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“The impact of the financial crisis on female labour migration”

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The impact of the financial crisis on female migrant workers

Analysis based on IOM Policy Guidance

**„The impact of the global financial crisis on
Migration“ (January 2009)**

focusing on gender

Impact on women

- Women face multiple disadvantages in crises
- Disproportionate burden
- Additional responsibilities
- Increased responsibility for household caregiving
- Increased informal jobs
- Reversal of achieved women's empowerment, gender equality and gains in poverty reduction



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- **Lessons learned from the economic and financial crises in Latin America, South Asia and Eastern Europa**
 - Most vulnerable social groups most effected
 - larger burdens of unpaid work for women(Report on „The current global crises and their impact on social development“ (Commission for Social Development, February 2009))xs
 - ILO report on **global Employment Trends** (January 2009): global unemployment rate
2007: 5.7% -> 2008: 6.0% (men: 5.8%; women: 6.3 %)
- > differential **impact according to gender**
- > **global financial crisis is gendered**

Impact on female migrant workers

- Migrant workers often the **first to loose their jobs**
- > **FEMALE MIGRANTS affected in multiple ways by the crisis:**
as women and as migrants
- **Particularly vulnerable**
 - Harrassment
 - Intimidation and threats
 - Economic and sexual exploitation
 - Racial discrimination
 - Poor working conditions
 - Increased health risks
 - Various forms of abuse: trafficking into forced labour, debt bondage, involuntary servitude, situations of captivity

Analysis of the current phenomena

- **Very recent phenomenon**
- **Existing data**
 - Proof of significant differences between male and female migrants throughout CIS
 - show signals of feminisation of migration from Central Asia to Russia

Immigration and Emigration in Armenia disaggregated by sex and age

ԲԿԱՇՈՂԵԾՈՐԸ - POPULATION - НАСЕЛЕНИЕ					
29. ՄԻԳՐԱՑԻՈՆ ՏԵԿՆՈՇԱՐԺԵՐԸ ԸՍՏ ՏԱՐԻՔԱՅԻՆ ԽՍՐԵՐԻ					
MIGRATION BY AGE GROUPS					
МИГРАЦИОННЫЕ ПЕРЕДВИЖЕНИЯ ПО ВОЗРАСТНЫМ ГРУППАМ					
Տարիքային խմբեր Age, years Возраст, лет	Արտեմիգրացիաներ - Emigrants - Эмигранты		Ներգաղթյալներ - Immigrants - Иммигранты		(%)
	Տղամարդ Males	Քին Females	Տղամարդ Males	Քին Females	
	Мужчины	Женщины	Мужчины	Женщины	
2005					
0-19	28.1	15.6	29.2	16.9	
20-49	49.9	67.4	49.4	64.6	
50 և ավելի 50 and over	22.0	17.0	21.4	18.5	
Ընդամենը Total	100	100	100	100	
2006					
0-19	27.0	16.1	27.0	14.8	
20-49	49.8	64.6	49.4	67.1	
50 և ավելի 50 and over	23.2	19.3	23.6	18.1	
Ընդամենը Total	100	100	100	100	
2007					
0-19	23.1	13.0	22.8	12.9	
20-49	51.7	69.0	52.4	66.9	
50 և ավելի 50 and over	25.2	18.0	24.8	20.2	
Ընդամենը Total	100	100	100	100	
Բոլորը Всего					

Immigration and Emigration in Azerbaijan disaggregated by sex and age

Migrants by sex and age structure in 2007						
Years	Arrivals to Azerbaijan Republic			Departures from Azerbaijan Republic		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Urban and rural places - total						
Total	1954	1209	745	3083	1511	1572
of which:						
0-4	42	19	23	86	53	33
5-9	50	27	23	109	70	39
10-14	70	33	37	184	102	82
15-19	55	28	27	128	40	88
20-24	104	44	60	383	157	226
25-29	130	49	81	515	259	256
30-34	219	116	103	402	185	217
35-39	433	302	131	421	197	224
40-44	383	276	107	334	195	139
45-49	235	166	69	191	104	87
50-54	115	77	38	82	61	21
55-59	34	20	14	79	36	43
60-69	53	33	20	81	30	51
70-79	27	17	10	67	17	50
80 and over	4	2	2	21	5	16
By age groups:						
under working age	162	79	83	379	225	154
at working age	1708	1086	622	2515	1241	1274

