

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA



**The Impact of the Eurasian Economic Union on Migration in
Armenia**

A MASTER'S ESSAY SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.....	2
ABSTRACT.....	4
LIST OF ABBREVIATION.....	5
LIST OF TABLES AND GRAPHS.....	6
CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION.....	7
BACKGROUND INFORMATION.....	8
CHAPTER 2- LITERATURE REVIEW.....	11
CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	19
RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION STRATEGY.....	20
LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.....	22
CHAPTER 4 - DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION.....	24
THE IMPACT OF EEU MIGRATION POLICIES ON DECISION TO EMIGRATE.....	24
SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS INFLUENCING EMIGRATION TO OTHER EEU COUNTRIES.....	30
WHO MIGRATES?.....	34
CONCLUSIONS.....	36
REFERENCES.....	38
APPENDICES.....	42

ABSTRACT

The study is aimed to understand the level of impact that the Eurasian Economic Union will have on migration in Armenia. Using survey and in-depth interviews as research instruments the study finds out the level of awareness of the citizens of Armenia about the migration policies of the EEU which is relatively low and measures the level of influence of different socio-economic and other factors on their decision to leave for the countries of the EEU. The study concludes that entering the Eurasian Economic Union will have its significant influence on increasing the level of emigration from Armenia.

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

ARMSTAT- National Statistical Service of Armenia

CIS- Commonwealth of Independent States

CU- Customs Union

EAC- East African Community

EDB- European Development Bank

EEU- Eurasian Economic Union

EU- European Union

FTA-Free Trade Agreement

GDP- Gross domestic product

IOM – International Organization of Migration

RA- Republic of Armenia

RF- Russian Federation

SMS – State Migration Service

WTO- World Trade Organization

LIST OF TABLES AND GRAPHS

Graph 1: Distribution of the destination countries by the respondents' intention to leave.....	25
Graph 2: Intentions to work and live.....	26
Graph 3: Awareness of respondents.....	27
Table 1. The impact of the EEU migration policy on people's decision to work in the host country.....	27
Table 2: The impact of the EEU migration policy on people's decision to live in the host country.....	28
Table 3: Correlation of the awareness about the specific migration policy on using social packages and the intention to migrate	28
Table 4: Correlation of the awareness of people about the right to stay in host country for 30 days without registration and people’s intention to migrate	29
Table 5: Correlation of the awareness of people about the right to attend schools and kindergartens without being citizen and people’s intention to migrate	29
Table 6: The levels of importance of the factors affecting migration	30
Table 7: Correlations between factors affecting migration and intensions.....	31
Graph 4: Main factors influencing people’s decision to leave.....	33
Table 8: Correlation between the age of the respondents and their intention to migrate	33
Table 9: Correlation between the education level of the respondents and their intention to migrate	34
Table 10: Correlation between the education field of the respondents and their intention to migrate	34

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

In September, 2013 Armenia declared to give up on its association agreements with the European Union and started negotiations of joining Customs Union with Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus thus dismissing the possibility to sign a free trade agreement with the European Union. On January 2, 2015 Armenia actually joined the Eurasian Economic Union. With this agreement Armenia became a full member of the union joining the Presidents of the member-States Vladimir Putin, Aleksander Lukashenko, Nursultan Nazarbayev who signed Eurasian Economic Union Treaty in Astana in 2014. The accession to this union supposed a full integration of the representatives of the Republic of Armenia into the managerial bodies of the union. The President of Armenia became the member of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council and the Prime Minister of the RA became a member of Intergovernmental Council of the union. Armenia as the other member-states of the EEU is represented in the Board of the union by 3 members from the RA. By joining a united market with about 170 million population Armenia undertook the obligation of being included in full-scale Eurasian integration implementation which is addressed to the formation of 4 freedoms: free movement of goods, services, capital and labor.

The freedom of labor movement and migration trends as a whole is under the focus of this research study. The aim of the study is to understand the perceptions of people and government officials working on the Eurasian integration concerning the impact of the Eurasian Economic Union on the migration of Armenia. Because of the recent join of Armenia to the EEU, no official statistics are available concerning the number of people migrated during 2015 to the EEU countries. Thus, this study is mainly based on the predictions of the experts of the field and the assessment of the perceptions and intentions of the citizens of the Republic of Armenia concerning the future migration trends to the other EEU countries.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Eurasian Economic Union has defined its migration policies inside the union from which Armenia benefits as well after joining the EEU. The migration policies are defined according to the article 97, Labor Activities of the Labor of Member States, the Agreement on Eurasian Union and are the following:

- Employers and (or) clients of works (services) of a Member State may engage employees from the Member States in the implementation of employment without restrictions for the protection of the national labor market. At the same time the workers of the Member States are not required to obtain permits for work in the State of employment.
- Member States do not establish or apply the restrictions imposed by their legislation in order to protect the national labor market, subject to the restrictions set forth in this Agreement and the laws of the Member States in order to ensure national security (including in sectors of strategic importance) and public order, in respect of workers carried out by Member States of employment, occupation and residence area.
- In order to implement the employment purposes of the Member States labor in the State of employment, education documents issued by educational institutions (educational institutions, organizations in the field of education) of the Member States are recognized, without the procedures for recognition of qualifications according to the legislation of the State of the employment.

The documents on scientific and academic degrees issued by the competent authorities of the Member States are recognized in accordance with the laws of the state of employment.

Employers (customers of works (services)) may request certified translations of documents on education in the language of the State of employment and, if necessary, in

order to verify the documents of education workers of the Member States submit requests, to information databases, educational organizations (educational institutions, organizations in the field of education), issued a document on education, and receive relevant responses.

- Labor activity of the employee of a Member State is governed by the laws of the State taking into account the provisions of this Treaty.
- The period of temporary stay (residence) of the employee of a Member State and a family member in the State of employment is determined by the duration of the employment or civil contract made by the employees of the Member State and the employer or client of works (services).
- Citizens and family members of Member States who have arrived for the implementation of employment or employment in the territory of another Member State, are exempt from the obligation of registration within 30 days from the date of entry.

In the case of stay of citizens of the Member State in the territory of another Member State for more than 30 days from the date of entry, these citizens are required to register in accordance with the laws of the State of entry, if such an obligation is set by the legislation of the State of entry.

