



**Russia's 'Golden Bridge' is Crumbling:  
Demographic Crisis in the  
Russian Federation**

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**August 2006**

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## **Key Points**

- \* Russia's current demographic crisis – with an annual loss of hundreds of thousands of people – is the most severe ever recorded in its peacetime history. If left unchecked, it could have disastrous results for the long-term viability of the state. Whilst there may be no imminent danger of a “yellow peril” in the Russian Far East or Siberia, there is a threat from a growing and locally influential non-Russian ethnic population.
- \* The reasons for the current crisis are many and varied – some are traditional Russian vices like smoking and drinking.
- \* Poverty is a distinct element in both contracting disease and ability to ameliorate its consequences.
- \* Russia is on the verge of an AIDS catastrophe.
- \* There are no “quick-fix” solutions: money may be of some help – for instance, in improving the country's ailing health system – but is unlikely to stimulate people to have more children.
- \* However, it is also possible that part of the reasons for the current crisis are more deeply rooted than simply in the events of the past 15 years, and reversing the decline may need to involve a significant change in the political and cultural environment.

# Russia's 'Golden Bridge' is Crumbling: Demographic Crisis in the Russian Federation

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In April 2005, the Chairman of the Federation Council, Sergei Mironov, was interviewed by the newspaper *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* about the current demographic crisis facing the Russian Federation. Quoting a number of statistics – ranging from the UN's forecast of Russia having a total population of only 96 million by 2050 to the very low birth rate of the country (1.26 live births per woman, compared to 6.78 per woman in Afghanistan, for instance), Mironov concluded that “the demographic question is no less severe than, say, the issue of defence” and that Russia was still a long way off from creating and maintaining a demographic “golden bridge”, i.e. children in a sufficient number to ensuring a steady population growth in the years ahead (in Russian, known as “*mnogodetnost' i dostatok*”).<sup>1</sup> A little over a year later, President Putin, in his state of the nation address, also spoke about the country's demographic crisis and described it as being “the most acute problem facing contemporary Russia”.<sup>2</sup> Thus, however long it has taken the senior Russian political leadership to recognise the gravity of the country's demographic situation, at least they now publicly acknowledge that if population decline continues in the way that it has done over the past 15 years, then Russia will face a number of significant political, economic and security repercussions.<sup>3</sup> A banner headline in the Ministry of Defence's main newspaper, *Krasnaya Zvezda*, on an unrelated topic, proclaimed: “Without the Motherland, we are nobody”.<sup>4</sup> Given current population trends, to put it bluntly, it could turn out that the Russian Motherland may not have sufficient “body” to maintain its current geophysical shape.

Of course, Russia is not alone in experiencing population decline – many advanced countries are also experiencing this phenomenon<sup>5</sup> but, in Russia's case, the trends are much more pronounced and frankly worrying, both for the state and the people. Unless halted and reversed, the stability and viability of the Russian state itself could be put in doubt within a relatively short space of time. In other words, most people reading this paper will be alive to see how Russia is forced to change its geophysical shape, unless it halts the present imbalance between birth and death rates. Although this fear may appear to be overstated, nevertheless it is one which is becoming increasingly expressed: “The danger exists that, within real historical time, we [Russia] will cease to exist as a nation-state [*natsiya-gosudarstvo*].”<sup>6</sup>

## The nature of the crisis

A report carried by one of the main news networks in Russia in 2004 informed both the domestic and world audience that the Russian population had fallen to 143,600,000, a fall of over 615,000 in one year and a drop of over 1.5 million on the last recorded census figure of October 2002.<sup>7</sup> Latest figures show that the drop in population has continued: the Russian Statistics Agency - *Goskomstat* - has released figures showing that the population of Russia as of 1 January 2006 stood at 142,700,000.<sup>8</sup> Ever since the collapse of the USSR in 1991, Russia's population has been in steady decline, and if present trends continue Russia will face a

number of very serious issues, ranging in the security field alone from not having enough people in certain parts of the Federation to maintain viable control, to not having a sufficient number of healthy recruits for the Armed Forces to draw on. According to a report by Russia's Health Ministry, every year Russia is losing 2 million people, mainly through premature death. In real terms, since 1994, Russia has lost, on a daily basis, the equivalent of 2 villages; over a year, this has amounted to the loss of a small region. Thus, since the collapse of the USSR, Russia has lost the population equivalent of 11,000 villages plus 290 towns! At this rate, according to some experts, the population of Russia, within the next 50-60 years, could be as low as 70 million.<sup>9</sup>

Even at just under 144 million people, Russia is still ranked as one of the most populous countries in the world, but set against its historical context, Russia is currently facing one of its severest population declines ever and this could spell disaster for Russia in certain geographical areas, for instance Siberia, the Far North and the Russian Far East (RFE). In an article written by Western specialists on the RFE, for instance, the authors painted a very gloomy picture concerning Russia's future hold on the area:

“the Far Eastern region of Russia appears to be fast becoming a *de facto* province of China...China has a huge surplus population in the adjacent Heilongjian Province...while the sprawling Russian Far East, in comparison, is almost empty of people. And China's booming economy has a gigantic appetite for the region's vast reserves of oil, gas, timber, and minerals, while Russia's creaking, backward industrial base can't come anywhere close to fully utilising the resources.”<sup>10</sup>

If these areas do become devoid of ethnic Russians, they will become considerably harder for Moscow to control. Their “loss” would pose a serious threat to the continuing viability of the state. Should Russia cease to maintain effective control of resource-rich but people-poor RFE – not necessarily through military conquest, but simply through a process of “Sinicisation” – then the consequences for the future viability of the Russian state as a whole would be grave indeed. Given the history of the relationship between Russia and China over the past 150 years, this potential threat to Russian sovereignty is not as fanciful as it may appear. The scenario for the large-scale military exercise held in the Maritime Pacific region in 2004 – *Mobil'nost'-2004* – was partly based on a non-Russian ethnic *diaspora* gaining power in the area, receiving support from a neighbouring state, and engaging in armed struggle against the local Russian authority.<sup>11</sup>

Up to the collapse of the USSR in 1991, the population of the Russian Federation had increased constantly since the end of WW2, although there are still a number of demographic disparities, due to the fact that so many men were killed during 1941-1945. In 1960, the population of the Russian Federation stood at 120,766,000; in 1970, the figure was 130,704,000; in 1980, it was 138,028,000; and in 1991, 148,704,000, but the population has been in steady decline since 1992.<sup>12</sup> According to the last Russian census (2002), the death rate per thousand stood at 15.4; for comparison, the European average is only 9.5. The birth rate per thousand in Russia was 9.4; the European average was 10.6. The dreaded “Russian cross” was evident – birth rate going down, death rate going up.<sup>13</sup> The population loss over the past decade is unprecedented in Russia's peace-time history, and although some experts are sceptical that Russia will continue to lose people at such a horrifyingly high rate, nevertheless unless drastic measures are adopted, it is difficult to be optimistic about the future.<sup>14</sup>

