstat148.htm>, last accessed October 2008

The Federal State Statistics Service provides the following average wage figures for the country:

In 2008 the highest average monthly wage was earned by workers in the financial sector, the fuel, energy and minerals procurement sector. The lowest average wage was paid in the education, public health services and granting of social services and agricultural sector.

Table: Monthly average wages on economy sectors¹⁸⁶

economy sectors	Wages in RUB
Agriculture, hunting and forestry	7.520
Fishery, fish culture	23.409
Mining operations	29.770
Processing manufactures	15.604
Manufacture and distribution of the electric power, gas and water	18.317
Building	17.262
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of vehicles, motorcycles, household products and subjects of a private use	14.392
Hotels and restaurants	11.034
Transport and communication	19.225
Financial activity	40.272
Operations with real estate, rent and granting of services	22.104
Scientific researches and workings out	22.228
The government and maintenance of military safety; obligatory social security	19.961
Education	10.786
Public health services and granting of social services	12.190
Granting of other municipal, social and personal services	12.974
Entertainments, culture and sports	13.563

Vulnerable groups

The most vulnerable group concerning work conditions are: 1) people employed in the prominent informal sector of the industry.

2) Workers employed in the heavy industry of the country (with the exception of the oil-, gas- and defence-industry), especially in not modernized enterprises.

¹⁸⁶ Russian Federation. Federal State Statistic Service (Rosstat)

http://www.gks.ru/bgd/free/B08_00/lssWWW.exe/Stg/d05/6-0.htm, last accessed on July 2008

3.3.1.4. Accessibility of short-term / occasional jobs

Although temporary jobs are relatively new in Russia they are offered more and more frequently. Mostly the offers concern work without proper contract even if the employer is promising the contrary. If the applicant intends to work officially he/she has to make sure that the contract and - most important! - its appendix will be actually handed over to him. Important agreements like a possible compensation sum are often specified in the appendix of the contract and it is necessary to check if this is actually the case. To be sure that contributions to a pension fund are included, the applicant should ask for the standard form 2-NDFL work contract.¹⁸⁷

Seasonal jobs are most frequent in the agricultural- and construction industry. A considerable number of such jobs are repair and renovation of private homes. Most of the offered jobs belongs to the grey labour market.

Specialised websites with short-term job-offers are collected under: <http://yaca.yandex.ru/yaca/cat/Employment/Freelance/geo/Russia/>.

3.3.1.5. Lack (or high demand) in specific professions

With economy growth and the demographical decline the requirement for various workers and employees grows in Russia also. Many human resource officers confirm that the labour market already suffers under the lack of high qualified workers and employees.¹⁸⁸ According to the deputy head of the Federal Service for Work and Employment, Jury Gertsy, the “most wanted” employees and workers are managers at different levels, technicians, technical engineers (especially in the field of automation), power engineers and qualified workers in various fields. There is as well a growing demand for agricultural experts.¹⁸⁹ According to a recent research the most open vacancies were to be found in the financial sector (28% of all job offers), (*However, since the Russian Federation is in 2008 badly effected by the international financial crisis, these particular data are most likely already outdated.*), followed by the IT-branch (22% of all vacancies). Highly demanded are experts of engineering and in construction work (8% of all vacancies). In spite of the fact that the mentioned sectors are searching actively for employees, the actual chances of an applicant vary significantly: just 10% of the programmers and system administrators which are registered as searching for work, fulfill actually the demanded requirements. In the financial sector the number of work-searching accountants and financial analysts has been 30% higher than the actual job offer. On the other hand in the administrative sector there has been nearly an identical number of applicants as vacancies. On secretaries, office managers, head-assistances there has been one open vacancy for two candidates.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ Russian daily “Work”, *Temporary Job? Be attentive!*, 17.06.2008, published on “Labor”:
<http://www.labor.ru/pressarh.php?id=1052>, last accessed October 2008

¹⁸⁸ Russian internet daily Finmarket, *Research - Why we are Facing a Lack of Workforce?*, 21.01.2008,
<http://personalmoney.ru/txt.asp?rbr=203&id=753906&s=3>, last accessed October 2008

¹⁸⁹ Website of the Russian Federal Service on Work and Employment, *The Main Problem of the Labour Market - Insufficient Qualification*, 7.06.2008,
http://www.rostrud.info/press/reviews/?act=show_news&id=726, last accessed October 2008

Russian branch of the BBC, *Labour Market: Need of Engineers*, 22.01.2007,
http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/russian/russia/newsid_6288000/6288811.stm, last accessed October 2008

¹⁹⁰ Rockfeller Russia, *The Most Demanded on Russia's Labour Market*, 05.05.2008,
<http://www.rokf.ru/carera/2008/05/05/121921.html>, last accessed October 2008

In the city of Moscow the “most wanted” qualification in 2007 was accountant, followed by programmers, software developers, sales managers, auditors and economists. Further qualifications in demand were: insurance agents, experienced administrative personnel, technicians specialised in entertainment electronics and information technology.¹⁹¹

3.3.2. Contact information relevant to the issue of recognition of degrees obtained elsewhere

The State Commission for Academic Degrees and Titles (VAK) of the Ministry of Education and Science performs the acceptance of foreign university degrees. The applicant submits the required set of documents to the VAK, at which point the commission examines the papers and determines the exact type of degree to which it corresponds in Russia.

VAK contact information:

State Commission for Academic Degrees and Titles (VAK) of the Ministry of Education and Science
Moscow, Sadovaya-Sukharevskaya street, 16
telephone number: 208-6139 and 208-6161

3.3.3. Education and retraining programs

3.3.3.1. By government

In all regions of Russia there are retraining courses for registered unemployed people available. However, according to the Public Service for Employment of the city of Moscow, just 3.400 unemployed persons followed these courses in 2007 in the whole city. More reception received the 242 job fairs, which were organised in 2007 in Moscow and visited by about 170.000 persons.¹⁹²

In St. Petersburg the Department for employment takes part in the state program for the retraining of the unemployed people. Retraining for unemployed citizens is carried out in 87 specialisations. Participants receive diplomas after successful finishing the courses.¹⁹³ For St. Petersburg there are no data available concerning the actual participation for the courses.

¹⁹¹ News Agency TASS, press release, 21.01.2008, <http://www.prime-tass.ru/news/show.asp?id=2418&ct=articles>, last accessed July 2008

¹⁹² Public Service for Employment of the Population of the City of Moscow, 3.04.2008, <http://www.labor.ru/pressarh.php?id=1040>, last accessed October 2008

¹⁹³ Detailed information about the retraining courses in St. Petersburg are available on the website of the “Committee for Employment of the Population of St. Petersburg”, <http://rspb.ru/educ/edde.html>, last accessed October 2008

Details of services in other cities in Russia are available on:
<http://www.rostrud.ru/portal/regions/regions.aspx>, last accessed October 2008

3.3.3.2. By international organisations or NGOs

No information available.

3.3.3.3. By private firms

In Russia, several employers offer specialisation and education programs. The employer carries the cost of the courses when their employers sign a contract to bind them for several years on the specific company. In case that the employee cancels the program, fines are common.

Companies in Russia invest in the development of the personnel, mostly in training experts, managers at all levels, and high potentials. Much attention is paid to the training of the technical staff.¹⁹⁴ Employees of company divisions engaged in sales, advertising, negotiations, management and marketing are attendants of various short-term educational programs.¹⁹⁵

Large enterprises, such as “Vim-Bill-Dan”, “RUSAL”, “TNK-VR”, “Nornikel”, “RAO EEC of Russia”, have established their affiliated universities which, in many companies, have turned from educational units of the enterprises to legal entities. In addition to staff training, some of these institutions even plan to render paid services for all those who wish to receive education within the sphere of the company’s interests.¹⁹⁶

Such big companies as “Sibneft’”, “Russkii Alyuminii ”, “Tatneft’”, “Vim-Bill-Dan”, “Severstal’”, “Vympelkom” have been developing distant education systems.¹⁹⁷

Experts observe essential growth of corporate training: “this index grows annually by 25-30 percent.” They also argue that “current size of consumption of services in the sphere of business-education in Russia is extremely small as compared with that in Europe: USD 1,5 and USD 86 per person per year accordingly.”¹⁹⁸

3.3.4. Starting a new business

According to the state statistics, “for the period within 2001 and 2006, the average number of small enterprises in Russia has increased to 38.500 (growth 5 %), the annual increase in the number of workers engaged in small enterprises being 78.900 persons (growth 5 %).”¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁴ Olga Golyshenkova, *World Tendencies of Development of Corporate Education*. www.makonews.ru/materials/articles/pril_8.doc, last accessed July 2008

¹⁹⁵ Discovery Research Group, *The Market for Business Trainings in Russia*, 27.09.2007, <http://mi.aup.ru/research/76/31657876.html>, last accessed July 2008

¹⁹⁶ Olga Golyshenkova, *World Tendencies of Development of Corporate Education*. www.makonews.ru/materials/articles/pril_8.doc, last accessed July 2008

¹⁹⁷ Online magazine "Expert", *New Forms of Formation*, 14.11.2005 <http://www.expert.ru/printissues/expert/2005/43/43ex-obr3/>, last accessed July 2008