- Citizens of a Member State when entering the territory of another Member State in cases specified by the legislation of the State of entry, use migration cards, unless other requirements are defined by separate international treaties of Member States.
- Citizens of a Member State when entering the territory of another Member State on one of the valid documents permitting border crossing by border control authorities on condition that the duration of their stay does not exceed 30 days from the date of entry,

shall be exempt from the use of the migration card, if such a duty is set by the legislation of the state of entry.

- In case of early termination of the employment or civil contract after the expiry of 90 days from the date of entry into the territory of the State of employment, employee of a Member State is entitled within 15 days to enter into a new employment or civil contract without departure from the territory of the State of employment.

CHAPTER 2- LITERATURE REVIEW

Before looking into the influence that Eurasian Economic Union may have on Armenia's migration it is important to define what is customs union and how it differs from free trade areas or other economic unions.

All trading blocks are broadly studied through the regionalism theory which is a new topic in economy. The first stage of regionalism was called "First Regionalism" or "Old Regionalism" in 1991 and was more spread in Western part of Europe. "New Regionalism" which was the second wave of regionalism was more successful and included more countries in regional unions. Freud and Ornelas claim that almost every country was included in a block as a minimum (Freund and Ornelas 2010; Mrazova 2010).

Customs Union (CU) is a trade union where the member countries have the same external tariffs on such goods which are not produced in the countries and are imported from non-member countries. Free trade areas or preferential trade areas are different from customs unions as they do not change their trade policies with non-member countries and maintain external tariffs. Freud and Ornelas argue that applying common tariffs to trade with non-member countries hugely affects states' welfare and foreign policy and this is the main difference of customs unions and free trade areas as FTA's main goal is preserving sovereignty outside the FTA and reach trade liberalization in short period of time. Customs unions include more members and it is a common feature for CU's to have members from near abroad and longer negotiations process. The main argument of all the authors cited is that member states of customs unions do not maintain their autonomy outside the unions. It becomes necessary for the states to make adjustments in their third party suppliers (Panagariya 1999; Freud and Ornelas 2010;

Andriamananjara 2011). WTO (World Trade Organization) defines customs union as a contract among members for exclusion of trade obstacles by establishing general external tariffs with non-members where the normal tariff should not be higher than the average of previous constituent countries. These unions do not entail any taxes on goods inside the union and charge taxes on products traded outside the union. One of the most successful examples of customs union is the European Union which was set up in 1958 till now having a common market, liberalization of all the products inside the union, free mobilization and common external tariffs with non-members of the union (Krueger 1997; Konishi, Kowalczyk, and Sjöström 2009; Mkrtchyan and Gnutzmann 2013).

From the authors' arguments we see that becoming member of a union affects a state's economy dramatically. The following part of the literature review will look into the changes in countries' economy after entering a union.

The research done by Syuzanna Smbatyan concerning the most beneficial scenario of Armenia joining Eurasian Customs Union or EU's Association Agreement argues that Armenia does have an advantage in becoming CU member but it will not benefit in big proportions as there will be the issue of the rise of tariffs on import duties outside the CU and Armenia will partially lose its trade sovereignty (Smbatyan 2014).

Another study by Marek Belka looked into the Poland's European integration and examined what the benefits and challenges are for Poland to be EU's biggest country among the newly integrated countries and how the EU influenced Poland's economy transition. The author looks into the aspects that are crucial for Poland in joining the EU. He mentions a number of aspects that were beneficial for Poland such as structural and entrepreneurship reforms, monetary policy which was aimed at ensuring price stability, quite practical fiscal policy etc. He argues

that after the EU accession Poland increased its GDP per capita for about 15% and Poland became a competitive actor in international market (Belka 2013).

Others have looked into the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union and how it affects the labor markets of the Member States. The authors examine the perceptions concerning the effects of trade liberalization and speed of convergence. They highlight 3 main channels through which Eastern Enlargement can have impact on labor markets: trade, foreign investment and migration. They come to the conclusion that the movement of trade and capital is not likely to lead to equation of factor prices which means that migration had incentives to be spread before the accession. The authors concentrate on highly influenced countries from migration which are Germany and Austria. They use micro econometric exercises to explain that the flow of migrants in the EU will have a moderate influence on wages and employment (Boeri and Brücker, 2001).

The impact of the East African Community (EAC) Customs Union on business was aimed to measure the level of awareness on the EAC CU implementation among business community, understand their expectations and facilitation needs, to indicate the challenges in exports and imports. The members of the EAC are Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania. The basic tool of the research was survey. Questions concerning the effectiveness of the CU on intra-regional trade in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania which were already members of CU were included in the first section. The second section involved questions concerning the perceptions of entrepreneurs on the impact of CU on their businesses in Burundi and Rwanda where the implementation has not yet started. They found that the level of awareness was high; the lowest level of awareness showed Burundi and Rwanda (50% and 40% respectively) and the highest rate had Uganda with 100% level of awareness. In contrast to the awareness the availability of information on CU tools was not high with Burundi having the lowest rate. The principle of asymmetry had a strong

support especially in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. According to the survey the free flow of the products inside the EAC is indicated as the main boost to the business again supported by the previously mentioned three countries. Other major benefits that the authors highlight are the possibility of the expansion of the business, annual business turnover and investments. For the EAC the main source of investment is the market inside the CU. The future recommendations include the further development of the CU infrastructure, harmonization of trade regimes, development of monitoring mechanism, capacity utilization, etc. (Intergrated Development Consultants 2008).

Management Consulting and EU Lobbying Company (CBBS) conducted a survey on new business opportunities for Croatia after its accession to the EU. Their main goal was to identify new opportunities in business market in Croatia specifically in projects with international partners, understand the EU funding opportunities, the participation of business community in projects funded by the EU. The survey helped them understand the perceptions of the business community on new cooperation and EU funding opportunities. CBBS surveyed members of business community and entrepreneurs representatives of governmental institutions, foreign companies in Croatia. The conclusion reported claims that Croatian accession to the EU definitely gives new opportunities, more optimism and raising expectations, growth in interest of the EU companies. The majority of the respondents was aware of the EU's funding and thought that the biggest challenge for the community are the using of human resources and knowledge for preparation for partnership and projects (CBBS 2013).