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What is causing great concern amongst experts is the fact that Russia is losing the most economically productive part of its labour force – males, aged between 30-44. It is estimated that of the 2m population loss, some 600,000 belong to this group.<sup>15</sup> In 1999, compared to an overall annual mortality rate of 16.7 per thousand, the rate for this particular section of the population was 26.4 per thousand; for women in the same age group, the rate was only 7.1 per thousand. For comparison's sake, the corresponding figures for 1991 were 11.9, 18.4 and 5.2 – still a comparatively high figure.<sup>16</sup> This high death rate amongst the active male population has led to the coining of a new term in Russian demography – *sverkhsmertnost'* – roughly translated as “excessive death rate”. Not only are men dying in greater numbers than before, but their life expectancy is also decreasing: in 1991, average life expectancy was 69.01 years (males – 63.46, females – 74.27). By 1999, the figures were 65.93, 60.75 and 72.38 respectively.<sup>17</sup> According to Russia's Academy of Sciences, by 2003 the situation had deteriorated still further: the average life expectancy of the Russian male was only 58.6 years, whereas for women, it was 72.1.<sup>18</sup> As one Western commentator noted: "Russia is one of the few places on earth to have seen life expectancy fall, rather than rise, amid advances in medicine since the 1960s."<sup>19</sup>

To put it in a slightly different way, there are now more than 10 million more women in Russia than there would be in a normal demographic profile.<sup>20</sup> The age gap between the sexes is also significant, unprecedented in Russian demographic history. In the words of the UN's Human Development Report for the Russian Federation for 2000: “the gap that opened between life expectancy for men and women in Russia in the later 1990s is the widest amongst the world's countries”.<sup>21</sup>

Although some degree of optimism can be taken from the recent statistics – a very slight increase in the birth rate, the number of abortions is going down, there has been a slight increase in the number of marriages taking place<sup>22</sup> – the decline in the population looks set to worsen in the foreseeable future. If Russia continues to haemorrhage people at the current rate, this will have a very real impact on the country's internal and external security picture. As one military analyst pointed out in the main journal of the Russian General Staff in 2001:

“the continuation of the process of depopulation in Russia, especially in the Far Eastern regions under conditions of growing demographic pressure in the border regions, is able to create an opening for a conflict situation...Both during the present time and in the foreseeable future...conflicts related to the exhaustion of natural resources, the growth in ethnic, demographic tension, the aggravation of the ecological situation in a number of regions in particular, and in the world as a whole, will assume greater significance...The next 10-15 years will be one of the most difficult [periods] in the history of civilisation, due not only to the global demographic crisis, but also ecological, as well.”<sup>23</sup>

A more recent article, published at the end of 2005, analysing the "Chinese threat" to Siberia, pointed out that, since 1989, the region had lost 1.3 million of its ethnic Russian population. The article also pointed out that in 2004 alone, the Chinese made 813,000 legal border crossings into Russia. In answering the somewhat rhetorical question of what it would take to "hold" Siberia, D. Filimonov posited that if you don't have the people, then why not "nuclear complexes and a well-fed army with modern weapons?"<sup>24</sup> The problem with that solution is that Russia is still a good way off having a "well-fed army with modern weapons".

It is plain that, if the current depopulation trends continue, Russia may have to resort to force, or at least the threat of force in order to maintain control of an area like Siberia, rich in natural resources and vital for Russia's long-term economic and political well-being. As has been shown by Russia's use of energy as a political weapon over the past few years, Russia will not hesitate - despite the fine, conciliatory words of *Gazprom's* chief, A Miller - to make what political capital it can from its natural resources. Given its role in the world's geo-economic and geo-political future, it is inconceivable that the Kremlin would not do everything in its power to hold on to such naturally resource-rich areas. Russia's natural wealth may be a tempting prospect for some, especially if the area becomes empty of Russians, but any attempt to seize any of Russia's natural wealth-producing areas would encounter a strong response from the Kremlin, including military force. Most of the current political and military leadership were schooled in the days of the USSR and still betray an imperial mentality: if Russia is prepared to hang on to areas like the Kurile Islands, or Kaliningrad *oblast'*, for instance, how much more likely will it be to hold on to such vast and important areas of the Federation as Siberia and the RFE.

But Russia's border regions, in particular, could begin to crack under the strain of having to cope with the consequences of large-scale, illegal migration into these areas as fewer and fewer Russians remain, occupying and working the lands once tilled and worked by their ancestors.<sup>25</sup> Russia's natural wealth may tempt others, not so well enriched, to attempt to exert some external pressure on Russia's internal situation. The perception may take hold that Russia is itself "up for grabs" as more and more parts of Russia's territory become empty of people. This would be a dangerous and foolhardy perception, but it cannot be ruled out.

## Causes

Experts have agreed on a number of factors in explaining the current demographic crisis facing Russia. In a work written jointly by two of the country's top demographic/economic institutes, both parts of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the authors outlined what had happened in the 1990s:

"on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1999, the population of Russia stood at 146,693,000. In the century since the conduct of the first Russian census [1897] the population had more than doubled. However, since the conduct of the last [Union] census - 1989 - the population has fallen...the decline began in 1992 and, in total, in the 7 years since [the study was published in 1999] the number of Russians has fallen by 2,011,000, in 1998 alone by 412,000. Throughout the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this is the fourth occasion that the population of Russia has fallen. But distinct from the first three occasions - WWI and the Civil War, the famine and repressions of the '30s, WW2 - when the decline in the population was underlined by non-demographic factors, in the '90s, it was distinguished by the nature of the [country's] demographic development...Although the decline in the population level is not as great, or as catastrophic, as occurred in the previous three periods, this tendency, in the light of internal conditions, is fixed and, more than likely, will remain so for the foreseeable future."<sup>26</sup>

Further, the report's authors were in no doubt about the most pressing factor:

"to halt the present decline of the population will be much harder than on the past three occasions, when the main reason was the temporary, catastrophic increase in the death rate [due to the war and the repressions

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of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century]...The main reason for the [current] population decline is the low birth rate in Russia."<sup>27</sup>

This is borne out by the statistical evidence: in 1991, the birth rate in Russia was 49.9 live births per thousand women; by 1999, this had fallen to 31.3 per thousand.<sup>28</sup> Even in 1913, the fertility rate was higher: 45.5 live births per thousand women.<sup>29</sup> In the UN's Human Development Report the question of falling fertility levels was given special prominence:

"the population size decline in Russia is as a result of continuing population ageing, falling fertility level, rising mortality level and a dwindling net migration gain. Fertility level has been going down and the population ageing as a result all through the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the mortality level began to rise in the mid-1960s and migration started thinning out in 1994 which means, in other words, that the record population decline has been caused by processes that have been going on for some time already...Two hypotheses are currently invoked to explain the latest bout of fertility decline. The first is that the fall in the fertility level in the early 1990s was the population's response to the socio-economic and political crises and the country's disintegration. The other hypothesis says that the sharp decline in the fertility level in Russia was a continuation of the long-standing trend of demographic transition and that crisis merely speeded up the process. If this hypothesis is correct, it leaves no hope for fertility rates reverting to their previous levels after the nation has emerged from its present crisis."<sup>30</sup>