¹⁹⁸ Discovery Research Group, *The Market for Business Trainings in Russia*, 27.09.2007, <http://mi.aup.ru/research/76/31657876.html>, last accessed July 2008

¹⁹⁹ Smirnov, N.V. Analysis of General Dynamics of Small Business Development in Russia in the early 21st century. National Institute for System Study of Entrepreneurship (NISSE). <http://www.nisse.ru/analitics/aodrmrmp/aodrmrmp-pdf.rar>, last accessed July 2008

The results of small enterprises' activities in January-June, 2007, as compared with January-June, 2006, are rated in a report of A.M. Shestoperov for the "National Institute for System Study of Entrepreneurship" as positive. In 70 regions of Russia the number of registered small enterprises has increased. An increase of people engaged in small enterprises has been recorded in 69 regions. The increased turnover of small enterprises has been indicated in 73 regions and the growth of investments into fixed capital of small enterprises was observed in 66 regions.²⁰⁰

Small enterprises' positive gain has demonstrate the profitableness of this kind of business activity in Russia. At the same time there are still significant administrative obstacles for creating small businesses. In May 2008, the Russian President Dmitry Medvedev signed the Decree "On the urgent measures for liquidation of administrative restrictions in realization of enterprise activity." It is planned to introduce certain administrative ameliorations for the small business sector. It is scheduled for 2012 that the registration-demand of a small enterprise can be introduced via e-mail.

3.3.4.1 Legal conditions

At the moment a small enterprise can be registered within 5-10 days assumed the applicant is well prepared and briefed which is frequently not the case. Lack of information and/or poor preparation by the applicant extend the expenditure of time not seldom to a month.²⁰¹ The administrative cost for the registration of a small enterprise amounting in St. Petersburg RUB 5.500.²⁰² However, enterprises in certain branches have to purchase as well several licences which will cost time and money to get. For example: to open a bar or a restaurant in St. Petersburg will demand approximately RUB 135.000 (USD 5.000).²⁰³ As a rule, to open a bar or a restaurant in St. Petersburg will cost on registration cost and equipment not less than RUB 26.000 (USD 1.000) per square meter, the costs for the location not included.²⁰⁴

In several branches controls of state agencies, fire prevention, issuing licences and sanctions are considerable. 10% of the monthly income should be calculated for these expenses. Another 6% up to 10% of the monthly income should be calculated for illegal contributions which are quite common in the sector of small businesses. They are enforced not only by racketeering of criminals but frequently by corrupt militia members as well. About 30 different state agencies are controlling small businesses by carrying out 45 different kinds of checks. That and the fact that the militia is authorized to control small businesses for 22 different elements of possible administrative offences stimulate corruption on a large scale. As a result the sector

²⁰⁰ National Institute for System Study of Entrepreneurship, Quarterly Information-Analytical Report: November, 2007, by A.M. Shestoperov, http://www.nisse.ru/analitics/dynamics_2-2007/dynamics_2-2007.zip, last accessed July 2008

²⁰¹ Shestoperov, A.M. National Institute for System Study of Entrepreneurship (NISSE). <http://www.nisse.ru/press.html?id=400>, last accessed on July 2008

²⁰² According to the website of the "Nevsky Legal Center", <http://www.pravospb.ru/content/view/20/39/>, last accessed July 2008

²⁰³ Specialized Internet Portal, "Sovets", *Business. How to Open a Restaurant*, 3.03.2007, <http://www.sovets.ru/business/1510.htm> last accessed July 2008

²⁰⁴ Specialized Internet Portal "FabrikaBIZ" (provides start-up information), *How to Open a Restaurant*, <http://www.fabrikabiz.ru/restaurant/1.php>, last accessed July 2008

of small business contributes only 17% to the gross national product, while in the USA and the EU these percentage amounts up to 80%.²⁰⁵

Information on the registration procedure in Moscow, is available at: <http://www.mbm.ru/stuff.asp?ID=459>, last accessed July 2008. Additional information is available at different specialised websites: <http://www.fabrikabiz.ru>; <http://www.businesslook.ru/>; <http://www.nisse.ru/>; <http://www.mbm.ru/>;

3.3.4.2 Credits and subsidies and access to them

The complexity of obtaining credits and rather high credit rates are another obstacle for launching a business. According to Vladimir Filin, the vice-president of the Association “Russia” just 25-30% of the actual demand of the small business sector is actually satisfied.²⁰⁶

According to information provided by the banks, the demand of small business for crediting has been satisfied by less than 18-20 percent.²⁰⁷ These figures are confirmed by businessmen themselves. The results of a recent research (including polls) devoted to the availability of credits for the business world have shown the difficulties to obtain start-up credits especially for small enterprises. Half of the respondents (representatives of mostly smaller enterprises) stated that it is “rather difficult” or “very difficult” to receive a start-up loan. One quarter found it “rather easy”. Further more, to get a start-up credit is highly dependent on the region within Russia where the application is filed. Given the same terms and a proper business plan, the most “difficult” regions for receiving bank loans proved to be the Siberian and Ural Federal okrugs, whilst the “easiest” regions are the Central and Privolzhsky Federal okrugs. The conditions to receive start-up credits in Moscow, in the Moscovskaya and Samarskaya oblasts proved to be better than in the average.

As a general rule, banks demanding liquid collateral security (pledge), worth the double of the sum of the credit.

It is most likely that the financial crises in 2008 will limit the access to start-up credits especially for small enterprises even more.

If an applicant does not dispose of a sufficient pledge, the only official way to receive a credit at fair conditions is the state program “Funds for Small Business Support”. The state fund exist in the most mayor cities of Russia. The “Department of Support and Development of Small Business of Moscow”²⁰⁸ launches a number of programs aimed to:

- support the beginners in launching small business;
- assist youth entrepreneurship;
- develop innovative (including venture) projects;
- compensate interest rate on credits;

²⁰⁵ National Institute for System Study of Entrepreneurship, Quarterly Information-Analytical Report: November, 2007, by A.M. Shestoperov, http://www.nisse.ru/analitics/dynamics_2-2007/dynamics_2-2007.zip, last accessed July 2008

²⁰⁶ “All credits in Russia” - a specialized reference resource about services for crediting the population, small and medium business, and businessmen. <http://www.allcredits.ru//1/16039> , last accessed July 2008

²⁰⁷ Pro-Credit, *News of the Credit Market*, 20.06.2008: http://www.pro-credit.ru/news/creditnews/item_4645/ , last accessed July 2008

²⁰⁸ Department of Support and Development of Small Business of Moscow, <http://www.dmpmos.ru/info.asp?id=36> , last accessed on July 2008

- ensure obligations of subjects of small business.

In some regions, the funds finance small enterprises independently: there is, e.g., the grant-in-aid program for the development of entrepreneurship in Leningradskaya oblast'.²⁰⁹

The "Support Fund of small business of the Republic of Udmurtiya" has published on its website the regulations for obtaining credits of the fund as well as from private banks.²¹⁰

Interest rate for start-up credits are in comparison with EC-countries however rather high with a clear tendency of further increase.²¹¹

It is necessary to check carefully the proper conditions of the credit. General advertises mention only the interest rate. They do not mention the various charges which are connected with many applications: opening and service charges, insurance charges for the pledges, charges to estimate the pledges, etc. Only so called "effective" rates are calculating as well the hidden costs. The Russian state-owned "Bank for Development" and its regional partners have an average effective interest rate in Summer 2008 of 15,7% per annum. Private banks are often calculating more than 20% per annum.²¹²

At a conference of financial experts in June 2008, the upcoming financial crises has already been the main subject. In a communiqué the conference stated that;

*"Small business will encounter toughening banks' credit policy and will be faced with refusals in credit arrangements. The rate on high-risk credit (which also involves small business crediting) will increase."*²¹³

3.3.5. Social security

Table: Basic social guarantees established by the Russian legislation²¹⁴

Monthly wages and pension in RUB	2005	2006	2007
Minimum wage	720	800	2.300
Size of base pensions ²¹⁵ :			
For age	660	954	1.794
For physical impairment			

²⁰⁹ Support Fund of Small Business in the Leningradskaya oblast' http://recept.813.ru/competition2/index.php?comp_id=102, last accessed on July 2008

²¹⁰ Support Fund of Small Business of the Republic of Udmurtiya http://www.udbiz.ru/rus/questions/finance/cr_open, last accessed on July 2008

²¹¹ Information of the two specialized websites "Pro-Credit" and "Allcredits", July 2008: <http://www.pro-credit.ru/>, <http://www.allcredits.ru>, last accessed on July 2008

²¹² Pro-Credit, *News of the Credit Market*, 20.06.2008: http://www.pro-credit.ru/news/creditnews/item_4645/, last accessed on July 2008

²¹³ Pro-Credit, *News of the Credit Market*, 20.06.2008: http://www.pro-credit.ru/news/creditnews/item_4645/, last accessed on July 2008

²¹⁴ Russian Federation. Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), Living standards of population / www.gks.ru/, last accessed July 2008

²¹⁵ Site of the government of the Tyumen area, <http://admtymen.ru/news/2008/07/24/39072>, last accessed July 2008