The same kind of research was conducted in Moldova with the same goal to measure people's positive or negative attitude towards the EU more specifically towards the Eastern Enlargement. The research also includes a study on Moldova-Russia relations and Moldova's

possible joining into the Eurasian Customs Union. The study shows that Moldovian respondents are in a confusion concerning the EU and CU values. The level of frequency of the travels to the European Union and the level of awareness has increased for 2% compared to 2009. On the contrary the public interest has decreased by 5% and the trust by 23%. Despite the results that the EU is associated with the feelings of 'enthusiasm' the research showed that public 'distrust' and 'indifference' has risen since 2009 by 15% and 3% respectively. What concerns the perceptions on EaP the respondents thought is that their countries' relations with the EU under EaP is more beneficial for the EU and corresponds to its interests. This perception affects the answers that indicate that there is a pressure from Russian side, public is not satisfied with living conditions, reforms that are costly for the country and uncertain policy and actually consider the change very limited. The survey conductors noticed disorientation among the respondents. Finally the perceptions on Eurasian Customs Union show that people are quite aware of the CU (85%) and consider it as effective as the EU in addressing pressure on trade, employment and reforms in Moldova. Though the EU is perceived as representative of 'social democracy' a big number of respondents thought that strong relations with Russia are more beneficial and prefer pro-Russian unions. According to the public opinion in Moldova Eurasian Customs Union is in rivalry relations with the European Union (Korotseleva 2014).

Irina Tochlitkaya and Ernest Aksen have made a research on the case of Belarus joining customs union within CIS countries in 1996. The study is based on econometric evaluation which is focused on the influence of Customs Union on revealed comparative advantage. The authors have taken possibility of technology, knowledge transfer, models of regional integration as the variables. They claim that Belarus tended to be less competitive in international market after joining CIS Customs Union for 1996-2000 though her findings indicate some increase in

the regional market. On the basis of regression analysis they argue that CIS Customs union did not make the attraction of modern technologies and production factors to the economy easy. The formation of a new economic structure was not facilitated as well and no improvements were made in domestic export structure (Tochitskaya and Aksen 1995).

What is more relevant to the research that we are going to conduct is looking into the reaction that joining Eurasian Customs Union created in member countries. In the article “Kazakhstan: Not everyone is happy about the Eurasian Economic Union” Valeriya Melnichuk talks about the activists that protested against Eurasian integration which were persecuted after their demonstration. The article examined the protestor’s arguments about why they are against joining CU and what negative implications CU will have on Kazakhstan’s economy. The first perception that people have is that the economic benefit is rather questionable. People think that the loss of economic sovereignty will lead to negative consequences which is a great threat from the Eurasian Customs Union. Some people claimed that it is impossible to be in an equal union when the member countries have unequally developed economies. As Kazakhstan is an import dependent country and has similar exports with Russia which means that both countries will be competing against each other for consumer markets. The other problem is that in Kazakh market Russian production is imported in huge numbers while Russian market is restricted. Among the main complaints from people the increase in prices of consumer goods and cars was mentioned. Devaluation of Russian money was a hit for Kazakh market as it caused a huge jump in prices. The issue of sanctions against Russia is highly discussed as in case of tighter cooperation with Russia Kazakhstan can be indirectly affected. People think that joining Customs Union directly affects citizens' lives and such kind of decisions are important to be made and discussed publicly taking into consideration the opinion of the public (Melnichuk 2014).

In contradiction to this article another article published in the Astana Times argues that the public perception concerning the Eurasian Union is positive in general though there is a little skepticism. The author argues that skepticism will last until each person feels the benefit of Eurasian integration individually. The EDB Center for Integration Studies project and the EDB Integration Barometer are introduced in the article which are responsible for a deep and comprehensive research concerning the public perception in CIS regional integration. The Center for Integration studies conducts yearly surveys among people in 12 CIS countries and the main goal of the research is to get people's attitude towards the Customs Union (Abubakirov 2014).

According to EDB barometer 2014 the approval of Eurasian Union is on a high level in Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan. The highest growth among the population in the approval of CU is witnessed in Russia and Kazakhstan which is increased by 11%. In 2014 Russia has 84%, Kazakhstan 79% and Belarus 68% of public support on Customs Union which grew for about 5% as compared with 2013 barometer data. Among non-member countries the highest support from public is demonstrated in Tajikistan in numbers 72% and Uzbekistan 68%. Uzbekistan has dropped its level of support as in 2013 it expressed 77% of public support. As a candidate country, public in Armenia showed 64% support, which is higher than the average number. The percentage of support decreased by 9% in Tajikistan and by 3% in Armenia compared to the data of EDB 2013 barometer. The EDB survey states that in 2013 Georgia had a support of 59% towards the Customs Union. What concerns Azerbaijan it has demonstrated the lowest level of support in 2013 (37%) and the negative attitude towards the Customs Union and SES is in the highest level compared to other countries (53%) which grew to 64% in 2014. In 2014 Ukraine became the lowest supporter of joining CU. The level of support has decreased by 19% (EDB 2013, 2014). To understand what can cause migration from Armenia to other countries of the

Eurasian Economic Union this part of the literature review looks into the reasons serving as triggers for migration. Looking into the factors that are making migration moods mostly socio-economic and personal factors are being discussed in the literature reviewed. According to some scholars financial and personal factors are the major reasons that cause people to migrate. The authors argue that high level of unemployment in a country makes young people search better employment opportunities in other countries (Man'shin 2009; Clemens 2013 and Blanch et al 2009). The search of better financial conditions increasing migration incentives talk in favor of scholars who argue that migration flows are being transformed from the countries with low GDP per capita to the countries with higher GDP (Clark, Hatton, and Williamson 2002; Borjas 1987).

Aleksandr Grigoryan argues that economic policies have a huge impact on migration in a country and even a marginal change in the economic policies will affect the migration intentions in young households within a certain period of time. Grigoryan refers to the education and work experience stating that in contrast to economic reforms that have effect on migration trends, employment experience and education of the people do not affect it (2015). In his another study Grigoryan refers to the remittances as a push factor for non-migrants to strengthen their intentions to migrate, if the host country offers certain opportunities for better financial conditions (2013).

Some authors put forward the ideological and political factors such as political persecutions, lack of liberties, threat of a war or a war itself, etc. affecting immigration alongside with the socio-economic conditions (Mathews 2015). In addition to these factors, there are researches that refer to the ecological factors as main forces affecting migration explaining it by ecological changes in environment that will cause worsening of the quality of food and water.