Many commentators have also attempted to analyse why men have been most prone to dying prematurely. Men aged 30-44 are ten times more likely to die before their time than their average European counterparts.<sup>31</sup> A UN report covering the countries of Central and Eastern Europe as well as the fSU, also noted this:

"the process of transition in the region has had huge development costs, many of which still continue unabated. The *biggest single 'cost of transition'* has undoubtedly been the loss of lives represented by the decline in life expectancy in several major countries of the region, most notably in the Russian Federation...and most strikingly among young and middle-aged men. Most regrettably, the trends in life-expectancy have meant that several million people have not survived the 1990s who would have done so if the life-expectancy levels achieved in the 1980s had been maintained."<sup>32</sup>

The report noted that there were "literally millions of 'missing men' in the region", because of the unusually high mortality rates of the early 1990s.<sup>33</sup> One Russian source has even attempted to put a figure on this: Russia is 5.9 million men short as a consequence of the societal transition of the 1990s.<sup>34</sup>

Other than what has been termed "societal stress", there are a number of reasons for the increase in the death rate, some more "traditional" to Russian society and others which have manifested themselves over the past 15 years. For a start, the traditional vices of too much drinking and smoking have taken an increased toll as more men and women seek solace from the rigours of everyday life. According to official figures, Russia has between 1,500-2,000 officially registered alcoholics per 100,000 of the population (one can only guess at the unofficial figure). Alcoholism is the third highest cause of premature death.<sup>35</sup> According to one recent report, it is

estimated that one in three Russian men and one in seven Russian women are alcoholics.<sup>36</sup> More than 40,000 people in 2002 alone died as a result of alcoholic poisoning.<sup>37</sup> Such figures have led the country's Interior Minister, R Nurgaliyev, to describe the situation as a "national tragedy".<sup>38</sup>

Related to this is the number of deaths on the roads as a result of drunk driving: 36,000 people are killed every year on Russia's roads (1/10 of all road deaths in Europe, despite the fact that Russia has considerably fewer cars than many other European countries). Approximately 1/5 of these deaths are as a result of drunk driving.<sup>39</sup> Car accidents are the leading cause of premature death in the 15-29 age-group. It is estimated that road accidents and their aftermath cause some 1.5-5% "socio-economic damage" to the country's annual GDP.<sup>40</sup>

The other traditional vice associated with many adult Russian men and women - smoking - also has a significant impact on the health and well-being of the people. It is estimated that 2/3 of Russian men and 1/3 of Russian women smoke regularly and, consequently, there has been an increase in death due to smoke-related diseases: approximately 500,000 people die annually as a result of illness contracted through, or assisted by, smoking.<sup>41</sup> This trend does not look set to decrease soon either - amongst the under 16s, the number of smokers is estimated at 20% of young lads and 11% for young lassies. Not surprisingly, Russia is the world's 3<sup>rd</sup> largest market for tobacco products, Russians spending some \$6 billion annually on them.<sup>42</sup>

Another major health issue for Russia, especially in comparison with other European countries, is tuberculosis (TB): in Russia, the number of people infected with TB is estimated at 88 per 100,000; in Europe, the average is 4 per 100,000. It is estimated that 10% of the Russian prison population has full-blown TB.<sup>43</sup> Overall rates of illness in Russia are estimated to be 40% higher than in the developed European countries, on average. Added to the relatively high cost of medicine and treatment, this means that Russians simply cannot afford proper medical treatment or diet - 25.5 million Russians live off less than \$85 per month, a further 74 million have a monthly income of just over \$170 - and, in a vicious circle, seek escape from health and other problems, thereby compounding their problems even more.<sup>44</sup> In the words of a World Bank report:

“people of lower socioeconomic status have higher mortality and are more likely to report bad health than people of higher status.. Furthermore, people with the lowest socioeconomic status are more likely to report frequent consumption of hard alcohol and have greater problems accessing health care systems and following treatment regimes than richer people.”<sup>45</sup>

Illegal use of drugs and the spread of AIDS are other major problems facing Russia's declining population, especially as the AIDS virus threatens to spread from marginal high-risk groups (like drug users) to the general population. The number of illegal drug users is growing steadily - according to Ministry of Health statistics, between 1992-2002 their number grew by 400% and, on the whole, is affecting the younger section of the population, aged between 15-29.<sup>46</sup> The Head of the Federal Drugs Control Agency, B Tselinskiy, estimated that in Russia alone there were between 3-8 million illegal drug users but that the state could only treat 500,000, and given the cost of treatment and the necessary infrastructure, considerably fewer than that effectively - 50,000.<sup>47</sup>

AIDS also poses an increasingly serious threat to the health of the nation: in 2001, the number of officially-registered people with AIDS stood at 140,000; by 2003, the figure had increased to 206,000.<sup>48</sup> Most agree, however, that the real figure could

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be 7-10 times higher.<sup>49</sup> By the end of 2004, the number of those infected with HIV had officially surpassed the 300,000 mark. There is widespread speculation that Russia is teetering on the verge of an AIDS explosion, especially taking into account the poor state of the nation's health service, the relatively expensive treatment and the fact that the sexual transmission of AIDS in Russia is more common than elsewhere in Europe (only 30% of Russian women regularly use some form of contraception).<sup>50</sup> As one recent commentator noted:

"Russia is on the cusp of a catastrophe. The UN AIDS report...says the global rate of new HIV infection peaked in the 1990s. In Russia, the rate of infection continues to accelerate faster than most other countries in the world...Over the past decade, the AIDS virus has swept through injecting drug users...and infected a known 350,000 people. At least three times that number - 1-1.5 million - are HIV positive, according to the Federal AIDS Centre in Moscow."<sup>51</sup>

With 22,000 cases of confirmed AIDS in St Petersburg alone - half as many as in the UK - it is not surprising that the AIDS picture in Russia has been described as "parlous".<sup>52</sup> And there is very little sign of any improvement to what is already a very grim picture: in 2003, it was estimated that of the 140,000 officially recorded AIDS cases, 62% were in the age-group 20-30, thus decreasing further the possibility of Russia righting its population decline soon.<sup>53</sup> Of the official 2004 figure, 80% were in the age-group 15-29, and a third were young women.<sup>54</sup>

"The spread of the disease has now reached tipping point. If the estimates are right and 1.5 million Russians are HIV-positive, that is more than 1% of the population, 10 times the rate in the UK. That proportion is the threshold at which the virus starts to move out of the high-risk marginal groups into the general population."<sup>55</sup>

In April 2006, Putin convened a session of the State Council of regional governors to examine the AIDS epidemic, describing the situation as "alarming". As a result, the state allocated a further £98 million to help combat the spread of the disease. A month later, the first ever regional conference on AIDS was held in Moscow and was attended by 1,500 delegates.<sup>56</sup> But is this all rather too little and too late?