I degree (until 2002 - III group)	330	477	897
II degree (until 2002 - II group)	660	954	1.794
III degree (until 2002 - I group)	1.320	1.908	3.588
In case of losing main provider:			
To children who lost both parents, or children whose single mother died (complete orphans), per child	660	954	1794
To other disabled family members of a deceased provider, per family member	330	477	897
Benefits in RUB ²¹⁶			
Single benefit payment to women who have registered with a female consultancy service in the early months of pregnancy (up to 12 weeks)	300	300	300
Single benefit payment for the birth of a child	6.000	8.000	8.000
Single benefit payment for the birth of a child The mother's (family) capital			250.000
Monthly benefit payments for the duration of parental leave, until the baby turns 1.5 years old	500	700	1.500
Social benefit payment for burial ²¹⁷	1.000	1.000	4.000
Monthly stipends in RUB			
Minimum stipend: ²¹⁸			
For students of state and municipal colleges and universities	400	600	1.100
For current students attending institutions of middle specialty and beginner professional education	140	210	400

3.3.5.1. Unemployment benefit and access to it

Unemployment benefits are among the guarantees provided for by the Russian Constitution.²¹⁹ The conditions for payment of such benefits are laid out in "The law on employment."²²⁰

According to this law, unemployment benefits are paid to citizens who are recognized as unemployed according to pt. 1, ch. 31 of the "The Law on Employment".

²¹⁶ For more information, please consult: The government of Moscow Southeast district <http://www.uvao.ru/social.phtml?RubricID=13543>, last accessed July 2008

²¹⁷ News agency "Regnum", *Burial Grants will Increase four Times*, 20.06.2008, <http://www.regnum.ru/news/1017318.html>, last accessed July 2008

²¹⁸ Russian daily "Novaja Izvestia", *In 2008 Student Grants will Raise*, 19.12.2007 <http://www.newizv.ru/lenta/81903/>, last accessed July 2008

²¹⁹ Russian Federation. *Constitution of the Russian Federation*, chapter 37, pt. 3. Accessible via www.consultant.ru, last accessed September 2008

²²⁰ Russian Federation. *Law on Employment of the Russian Federation*, August 22, 2004. Accessible via www.consultant.ru, last accessed September 2008

The unemployment benefit is either paid as a percentage of the average income the unemployed had at his last job, or as a multiple of the minimum unemployment benefit payment – depending on the reasons for which the person was left without a job.

Since January 1, 2008, the Russian federal government has established a minimum and maximum unemployment benefit payment: RUB 781 and RUB 3.124.²²¹

The Moscow municipal Duma has been approved in first reading on July, 9th 2008 an amendment of the city law concerning a new fixing of surcharges to grants (benefits for low-income families concerning public transport, for attending public work, material aid for disabled, etc.). It is planned to rise the unemployment benefit in the city to the level of the legal minimum payment.²²² In July 2008, the unemployment benefit in Moscow amounts to an average of RUB 1.254²²³

Unemployment benefits may not be paid interminably. The legislation establishes limits on the period over which they are paid. These limits depend on the reason for which the person was left unemployed.²²⁴

Unemployed citizens who remain without a job at the end of the first period of unemployment benefit payments have the right to repeated payments, unless otherwise stipulated by the law.²²⁵

A decision to issue unemployment benefit payments to a citizen is reached simultaneously with his official recognition as being unemployed.²²⁶

Citizens are awarded unemployment benefits from the first day of their unemployed status.²²⁷

Unemployment benefit payments are made monthly under condition that the unemployed undergoes re-registration in the period assigned by the employment service agency, but no more than twice a month.²²⁸

Exceptions

For citizens who are laid off from an organisation due to the organisation's liquidation or the reduction of its staff or the staff's status, and who are recognized as unemployed in the established order, but who were not employed in the period for which they were being paid an average monthly wage at their last place of

²²¹ Russian Federation. Russian government resolution No. 194 from March 23, 2008 "On the minimum and maximum unemployment benefit payments for 2008". Accessible via www.consultant.ru, last accessed September 2008

²²² News agency "Allmedia", Moscow: *The Bill «About the Employment of the Population» is accepted in First Reading*, 9.07.2008, <http://allmedia.ru/newsitem.asp?id=826114>, last accessed July 2008

²²³ Public Service for Employment of the Population, city of Moscow, statistics <http://www.labor.ru/pics2/marketstat148.htm>, last accessed July 2008

²²⁴ Russian Federation. *Law on Employment of the Russian Federation*, August 22, 2004. (pt. 4, ch. 31) Accessible via www.consultant.ru, last accessed September 2008

²²⁵ Russian Federation. *Law on Employment of the Russian Federation*, August 22, 2004. (pt. 5, ch. 31) Accessible via www.consultant.ru, last accessed September 2008

²²⁶ Russian Federation. *Law on Employment of the Russian Federation*, August 22, 2004. (pt. 2, ch. 31) Accessible via www.consultant.ru, last accessed September 2008

²²⁷ Russian Federation. *Law on Employment of the Russian Federation*, August 22, 2004. (pt. 3, ch. 31) Accessible via www.consultant.ru, last accessed September 2008

²²⁸ Russian Federation. *Law on Employment of the Russian Federation*, August 22, 2004. (pt. 6, ch. 31) Accessible via www.consultant.ru, last accessed September 2008

employment (compensated by severance pay), the unemployment benefit payment begins on the first day following this special period.²²⁹

For citizens who failed to reach pension age (60 years of age for men and 55 for women) and whose length of service allows them to receive pension payments (i.e. 25 years of service for men and 20 for women, or any length of service at corresponding jobs that permits them to receive early pension payments), the period during which unemployment benefits are paid is extended beyond the assigned 12 months by two calendar weeks for each year of employment that exceeds the given employment status.²³⁰

The entire period of unemployment benefit payments may not exceed 24 calendar months, cumulatively, as paid over a 36 calendar month period.

Unemployment benefit payments cease with the removal of the citizen's unemployed status in cases of:²³¹

- recognition of citizen as employed;
- completion of professional training, improved qualification or retraining as assigned by the employment service agency, with payment of stipends;
- an extended (over one month) failure by the unemployed to appear at the employment service agency without a legitimate excuse;
- the unemployed person's relocation to a different area;
- the unemployed person's conviction resulting in loss of freedom;
- assignment of a pension;
- refusal to accept mediation from the employment service agency (by way of the citizen's personal written statement);
- the unemployed person's death.

A decision to terminate unemployment benefit payments is reached by the employment services agencies with mandatory notification of the unemployed.²³²

Halt to unemployment benefit payments

The payment of unemployment benefits may be halted for a period of up to three months in cases of:²³³

- refusal, during the unemployment period, to accept two suitable jobs;
- refusal to accept a paid public sector job at the end of a three-month unemployment period, or to participate in education programs assigned by the employment service agency – for citizens who are seeking their first jobs (no previous employment history) and who at the same time have no profession

²²⁹ Russian Federation. *Law on Employment of the Russian Federation*, August 22, 2004. (pt. 3, ch. 31) Accessible via www.consultant.ru, last accessed September 2008

²³⁰ Russian Federation. *Law on Employment of the Russian Federation*, August 22, 2004 (pt. 1, ch. 32) Accessible via www.consultant.ru, last accessed September 2008

²³¹ Russian Federation. *Law on Employment of the Russian Federation*, August 22, 2004. (pt. 2, ch. 35) Accessible via www.consultant.ru, last accessed September 2008

²³² Russian Federation. *Law on Employment of the Russian Federation*, August 22, 2004. (pt. 6, ch. 35) Accessible via www.consultant.ru, last accessed September 2008

²³³ Russian Federation. *Law on Employment of the Russian Federation*, August 22, 2004. (pt. 3, ch. 35) Accessible via www.consultant.ru, last accessed September 2008

(qualification), for citizens who are trying to resume employment after an extended absence from work (more than one year), and for certain other citizens;

- ↪ the appearance by the unemployed for re-registration in a state of inebriation caused by the use of alcohol, drugs or other intoxicating substances;
- ↪ dismissal from last place of employment (service) for violation of work discipline and other wrongful acts covered by existing legislation, as well as the dismissal of an individual assigned to education courses from those courses for wrongful acts;
- ↪ violation, without proper justification, by the unemployed person of the conditions and terms for the person's re-registration as unemployed (unemployment benefit payments are halted from the day following that of his last appearance for re-registration);
- ↪ the citizen's voluntary end of attendance at re-education courses assigned by the employment service agencies.

The period for which the unemployment benefit payments are halted is counted toward the entire period of unemployment benefit payments.

A decision to halt unemployment benefit payments is reached by the employment services agencies with mandatory notification of the unemployed.

Unemployment benefit payments are not made in case of:

- ↪ pregnancy and maternity leave;
- ↪ the unemployed person's departure from his permanent place of residence due to attendance in evening schools or corresponding professional education institutions;
- ↪ the unemployed person's enlistment in military duty, or enlistment in activities linked to preparations for military duty, or the performance of state duties.

This period is not counted toward the entire period of unemployment benefit payments, which is extended.

