

# MIGRATION in BELARUS

*within the NEW BORDERS*

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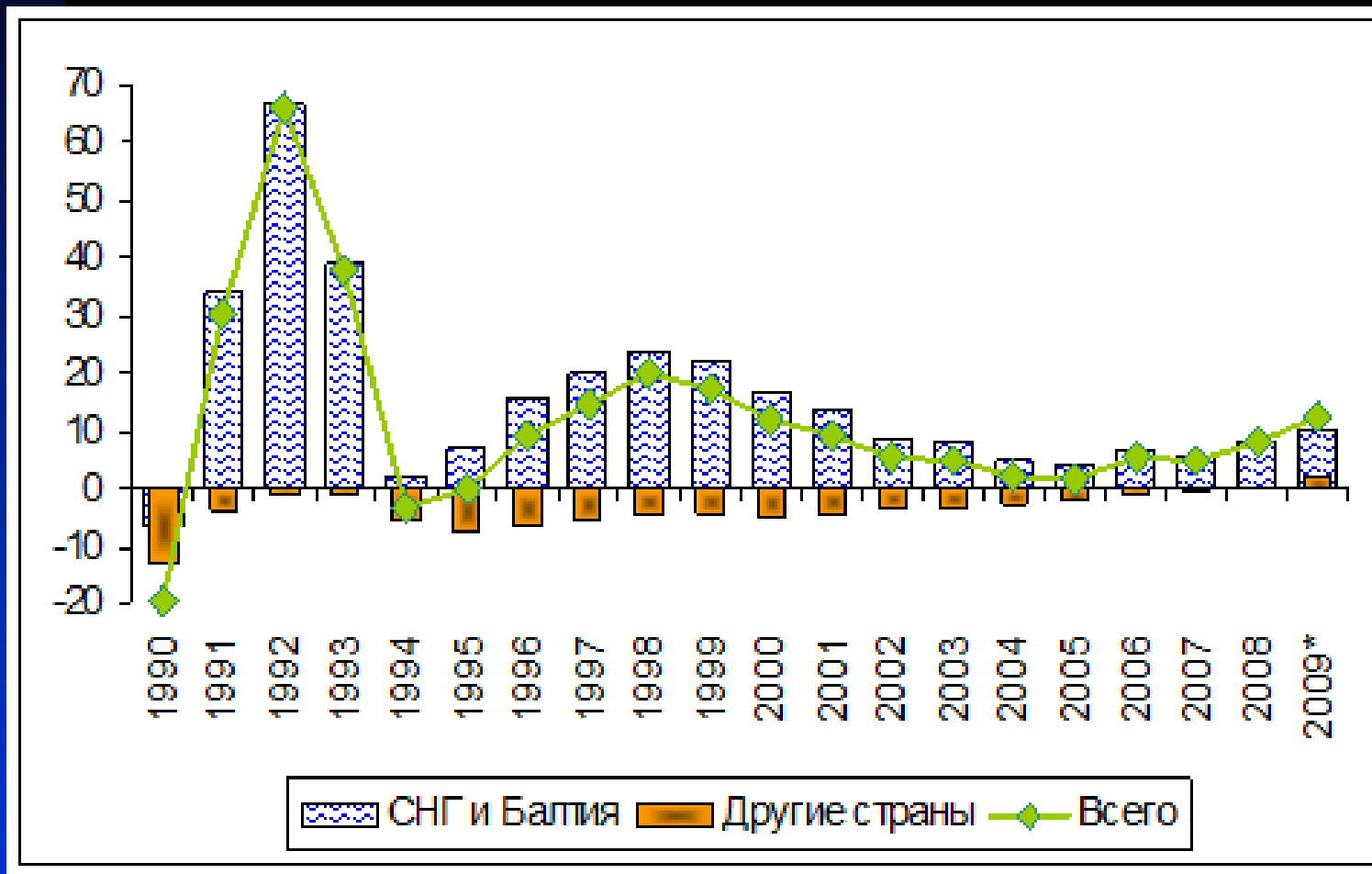
# Problem of Migration