Added to this the high murder rate – according to Interior Ministry statistics, 180 murders per day – and the suicide rate, x2.5 higher amongst Russian men than their European counterparts (estimated now at 50,000 per year, putting Russia in the “top 5” countries in the world for suicides), it is little wonder that of the current generation aged between 15-19, only 54% of males are expected to be around to collect their pension aged 60.<sup>57</sup>

A note of caution, however, should be added at this stage. Whilst there can be no denying the fact that the collapse of the USSR and the subsequent “robber-baron” period have had a significant impact on the population's health and lifestyle, there is a school of thought amongst other Russian specialists, who argue that Russia's population decline long predates the collapse of the USSR in 1991, who evaluate the current demographic crisis as part of “an evolutionary demographic process” and a reflection of an age-old Russian view of the role of the state towards the individual, needless to say, to the detriment of the individual.<sup>58</sup> At least part of the problem is that the state has had a very low estimation of the value of the individual. The individual, in short, is there to serve the state, not the other way round; summed up, in some respects, by the thought process that the headline

quoted at the beginning of this paper reflects: “without the Motherland – we are nothing!” According to V Kiselev, the central Russian political authority has to seriously re-examine the state’s attitude towards the value of the individual if it is to successfully tackle the demographic problem:

“our misfortunes stem from the fact that for the authorities, the Russian people, by itself, never had value, it was always a means to achieve some state interest. The people – labour resource for the economy, the youth – call-up potential for the Army. No one ever thought about the well-being of the individual. Correspondingly, this is the attitude which we show towards our life and our health...A serious re-examination of the main priorities of society is required.”<sup>59</sup>

If population decline is reflective of the deep-seated political attitude of the ruling authority towards the role of the individual in society - then what is required to change the current demographic crisis for the better is no less than a wholesale restructuring of Russia’s political culture and psyche. Such a profound change is not going to happen overnight, if ever.

At the very least, the trends have either been ignored, because of the traditionalist, “statist” view of the worth of the individual, or not thought serious enough to be worthy of action. There is no easy fix to the problem. The current crisis will not be overcome by financial incentives alone. Another short term remedy - mass immigration - would also have mixed consequences: do you “import” anyone who wishes to come and settle in the country, or do you pick and choose? Would Russians be happy to share the living space of the RFE or Siberia with Chinese, for instance?

According to a recent World Bank report, in order to ensure “steady” economic growth, Russia will need to “import” approximately 1 million people of working age annually.<sup>60</sup> This is part of Putin’s plan to redress the population decline. What the current Russian government wants is a mass influx of CIS citizens – preferably ethnic Russian – to the East, working and living and populating the whole region with lots of little Ivans and Lenas. But given the deteriorating social infrastructure – as one analyst described, for instance: “the Baikal region, compared to the majority of the country’s *oblasts*, concedes much in the quality and standard of living and does not have the potential of expanding its reproductive population potential”<sup>61</sup> – this is not a bankable proposition at present. These are regions of Russia which have a long tradition of being, in the main, unattractive parts for people to want to settle. One way that Moscow had of maintaining control of such areas was supplying them with everything that they required – labour, machinery, consumer goods, etc. - whilst taking in the region’s oil, gas and other mineral deposits. This was done at heavily subsidised rates and material incentives were given to people to settle the land there. As one US scholar puts it rather colourfully:

“In many respects the Russian drive to explore and develop the Far East parallels America’s drive westward... While much of the US West Coast is overcrowded, the Tsars and the Soviets had to entice settlers to the Far East with high wages and expensive subsidies. When they did not work, they resorted to prison labour.”<sup>62</sup>

However “as Moscow began implementing economic restructuring after 1987, the growth of the Far East, that had been heavily dependent on investment and subsidies from Moscow, came to a sudden halt”.<sup>63</sup>

In short, once the subsidies and incentives went, so did the people – and Moscow has found it difficult, if not impossible, to get them to go back.

### **Trends and consequences**

*Goskomstat*, a few years ago, worked out a range of scenarios concerning the possible future for Russia's overall population level. According to its calculations, based on best possible, most likely and worst case scenarios, the Russian population (rounded up to the nearest million) by 2015 could be as high as 147 million, or as low as 130 million, with the middle figure coming in at 138 million.<sup>64</sup> In its published Concept for Demographic Policy of the Russian Federation to 2015, *Goskomstat* stated that “the population of the country will fall, in comparison with the figure for the beginning of 2001, by 10.4 million people, or 7.2% and will stand at 134,400,000. Positive migration flow will not compensate for the natural decline in the population.”<sup>65</sup>

An obvious consequence of a smaller population pool, from a purely security point of view, is a smaller manpower pool to draw on to replenish the country's Armed Forces. This would be bad enough, if the manpower pool were physically healthy.

“The quality of the human factor depends largely on the state of those being called up. At the present moment in time, the health of our nation does not encourage optimism. It was no accident that the Russian President put the improvement of the health [of the nation] first amongst the issues to be addressed. The essence is solving this problem lies not in spending huge sums on curing [disease] but on preventing it. The might, including the military might, of our country, will significantly increase if we have fewer drug addicts, drunkards, criminals.”<sup>66</sup>

According to the chairman of MoD's Main Medical Board, Colonel General V Kulikov, in 2005, 1/3 of all potential recruits were rejected right away because of poor health; 57 out of every 1,000 were turned down because of “psychological illness”; a total of 45,000 were rejected because of physical under-development; 15% were turned down for poor bone development, etc.<sup>67</sup>

The poor state of many of the potential recruits to the Armed Forces was further underlined by of a member of the *duma's* Defence Committee, Major-General N Bezborodov, who complained that 30% of those called up had not completed secondary education; 12% were “persistent users of alcohol”, and a further 8% were regular users of illegal drugs. He also pointed out that of the total manpower available, the Russian Armed Forces could only draw on 9%, once they had removed all those exempted from military service for a variety of reasons or who were simply too unfit to serve. The immediate future looks bleak: in 2008, the military will only have the half the manpower pool currently available.<sup>68</sup> 1.218 million males were born in RSFSR in 1987; the corresponding figure for Russia in 2005 was only 675,000.<sup>69</sup> Although Russia is heading towards a fully professional army, it is still some way short of having one. Unless voluntary military service is made very attractive to the young, Russia will have great problems in meeting its own very basic requirements.

The Russian armed forces may have to adopt some fairly radical steps if they are to maintain a credible military presence in areas of the Federation which may prove a tempting target for the expansionist designs of neighbouring states. The scenario

for *Mobil'nost'-2004* proved that the General Staff were taking the prospect seriously.

“Over the past few years, the military-political situation in the Maritime Pacific region has seriously deteriorated and, at the beginning of summer 2004, a real threat to the constitutional order and sovereignty of Russia arose over a significant part of the region’s territory. Over the past few years, the diaspora of the citizens from one of the neighbouring states has grown enormously and has already achieved such a size and influence that, electing its representatives to a whole series of local organs of executive and legislative power, it has become a real political force. It is trying hard to conduct its own [political] line, which often runs counter to Russia’s state interests.