The amount of the unemployment benefit payment may be reduced by 25 % for a period of up to one month in case of:

- ↪ failure to appear without a legitimate excuse for talks with an employer within three days of being assigned to do so by the employment service agencies;
- ↪ failure to appear without a legitimate excuse to the employment service agency for employment (or education) assignment .

A decision to reduce unemployment benefit payments is reached by the employment services agencies with mandatory notification of the unemployed.

It should be remembered that unemployment benefit payments are made only with the presence of registration based on place of residence. Attempts to contest this rule in court have been unsuccessful.

3.3.5.2. Sickness benefits and access to them²³⁴

Sickness benefits are accessible only to citizens who have a health insurance policy. A health insurance policy may be obtained in a medical institution based on place of registration. The latter means that sickness benefits may only be received if one is registered.

The following are excerpts from the instruction for issuing documentation confirming a citizen's temporary unemployed status²³⁵:

Documents confirming a person's temporary disability or confirming the person's temporary dismissal from work (studies) constitute a disability memo and, in specific cases, acceptable forms of certificates granted to citizens in case of sickness or injury for the period of their medical rehabilitation, in case of the need to leave work to attend to sick family members, a healthy or disabled child, for a period of quarantine, for pregnancy and maternity leave, and for prosthesis in case of in-patient hospitalization. With the issue of a disability memo, in accordance with corresponding laws, payments are assigned and begin for temporary disability or pregnancy and maternity leave. A disability memo (sickness list) is issued to: citizens of the Russian Federation, foreign citizens including those of the CIS states, people without citizenship, refugees and forced migrants, who are employed in businesses, organisations and institutions of the Russian Federation regardless of whether they are private or public; citizen who became disabled within one month of leaving a job for sound reasons; citizens who have been recognized as unemployed and who have registered with regional employment service agencies; former servicemen who became disabled within a month of being dismissed from emergency service in the Russian armed forces.

The right to issue disability memos (sickness lists and notes) belongs to practicing doctors in federal, municipal and private medical system institutions, based on them having a license to conduct temporary disability evaluations. Doctors issue disability memos (sickness lists) after receiving a document confirming the patient's identity. The issue and extension of a document confirming temporary disability is done by the doctor after performance of a physical examination and is confirmed by an entry in a medical journal that explains the temporary disability. The document confirming temporary disability is issued and then stopped, as a rule, in the same medical facility but, with evidence, may be extended in a different one. Citizens who are located outside their permanent place of residence receive their disability memo (sickness list) from the treating doctor, who confirms the temporary disability with permission from the medical facility's administration, taking into account the number of days required to travel to the place of permanent residence. In case of illness or injury, the treating doctor issues a disability memo (sickness list) personally and on a one-time basis for a period of up to 10 calendar days, and extends it personally for a period of up to 30 calendar days, taking into account the approximate disability period for various illnesses and injuries approved by the Russian Health Ministry.

All types of benefits are paid during the disability period of an employee according to the work contract. The illness or injury of the insured person should occur within 30 calendar days of the day the person stopped working, or from the day the contract was signed until the day it was annulled.

The size of a benefit payment for temporary disability may not exceed RUB 17.250.²³⁶ If an insured person has jobs with several employers, the size of the temporary

²³⁴ Russian Federation. Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), *Data Public Health*; www.gks.ru, last accessed July 2008

²³⁵ Russian Federation Ministry of Health. Decree No. 206, October 19, 1994.

²³⁶ Federal law N 183-FZ, <http://nalog.consultant.ru/doc65953.html>, last accessed July 2008

disability benefit may not exceed the stated maximum of that type of benefit for each place of employment. A person who has been insured for less than six months receives a temporary disability benefit payment that does not exceed the monthly minimum wage (RUB 2.300).

3.3.5.3. Family allowances and access to them

There is no nationwide family, but some cities and towns provide direct payments and/or various privileges to families.²³⁷ Returnees with children should ask the communal authorities if such payments or privileges are offered.

3.3.5.4. Other benefits in the social welfare system²³⁸

Alarmed by the declining population of the Russian Federation the government searched for tools to stop the trend. One of the tools is the so called “Basic Mother (or Family) Capital”: a single benefit of RUB 250.000 (about EUR 7.200) paid with the birth of a second and any consecutive child. This considerable sum is however not paid in cash and can only be spend on defined terms and conditions: on the education of the child, improvement of the housing or to transfer the sum to a pension fund. Detailed information on the fund can be collected on the website of the Moscow region.²³⁹ Other benefits:

Provision of pregnancy and childbearing benefits

Since January 1, 2007, the following state maternity benefits are being paid to citizens by Russia’s Social Security Fund:

- a pregnancy and childbearing benefit payment;
- a single benefit payment to women who register at a medical facility in the early stages of pregnancy;
- a single benefit paid with the birth of a child;
- monthly benefits for tending to children.

Pregnancy and childbearing benefit payment

A pregnancy and childbearing benefit is a one-off payment that is granted and paid cumulatively for the period of maternity leave during pregnancy and birth. The pregnancy and childbearing benefit is paid to an ensured woman for the entire period from pregnancy to childbirth. In cases of labour complications or multiple pregnancy,

²³⁷ For more information, please consult: The government of Moscow, southeast district, *Information on grants and other payments in 2008*, <http://www.uvao.ru/social.phtml?RubricID=13543>, last accessed October 2008

²³⁸ The government of Moscow, southeast district, *Information on grants and other payments in 2008* <http://www.uvao.ru/social.phtml?RubricID=13543>, last accessed October 2008

²³⁹ The government of Moscow, southeast district, *Information on grants and other payments in 2008* <http://www.uvao.ru/social.phtml?RubricID=13543>, last accessed October 2008

More useful information on a special folder of the Russian daily “Rossiskaya Gazeta”, *All about the “Mother (family) Capital”*, <http://www.rg.ru/sujet/2778.html>, last accessed July 2008

a new disability form is issued, extending an existing one, for the additional days of the post-delivery period. The right to pregnancy and childbearing benefits is held by:

a) women subject to mandatory social security.

Benefits for working women are awarded by the Social Security Fund depending on the place of employment. The basis for awarding a pregnancy and childbearing benefit is a disability memo that is issued according to current procedure. Pregnancy and childbearing benefits for working women are assigned at a rate of 100 % of the average wage (income) received over the 12 calendar months preceding the start of maternity leave.

The average wage for calculating the pregnancy and childbearing benefit is determined by federal law No. 255-F3 from December 29, 2006 "On providing benefits for temporary disability, pregnancy and childbearing to citizens who are subject to mandatory social security," and other statutory acts concerning mandatory social security.

For women who had been insured for less than six months, pregnancy and childbearing benefits are paid an amount not exceeding the minimum full monthly wage established by federal law, with application of regional coefficients in localities where they are applicable.

The pregnancy and childbearing benefits are also assigned and paid according to the last place of employment (service) in cases where the maternity leave begins within one month of a women leaving her job due to her husband's relocation for other employment, and her move to be with her husband; illness prevents the continuation of work or living in a given area; there is need to take care of sick family members (in the presence of a medical conclusion) or group of disabled people.

b) women who were dismissed due to the liquidation of an organisation, cessation by particular individuals of their business activity, termination of private notary or attorney powers, or the cessation of business activity by other private individuals whose professional work is subject to state registration and (or) licensing in accordance to corresponding federal laws - within a period of 12 months preceding the day they were recognized, according to current procedure, as unemployed.

This category of women is awarded and paid benefits for the amount of RUB 300 per calendar month (adjusted to the local coefficient, in regions where they are applicable) by social security agencies in their place of residence. In order to be eligible for pregnancy and childbearing benefits, these women must submit a corresponding application to the local social security agency, along with a disability memo, a properly notarized copy of their employment history book stating their last place of employment, a certificate from the local federal employment service agency confirming their unemployed status, a decision from the regional federal tax service agency on state registrations confirming the private individual's cessation of activities as a private entrepreneur, private notary, attorney, and the cessation by other private individuals of professional activity that is subject to state registration and (or) licensing in accordance to corresponding federal laws.

This benefit payment is drawn from the accounts of Russia's Social Security Fund.

c) women who receive residence training at lower, intermediate and higher professional training institutions and post-graduate professional training facilities.

These women receive benefit payment in the size of the stipend established by the learning facility (but no lower than the minimum stipend established by Russian law), based on a standard form medical certificate.

The pregnancy and childbearing benefit payments are made from federal budget (regional budget) funds designated for paying stipends at education facilities.

In addition, all of the above-mentioned categories of women are eligible for pregnancy and childbearing benefits in case of adoption of a child (or children) up to three months old.

In case of adoption of a child (or children) that is up to three months old, the pregnancy and childbearing benefit is paid for the period starting from the day of adoption up until the expiration of 70 calendar days (110 calendar days in case of adoption of two or more children) from the day of the child's (or children's) birth.

The assignment and payment of pregnancy and childbearing benefits to women who adopt a child that is up to three months old is done in accordance with procedures established for the above-mentioned categories of benefits.

In addition, a court certificate confirming the adoption is required for the assignment of these benefits.

The pregnancy and childbearing benefit is paid no later than 10 days from the date of submission of all required documents.