- Not a new problem for Belarus (historically, migration always took place here – forced or natural)
- Not the most important current problem for Belarusian state
- However, new conditions constructed several threats related to migration for the future of Belarus

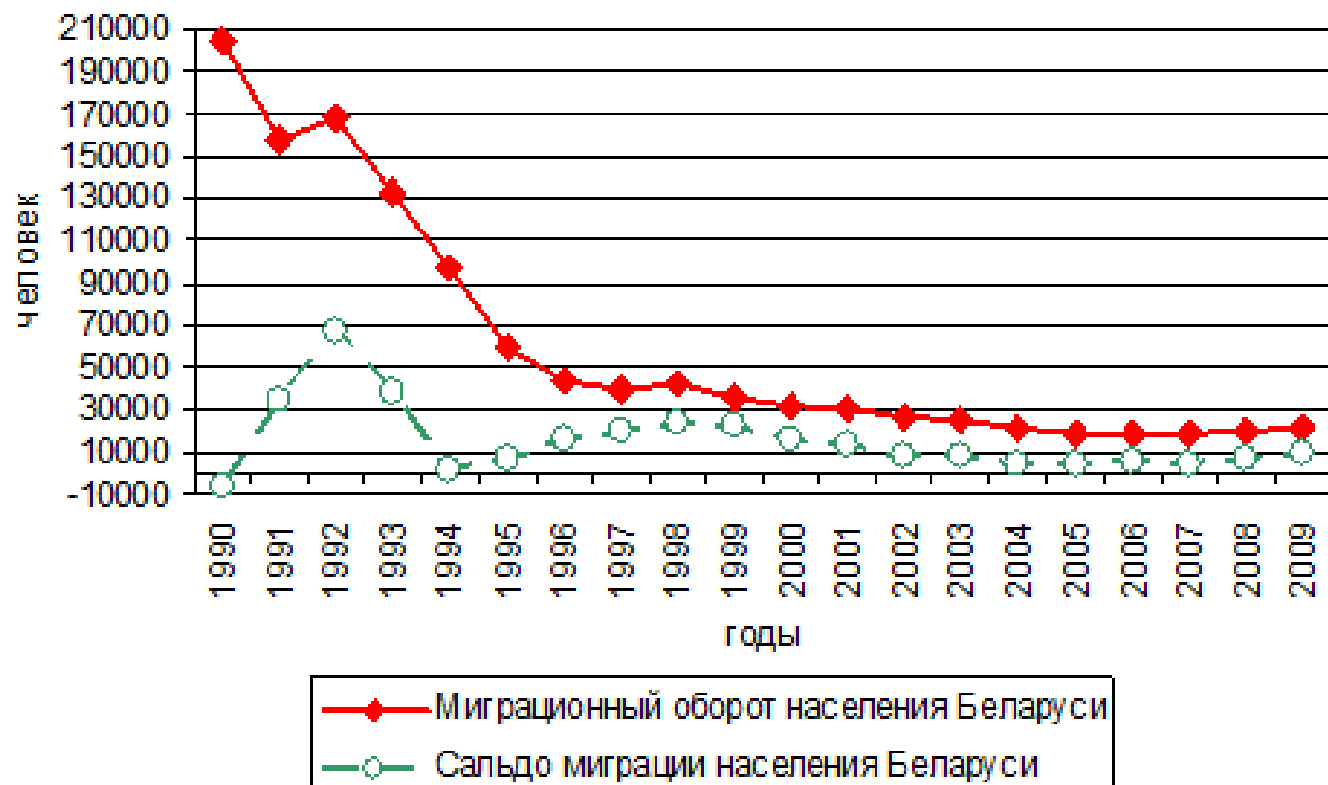
# Migration changes in Belarus within the post-Soviet period

- 1. In the 1990s, external migration from the former Soviet republics was useful for Belarus (positive balance). Many people crossed the new borders of the FSU and arrived in Belarus for permanent residence.
- 1992 – 67.000 people arrived (max)
- 2. Migration related to the far abroad countries had always a negative balance.
- 3. In the 2000s, migration from the FSU became very small, still keeping a non-significant positive balance.

