

Minutes of the Kick-off Meeting of the International Research Project

COMPARING OUT-MIGRATION FROM ARMENIA AND GEORGIA (ArGeMi)

Funded by the Volkswagen Foundation

The kick-off meeting of the project team took place in Yerevan from 23rd September (arrival day) to 28th September 2008 (departure). The meeting was initially scheduled to take place in Tbilisi, Georgia. Given the tense international situation, the meeting had to be moved to Armenia in due course, where it took place in a remarkably constructive and effective spirit.

All invited participants took part in the meeting:

- Freie Universität Berlin (FUB)
Prof. Dr. Nikolai Genov, Head of the Project
Dr. Tessa Savvidis (Hofmann)
- National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia (NA RA)
Prof. Dr. Gevork Poghosyan
- Georgian Centre of Population Research
Dr. Irina Badurashvili
- Moscow State Social University
Prof. Dr. Galina Osadchaya

Tools for the field studies (four questionnaires for migrants, two for semi-structured expert interviews) and guidelines had been drafted prior to the meeting and sent to all participants in the Yerevan meeting. After intensive discussions unanimous decisions were taken on the timetable and co-ordinated activities of the international team. Among others, it was decided:

1: The first step of the implementation of the Project will be the preparation of three Reports on the out-migration processes from Armenia and Georgia and the immigration from Armenia and Georgia to Moscow after 1990. The Head of the Project will provide the partners with a revised version of the guidelines for reports till 30th September 2008. The Reports from Armenia, Georgia and Moscow are due to be received by the Head of the Project until 30th November, 2008, prepared according to the Guidelines.

2: The common starting point of the field studies will be 1st February, 2009, as scheduled in the project proposal. Subsequently, the following activities will be carried out:

- *Monitoring of Migration Relevant Events* in Armenia, Georgia and in Moscow (first round of three months according to guidelines);

- *Semi-structured Interviews with Experts* in Armenia, Georgia and in Moscow according to the instructions for interviews;

- *Structured interviews by using Questionnaires No 1, 2, 3 and 4* according to the instructions for interviews

3: The SPSS matrix for introduction and proceeding of primary data raised by the use of Questionnaires No 1, 2 and 3 will be prepared in Yerevan and Tbilisi together with instruction for data processing in coordination with the German team. The SPSS matrix for introduction and processing of primary data raised by the Questionnaire No. 4 will be prepared in Moscow together with the instruction for data processing in coordination with the German team.

4: Primary information from all field studies (recorded and transcribed interviews, SPSS files, etc.) will be collected at the Freie Universität Berlin.

5: The advanced drafts of the Reports on the findings from the above field studies will be discussed at the Mid-term meeting of the international research team. The meeting will take place in Moscow in June or July 2009.

In the course of the meeting the following visits to international and national migration relevant institutions in Yerevan took place:

- A. Visit to the *Institute of Philosophy, Sociology and Law* of the NA RA and discussion with the collaborators of the Institute on Migration Issues;
- B. Visit to the *State Agency on Migration and Refugees*;
- C. Visit to the Yerevan Office of *IOM*;
- D. Visit to the Yerevan Office of *OSCE*;
- E. Visit to the Museum of Ancient Manuscripts *Matenadaran* (NA RA);
- F. Visit to the Genocide Memorial and Institute of the NA RA.

All participants from Armenia, Georgia and Moscow expressed their sincere gratitude to the *Volkswagen Stiftung* for the generous support to their joint research work.

The guests-participants expressed their heartfelt gratitude to Prof. Gevork Poghosyan for the excellent local organization of the meeting.

Yerevan-Berlin
30th September, 2008

.....

Prof. Dr. sc. Nikolai Genov, Head of Project

.....

Dr. Tessa Savvidis