Parallel with efforts to create a political party in the Maritime Pacific region has also been the active formation of illegal armed formations which have begun to terrorise the local population. The situation became so serious that, in the middle of June, the illegal armed formations, making use of material and other support from abroad, began an open armed struggle for control of part of Russia’s territory.

A critical situation arose in the border regions of the Maritime Pacific region. Forces deployed in the region were not able to reverse the situation. In this connection, the leadership of the country took the decision to immediately transfer to the Far East mobile units from other regions of Russia. The task placed before them was not simple: by a certain fixed time and in unfamiliar territory and using ‘alien’ equipment, to blockade and eliminate the enemy.”<sup>70</sup>

As Kiselev points out: “the less of us there are, the more attractive become our huge resources, the massive unpopulated Russian expanse, to our neighbours experiencing an ever greater deficit of [their own] resources.”<sup>71</sup>

The size of the country and the size of its Armed Forces are related to one another. Whilst size is not everything, a country still needs a basic minimum physical presence and, allied to that, a credible local military infrastructure. The MoD and General Staff will be anxiously assessing how the current fall in Russia’s population impacts on Russia’s ability to defend itself, both from the internal and external threats. Russia already has an internal “counter-terrorist operation” in Chechnya; could it handle another military operation, without being over-stretched? The General Staff would be failing in its duty if it did not develop contingency plans to meet all and every eventualities. Thus, whilst relations between the Kremlin and Beijing may currently be good, even very good, this has not always been the case, and on many occasions, blood has been shed between the two countries.

Russia’s control of its border regions is crucial to the country’s long term economic and political survival. When Putin toured Siberia and the RFE in July 2000, he highlighted the government’s sensitivity: “if we do not make a real effort to develop Russia’s Far East, then in the next few decades, the Russian population will be speaking mainly Japanese, Chinese and Korean.”<sup>72</sup> Curiously enough, Putin’s remarks can be seen as a continuation of age-old fears of the central Russian authority about events happening thousands of miles away, even when made in the region itself! Ever since the Russian Empire began seriously colonising the RFE region in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the central Russian power has expressed misgivings about the presence of so many “Asians” in this part of the Empire. As one Western specialist has written:

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“this expansion into areas that had been predominantly, or at least politically, Chinese and Korean, coupled with the rising power of Japan during this era, meant that political leaders in the RFE and the Russian colonists were often fearful of losing their control. Also, since there were so few Russians and native peoples, many elites worried about the lack of demographic balance and feared being ‘overrun’ by the more numerous Asian peoples in the region...A passport system was proposed to control the movement of Chinese and Koreans in the RFE [in the 1880s-1890s]...Even political figures like Nikolai Gondatti, who often asserted that the Korean population was not a threat to Russia, used xenophobic rhetoric once he took office as governor-general. Such rhetoric seemed to appeal to the populace and make governing easier.”<sup>73</sup>

On a more contemporary note, another Western specialist has written:

“the Russians are vastly outnumbered by their neighbours across the rivers. There are only about 9 million people in the area that stretches from Lake Baikal to the Pacific. Indeed, there are only about 28 million people in the area east of the Ural mountains, but Heilongjiang alone has 36 million inhabitants, Inner Mongolia 22 million...Yet such comparisons are essentially meaningless. They have been made since the nineteenth century when Russia began settling the Pacific coast. Their chief value comes in playing on fears, on racial prejudice and on greed.”<sup>74</sup>

In other words, Russian demographic development has always been at a disadvantage here. This, despite the fact that, on the eve of the First World War, as part of an official government programme, the Tsarist government succeeded in “exporting” some 2 million citizens to help colonise Siberia and the RFE.<sup>75</sup> This is still very evident in the spread of Russia’s population - approximately 75% of the population still live in only 25% of the country’s land mass. According to the 2002 census, Russia’s population had been moving steadily closer to the central and southern heartland of the Russian Federation. Some 60% of the Russian population now live in the Central, Volga and Southern Federal Districts (FDs). Between 1989-2002, more than 1 million Russians quit the Siberian and Far Eastern FDs and re-settled in the country’s southern and central regions.<sup>76</sup>

The migration of the Russian population towards the centre and the south seems to have been exacerbated by the “coloured revolutions” of the recent past, as well as an increasingly hostile attitude shown by other states of the fSU towards the local Russian diaspora, a point not lost on Western journalists: local Russians in a number of the fSU republics “have noted an anti-Russian mood being shown in Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan”, which has compelled a number of the local Russians to quit their adopted homelands and move back to Mother Russia.<sup>77</sup> They too settle in the centre and the south, not in Siberia or the RFE.

Russia is a huge country: at 17 million square kms, it is double the size of USA, Canada, China, etc. The RFE alone is 2/3 the size of the USA.<sup>78</sup> The lack of people is not only a security problem, but also an economic one: in a recent interview the Minister of Education, A Fursenko, stated that “in our country, we catastrophically do not have enough people to be able to effectively use all the riches of our country. Russia needs, minimum, x3 the current population. Otherwise, we will not be able to hold onto such a large territory.”<sup>79</sup> Territories, like the Far North, the RFE and Siberia, although huge in terms of physical size, only account for a tiny fraction of

the human capital of the country (in October 2002, only 4.6% of the Russian population lived in the Far Eastern FD, for instance).<sup>80</sup> Yakutia, bigger than 60 “subjects” of the Russian Federation, has a population density of only 1 person per square km (for comparison, population density in Europe, on average, is 119 per sq km). Moscow has more people than the Russian Far East.<sup>81</sup> Between 1992-1998, the European part of Russia lost 939,000 people; the Asiatic part of Russia, however, lost 1,072,000 people.<sup>82</sup> According to some experts, Russia could lose up to \$390 billion in GDP “that it would otherwise have made by 2025 as a result of the projected demographic decline”. In order to combat this negative economic forecast, the influential Business Russia group has called on the government to spend \$140 billion over the next 20 years in order to improve the overall health – and, thus, long-term economic well-being – of the country.<sup>83</sup> The link between economic development and depopulation has now become a truism in handbooks on the country’s future economic development: “on the whole, the demographic potential of Siberia and the Far East is insufficient to develop the rich, natural resources there.”<sup>84</sup>

In relation to the RFE, the growing Chinese presence in the area is a worrying sign for the Russians, despite official assertions to the contrary. Some assert that there are already 3 million Chinese in the Russian Far East, both legally and illegally.<sup>85</sup> However, this is an estimate based on very little evidence and is possibly designed to stoke a fear of the “yellow peril” and, as has happened in the past, make the region easier to govern by diverting people’s attention away from real issues – such as collapsing infrastructure. One Russian journalist has noted that, in reporting on the Chinese presence in the RFE, there are 4 basic stereotypes at work, which can be summarised thus:

- 1) in ten years’ time, the RFE will be full of Chinese and will transfer to Chinese rule;
- 2) there are already 10-12 million Chinese in the RFE, i.e. double the local indigenous Russian population;
- 3) Chinese men, *en masse*, will marry Russian women, thereby creating a base for further Chinese expansion in the region;
- 4) the Chinese in the RFE use local slave labour and pay them pennies for their work.<sup>86</sup>

According to the Russian Ambassador to China, I Rogachev, however, the truth is very different. In 2004, there were approximately 40,000 “guest workers” legally working in RFE, of whom approximately 66% were Chinese. In 2005, the overall total increased by 42%. Rogachev also quoted the statistic that in Amur *oblast'*, only 1.6% of the workforce were Chinese. Thus, Rogachev could find little hard evidence to support the assertion of a massive Chinese presence in the region.<sup>87</sup>

Unofficially, it is reckoned that the true number of Chinese migrants in the area could be between 3-10 times the official figure but even that yields less than 100,000 or less than 370,000.<sup>88</sup> On top of that Russia is not top of Chinese wish lists of countries where they want to work. In 2002, only 2.9% of Chinese who worked abroad actually worked in Russia. More preferred countries like Canada or the Republic of Ireland, certainly taking into account both pay and the quality of life.<sup>89</sup>

Of course, this does not prevent politicians, of whatever colour, playing the “yellow peril” card when it suits but, as Rogachev pointed out, one of the easiest means Russia has at its disposal to hold onto the region is to develop it and one of the easiest ways that it can do that is to employ the large pool of reasonably skilled, well-disciplined, cheap workers almost literally on its doorstep – the Chinese:

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“migration processes in the Russian Far East can and must become a factor assisting the positive development of society, if we take into account the demands of the economy, the interests of national security, public order and the state of health of the nation.”<sup>90</sup>

In short, the Chinese “threat” to the region in the short-to-medium term looks to have been exaggerated at least partly in order to allow regional and central powers to maintain control over a physically huge territory. However, ironically, Russia could find herself in the position where – its attempts to attract colonists from the fSU to re-settle the RFE, Siberia, Maritime Pacific regions having failed – in order to develop the region economically and hold onto it, it may have to invite ever greater numbers of “guest workers” from China, North Korea and Vietnam! If it was a simple matter of economics, most Russian businessmen, given the choice, would opt for the cheaper of the two choices: better cheap but good Chinese workers, than expensive, more prone to strikes, immigrants from the former Soviet Union. This does place the central government in a dilemma: should it allow increasing numbers of foreign nationals – particularly the Chinese - to live and work in the RFE, for instance, and thereby develop its full potential, at the risk of creating the basis for the locals’ fear of the “yellow peril”? Even in Russia’s formally approved Demographic Concept, the planners still forecast another decade, at least, of continuing population decline in the Russian East:

“in the period, 2001-2016, the population level of Siberia and the Far East will fall by 7.6%, in the Northern and adjacent territories – by 12%. The geographical shift of the population re-settling to the West and South significantly reducing the population density of the Asiatic part of the Russian Federation, its border regions, is very unwelcome from the point of view of national security and the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation.”<sup>91</sup>

Thus, a growing ethnic disbalance is making itself increasingly evident. This is also happening elsewhere in Federation where, as a result of the ethnic Russian population leaving for pastures new, the war in Chechnya, the growing unrest in the non-Russian republics of the fSU, the ethnic balance is becoming a real issue for a number of the local authorities. In Rostov *oblast'*, which acts almost like a “buffer” zone between the North Caucasus and the centre of Russia, for instance, on an annual basis some 12-15,000 illegal migrants are officially registered, although the unofficial figure could be double that. Although some are ethnic Russian, most of them are not, and this is creating problems:

“the uncontrolled flood of migrants has given rise to the situation that in a number of regions in the *oblast'*, the number of native Russians is less than the number of ‘aliens’, who often do not want to come to terms with their culture, the customs or the rights of those who have lived there for centuries. Recently, the number of the [indigenous] Slavic population, especially in the eastern regions of the *oblast'*, has significantly declined. There are small villages where all that remains which is Russian is simply the name of the village itself.”<sup>92</sup>

For his part, the governor of Samara *oblast'*, K Titov, has created a “Ministry for Demographic Development”, whose laudable aims are to “end the de-population of the *guberniya* and increase the birth rate”. Similarly, the head of Nizhniy Novgorod *oblast'*, V Shantsev, has called on every family in the *oblast'* to bring up two children per family; the head of Ul'yanovsk *oblast'*, S Morozov, has stated that he

will donate his monthly salary to help orphan children. The head of Voronezh *oblast*, V Kulakov, has stated that where villages have received a recently-installed gas supply, the birth rate has doubled!<sup>93</sup> A lot of this activity seems to hark back to the Soviet political past: rather than really tackling a very serious problem, you appear to be doing something and talk about “initiatives” and “steps” taken. In other words, appearance is everything and, all going well, helps to curry favour with the central political power. Such “activity” has already prompted a number of more cynically-inclined Russian journalists to resurrect an old word from the Soviet political lexicon – *kampaneyschchina*, appearing active, without actually doing much, but attracting the attention of the men in the Kremlin and thus garnering more money and support for the local area.<sup>94</sup>

Ethnic disbalance is leading to an increasing number of racist attacks. In Karelia, for instance - where the native population now numbers only 4% - the local market traders have been forced to turn two trading days of the year (the days commemorating the formation of Airborne Forces and the Russian Navy) into “sanitation” days, i.e. they have been forced to close the market down, because too many ex-servicemen were turning up on those days looking for non-Russians to beat up.<sup>95</sup> As Russians feel threatened by “strangers” and “newcomers” coming into “their” *oblast*, town or village they may resort to defending what they perceive as “their” way of life not only by physical violence but, more importantly, at the ballot box, in supporting more nationalistic, xenophobic, political parties.

Russia has a tradition of extreme right-wing politics - one should never forget that although the 20<sup>th</sup> century is famous in Russia for the social revolutions which eventually gave rise to the creation and establishment of Soviet power, the same period was also the period of operation of the notorious “Black Hundreds” – gangs, semi-officially sanctioned, who carried out annual *pogroms*, particularly of Jews, in various parts of the Russian Empire.

Allied to this is that one of the few growth areas in Russia’s population figures is in the number of Muslims.<sup>96</sup> It should be stressed that that these are native Russian citizens, not migrants from elsewhere but, given the campaign against international terrorism and the continuing war in Chechnya, the ever-increasing number of Muslims may become a real internal security issue. According to one Russian expert on Islam, A Malashenko:

“the real problem is the crisis of the Russian population, not the increase of the Muslim population. And, of course, the [Orthodox] Church is not so powerful or so significant for Russians, as Islam is for Muslims. This doesn’t mean that Russia will become a Muslim society in several years, although maybe in half a century, we’ll see something surprising.”<sup>97</sup>

## Conclusion

The current demographic crisis in the Russian Federation is not an easily solvable problem – there are many variants at work and, if it can be turned around, the eventual solution may involve more than just money, but also significant cultural and perhaps even political-cultural changes. Certain changes may be achieved more easily than others – reducing the number of deaths through road accidents, for instance - but other changes in lifestyle – drinking, smoking, drug-taking – elements of which have almost been used to define what it means to be a “Russian”, may be a lot harder. If, as some specialists argue, the political culture has to change, this would entail a wholesale re-structuring of the official and unofficial

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outlook of the state towards the individual and it is hard to see how that could come about, either quickly or easily.