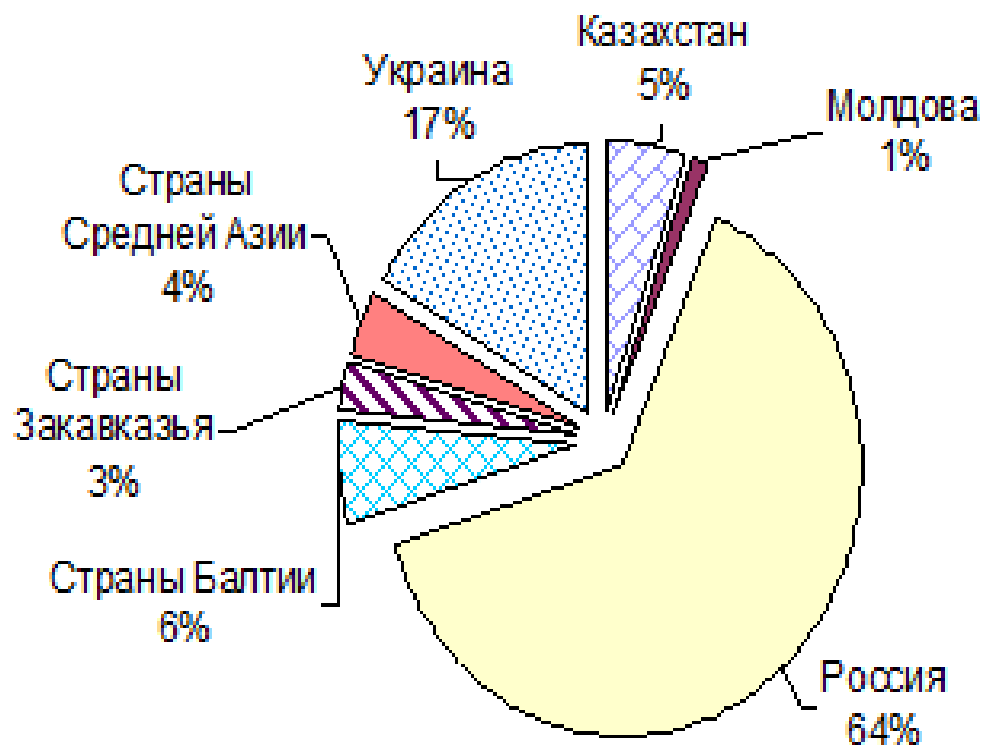
# Dynamics of external migration, Belarus. Major directions of migration, 1990-2009