Single benefit payment to women who register at a medical facility in the early stages of pregnancy.

Women who register at a medical facility in the early stages of pregnancy (up to 12 weeks) are eligible for a single benefit payment in addition to the pregnancy and childbearing benefits.

This benefit payment in the amount of RUB 300 is assigned and paid based on the place of assignment and payment of the pregnancy and childbearing benefit. The payment is made on presentation of a certificate from a women's consultancy or other medical facility that has registered the woman in her early stages of pregnancy. The benefit is paid in accordance with the established regional coefficient factor (based on the coefficient factor established in the Urals, the benefit payment stands at RUB 345).

The single benefit for women who register with a medical institution in the early stages of pregnancy is granted and paid together with the pregnancy and childbearing benefit if the certificate confirming registration at the medical facility is presented together with the documents for receiving pregnancy and childbearing benefits. Otherwise, it is paid no more than 10 days from the date of submission of the certificate confirming registration at the medical facility, if the said certificate is submitted at a later date.

Single benefit paid with the birth of a child

A single benefit paid with the birth of a child serves as compensation meant to cover expenses involved with the birth of a child. For this reason, the state guarantees payment of this type of benefit both to employed (i.e. insured by mandatory social security) and unemployed citizens. The right to a single benefit payment with the birth (or adoption at the age of under three months) of a child is held by one of the parents, or a stand-in person. Since January 1, 2006, the benefit payment with the birth (adoption) of a child stood at RUB 8.000 (RUB 9.200 based on the Urals regional coefficient). The size of the benefits payment did not change in 2008. In case of the birth of two or more children, the single benefit payment is awarded and paid for each child. The benefit is not awarded in case of the birth of a stillborn. The single benefit paid with the birth of a child is assigned and paid to one of the parents or a stand-in individual based on place of employment (service, studies). If the parent or the stand-in individual is unemployed (not in service, attending school), it is paid by the social security agency based in the child's residence.

3.3.6. Useful data to calculate the cost of living

Naturally the costs vary largely between the different regions in Russia. The average monthly costs in Moscow amount to RUB 6.659 and RUB 4.595 in S.-Petersburg. The cheapest cost of living was in Tambov, the most expensive in Chukotka. Recent months are described by the continuous growth of prices for food. In June, 2008 the average monthly cost for food (representative shopping basket) amounted to RUB 2.173,9 per month and capita. In Moscow it was equal to RUB 2.439,6, in St. Petersburg RUB 2.339,9, in the Tambov region RUB 1.793,4 and in Chukotka RUB 5.439,3.²⁴⁰ In mid November 2007 the average price of gasoline in the country was RUB 18,68 per litre for gasoline and RUB 18,07 per litre for diesel fuel, A-76 and AI-80 class gasoline, on average, cost RUB 18.27 per litre, AI-92 RUB 19,63, AI-95 RUB 21,18.²⁴¹ Till July 2008 petrol prices increased to an average of RUB 24,81 per litre diesel, RUB 22,97 per litre petrol, marks A-76, AI-80 or similar, RUB 20,67 per litre petrol, marks AI-92, AI-93 or similar, RUB 24,01 per litre petrol, marks AI-95 and above.

The average petrol prices per litre petrol in Moscow (July, 7th, 2008): RUB 24,86 (diesel), RUB 23,24 (marks A-76, AI-80), RUB 21,03 (marks AI-92, AI-93), RUB 24,34 (marks AI-95 and above).²⁴²

3.4. Health

The health service in Russia underwent a serious crisis in the early 1990s. Government expenditures for the health sector declined from 1991 to 2000 by one-third. Many health facilities, especially at the countryside and almost all facilities which were associated with Soviet enterprises, were closed, while private health facilities were opened nearly exclusively in the cities. It was meant that the drop of governmental support would be absorbed by financial injections from the new health insurances. But the insurance sector developed not as expected, leaving a notorious underfinanced public health service. Government expenditures for the health sector exceed the level before 1991 only in 2006 with the infusion of resources from the newly created “National Priority Health Program”. However, Russia’s spending for the public health sector, as measured by share of the GDP, is still less than half of the average in the EU and even less than the average of all other CIS-countries.²⁴³ After the reforms of the 1990s the financing of the health system is fragmented, decentralized and due to a poor performance of the administration, ineffective. Funding comes from federal, regional, and municipality budgets.²⁴⁴ Researchers at the Russian

²⁴⁰ Research of “Civic Assistance Committee”, June 2008, contact: Appendix II

²⁴¹ New Agency “Tass”, Press release, 4.12.2007, <http://www.prime-tass.ru/news/show.asp?id=740005&ct=news>, last accessed July 2008

²⁴² Specialised website “Forex and Finance”, *Petrol Continues to Rise in Price*, 10.07.2008, <http://fin-forex.com/petrol-continues-to-rise-in-price/>, last accessed July 2008

²⁴³ WHO (2008), *Better Outcomes through Health Reforms in the Russian Federation: The Challenge in 2008 and Beyond*, <http://www.who.int/management/country/rus/BetterOutcomesReformsRussia.pdf>, P. 4 et seq., last accessed September 2008

²⁴⁴ David Hauner (2007), *Benchmarking the Efficiency of Public Expenditure in the Russian Federation*, IMF Working Paper, WP/07/246, <http://imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2007/wp07246.pdf>, last accessed October 2008

See as well: William Tompson (2007), *Healthcare Reform in Russia: Problem and Prospects*. OECD Economics Department Working Papers, No.538,

Academy of Sciences' "Open Health Institute" estimate that as much as 35% of the financial resources of the sector are lost by the widespread corruption, which is perpetuated by the still low salaries of the medical personal.²⁴⁵

A further hinder of access to medical care is the fact that governmental health institutions offer medical care only during working hours.

As a result, citizens' right to free medical care in state and municipal institutions, which is guaranteed by the Russian Constitution (Chapter 41), does not exist in practice. Commercial medical practices continue to expand, while free assistance is shrinking. The WHO commented: "*The large share of private expenditures reflects out-of-pocket payments for informal charges in health facilities and the purchase of pharmaceuticals that tend to hinder the access to quality health services, particularly among the poor.*"²⁴⁶

As a result of the dramatic demographical crisis in Russia, the government realized in the last two years for the first time the importance of an improvement of the public health sector. The "Health Care Programme" of 2007 had a budget of 3.7bn USD and financed a long awaited wage increase for physicians and the purchase of much needed foreign high-tech equipment.²⁴⁷

3.4.1. General health situation by regions

*"Russia faces a greater disease burden than any other European country."*²⁴⁸

The average life expectancy at birth has dropped in Russia from 69.6 years in 1965 to 66 years in 2007. Whereas the data from 1965 reflected the same contemporary level as in the leading Western nations, the data of 2007 reflecting a level far behind other G-8 countries: Russia lay behind the life expectancy of Japan by 16 years and the EU-average by 14 years.²⁴⁹ Especially the male live expectancy dropped dramatically in the Russian Federation to an average of 59 years (women: 72 years) which is 16 years less than in the United Kingdom²⁵⁰ and even 20 less than in Japan.²⁵¹ The mortality rates for adult males

[http://www.oalis.oecd.org/oalis/2006doc.nsf/LinkTo/NT000076DA/\\$FILE/JT03220416.PDF](http://www.oalis.oecd.org/oalis/2006doc.nsf/LinkTo/NT000076DA/$FILE/JT03220416.PDF), last accessed September 2008

²⁴⁵ Freedom House, *Public Health in Russia and Environs: Stuck in a Rut*, 28.02.2008, <http://blog.freedomhouse.org/weblog/2008/02/public-health-i.html>, last accessed September 2008

²⁴⁶ WHO (2008), *Better Outcomes through Health Reforms in the Russian Federation: The Challenge in 2008 and Beyond*, <http://www.who.int/management/country/rus/BetterOutcomesReformsRussia.pdf>, p. 4, last accessed September 2008

²⁴⁷ Dutch governmental agency EVD - Internationaal Ondernemen en Samenwerken, *Rusland: medische sector*, 29.01.2008, <http://www.evd.nl/zoeken/showbouwsteen.asp?bstnum=88464&location=>, last accessed September 2008

²⁴⁸ Business Monitor International, *Russia Pharmaceuticals and Healthcare Report Q3 2008*, September 2008, available at: http://www.researchandmarkets.com/reports/655483/russia_pharmaceuticals_and_healthcare_report_q3, last accessed October 2008

²⁴⁹ WHO (2008), *Better Outcomes through Health Reforms in the Russian Federation: The Challenge in 2008 and Beyond*, <http://www.who.int/management/country/rus/BetterOutcomesReformsRussia.pdf>, p.3, last accessed September 2008

²⁵⁰ Uk-daily "The Guardian", *No Country for Old Men*, 11.02.2008, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/feb/11/russia>, last accessed September 2008

²⁵¹ US-daily "The Los Angeles Times", *Russia's Outdated Healthcare Mired in Corruption*, 16.03.2008, <http://articles.latimes.com/2008/mar/16/world/fg-russia16plr>, last accessed September 2008

is in Russia the highest of all industrialised countries and higher than in the average of the CIS-countries. The obvious health crisis of Russia is just partly provoked by the poor performance of the public health sector. More influx on poor health outcomes in Russia - death, ill health and disability - has the still rising level of so called *noncommunicable diseases* (e.g. heart attacks, strokes, cancer) and injuries caused by an alarming high rate of traffic accidents. In both cases the misuse of alcohol plays an important role and explains mainly the huge difference between male and female life expectancy.²⁵²

Against the backdrop of a high but stable death rate from blood circulation problems (which account for more than half of all deaths), one observes a growing death rate among those suffering from digestive system ailments. The rate is also wavering but rising for certain infectious diseases, including tuberculosis.