The immigration level will be increased at those countries where the resources of clean water and good quality food exist (Piesse 2014).

CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The primary objective of this research study is to examine the attitude and expectations that labor force has concerning the effects of joining Eurasian Economic Union on labor migration and compare the perceptions of people with the opinions of the officials and experts in that sphere. This study tries to articulate both the advantages and disadvantages of the EEU effects on labor migration. A scholarly research on this issue is timely as Armenia joined the union recently and there is an ongoing debate among the government and the National Assembly.

From the objectives above the following research questions are derived:

RQ1: Will the level of migration to the EEU countries be increased after joining Eurasian Economic Union?

RQ2: What are the main motives for having an intention to leave for an EEU country?

RQ3: What segments of population are keener to leave for the EEU countries?

RQ4: Is there a preferred country destination for the Armenian population among the EEU countries?

The hypotheses formulated for the essay are as follows:

H₁: The level of migration to the EEU countries will be increased after joining the Eurasian Economic Union.

H₂: Among the EEU countries Russia is the most preferable destination for the Armenians.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION STRATEGY

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods are used to answer the research questions. The method of the data collection is *mixed*, design used is *sequential qualitative* which implies a survey research after the collection of qualitative data from the in-depth interviews and its analysis integrating both methods in the interpretation of the results.

As the first tool for the qualitative research in-depth interviews were used. The interviews were held with the officials and experts responsible for the Eurasian integration and 3 major bus companies. 10 interviews were conducted. The interview questions were developed from the research questions and literature review. The interview questionnaire included questions on the impact of the EEU concerning the migration policies and other opportunities, possible migration statistics, expected benefits and risks from these policies. The questions were aimed to find out the opinions of the people interviewed concerning the possible effects of socio-economic and other factors on defining migration intentions. The findings from the interviews of government representatives, experts and bus company representatives are compared to each other and to survey results in order to exclude the possible bias in final conclusions.

Content analysis of the interviews differentiates between the frequency and intensity of the descriptors that were mentioned during the interviews. The frequency of the descriptors mentioned is defined by the total sum of the descriptors divided by the number of interviews conducted. The intensity of the descriptors is described by the importance that people interviewed gave to them. The interview questions will be provided in the appendices section below.

The second quantitative phase of the research was constructed by a survey research. The survey found what the expectations are from the EEU among the population of Armenia. It looked into the attitude and perceptions of the people surveyed. In the survey we try to get an insight look at the motives triggering migration to the EEU countries according to the people's perceptions. The survey used a stratified sample with random sampling within each of the selected strata. 250 citizens of Armenia starting from 18 years of age were surveyed 95 of which were male and 155 female. Survey questionnaire includes 19 questions: 10 demographical questions and questions finding out the respondents' level of awareness on the migration policies of the EEU and factors that can shape migration moods. The survey questionnaire is provided in the appendix section below.

Every fourth marz of the Republic of Armenia ordered alphabetically was selected. Thus, the selected *marzes* were Gegharkunik, Syunik, and Tavush. To ensure that the largest city of population is included in the sample Yerevan city was added to the regions selected. Every third urban and every fifteenth rural community in alphabetical order were selected from the three above mentioned marzes. This ensured the full representativeness of the sample.

The permanent population of the Republic of Armenia is 3.026.900 according to the official data retrieved from ARMSTAT (2013). To ensure that the survey questionnaire is distributed proportionally the number of the questionnaires is divided by the total number of population of the Republic of Armenia.

1. Gegharkunik (235.075) - 38 respondents (15%)

Urban Community – Gavar

Rural Community – Berdkunk, Eranos, Tsovatakh, Madina, Jil, Pokr Masrik

2. Syunik (141.771) – 23 respondents (9%)

Urban Community – Kapan, Dastakert

Rural Community – Bnunis, Leyvaz, Kaghnut, Nerkin And, Vorotan, Sevakar, Tandzatap, Kyurut

3. Tavush- (128.609)- 20 respondents (8%)

Urban Community – Ijevan, Berd

Rural Community – Berdavan, Lusadzor, Nerkin Karmraghbyur, Verin Kyurplu

4. Yerevan- (1.060.138) - 169 respondents (67%)

District – Davtashen, Malatia-Sebastia, Shengavit

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for data analysis to determine the relationship between the variables through correlations.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In this research the term migration refers to one type of migration particularly to immigration which means that only migration flows from Armenia are being investigated. A comparative study concentrating on both types of the migration would be of great use to understand to what extent the EEU has influenced the migration in Armenia as a whole.

The survey used in this research project is cross-sectional, i.e., administered in a single period of time to get a snapshot of the issues debated across the country. A longitudinal study, conducted over a twelve-month period, at the minimum, would have been more valuable to determine the changes in public opinion over time.

Survey for the study included people living in Armenia and was conducted in a single period of time. As the integration phase is on its beginning a longitudinal and cohort study with bigger sample size including citizens of Armenia who live in all countries of the EEU would have been more valuable to determine the perceptions of people at the very beginning of Eurasian integration and later. Interviewing representatives of the EEU branches from Russia or the other countries of the EEU and using statistical data would have given a more accurate picture.

The law on “income tax” of RA amended and accepted by the National Assembly of Armenia allows people working abroad pay taxes in the Republic of Armenia. This new amendment of the law can have its impact on the migration to the EEU countries. As the law has not gone into force yet, this study does not touch upon this issue. A cohort study including the impact of this law amendment and annual reports of the Statistical Service of Armenia concerning the migration of Armenia after joining the EEU would be valuable and would have helped to determine the accuracy of the predictions introduced in this study.