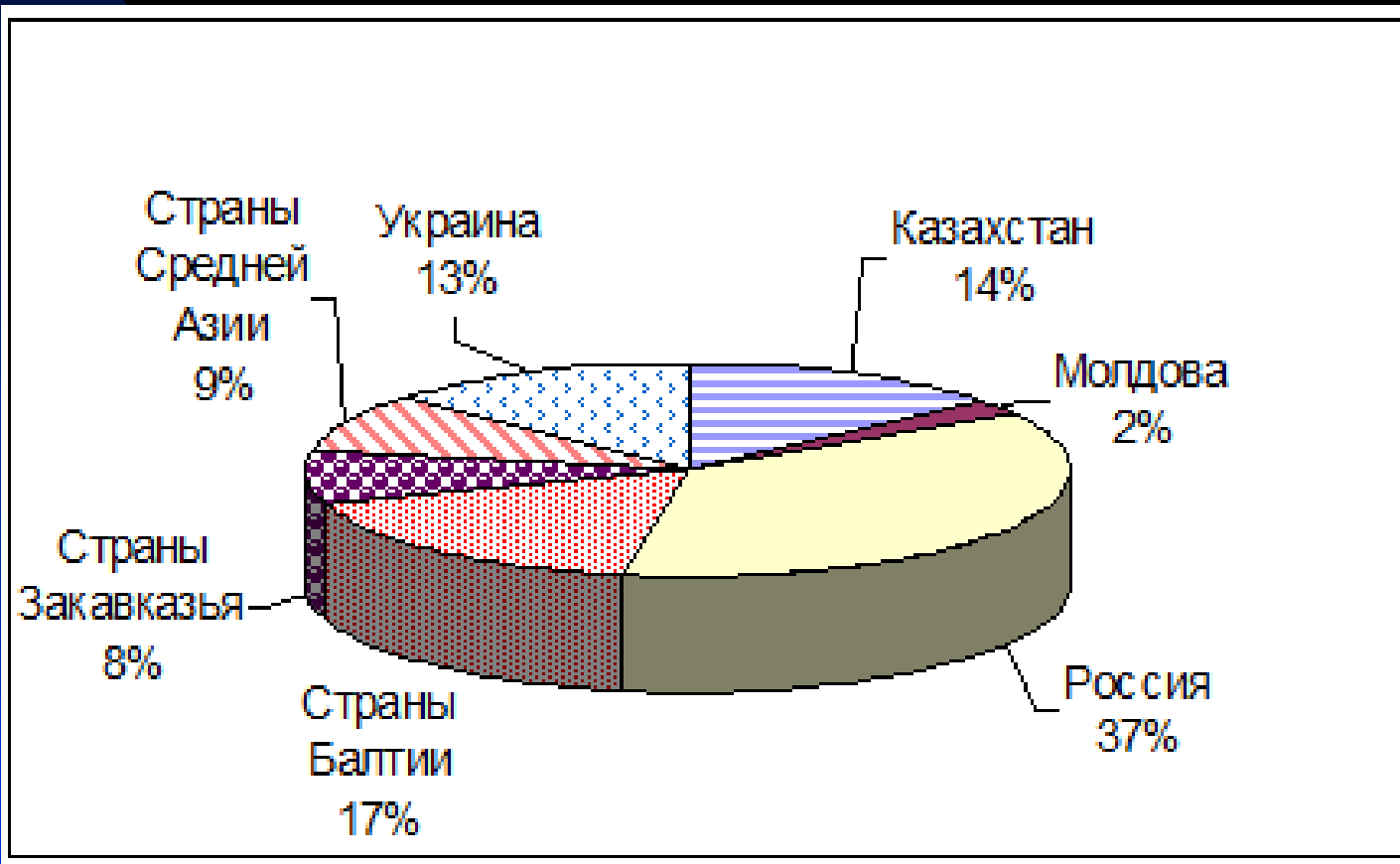
# Migration balance, Belarus, 1990-2009



## Position of Russia and the Baltic states in migration (rotation for 1990-2009)



# Migration Balance with the FSU states, 1990-2009



# Far Abroad countries and Belarus (negative balance)

- Early 1990s – MAJOR REASONS for leaving Belarus:
- (1) LIBERALISATION OF LIFE (EASY EMIGRATION TO ISRAEL – destination #1:
  - 1990 - 97%, 1992 - 33% of all emigrants)
  - Other destinations: USA (1992 – 57% of all), Germany
- (2) ECOLOGICAL THREAT (CHERNOBYL)
  - Emigration pick – in 1990 (more than 34.000 people left Belarus)



# Far Abroad states and Belarus: the 21<sup>st</sup> century

- Major reasons for leaving Belarus:
  - 1. Job, temporary or permanent (USA, Germany, Poland, etc.)
  - 2. Study (latent brain drain)
  - 3. Human trafficking
  - 4. Foreign marriages
  - 5. Political reasons