One of the most significant risk factors for the growing number of circulatory system ailments is the sharp increase in the rate of arterial hypertension in Russia. Arterial hypertension has reached epidemic proportions in recent years. It is caused by growing cardiovascular risk factors – smoking, obesity, poor exercise, unbalanced diet, stress – and an absence of adequate controls over the problem due to the population's poor familiarity with the disease and its severe consequences. Earlier studies already confirmed that a much higher rate of men ages 30 to 59 dying from heart diseases than in any other industrialised country.²⁵³

Oncological diseases occupy a second place among fatal ailments. At the end of 2005, the number of patients with malignant tumours registered in oncological treatment centres stood at 2.386.766 people, or 1.7 % of the population. An important problem remains that, despite diagnostics improvements, the ratio of patients whose tumours are detected in the early stages fails to improve. This is due to many regions' refusal to oversee prophylactic health checkups on the population what had been the norm in the Soviet era. This fact is largely responsible for the large percentage of patients who die from oncological diseases.

The health risk in aspect of the mentioned diseases is increased by the forth-highest consumption worldwide of tobacco per capita (behind Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria): an estimated 60% of Russian men and 30% of the women are smokers. The government reacted just recently on the problem and tobacco prices remain affordable even for the poor.²⁵⁴

The epidemiological situation with viral hepatitis also remains unfavourable. There have been cases of hepatitis infections occurring in medical and prophylactic institution. The spread of hepatitis A among the population is promulgated by the poor quality of drinking water.

In the first five months of 2008 the Federal State Statistic Service counted 9.400 new tuberculosis cases, which is an increase of 3.6% compared with the same period in 2007.²⁵⁵ In total, the Russian authorities recorded officially some 120.000 new

²⁵² P. Marquez, M. Suhrcke, M. McKee, and L. Rocco. (2007) *Adult Health in the Russian Federation: More than Just A Health Problem*, in: Health Affairs 26 (4), 2007, p. 1040-52

²⁵³ A study of the Columbia University numbered this specific death risk among the mentioned group in Russia as five times higher than in the United States, US-daily "The Los Angeles Times", *Russia's Outdated Healthcare Mired in Corruption*, 16.03.2008, <http://articles.latimes.com/2008/mar/16/world/fg-russia16plr>, last accessed September 2008

²⁵⁴ US-daily "The Chicago Tribune", *Russia's First Step Toward Butting out*, 11.04.2008, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/chi-041108-out-there-russia-smoking-apr12,0,1640942.story>, last accessed September 2008

For more information: K. Danishevski et al., (2008) *Public Attitudes Towards Smoking and Tobacco Control Policy in Russia*, in: Tobacco Control, 2008,17, p. 276-283

²⁵⁵ Russian Federation. Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), http://www.gks.ru/bgd/regl/b08_01/lssWWW.exe/Stg/d07/3-3.htm, last accessed September 2008

tuberculosis cases in 2007. In comparison: The United States with two times more inhabitants, counted in 2007 14.000 new cases. About 26.000 persons die in Russia annually on tuberculosis compared with an average of only 650 in the United States. A recent study on the tuberculosis-treatment in the Russian Federation comes to the conclusion that "(...) only 9 percent of TB hospitals meet current hygienic standards, 60 percent need capital repairs, 21 percent lack either hot or cold running water, and 11 percent lack a sewage system (...) 42 percent of hospitals have inadequate medical equipment and (...) 20 percent have a shortage of TB drugs."²⁵⁶

The annual report of UNAIDS says the contrary about the situation of the HIV/AIDS-epidemic in Russia: "*The HIV epidemic in the Russian Federation (already the largest in this region) continues to grow, although apparently at a slower pace than in Ukraine (...)*". According to the report, an estimated 1.03 million infected people lived in 2007 in Russia, which is 69% of all HIV-cases in whole Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

In contradiction to the UNAIDS data, official Russian governmental figures states that the countries HIV/AIDS epidemic is stabilized.²⁵⁷

Vulnerable Groups - HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis

The most vulnerable group of HIV/AIDS-infection as well as of tuberculosis infection are users of injected drugs, however with a high regional variation which ranges in Russia from just 3% in Volgograd to more than 70% in Biysk (an average of 62% for the whole of Eastern Europe).²⁵⁸ The risk of being infected is by far the highest in Russian prisons, where the infection rate is exorbitant - prisoners are making up about 25% off all the countries tuberculosis patients. At the same time the treatment of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis in Russian prisons is nearly inexistent. There exist also a direct link between the much higher concentration of prisons in Siberia than in the European part of Russia and the much above-average number of tuberculosis infections in this region. Because infected prisoners are mostly not properly treated they often developed the aggressive multidrug resistant form of the disease. They also risk to infect after their release from prison other inhabitants of the often cramped and unventilated apartment blocs.²⁵⁹

Several studies show furthermore the overlap of injecting drug use and sex work: for example, 39% of female sex workers in the Samara oblast used such drugs and 37% in the city of St. Petersburg. The homosexual intercourse as mode of transmission is estimated as minor. It varied in 2006 from 0.9% of all cases in Moscow to 9% in Nizhni Novgorod. However, due to the strong societal stigmatisation of homosexuality in Russia the actual data are probably higher.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁶ M. Feshbach, *What's in a Number? A New Projection by Pokrovskiy's Centre for HIV Prevention and Treatment and some Consequences for Russia*, 13.08.2008, <http://www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/2008-153-36.cfm>, last accessed September 2008

²⁵⁷ Russian Federation. Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), http://www.gks.ru/bgd/regl/b08_01/lssWWW.exe/Stg/d07/3-3.htm, last accessed September 2008

²⁵⁸ UNAIDS (2008), *2008 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic*, p.52, http://data.unaids.org/pub/GlobalReport/2008/jc1510_2008_global_report_pp29_62_en.pdf, last accessed September 2008

²⁵⁹ Scientific American, *Prisons in Post-Soviet Russia Incubate a Plague*, 25.08.2008, <http://www.sciam.com/article.cfm?id=prison-plague-post-soviet-russia>, last accessed September 2008

²⁶⁰ UNAIDS (2008), *2008 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic*, p.53, http://data.unaids.org/pub/GlobalReport/2008/jc1510_2008_global_report_pp29_62_en.pdf, last accessed September 2008

3.4.2. Drinking water and sanitation by regions; heating systems

The Russian infrastructure of supplying gas, water and electricity is situated in a vicious circle of inadequate equipment and chronically insufficient funding. Russian households still paying just 50-60% of the official market price of energy and water and the growing deficit is not covered by the Russian government. As a result the maintenance of the infrastructure is not sufficient and major investments are not taking place. In most settlements, the water, sewage and heating systems were built in the Soviet era and have since become severely run down, leading to frequent malfunction. Over recent years, Russian media have supplied regular reports about breakdowns that leave entire cities and regions without heat.

Around 40% of the Russian water networks are not equipped with the necessary water purification installations and the quality of drinking water is in the consequence in wide areas of Russia inadequate and even a health risk - especially in industrialised areas. According to estimations an annual 20bn m³ of heavy polluted sewage runs unattended in the natural water sources, although in 2005 the particular law was toughened.

Recently the government adopt a federal action plan to renovate 126 water supply networks. The program has a volume of USD 50mio.²⁶¹

The fast growing of the city of Moscow has led to an overly intense exploitation of groundwater. The level of groundwater has dropped by nearly 90 meters and usage per capita has fell from 560l/daily per capita in the beginning of the 1990s to a current 300l/daily per capita. Plans to exploit groundwater reserves about 100km away from Moscow are under way.²⁶²

Generally, in Russian cities nearly all apartments are connected to the local water and energy network. Central heating, often via long-distance heating, is standard. In rural regions, however, less than half of the residences have running water, and even fewer are connected to a sewage systems. In most cases, heating comes from either gas or wood-burning ovens. It is rare for villages to be supplied with hot water via long-distance heating, but most village homes now use gas, which either comes from a central system or canisters. However, there is a considerable number of villages in Russia whose lone sign of modern progress is electricity.