CHAPTER 4 - DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

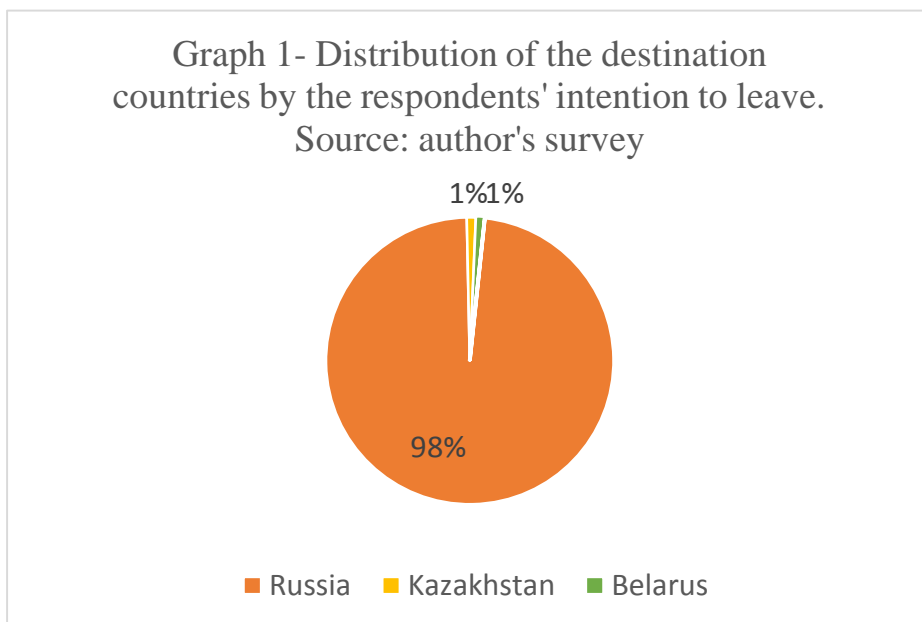
THE IMPACT OF EEU MIGRATION POLICIES ON DECISION TO EMIGRATE

The issue of the increase or decrease the in immigration level in Armenia is highly debatable. This part of the paper discusses the main findings that were collected through survey and in-depth interviews. Here we refer to push and pull factors that make people leave their country. A sense of injustice, bad social conditions, political pressures and other factors can be regarded as pushing factors for people to leave their country. Family bonds abroad, better professional or educational opportunities, need for changes or simply a search for a better life outside the country are the pulling factors for migrants (IOM 2013). From our data analysis we will try to find out what factors can serve as push and pull factors for Armenians to leave for an EEU country which will help us to answer our research questions.

From the in-depth interviews we found that there is no common perception that the level of migration will be increased as it was firstly supposed. Those people interviewed who assumed that the level of migration in Armenia will be increased explained it by the eased migration policies of the Russian Federation which will have a direct impact on Armenian migration. According to the interviews the easing of the conditions of the migrants from Armenia is connected with the revision of the profiles of people deported from the RF. These people who have been deported from Russia have opportunity to apply for their profile revision and in case of success return to the RF. It is important to mention that all the experts and government officials interviewed see a direct linkage of the eased migration policies of the RF and Armenia's accession to the EEU. This is the reason why migration flows to Russia cannot be explained only

by eased migration policies of the RF and is more regarded to the EEU. The migration policies of the EEU themselves were indicated as a pushing factor for migration increase.

Some of the interviews indicated that the migration flows will be regulated due to the migration policies of the EEU. In contrast to the opinion that the EEU migration policies will serve as instrument for having increased level of migration, some people interviewed consider that the elimination of administrative barriers will decrease the level of migration. It is explained by previously not having strict visa regimes with these countries of the EEU and not having problems entering these countries before the EEU accession. Those people who faced registration problems, did not have the opportunity to take their children to school or kindergarten, had the problem of their Armenian diploma to be recognized in the countries of the EEU were keen to withdraw from the Armenian citizenship. Now these people will not have that kind of problems and it will not push them to withdraw from the Armenian citizenship and seek citizenship in the hosting country. According to the interviews these factors will directly



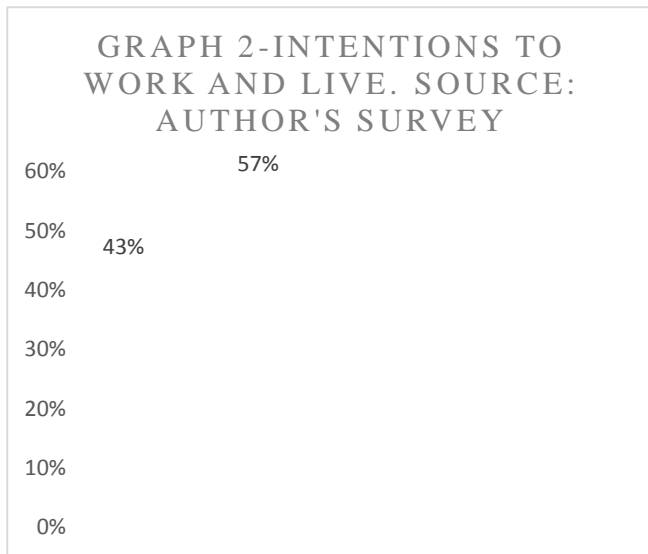
contribute to transforming leave-stay society into leave-return.

One of the findings that is important to mention is that none of the survey respondents

has previously been living in the EEU countries except Russia. The graph 1 shows that only 1%

of the respondents has an intention to leave for Kazakhstan and 1% for Belarus. Hereby we can conclude that the main destination for the respondents who have an intention to leave for an EEU country to work or to live is Russia.

33% of the survey respondents has previously lived in Russia and 54% expressed a willingness to leave for an EEU country, particularly Russia. 43% of those respondents who



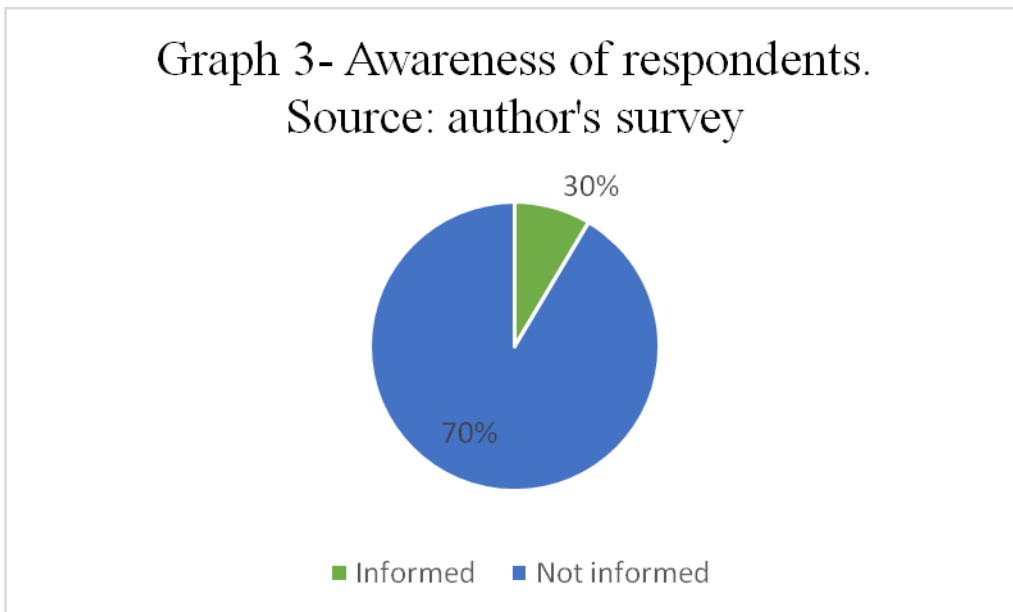
expressed willingness to leave has an intention to work and live in one of the EEU countries and 57% wants to leave for working purposes and come back (see graph 2). 93% of the respondents having an intention to leave has a desire to work as a registered employee. These results of the survey speak in favor of the hypothesis that joining the EEU will