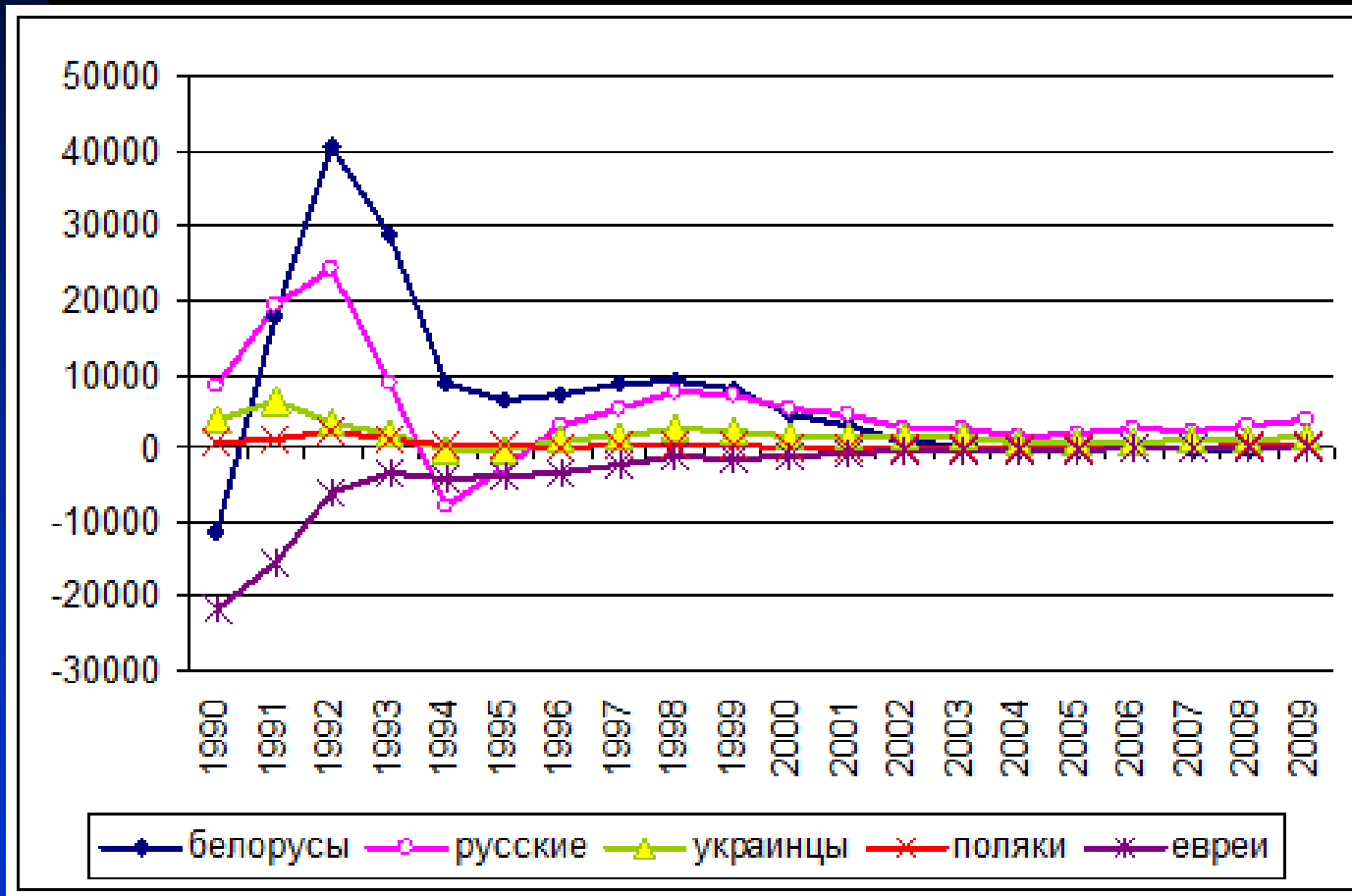
# Total Migration Balance

- Negative balance with the EU and all Western (advanced) countries, incl. Australia
- Positive balance with Asian states (China, Vietnam, Turkey, India)
- Latent negative balance with Russia (socio-economic reasons)
- Min. positive balance with other FSU

# Migrants by Ethnicity

- Out migration:
  - Early 1990s – mostly Jews (leaving for US and Israel)
  - 21<sup>st</sup> c. - Belarusians
- In-migration:
  - 1992 – max Belarusians (from the FSU)
  - 1990s – Russians from the FSU with some roots or relatives in Belarus
  - 21<sup>st</sup> c. - Asians