Table: Accommodations equipped with services and utilities²⁶³

	accommodations quipped with types of services (percentage)						
	running water	sewage systems	heating	bathtubs (showers)	Gas (central, liquefied)	hot water	floor electric ovens
Entire housing sector							
2006	76	72	81	66	70	63	18

²⁶¹ Source: the Dutch stately agency EVD - Internationaal Ondernemen en Samenwerken, *Rusland: water*, 21.04.2008, <http://www.evd.nl/zoeken/showbouwsteen.asp?bstnum=103214&location=>, last accessed September 2008

²⁶² Online magazine Russia Profile.org: Sergei Balashov, *Russia's Clean Water Pact*, 21.08.2008, <http://www.russiaprofile.org/page.php?pageid=Culture+%26+Living&articleid=a1219336746>, last accessed October 2008

²⁶³ Russian Federation. Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), data on Public health, 2006, www.gks.ru, last accessed September 2008

Housing sector in cities							
2006	88	86	91	81	68	79	23
Housing sector in rural area							
2006	44	34	54	26	75	22	3

3.4.3. Healthcare system

Russia's healthcare system still has inherited the worst traits of the Soviet healthcare system – specifically, its bureaucratic and centralized nature. All non-commercial medical facilities are separated into three groups: 1. state medical facilities accountable to the federal government; 2. state medical facilities overseen by regional authorities; 3. municipal medical facilities overseen by municipal authorities. On his own, a citizen may only appeal for help at a municipal medical facility that services the specific medical region in which the person is registered (where he has a residence permit). In order to receive free medical assistance in state institutions a person must be either officially redirected by a municipal facility to one overseen by regional authorities, or by the region's healthcare administration to an institution accountable to the federal government. Opportunities to win placement in medical facilities accountable to the federal government are limited by the size of annual quotas issued to each specific region.

3.4.3.1. Healthcare infrastructure by regions

According to official statistics provided by the Ministry of Health and Social Development, 7.500 hospitals, 18.800 ambulatory and medical clinics, 13.500 polyclinics and 42.300 'feldscher-obstetric' stations provided health care in Russia in 2007.²⁶⁴

In rural regions, ambulatory and obstetrician centres, as well as local and district hospitals usually offer medical assistance. Ambulatory and obstetrician centres come practically unequipped with any medical equipment. This is confirmed by the fact that the federal "Health" project in operation since 2006 aims to supply medical equipment to 12.000 ambulatory and obstetrician centres. Rural medical facilities suffer from severe staff shortages: in 2005, 16 % of ambulatory and 7 % of rural local hospitals had no staff positions filled by a certified doctor. The number of rural facilities has also been declining in recent years: 318 ambulatory and 231 local hospitals closed in 2005.

City residents receive medical treatment in district and city outpatient clinics and hospitals. In cases where rural, district and city hospitals are unable to treat a patient, they are sent to either a region's or specific republic's central hospital, located in the capital city of that subject of the Russian Federation.

²⁶⁴ Russian Federation. Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), *Main Indicators of Health 2007*, http://www.gks.ru/bgd/regl/b08_11/lssWWW.exe/Stg/d01/09-01.htm, last accessed October 2008

Highly trained, technologically equipped medical service is provided to patients on direction from regional healthcare administrations, in accordance with annual quotas issued for facilities overseen by federal authorities. These are located in Moscow, St. Petersburg and several other major Russian cities. City medical facilities have better medical equipment than rural ones, but they suffer from severe shortages of modern medical technologies. This is even true for Defence Ministry facilities.

Emergency medical assistance (in cases of accidents, injuries, poisonings and other conditions and illnesses) is provided by the ambulance service. In 2005, 3276 ambulance stations operated in Russia. Thirteen percent of patients in rural areas received help from ambulance services that year.

According to an Accounts Chamber report prepared in 2002, the country's medical facilities' specialized equipment needs are being fulfilled by just 30-40 %. Eighty percent of the existing equipment has been in service for 15 to 20 years, and has been physically worn down and otherwise aged. The average wear of medical equipment for 49 Russian regions surveyed stood at 61.8 %, and was more than 80 % in some regions. Even in some leading medical scientific centres, equipment wear was recorded at 30 to 80 %.

Medical and prophylactic facilities are also inadequately supplied with high-tech diagnostics equipment. Thus, there is one MRI system for every 5-6 million Russians, and one computerized tomographic system for one to 2-3 million people. In Western countries, these ratios stand at 1:500-600.000 people and 1:200-300.000 people, respectively. About a quarter of Russia's regions do not have such equipment at all, which is reflected in their levels of diagnostics and treatment, including in cases of oncological diseases.²⁶⁵

As part of the already mentioned "Health Care Programme" the Russian government is planning to establish six so called "High-Tech Clinics", specialised in heart- and vascular diseases, orthopaedy and neurosurgery. These hospitals will be situated in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Penza, Krasnodar, Astrachan and Tsheboksariy.²⁶⁶

The World Bank is financing several projects mostly to combat infectious diseases.²⁶⁷

In the last years the dentistry sector of health care has grown significantly. This quick growth has been realized by the commercial sector almost alone. In Moscow there are more than 750 commercial dental practices. Governmental control is limited and the grey market therefore is significant. In the larger private dental care-chains like "Masterdent" (www.masterdent.info) and "Medi" (www.emedi.ru) the quality is on Western level but prices are as well.²⁶⁸

3.4.3.2. Eligibility criteria and access to healthcare services

²⁶⁵ Russian Federation. Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), *Main Indicators of Health 2007*, http://www.gks.ru/bgd/regl/b08_11/lssWWW.exe/Stg/d01/09-01.htm, last accessed October 2008

²⁶⁶ Dutch governmental agency EVD - Internationaal Ondernemen en Samenwerken, *Rusland: medische sector*, 29.01.2008, <http://www.evd.nl/zoeken/showbouwsteen.asp?bstnum=88464&location=>, last accessed October 2008

²⁶⁷ Detailed information at the World Bank's website: <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/RUSSIANFEDERATIONEXTN/0,,contentMDK:21054807-menuPK:517666-pagePK:1497618-piPK:217854-theSitePK:305600,00.html>, last accessed October 2008

²⁶⁸ Dutch governmental agency EVD - Internationaal Ondernemen en Samenwerken, *Rusland: medische sector*, 29.01.2008, <http://www.evd.nl/zoeken/showbouwsteen.asp?bstnum=88464&location=>, last accessed October 2008

Russia's Constitution and the "Legislative principles of the Russian Federation on citizens healthcare" guarantee free medical care to Russian citizens in state and municipal medical facilities, within the frameworks of the government's annually published program for state guarantees for providing free medical assistance to Russian citizens. However, in practice, receiving free medical assistance in municipal facilities hinges on the patient being registered based on place of residence in the specific municipality and subject of the Russian federation (region). In case of absence of such registration, free medical assistance may only be provided with special consent (directive) of the regional healthcare administration. At the same time, the presence of registration also does not prevent patients from having to pay, in one form or another, for medical assistance in state and municipal medical facilities – especially in cases of surgeries that require hospitalization.

In St. Petersburg patients can receive adequate medical care if they have a provisional registration. If the patient is in possession of a health insurance almost all medical examinations are paid²⁶⁹.

3.4.3.3. Costs of healthcare

The Russian government annually approves a "Program of state guarantees for providing Russian citizens with free medical assistance" that, in part, earmarks financial spending on this assistance. The program for 2007 sets the following spending allotments for medical organisations to provide citizens with free medical assistance:

- a) an average of RUB 116,9 per one visit to an ambulatory or prophylactic organisation, and RUB 238,3 per one patient-day in such a facility
- b) an average of RUB 238,3 per one hospital bed-day of in-patient treatment
- c) RUB 1064 per one ambulance dispatch call

These norms "take into account expenses for wages, additional labour remunerations, supply of medicaments and bandages, food, soft stock, medical instruments, reagents and chemicals, glass, lab dishes and other material supplies, as well as payment for laboratory and instrument tests performed at other facilities (in the absence of own laboratory and diagnostic equipment), and payment for the organisation of the supply of food to the facility (in case of absence of own kitchens)."²⁷⁰

However, real costs are increased considerably by the common corruption in the underpaid health sector. Frequently patients are forced to pay bribes to receive even basic treatments. The "Los Angeles Times" published recently a case study about the Hospital No 67 in Moscow, where relatives of a patient had a.o. to pay USD 20 for injections and USD 40 for each consultation of the doctors.²⁷¹

The costs of medical services at private institutions vary greatly: they are higher in medical scientific research institutes than in capital city hospitals. They are higher in Moscow and St. Petersburg than in the provinces. For example, doctor consultations in a Moscow medical centre cost between RUB 500 and 1.000, an electrocardiogram costs between RUB 400 and 500, and an X-ray of each section of the spine between

²⁶⁹ Interview of The House of Peace and Non-Violence (contact in Appendix II) with Mrs Bela Vilenskaya, St Petersburg, May 2007, verified August 2008

²⁷⁰ Russian Federation. Russian government resolution No. 885, December 30, 2006

²⁷¹ US daily "Los Angeles Times", *Russia's Outdated Healthcare is mired in Corruption*, 16.03.2008, <http://articles.latimes.com/2008/mar/16/world/fg-russia16plr>, last accessed October 2008

RUB 500 and 800. These prices are two to three times lower in the North Caucasus. In-patient treatment costs depend on the level of the clinic and the type of treatment performed. Surgery in a major scientific centre on average costs each patient about USD 3.000-5.000. Some operations are far more expensive, although they rarely exceed USD 10.000.

