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ROBERT SCHUMAN CENTRE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES

MIGRATION POLICY CENTRE



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Migration Facts Belarus

On the web: www.migrationpolicycentre.eu

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Introduction. During the Soviet period, external migration was generally not allowed. Migration from and to the Republic was limited to the territory of the USSR. After the break-up of the Soviet Union, the main destination countries for labour migrants have been Russia, the US, Poland and Germany. Russia has been an attractive destination for labour migration due to its large labour market open to Belarusians, reduced transportation costs and recognition of qualifications. Female outward migration prevails considerably. Current migration flows are mainly directed to the EU, the United States and CIS countries. CIS countries are the main source countries.

Demographic-Economic			
Outward Migration		Inward Migration	
STOCK			
Belarusian emigration stocks - year 2011 (a)		Immigration stocks in Belarus - year 2009 (b)	
Total emigrants: 398,287		Total immigrants: 142,054 (stateless persons: 11.3%) (1.5% of the total resident population)	
Five top countries of residence: Israel: 62,541 United States: 60,590 Latvia: 57,867 Lithuania: 56,170 Poland: 37,652		Five top countries of nationality (c): Russia: 83,561 Ukraine: 16,874 Lithuania: 2,995 Turkmenistan: 2,828 Kazakhstan: 1,811 (c) Irregular migrants are not included	
Sex: Males: 39.3% Females: 60.7%	Age group: Less than 15: 3.6% 15-64: 63.0% 65+: 33.4%	Sex: Males: 51.0% Females: 49.0%	Age group: Less than 15: 8.0% 15-59: 71.0% 60+: 21.0%
Level of education (year 2006): primary or below (26.0%); secondary (33.9%); tertiary (40.1%)		Level of education: primary or below (28.2%); secondary (56.1%); tertiary (15.7%)	
Occupation (year 2006): professionals (26.5%); service workers and shop and market sales workers (17.1%); technicians and associate professionals (14.9%)		Occupation: qualified workers of industry, construction and workers of related professions (18.3%); professionals (16.2%); legislators, heads of governmental bodies, nongovernmental organizations, commercial and non-profit organizations (14.5%)	
Notes: (a) Belarusian emigrants are defined according to the country of birth (best option) or country of nationality criterion according to countries of residence. In the post-Soviet zone, the country of nationality is used Source: destination countries' sources (population census/population register/household survey)		Notes: (b) Immigrants are defined according to the country of nationality criterion except of the table on "Occupation", where the country of birth criterion is used Source: Belarusian population census – 2009	
FLOWS			
Outflows of Belarusian nationals to selected countries of destination – year 2011		Inflows of migrants in Belarus – years 2002-2007	
Total outflows: 76,805		Total inflows: 13,089	
Five top countries of destination: Poland: 69,622 Italy: 1,175 United States: 982 United Kingdom: 919 Ukraine: 668		Five top countries of nationality: Russia: 4,667 Ukraine: 1,823 Turkmenistan: 503 Poland: 409 Lithuania: 178	
Source: flow data are proxied by granted first residence permits (EU MS + Norway), issued visas (US + Australia) and the number of registrations to a place of permanent residence (post-Soviet zone)		Source: flow data are proxied by the number of registrations to a place of permanent residence in Belarus (National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus)	

Legal and political framework governing migration and mobility

General legal references

2010 Law On the Legal Status of Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons
 2010 Law On External Labour Migration
 2010 Law On the Legal Status of Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons
 2009 Law On the Procedure of Entry and Exit for the Citizens of the Republic of Belarus
 2008 Law On Refugee Status, Subsidiary and Temporary Protection to Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons
 2006 Law On the Legal Status of Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons in the Republic of Belarus
 2002 Law On Citizenship of the Republic of Belarus (supplanted 1991 Law on Citizenship)
 1994 Constitution