increase the level of migration in Armenia as there is a rise of 21% between those people who have lived or worked and those who have intention to live and work in one of the EEU countries.

The interviews with 3 major buss company representatives in Armenia comes to prove this hypothesis. As the representatives stated after joining the EEU the number of directions to the Russian Federation was increased and now the companies have 3 or 4 more directions which go to Russia 2 times a week. They also indicated that the buses leaving Armenia are almost always full (53 or 65 seats) especially in spring and summer times. These buses usually come back to Armenia with 1/3 of the seats filled. From these interviews we conclude that migration trends are

increasing and joining the European Economic Union is serving as a trigger for people to emigrate.

What is interesting in these findings is that though the level of intention to leave for an EEU country is high as we previously stated, the level of awareness of the respondents concerning the new migration opportunities is relatively low. In the graph below we can see that 70% of the respondents did not know what new migration opportunities the EEU offers.



Among those respondents who are aware of the migration policies offered by the EEU the opportunity to work as a registered employee without presenting a special license shows a weak significance in correlation with their intention to work in the destination country. The

correlation between the variables shows

significance at the level .402 which is not

Table 1 (correlation) - The impact of the EEU migration policy on people's decision to work in the host country	
	No special license needed for job admission

Intention to work	0.402
-------------------	-------

very strong while, the second correlation table indicates association of

the two variables correlated (0.694). The correlations are significant at the level 0.01 which means that the correlation is 99%.

Hereby, we estimate that the respondents' willingness to leave for working intentions is not influenced by no longer having the necessity to have a special license for being admitted to a job

in an EEU country while very surprisingly, the intention to live in one of those countries is at some extent driven by this particular migration policy mentioned above.

Table 2 (correlation) - The impact of the EEU migration policy on people's decision to live in the host country	
	No special license needed for job admission
Intention to live	0.694

The correlation with the significance at the level .405 and .408 shows that one of the major points from the EEU migration policies that influence people's decision to migrate is the opportunity to use social packages offered by the host country. This correlation showed the highest level of significance among the variables correlated but it is not strong enough to argue that the level of awareness about the opportunity to use social packages of the host country will have its impact on people's decision to emigrate.

Table 3 (correlation)- Awareness about the specific migration policy on using social packages and the intention to emigrate

	No special license needed for job admission
Intention to live	0.405
Intention to work	0.408

In contradiction to the opinion of people interviewed that considered the opportunity to stay in the destination country for 30 days without registration and attend

schools or kindergartens in the territory of the host country will make the migration among the countries more mobile and increase the level of migration, the analysis of our survey results showcases that this policies do not have direct influence.

Table 4 (correlation) - Awareness of people about the right to stay in host country for 30 days without registration and people's intention to migrate	
	30-day-stay without registration
Intention to migrate	0.000

We can see that the correlation between the variables of the awareness of people about the right of not being registered for 30 days does not show significance

(.000). Almost the same picture is in case of correlating the awareness of people of the right to attend schools and kindergartens without being a citizen of the host country. The significance of the Pearson correlation is at the level .001 which means that the awareness of the people concerning this policy does not influence their decision to leave.

Table 5 (correlation) - Awareness of people about the right to attend schools and kindergartens without being citizen and people's intention to migrate	
	Attend schools and kindergartens

Intention to migrate	0.001
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SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS INFLUENCING EMIGRATION TO OTHER EEU COUNTRIES

In general many people assume that people migrate because of bad social conditions, seek for a better life. We tried to find what factors can influence people’s decision to leave for the EEU countries and whether it corresponds to the mainstream opinion. During the in-depth interviews a number of factors that are supposed to be influencing the migration were mentioned. The main factors differentiated for the EEU countries as triggers for migration are presented in the table below. The intensity and frequency of the factors mentioned during the interviews in a scale of 1-7 shows how the importance of these factors is distributed according to the interviews. The chosen descriptors were mentioned during the interviews and the following numbers indicate the mentioned frequency and intensity of these descriptors.

Table 6: The levels of importance of the factors affecting migration (1-7 scale).

Source: in-depth interviews

	Descriptors	Intention to work		Intention to live	
		Frequency	Mean	Frequency	Mean
	Factors affecting migration	Frequency	Intensity	Frequency	Intensity
1	Unemployment	5.1	6	4.3	4.4
2	Inflation	4.5	5	4.3	4.9
3	Low salaries	4.8	5.1	4.5	5
4	Corruption	2.6	3	2.2	3

5	Sense of injustice	0.7	1.1	1.3	0.9
6	Security problems	0.5	0.9	0.5	0.9
7	Political pressures	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4
8	Unclear future	3.3	2.5	3.1	2.2
9	Better future	2.4	3	3.1	2.5
10	Better education	0.1	0.4	1.2	0.5
11	Professional development	2.3	1.1	3	1
12	Better protected human rights	0.8	0.5	1	0.5
13	Improved financial conditions	5.4	6	5.2	6
14	Family bonds	1	1.5	6	4.5

Almost the same picture can be seen from the survey results. In order not to put all the correlations tables, in the table below we present the levels of significances of the variables correlated with people's intention to live and to work in the EEU countries.