Thousands of Russians are dying every year from preventable causes - smoking, drinking, illegal drug use, car accidents. These can be turned around, through careful education, improved road safety measures, making smoking unfashionable amongst the young, etc. But real effort will be needed to cut back significantly on these premature and avoidable deaths.

The security implications for Russia in not being able to maintain a viable physical presence in those areas of the Federation vital for long-term economic prosperity are very significant: China would not have to do much for certain areas of the Federation to slip quietly under its effective control. It certainly would not have to resort to military pressure. China has a robust economy and an ever increasing demand for raw materials and energy, and it has the wherewithall to pay for all of it. Could Russia and China develop a mutually symbiotic political and economic relationship in the RFE, where both get what they want from one another? Russia needs a huge number of "guest workers" in order to develop its regions east of the Urals; where is it going to attract them from, if not from China, North Korea and Vietnam? Similarly, where is China going to get the necessary oil, gas and other raw materials to maintain its present economic growth? Population is vital to the security dynamics in this part of the world. Thus, Putin's reawakened interest in his country's health and falling population level is not just an example of the leader's benevolence and concern for the well-being of his people, but also a simple acknowledgement of a very hard fact: if Russia is to survive as a power, never mind increase its presence on the international stage it needs a healthy, active population. In other words, you cannot have "Russia" without Russians!

However late, the government seems to have woken up to the reality of the problem and, as outlined in Putin's address in May 2006, has adopted a series of steps to try to halt the population decline. Putin outlined three main steps which, in his opinion, should help to reverse Russia's population decline: these are to "stimulate the flow of qualified immigrants, educated and law-abiding"; "stimulate the birth rate, by taking steps to support young families"; "changing the attitude of the whole of society towards the family and its values".<sup>98</sup> However, these new incentives look both inadequate and piecemeal. There is no obvious, direct correlation any more between material well-being and the desire to have another child; the import of new immigrants, even from the near abroad, could well create new problems as well as help solve old ones (the attitude of the incumbent population may well be to distrust the "incomer": there are areas of Scotland, for instance, where the local population is resentful, if not hostile, to the arrival of "incomers") it is not just a question of changing society's attitude towards the family but, possibly even deeper, changing the state's attitude towards the importance of the individual. Thus even if the government does manage to convince millions of ethnic Russians to return 'home' from the ex-Soviet republics, for instance - the Russian *diaspora* in the fSU currently numbers 25 million - the local infrastructure is poor. In fact, population decline is not fixed by throwing money at it. The state also has to change its attitude from seeing what the individual can do for the state and begin to address the other side of the coin, i.e. what the state can and should do for the individual. Have the Russian political leadership realised that without Russians, there is no Motherland to preserve or defend?

There is also the very real issue that many Russians are against having large families, either because of expense, or because they are content to bring up no

more than 2 children.<sup>99</sup> Putin may think that by paying people to have children, they will duly oblige and produce more children for the long-term benefit of the state. However, research carried out by the Institute of Public Forecasting revealed that “the higher the [economic] well-being of people, the less likely they are inclined to increase the size of their family”.<sup>100</sup> This assertion has been further underlined by the fact that unemployment in the villages, which is particularly high, seems to encourage parents to have more children, not less.<sup>101</sup> Thus, an important part of Putin’s May 2006 policy - attempting to increase the size of the population by increasing family subsidies - may be crucially wrong.

If current trends continue, then the outlook for Russia looks very bleak indeed: by 2075, Russia's population could fall to as low as 50-55 million and, in the words of one analyst: “there simply will be no one left to serve in the Army. [Even worse] no one left to defend.”<sup>102</sup>

## Endnotes

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<sup>2</sup> V Putin, “A teper’- o glavnom...o lyubvi, o zhenshchinakh, o detyakh”, *Izvestiya*, 11 May 2006.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> A Bondarenko, “Bez Rodiny - my nikto!”, *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 27 January 2006.

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<sup>6</sup> V Kuzar’, “Demograficheskiye vyzovy Rossii”, *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 15 February 2006.

<sup>7</sup> BBC Monitoring Service (BBCM), “Russian population down to 143 million”, 22 December 2004; O Schcheblykin, “Kto zhivet v Rossii”, *Strazh Baltiki*, 25 February 2004.

<sup>8</sup> D Okuneva, “Zemlyan vsye men'she”, *Novyye Izvestiya*, 27 February 2006.

<sup>9</sup> V Pokrovskiy, “Tri dorogi ‘Russkogo kresta’”, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 24 November 2004.

<sup>10</sup> Alexander V Nemets, John L Scherer, “China’s ‘takeover’ of Russia’s Far East”, *World and I*, vol.19, issue no 2, February 2004, pp.60-65; 60.

<sup>11</sup> V Akhmedkhanov, “My tol’ko chto otstoyali Primor’ye”, *Rossiyskoye Voyennoye Obozreniye*, no.7, 2004, pp.28-31; 28.

<sup>12</sup> *Demograficheskiyy vyzhegodnik 2000*, Moscow Goskomstat, 2000, V.L Sokolin, I A Zbarskaya, eds. P.22

<sup>13</sup> V Shandybin, “V strane vsye men'she kolybyley”, *Pravda* 4-7 July 2003.

<sup>14</sup> V Tishkov, “Obshchestvo. Demografiya. Strasti po demografii”, *Expert*, 6 February 2006.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p.162.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Shandybin, *ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> N Buckley, “Nation needs more migrants”, *The Financial Times*, 21 April 2006; an estimate has been made that over the past 40 years, some 14 million Russians have died prematurely (V Kiselev, “My idem na ubyl’”, *Rossiyskoye Voyennoye Obozreniye*, no.5, 2005, 56-61; 60).

<sup>20</sup> Pokrovskiy, *ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> 2000 Human Development Report for the Russian Federation, ([http://www.undp.ru/NHDR/summary\\_2000.eng.htm](http://www.undp.ru/NHDR/summary_2000.eng.htm))

<sup>22</sup> Pokrovskiy, *ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Colonel Yu G Romanchenko, “Voyennyye ugrozy: politologicheskiy aspekt”, *Voyennaya Mysl’*, no.5, 2001, 55-60; 58.

<sup>24</sup> “Naskol’ko real’na dlya Rossii ‘kitayskaya ugroza’”, S. Filimonov. *Izvestiya*, 20 December 2005.