Outward Migration and Mobility	Inward Migration and Mobility
Visa	Visa
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Citizens of Belarus are exempted from the short-term visa requirements in the CIS countries, Georgia, Montenegro, Serbia, China (tourist group travels), Cuba, Bolivia and Venezuela. - Local Border Traffic agreements with Latvia, Lithuania and Poland for visa-free travel of residents of border territories (not working in practice yet). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 types of visa: "B" - transit visa for max 2 days; "C" – short term visa for max 90 days stay; and "D" - long-term visa for a stay of max 90 days during one year, unless stated otherwise in an international agreement. - Citizens of CIS countries, Georgia, Serbia, Montenegro, China (tourist group travel), Bolivia, Cuba and Venezuela are exempted from the short-term visa requirement. - Local Border Traffic agreements with Latvia, Lithuania and Poland for visa-free travel of residents of border territories (not working in practice yet).
Labour	Labour
<p>Bilateral agreements on labour migration have been concluded with six CIS countries (AM, AZ, KZ, MD, RF, UA) and Lithuania, Poland, Serbia. Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers and their Families (2008) and Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Labor Migration and Social Protection for Migrant Workers (1994) apply vis-à-vis other CIS states.</p> <p>2010 EurAsEC Agreement on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers and the Members of their Families with RF and KZ allowing BY citizens to work in these countries without work permits.</p>	<p>BY has not been particularly successful in developing its immigration policy, regardless its economic needs. Aliens can be employed only if job vacancies cannot be filled by BY citizens and permanent residents. Quotas are established by the Council of Ministers. A special permission from the MIA is needed if the employer intends to hire 10 or more foreign nationals.</p> <p>Bilateral agreements with AM, AZ, KZ, MD, the RF and UA provide for social protection of migrant workers. RF and KZ citizens enjoy privileged status with regard to work permits and registration based on 2010 EurAsEC Agreement on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers and the Members of their Families.</p>
Rights	Rights
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Citizens abroad receive consular protection. - Citizens residing abroad must register at the consulate. - Bilateral agreements with AM, AZ, KZ, MD, the RF and UA for social protection. 	<p>Aliens have the same rights as the citizens of the Republic, with some exceptions for the most part relating to political rights. Refugees are subject to special benefits and state assistance. Temporary residence is granted up to 1 year. Permanent residence can be granted, as a rule, after 7 years of temporary residence. Refugees are subject to special benefits and state assistance.</p>
Readmission Agreements	Irregular Migration
<p>No readmission agreements are in place. BY is party to 1998 Agreement on cooperation between CIS Member States in combating illegal migration, and to 2010 EurAzEC Cooperation Agreement on Countering Illegal Labour Migration from Third Countries with RF and KZ.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Illegal crossing of the state border, violation of rules of transit, stay and residence, and illegal employment of aliens are administrative infringements (deportation). - The organisation of illegal migration is a crime, and so is the repeated, during the same year, illegal crossing of the state border.
Diaspora	International Protection
<p>Belarusian legislation does not regulate legal relations with emigrants and the diaspora abroad, which reflects the lack of interest in emigration and diaspora policy. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs keeps a database on citizens abroad.</p>	<p>Forms of protection granted: refugee status, asylum, complimentary protection, temporary protection. Annual quotas for filing applications for refugee status/subsidiary protection in each of the six regions of Belarus are established.</p>
Multiple Citizenship	Citizenship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Belarus citizens who are at the same time citizens of other states are recognized in relation to Belarus only as its citizens. - Citizenship is lost if a citizen joins another state's army, or when parents (single parent) submit an application on behalf of their child, who along with the citizenship of a foreign state also acquired the citizenship of Belarus. 	<p>Preconditions of the naturalization are: 7 years of permanent residence. Simplified rules, including waiving the 7 year term, apply in limited cases for ethnic Belarusians or those identifying themselves as Belarusians. Not conferred on those convicted of international crimes or serious crimes.</p>