Table 7: Correlations between factors affecting migration and intentions. Source: author's survey

		Intention to work	Intention to live
1	Unemployment	.308	.274
2	Inflation	.330	.212
3	Low salaries	.318	.254
4	Corruption	.176	.154
5	Sense of injustice	.119	.180
6	Security problems	-.314	-.244
7	Political pressures	-.354	-.543
8	Unclear future	-.024	.272

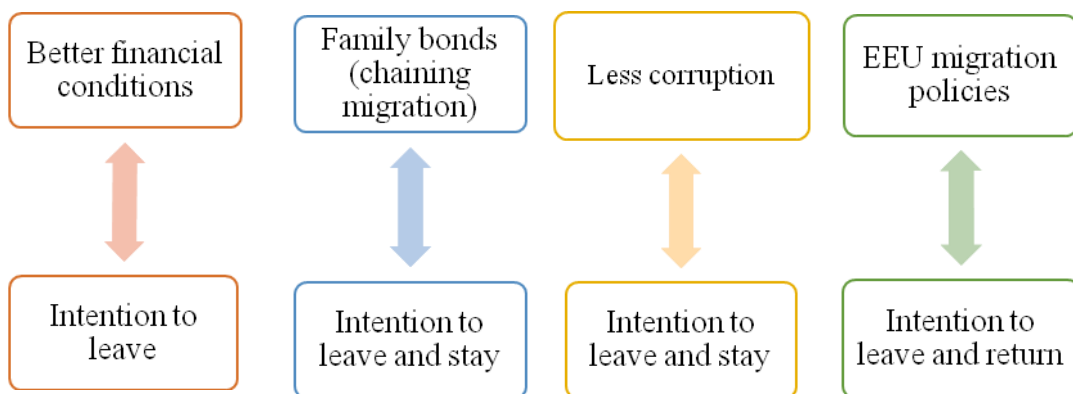
9	Better future	.533	.456
10	Better education	.038	-.105
11	Professional development	.445	.232
12	Better protected human rights	.290	.118
13	Improved financial conditions	.729	.284
14	Family bonds	.128	.654

Comparing the data in the tables above we see that the results of the in-depth interviews and survey are almost identical. For the people who have intention to work in the EEU countries the influential factors are unemployment, low wages, inflation and the desire to improve their financial condition. Among the pushing factors the highest frequency has the unemployment descriptor which has a significant correlation as well. In the pulling factor descriptors the highest frequency is seen in case of the desire to improve financial conditions. In the correlation of these variables the highest level of significance is seen as well (.729). We witness negative correlation with the people's intention to work in the other EEU countries and variables responsible for the security issues, political pressures in Armenia and unclear future. These descriptors were not given a significant importance in the interviews as well. Hereby we conclude that these factors do not influence people's decision to leave for another EEU country for working intentions.

For the intention to live in another EEU country we have the most significant correlation of family unification (.654) with the frequency of 6 and intensity of 4.5 in the interviews. The correlation of intention to live and search for a better future in another EEU country has a significance though not very strong (.456) followed by frequency of 3.1 and intensity of 2.5 in the interviews. This means that the factor of seeking better future has an impact in people's decision to leave but not a decisive one. What is interesting here that the survey shows that

people do not think that in another EEU country they will get a better education as the relationship of the variables is negative (-.105). This idea is supported by the interviews as this opinion was mentioned in the interviews as well. Here we can again refer to the security problems and political pressures as variables having a negative correlation (-.314 for intentions to work and -.244 to live), (-.354 and -.543) respectively and conclude that these issues are not factors pushing emigration nowadays and even show the opposite scenario, that the in case of political pressures or feeling of injustice will affect their decision to stay in the country. The interviews support this opinion stating that security issues pushed emigration at the times of Nagorno Karabakh conflict drastically. In 1990s many young men left Armenia to avoid military service, which is not the case now.

Graph 4: Main factors influencing people’s decision to leave. Source: author’s survey and interviews



To sum up the findings concerning the main factors influencing people’s decision to leave for another EEU country with the intention to work or to live is presented in the graph above. We see that it is important to differentiate between the factors that can affect migration with the purpose of working, studying etc. and coming back and the factors that are the reasons that make migration moods for changing people’s permanent residence and taking their families with them.

WHO MIGRATES?

Table 8: Correlation between the age of the respondents and their intention to migrate	
	Age
Intention to live	0.010
Intention to work	0.012

In the interviews we refer to the segments of population that are keener to emigrate. The results indicate that age does not have a

direct impact for leaving to an EEU country particularly Russia. Our experts from the State Migration Service expressed the opinion that starting from the young age till people who are in pension leave for Russia mainly as seasonal migrants. We can observe the same results from the survey data analysis showing no significance between the variables correlated neither for working purposes nor for living (0.010, 0.012 respectively).

No significant relationship was witnessed in case of correlating respondents’ level of education and education field with their intentions to work or live in other EEU country as we can see in tables 9 and 10.

Table 9: Correlation between the education level of the respondents and their intention to migrate	
	Age

Intention to live	0.044
Intention to work	0.077

Table 10: Correlation between the education field of the respondents and their intention to migrate	
	Age
Intention to live	0.115
Intention to work	0.055

It shows up that people from different education levels and different education backgrounds decide to leave the country and no specific type of people having the same education level is influenced to go. Here we can refer to the literature reviewed where Aleksandr Grigoryan puts forward this hypothesis and proves it making regressions. Our correlations show the same results that Grigoryan is stating which is that education and work experience do not shape migration moods (Grigoryan, 2015). Our correlations show that type of employment of the respondents does not have a strong correlation with their purposes to work or to live in another EEU country as the Pearson coefficient is significant at the level of .163 in case of intention to work and .147 in case of intention to live. There is no significant correlation between the place of the residence of the respondents and their intention to leave Armenia which estimates that living

in urban or rural communities does change the respondents' willingness to stay in Armenia or to leave for an EEU country.

To sum up the analysis of the data collected through survey and in-depth interviews shows that many the migration moods in Armenia are being increased and joining the European Economic Union has increased the level of intention to leave for the countries of this union, particularly to Russia. Thus, we can say that alongside with the socio-economic factors that cause migration moods, the migration policies of the union are new pulling factors for people in Armenia. The data analysis showed that age, education and employment of the respondents do not have significant influence on their intentions to leave Armenia and work or live in another EEU country.