<sup>25</sup> As noted by one Western specialist of the area: “the Russians are vastly outnumbered by their neighbours across the rivers. There are only about 9 million people in the area that stretches from Lake Baikal to the Pacific. Indeed, there are only about 28 million in the area east of the Ural mountains, but Heilongjian alone has 36 million inhabitants, Inner Mongolia 22 million...”, (R Valliant, “The political dimension”, T Akaha, ed., *Politics and economics in the Russian Far East*, (London Routledge 1997), pp.1-20; 19). One should not

underestimate the pull of the land to Russians. Even despite the Communist ideology of the Soviet period, 'Russia' had an immense pull on people, especially during the War. K Simonov, one of the USSR's foremost Soviet poets of the War period, most eloquently expressed this in a piece he wrote during the opening period of the War. Whilst travelling through the Smolensk region, he saw the initial destruction wrought by the Germans on small Russian villages: "the bitterness of the first two weeks of the war convinced me that even though the Germans might get as far as this it was impossible to imagine that the land itself could become German. Whatever happened it was and would remain Russia. In these graveyards lay so many unknown ancestors, grandfathers, great-grandfathers, old men whom we had never seen, that this land seemed Russian not only on the surface but downwards for yard after yard into the depths." K Simonov, *Sto sutok voyny*, Smolensk, 1999, p.64

<sup>26</sup> *Naseleniye Rossii 1999*, ed. A. G. Vishnevskiy, INP-RAN, Moscow, 2000, 156.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> *Demograficheskiy Yezhegodnik Rossii*, p.136.

<sup>29</sup> Yu Granin, "Chelovecheskiy potentsial pod ugrozoi", *Svobodnaya Mysl'*, no.9, 2000, 74-84; 76.

<sup>30</sup> *2000 HDR...*, ibid.

<sup>31</sup> A Amel'kina, "Prichiny demograficheskogo krizisa v Rossii", *Izvestiya*, 16 September 2003.

<sup>32</sup> *Transition 1999. Human Development Report for Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS*, (<http://www.undp.org/rbec/pubs/hdr99/>)

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> A Fren'ko, "Perekhod k rynku stoil zhizni 6 mln rossiyskikh muzhchin", *Kommersant-DAILY*, 3 August 1999.

<sup>35</sup> Shandybin, ibid.

<sup>36</sup> A Osborn, "Drinkers go thirsty after bungling bureaucrats clear shelves of spirits", *The Sunday Herald*, 9 July 2006.

<sup>37</sup> BBCM, "Over 40k died of alcoholic poisoning last year – TV", 28 May 2003.

<sup>38</sup> "Moonshine kills 40,000 a year", *The Independent*, 24 April 2006.

<sup>39</sup> F Andreyev, "100 smertey na dorogakh kazhdyy den", *Izvestiya*, 4 March 2005.

<sup>40</sup> Andreyev, ibid.

<sup>41</sup> T Bateneva, "Mir nachal voyny s tabakom po pravilam, no bez Rossii", *Izvestiya*, 4 March 2005.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Shandybin, ibid.

<sup>44</sup> E Samedova, "Na grani bol'shogo vzryva ", *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 7 July 2005. Another report highlighted the growing disparity between the "haves" and the "have nots" in Russian society: according to the 10<sup>th</sup> World Wealth report, Russia has 103,000 \$ millionaires. On top of that, Moscow has more billionaires than either New York or London. The 100 richest people in Russia have a combined wealth equal to one quarter of the country's GDP. (T Parfitt, "Row of wooden shacks becomes a symbol of Moscow's battle with its own people", *The Guardian*, 27 June 2006).

<sup>45</sup> *Dying Too Young*, World Bank Report, 2005, p.xviii.

<sup>46</sup> I Zhirnova, "Armiya govorit narkotikam 'net'", *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 24 June 2006.

<sup>47</sup> G Il'ichev, "Rossiyane boyatsya narkotikov v 4 raza sil'neye, chem terroristov", *Izvestiya*, 27 June 2005.

<sup>48</sup> S Leskov, "SPID ne vechen. Chelovek, uvy, tozhe", *Izvestiya*, 8 September 2001; Shandybin, ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Shandybin, ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Amel'kina, ibid.; Shandybin, ibid.

<sup>51</sup> J Laurance, "HIV infection rates raise fears of AIDS catastrophe in Russia", *The Independent*, 31 May 2006.

<sup>52</sup> A Jack, "Between hope and despair: why the fight against AIDS is at a turning point", *The Financial Times*, 31 May 2006.

<sup>53</sup> S Nekrasov, "Demograficheskaya katastrofiya i kak s ney borotsya", *Pravda*, 20-23 May 2005.

<sup>54</sup> O Neverova, "Vrachi prizyvayut udesyaterit' VVP", *Izvestiya*, 1 December 2004.

<sup>55</sup> Laurance, ibid.

- <sup>56</sup> Laurance, *ibid.*; "Kremlin cash to fight AIDS", *The Times*, 22 April 2006.
- <sup>57</sup> Shandybin, *ibid.*; Amel'kina, *ibid.*; Pokrovskiy, *ibid.*; Kiselev, *ibid.*, 59.
- <sup>58</sup> V Yemel'yanenko, "'Kitayskoye schast'e", *Izvestiya*, 23 June 2001; Kiselev, *ibid.*, 56-61.
- <sup>59</sup> Kiselev, *ibid.*, 60.
- <sup>60</sup> V Portyakov, "Rossiyskiy vektor v global'noy kitayskoy migratsii", *Problemy Dal'nego Vostoka*, no.4, 2006, 10-21; 17.
- <sup>61</sup> A Tarasov, "Kitaytsy v Zabaykale", *Problemy Dal'nego Vostoka*, no.5, 2003, 61-78; 62.
- <sup>62</sup> J Thornton, C E Ziegler, "The Russian Far East in perspective", 1-34; 4, in J Thornton and C E Ziegler, eds., *Russia's Far East. A region at risk*, University of Washington Press, (Seattle, 2002).
- <sup>63</sup> N Arai, T Hasegawa, "The Russian Far East in Russo-Japanese relations", 157-186; 159 in T Akaha, ed., "Politics and Economics in the Russian Far East", Routledge, London, 1997.
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- <sup>65</sup> Kontseptsiya demograficheskoi politiki Rossiyskoi Federatsii na period do 2015 goda, (<http://www.demography.narod.ru/opinions/gpp.html>, I-22; 6)
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- <sup>67</sup> V Kulikov, "U nas trebovaniya k sostoyaniyu zdorov'ya vyshe, chem v amerikanskoj armii", *Izvestiya*, 26 July 2005.
- <sup>68</sup> A Braterskiy, D Litovkin, "Srok sluzhby sokratyat go odnogo goda", *Izvestiya*, 2 December 2005.
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- <sup>84</sup> *Ekonomicheskaya geografiya Rossii. Uchebnyk*, M Pozdnyayev, V I Vidapin, V M Stepanov eds. Infram Moscow 2000, p.59
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- <sup>88</sup> Tarasov, *ibid.*, 71; Portyakov, *ibid.*, 14.
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## **Want to Know More ...?**

See:

All-Russian 2002 Census, <http://www.perespis2002.eng/content>

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ISBN 1-905058-84-5



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United Kingdom**

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