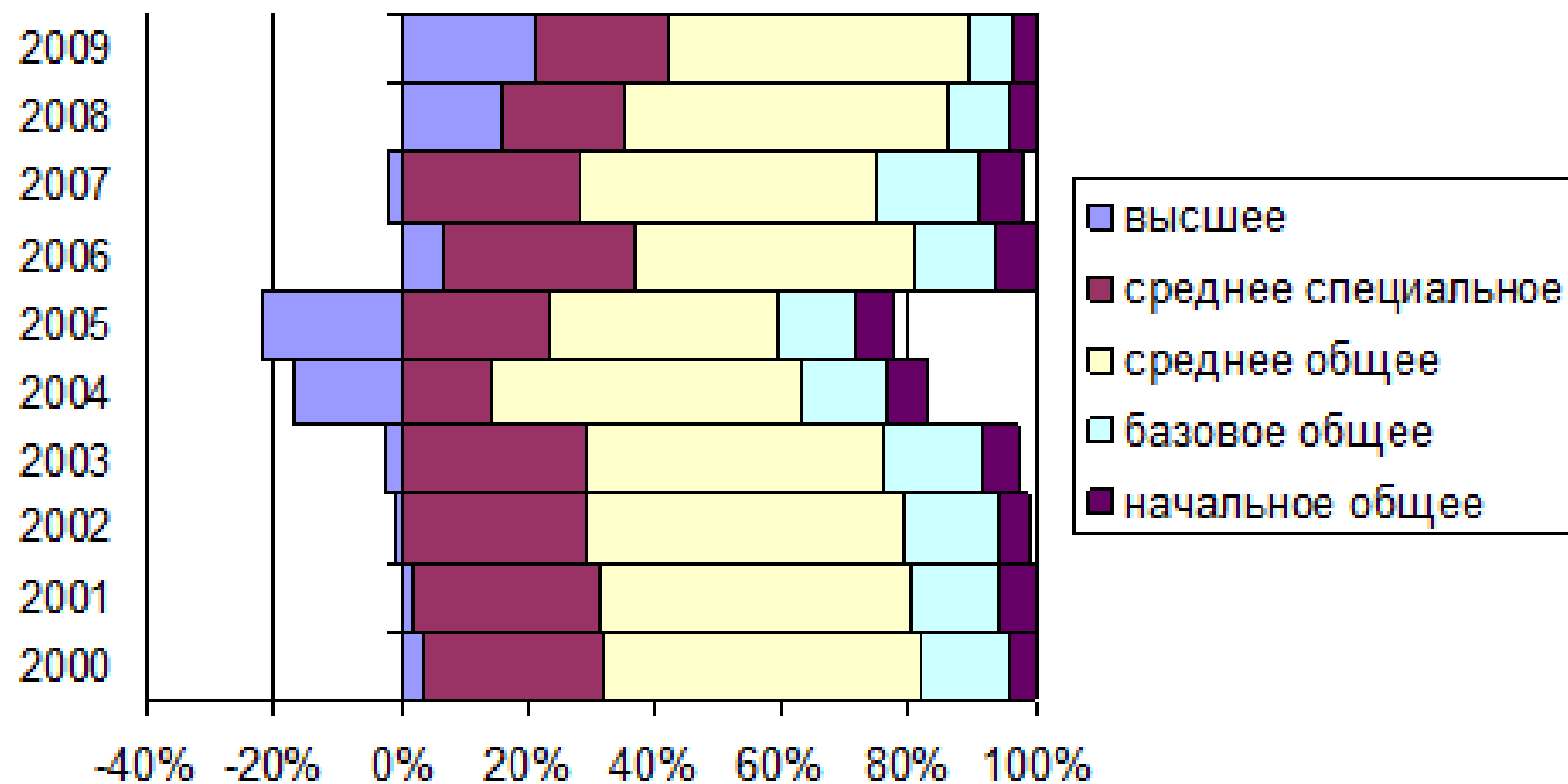
# Migration balance by ethnicity, 1990-2009