CONCLUSIONS

Tackling the issue of migration has become more important for Armenia after joining the Eurasian Economic Union. One of the 4 freedoms granted by the union, the freedom of labor movement is considered to be a pushing component from Armenia to the EEU countries. This study was focused on the labor movement and emigration to the EEU countries from Armenia

after January 2, 2015. Collecting and analyzing data from survey and in-depth interviews helped us to answer the research questions put forward at the beginning of the research study.

The answer to the first research question “Will the level of migration to the EEU countries be increased after joining Eurasian Economic Union?” is positive. From the survey we found out that 54% percent of the respondents has the intention to leave for an EEU country with living or working purposes though 33% of them has previously lived there. The difference in the percentage of the respondents wishing to leave and previously lived in an EEU country indicates an increase in the level of emigration.

The first hypothesis suggesting that the level of migration to the EEU countries will be increased after joining the Eurasian Economic Union is accepted on the basis of the data analysis collected from the survey conducted in 3 marzes of Armenia and Yerevan alongside with the opinions expressed during the in-depth interviews with government officials responsible for the Eurasian integration and experts in the field.

The answer of the second research question which is what the main motives are for having an intention to leave for an EEU country are firstly socio-economic conditions mentioned by both the survey respondents and the experts interviewed. Pushing factors like unemployment, bad social conditions, inflation showed the strongest significance among the relationships analyzed. What as to the pulling factors from the host countries, the seeking for a better life is among the most mentioned and having the strongest correlation. Political issues like sense of injustice in the country or political pressures showed negative correlation which means that people’s intention to work or live in the other countries of the EEU are not affected by political issues in the country and shows even the opposite scenario, that the in case of political pressures or feeling of injustice will affect their decision to stay in Armenia.

Our survey results showcase that there is no particular segment in population that is keener to leave for EEU countries. This argument goes against the mainstream idea that mainly the young people from rural communities who do not have higher education or do not get high salaries are leaving for Russia. Our results strongly indicate that neither age and place of residence, nor the education or employment type do not influence people's decision to leave Armenia as in none of the cases we witnessed a significant correlation. As 98% of the respondents wishing to leave for EEU country expressed desire to go to Russia, we estimate that the preferred country destination among the EEU countries is Russia. Both the survey and interview results indicated that Russia is the most preferable country for the Armenian citizens to emigrate among the EEU countries. The second hypothesis stating that among the EEU countries Russia is the most preferable destination for the Armenians is accepted.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

1. What is your age group?

- a) 18- 24
- b) 25- 34
- c) 35-44
- d) 45-54
- e) 55-64

f) 65+

2. Please indicate your gender.

a) Male

b) Female

3. What is your level of education?

a) Elementary

e) Higher

b) Primary

f) Postgraduate

c) Secondary

g) No education

d) Vocational

4. Please indicate the field of your education.

a) Humanities and Social Sciences

b) Natural Sciences

c) Applied Sciences

d) Other

5. Please indicate your employment.

a) Hired employee

b) Entrepreneur

c) Student

d) Running household economy

e) Student

f) Unemployed

g) Other

6. How many family members do you have?

- a) 1-3
- b) 4-6
- c) 5-7
- d) 8 and more

7. What is the monthly income of your family?

- a) Up to 50.000
- b) 51.000-100.000
- c) 100.000-200.000
- d) 201.000-300.000
- e) 301.000 and more

8. How many family members do you have abroad?

- a) 0
- b) 1-3
- c) 4-6
- d) 7 and more

9. Where is your permanent residence?

- a) Urban community
- b) Rural community

10. Have you ever lived or worked abroad? (If yes, please indicate the country, if no, please skip to question 13)

- a) Yes _____
- b) No

11. How long have you lived abroad?

- a) Up to 1 year
- b) 1-2 years
- c) 3-4 years
- d) 5 years and more

12. Have you worked as a registered employee?

- a) Yes
- b) No

13. Do you have an intention to work in other EEU country?

- a) Yes, in Russia
- b) Yes, in Kazakhstan
- c) Yes, in Belarus
- d) No

14. Do you have an intention to live in other EEU country?

- a) Yes, in Russia
- b) Yes, in Kazakhstan
- c) Yes, in Belarus
- d) No

15. Do you want to work as a registered employee?

- a) Yes
- b) No

16. Please indicate your level of awareness concerning the following points.

	Fully aware	Partially aware	I have heard about it	I have not heard about it	I am confused
EEU citizens can stay in the territory of the EEU for 30 days without registration					
No license is needed for job admission for the EEU citizens					
The right to benefit from social package in the EEU countries (excluding pension)					
The right to benefit from social package in the EEU countries (excluding pension).					
Right to attend schools and kindergartens of the EEU countries					
Permission of free residence for 90 days prior to finding employment					

17.

To what extent do you

agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree

<p>The fact that the EEU citizens can stay in the territory of the EEU for 30 days without registration will influence my intention to leave</p>					
<p>The fact that no license is needed for job admission for the EEU citizens will influence my intention to leave</p>					
<p>The right to benefit from social package in the EEU countries (excluding pension) will influence my intention to leave</p>					
<p>The right to benefit from social package in the EEU countries (excluding pension) will influence my intention to leave</p>					
<p>The right to attend schools and kindergartens of the EEU countries will influence my intention to leave</p>					

Permission of free residence for 90 days prior to finding employment will influence my intention to leave					
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18. Please rank the following factors that can have impact on your intention to leave.

- a) Unemployment
- b) Inflation
- c) Low wages
- d) High level of corruption
- e) Sense of injustice
- f) Unclear future
- g) Sense of insecurity
- h) Political pressures
- i) Search for better education
- j) Search for better life
- k) Search for changes

19. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements.

Leaving for other EEU country will improve my professional development.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral

- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree

Leaving for other EEU country will improve my financial conditions.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree

Human rights are better preserved in other EEU countries.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree

Appendix B: Interview questions

1. What impact will the EEU have on migration flows in Armenia? Is there any statistical evidence since January 2, 2015?

2. Will the EEU migration policies affect both emigration and immigration in Armenia? What is the level of possibility that Armenia will accept migration flows from other EEU countries?
3. What will be the benefits of the citizens of Armenia from the EEU migration policies?
4. What are the risks and problems of the EEU migration policies? Can they lead to depopulation in Armenia?
5. What factors can have impact on shaping migration moods to the EEU countries?
6. What segments of population are keener to leave for the EEU countries?