Source: The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan
<http://www.azstat.org/statinfo/demographic/en/052.shtml#s3>

Likely Impact of the financial crisis on female migration

- **Job losses**, especially in construction, manufacturing, finance, services, retail and tourism, thus affecting migrants in these sectors.
- **Constant demand** for migrant workers stable in sectors with **structural demand** (healthcare and domestic work)
- Possible **reductions in wages** and **poorer conditions in the workplace** as companies and employers seek to make savings, as well as cuts in social services provision, impacting on migrants' **quality of life and health**.



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- Adoption of **more restrictive immigration policies** (e.g. Italy, U.K., Spain)
- **Return** of unemployed migrants to countries of origin (or regions of origin in the case of internal migration); possible **loss of the economic independence** obtained through migration
- Increase in **irregular migration**
- Strengthening of the **informal labour market**
- Increase in **trafficking** in human beings



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- **Reduction in labour migration flows** as potential migrants choose to stay home and see out the crisis there
- **Risk of discrimination and xenophobia** as migrants are mistakenly perceived as taking the jobs of local workers, particularly in low-skilled sectors of the labour market
- **Decline in remittance** flows to developing countries as migrants lose their jobs. Migrants who hold their jobs might **increase** their volume of remittances.

Lessons learned from previous economic downturns

- **Migration will continue** (structural demand)
- **Keeping markets open** to migrants is important to stimulating a **quicker economic recovery**

Policy responses in the context of the crisis should ensure

- The **rights of migrants** have to be **effectively protected**
- Migrants should **not be stigmatized** for job losses and be **protected from discrimination, sexism and xenophobia**.
- The general population should be **informed about the contributions** made by migrants.
- **Regular labour migration channels** must remain **open** to meet the continuing demand for migrant workers and prevent irregular migration and trafficking in human beings.
- **Remittance flows** must be **facilitated** through the lowering of transaction costs, public and private sector initiatives (especially important for female migrants).



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- **Assisted repatriation, reception and reintegration** of returnees needs to have a **specific gender approach** to prevent stereotyping, stigmatization and discrimination.
- The **consensus achieved between destination and origin countries** in recent international fora on migration and development must not be weakened as a result of the financial crisis.
- **Labour mobility** and the **interests and needs of migrants have to be fully factored** into any remedial **measures** (including reforms to the global financial system) proposed to address the crisis, which includes a **gender focus**.

IOM's position

1. **Negative effects** are likely for both migrants and nationals, but **different** according to **country, geographic region, employment sector** and **gender**. **Protection** is required from xenophobia, sexism and any other forms of discrimination in the employment and social spheres.
2. Flexible, coherent and comprehensive policies are needed to effectively manage migration. **Human mobility makes economies more dynamic and more efficient**. Thus, migration may also be a **positive force** in alleviating the financial crisis and potentially making an important contribution towards overcoming the economic downturn. Trying to combat the financial crisis by simply cutting immigration may make the situation worse.



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3. A **strong degree of solidarity** between countries of origin and destination is called for to safeguard and continue to harness the benefits of the migration and development relationship to both sets of countries as well as for the benefit of migrants and their families.
4. **Migration is part of globalization and the global economy.** Consequently, this requires that it be factored into policy responses aimed at economic recovery, a policy which is not blind to **gender factors** but makes them the **core of its approach**.
5. Need for a **data basis with a clear gender focus**. The impact of the financial crisis on migrants, as well as countries of origin, transit and destination needs to be carefully monitored and relevant research and data be carried out, collected and disseminated.



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