# Migration by Gender

- 1990s –Equal number of men and women (both in and out)
- 21<sup>st</sup> c. – men prevail (esp. to Russia)
- NB: increase in “brides out-migration”
- Female: age group 25-35 (regular loss: annually 1000 more women than men going West)
- In 2009 women=68% of all out-migrants
- (many with high level of education)

# Migration by Education Level (resulted)



# Brain-drain

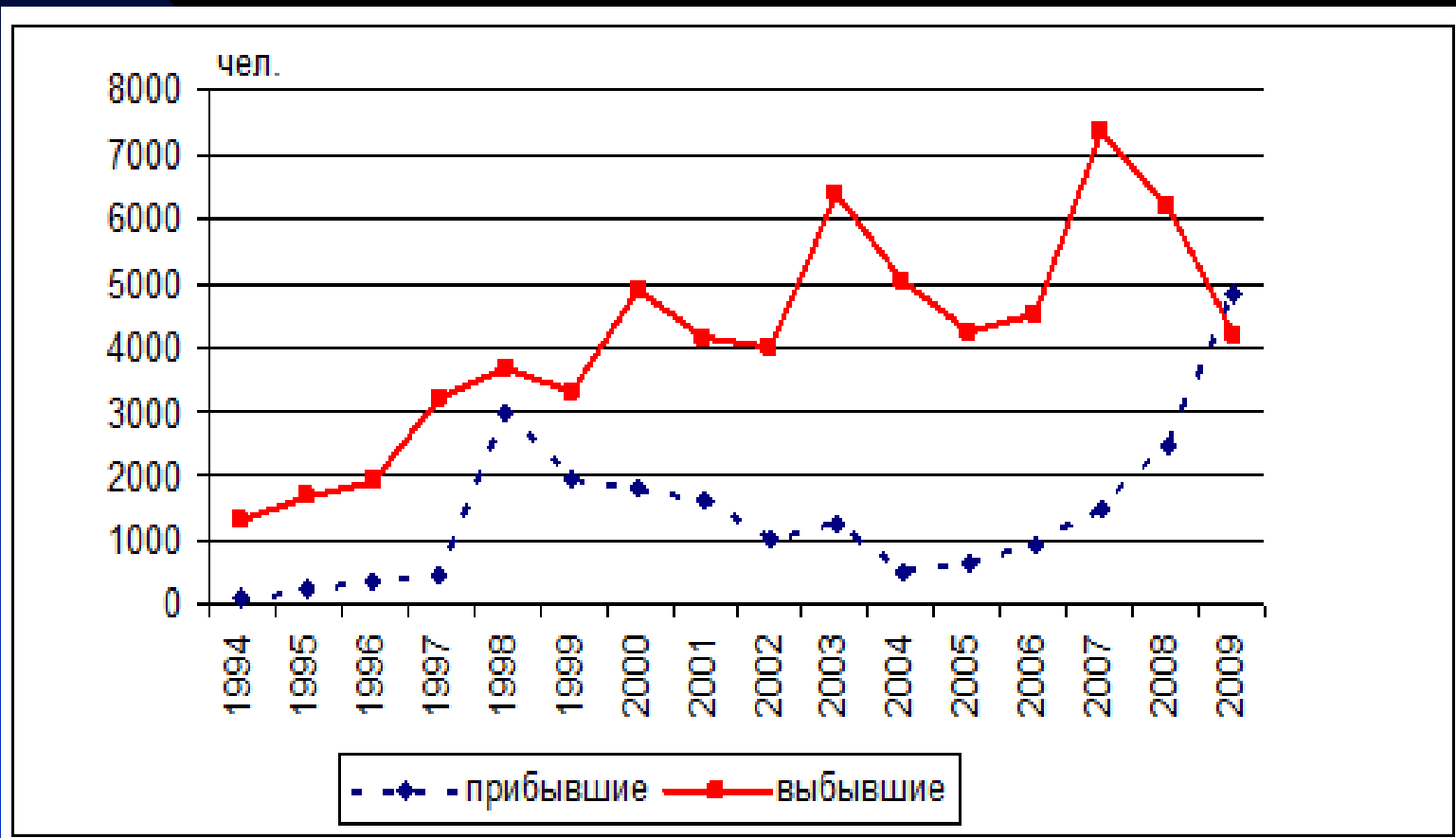
- In 1996-2006: annually 70-90 scholars (almost half with degree), more than 50% from Minsk
- Countries of destination:
  - 1990s-USA, Germany, Israel
  - Now – Russia, Poland, Ukraine
- Age groups:
  - 1990s – middle-old age;
  - now - youth