Vulnerable groups

In case of some illnesses, the required medication is so expensive that it becomes unaffordable in case of long-term use for even the most well-off patients. This is the case with leucosis, haemophilia, collagen disease, disseminated sclerosis, kidney transplant convalescence, and some others. Medications used to treat the most common cardiovascular diseases are significantly cheaper. But for the elderly, who most frequently suffer from these diseases, payment for medicines (if not received for free) can take from one third to a half of their only wage - pensions.²⁷²

3.4.3.4. Discrimination in healthcare system

The main and almost only form of discrimination in healthcare comes in the form of the abovementioned access restrictions to free medical assistance for citizens who lack registration based on place of residence. The widespread existence of xenophobia in Russian society leads to patients with roots in the Caucasus, Central Asia, or those with dark skin sometimes encountering ill-natured treatment from medical personnel. However this does not provide sufficient grounds to speak of discrimination based on ethnic or racial grounds in the Russian healthcare system. One may also view the inability for large segments of Russian society to access the highly qualified, modern medical treatments administered in central clinics, as well as to obtain expensive medications, as a certain form of social discrimination.

3.4.3.5. Services of non-state agents in healthcare

Numerous international, foreign and nongovernmental NGOs operate in Russia's healthcare system. Foreign and international NGOs mostly provide assistance to medical facilities in the form of medication and equipment supplies. Some of them organize and finance direct free medical assistance to groups of citizens that have no access to free state care. Several international and foreign humanitarian organisations provided (and some still continue to provide) first aid in Ingushetia – in camps and places of temporary residence set up for refugees (IDPs) from Chechnya and forced migrants from North- and South Ossetia.

The World Bank is financing, as mentioned before, several projects to improve the health care in the Russian Federation.²⁷³

Russian NGOs concentrate more on providing individual support for patients and their families. For example, a charity group working with the Russian Children's Clinical Hospital collects donations for expensive medication and medical treatments performed on children who are being treated in oncohematology departments.

²⁷² Information of Civic Assistance Committee, July 2008 contact: Appendix II

²⁷³ Detailed information at the World Bank's website:
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/RUSSIANFEDERATIONEXTN/0,,contentMDK:21054807-menuPK:517666-pagePK:1497618-piPK:217854-theSitePK:305600,00.html>, last accessed October 2008

3.4.3.6. Diseases which cannot be effectively treated in the country

The methodology used in Russia to treat most ailments corresponds to that used by international patient treatment programs. Russia's lag in treating some illnesses (oncological, endocrinological, immune system deficiencies, haemophilia, disseminated sclerosis, and others) is attributed to medical facilities' poor stock of modern medications and medical equipment. In addition, due to low wages paid to medical personnel, in-house treatment centres cannot provide the necessary care for patients (including patients' post-surgery rehabilitation), which leads to a reduced effectiveness of the provided treatment.

Psychotherapy is only poorly developed in Russia and psychological problems gained just recently attention as being a serious health risk. Treatment is accessible mostly in private clinics and prices vary between EUR 10 and EUR 32 (about RUB 345 - RUB 1.004) for consultations. Prices for known experts vary in Moscow even between EUR 65 and EUR 130 (about RUB 2.243 - RUB 4.483) and are just affordable for the rich.²⁷⁴

Vulnerable groups

Cancer patients with low income are the most prominent risk group concerning an effective treatment in the Russian Federation, especially outside the urban centres of Moscow and St. Petersburg. Early diagnosis of cancer is insufficient.

A considerable vulnerable group are furthermore patients with psychological diseases, most of all trauma-patients. With the exception of the victims of the Beslan hostage siege no governmental program was so far launched to provide trauma patients with psychological help. Persons concerned are most prominent Chechen war victims, Russian war veterans, victims of child abuse and victims of traffic accidents.²⁷⁵

3.4.3.7. Supply with standard medicines

The offer of free medical assistance by state and municipal in-patient centres also stipulates free supplies of medicines used during treatment. However most provincial hospitals are not stocked with required medicines, and patients or their families are forced to obtain them on their own. Federal medical centres also often lack required medicines – especially modern, highly effective and expensive ones. Moscow city hospitals have the best medicinal supplies.

In accordance to the law “On state social assistance”²⁷⁶, the right to free medicine and ambulatory treatment is guaranteed to World War II veterans, those who saw combat duty, and the disabled. The Ministry of Health and Social Development approves the

²⁷⁴ Dutch daily NRC Handelsblad, *Russen ontdekken langzaam de psychotherapie*, 31.03.2008, accessible via. Overlegplatform Geestelijke Gezondheidszorg Oost-Vlaanderen vzw, <http://www.popovggz.be/index.php?submenu=02&sublink=03&sublinkrechts=&content=nieuwsgierig/allyounever/allyoubekijk.php&ID=234>, last accessed October 2008

²⁷⁵ Information provided by the Russian NGO's “Centre for Independent Social Research” and “Civic Assistance Committee” in July 2008, contact: Appendix II

²⁷⁶ Russian Federation. Federal law N° 195, *State Social Assistance*, November 25, 2006, accessible via www.consultant.ru, last accessed September 2008

list of medications provided to these patients for free. However this list does not include all of the required medicines. In addition, provincial hospitals that provide free medicine for these patients often lack medicines included in this list – especially the most expensive medicines that are most difficult for patients to obtain on their own. As a result, most patients who suffer from serious ailments are unable to obtain the required medications for free. For example, no more than 10 % of Russia’s 150.000 patients suffering from disseminated sclerosis receive free medicine. This occurs while even the briefest lapses in treatment with the required drugs lead to death.²⁷⁷

A general problem on the Russian market for medicines is the relative high level of falsified and therefore often ineffective products, with an estimated market share of 12%.²⁷⁸

Vulnerable groups

The realization of the right to free medicine, as well as to free medical assistance, is conditional on the presence of registration based on place of residence. A patient who does not have registration based on place of residence in the location in which he lives may not receive even vital medicines without special permission from the regional healthcare administration. As the “Civic Assistance Committee’s” experiences in defending the rights of such patients show, regional healthcare administrations are very reluctant to issue permission for non-registered patients to obtain free medicine.

The most prominent vulnerable group in this aspect are pensioners which are not provided by the government with sufficient supply of standard medicines. The insufficient pension does not allow to fill this gap on the private market.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁷ A. Gorbachyova, *Fatal Lapse*, in: Russian daily Nezavisimaya Gazeta, March 30, 2007

²⁷⁸ Dutch governmental agency EVD - Internationaal Ondernemen en Samenwerken, *Rusland: medische sector*, 29.01.2008, <http://www.evd.nl/zoeken/showbouwsteen.asp?bstnum=88464&location=>

²⁷⁹ Information provided by “Civic Assistance Committee” in July 2008, contact: Appendix II

ANNEX 1

Counselling Points of HRC “Memorial”

	Location, city and region	Address, phone, fax, e-mail	Lawyers
1.	Astrakhan, Astrakhan region	414000 Astrakhan, Moscovskaya str. 63 #7 tel: +7(851) 222-05-13 Fax +7(851) 240-72-84 kassandra.88@mail.ru	Alexandra M. Beliayeva
2.	Belgorod, Belgorod region	308007 Belgorod, Nagornaja st. 2. Attorney agency, for Popov tel: +7(472)233-90-33 e-mail: memorial@bel.ru , v_n_popov@chat.ru	Vassily N. Popov
3.	Borisoglebsk, Voronezh region	Borisoglebsk, Voronezh region, Svobody str, 170 tel: +7(473)546-26-12 e-mail: iolant@icmail.ru	Iolanta A. Agababovyan
4.	Bryansk, Bryansk region	241011 Bryansk, Oktyabrskaya st. 16 tel: +7(483)266-18-13 Fax: +7(483)275-32-44 e-mail: ns@polyakov.bryansk.ru	Nikolay S. Polyakov
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Platform van Russisch Sprekenden "Solidariteit"	Migrant Organisation	ACV-building - 5 th floor, Nationaalstraat 111-113, 2000 Antwerp/Belgium Tel: +32 3 220 14 49 Fax: +32 3 220 12 20	Galina Matushina solidariteit@internationalcomite.be	-

Abbreviations

AI	Amnesty International - International NGO
CAC	Civic Assistance Committee - Russian NGO
CISR	Centrum for Independent Social Research - Russian NGO
COE	Council of Europe
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
EUR	Euro - Currency
FMS	Federal Migration Service - Russia
FSB	Federal Security Service - Russian Intelligence Agency
FSS	(Russian) Federal Security Service
GDF	Glasnost Defence Foundation - Russian NGO
HRC	Human Rights Centre
HRW	Human Rights Watch - International NGO
IDP	Internal Displaced Person
IET	Institute for the Economy in Transition - Russian NGO
IOM	International Organization for Migration - inter governmental organization
MVD	Ministry of the Interior, Russia
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
OMON	Otryad Militsii Osobogo = Special Purpose Police Squad - Russian special security force
RF	Russian Federation
Rosstat	“Statistics of Russia” - Russian Federal Statistic Service
RUB	Russian Rubel - Currency
sq.m.	Square meter
USD	US-Dollar - Currency
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VAK	Russian State Commission for Academic Degrees and Titles
WHO	World Health Organization