# Illegal Labor Migration

- Belarus as transit country (2.000-3.000 foreigners caught on border annually)
- Constantly, up to 30.000 migrants stay in Belarus trying to cross EU border
- Illegal labor migration (mainly, to Russia, in construction, other industries)
- Women trafficking (illegal profit up to 15 mln \$ per year)



# Legal Labor Migration



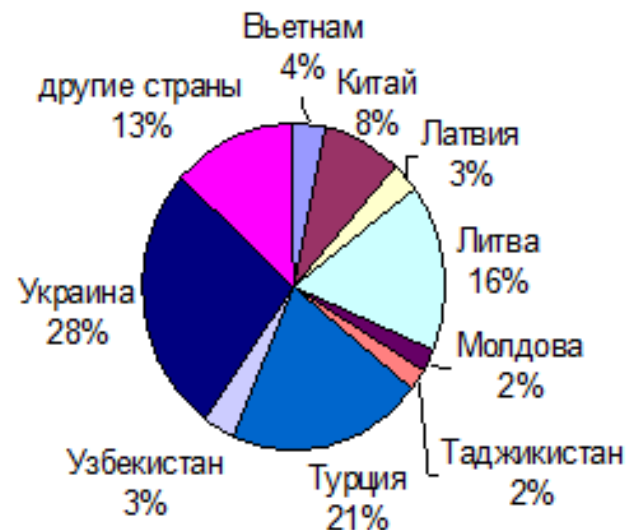
# Countries-Recipients of Belarusian migrants

- USA 30% (in 2009)
- Russia 64% (in 2009)
- Germany
- Poland
- Czech Republic
- Arab states

(official statistics only)

# Countries-Donors, 2009

(80% construction workers, 11% professionals)



## Potential Migration (surveys 2003, 2008)

Q: Would you like to leave Belarus?

- Among high school students - 16%, for legal job or study
- Among PhD students of the NAS Belarus – more than 50%, for research and career reasons
- Other survey (2003): 45% of age 18-45 want to go abroad

NB: even if 1% would really leave Belarus, it will be 95.000 people (compare with 5000 persons, giving by the official statistics)

# THREATS of MIGRATION

- 1. Decrease of labor power in Belarus due to out migration, need in migrants
- 2. Further decrease of birth rate (due to women of 18-30 migration)
- 3. Growth of divorce rate, single mothers
- 4. Brain-drain increase
- 5. Growth of illegal transit migration (economic burden for Belarus)
- 6. Growth of drug using (drug transfer)
- 7. Social exclusion of migrants, families from far abroad (cultural contradictions)

# Survey data on attitudes to the migrants in Belarus

- 1. Public opinion is positive about migrants from the FSU, coming for permanent residence in Belarus.
- 2. Public opinion is half neutral, half-negative to other migrants.
- NB: still, in reality, migrants are not a big social problem for Belarus

# RESUME (1): FSU states

- 1. New borders within the FSU increased social-economic inequality, stimulated migration. However, this balance is still not dangerous for Belarus.
- 2. If economic crisis would continue for long, Belarus can loose a significant segment of its labor power to Russia and other FSU countries with higher salaries.

# RESUME (2): non-FSU countries

- 1. New border regime with Western countries (EU mainly) stimulated out-migration that can be a big threat for Belarusian future
- 2. Internal social, economic, political problems stimulate migration and threats for Belarusian future, making it a potential problem for neighbor countries as well.





**Thanks for your attention!**