

Migration processes in the coastal Arctic regions of the Far East¹

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Abstract. The structural and territorial trends of the migration dynamics of the coastal Arctic regions of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) are considered. Based on the statistical analysis of migration processes for 2010-2018, the features of their ongoing changes are revealed: the main reason for the reduction in the resident population is the migration outflow; in the structure of migration flows, the share of intraregional migration is increasing, while the outflow of the rural population to the urban area remains; the share of interregional migration is decreasing; in the age structure of migrants, the flow of the working-age population is predominant; young people are actively leaving coastal territories, which in the future may have serious consequences, as this age group is of great importance in the demographic and economic development of the Arctic regions of the Far East.

Keywords: migration processes, age structure of migrants, coastal Arctic regions, the Far East.

Further development and increase in the level of socio-economic development of land areas belonging to the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation is one of the priority directions of state policy from the point of view of ensuring national security. However, it is impossible in the conditions of an insufficiently favorable demographic situation, which has developed due to the migration outflow, which significantly exceeds the rate of natural population growth.

On March 5, 2020, the President of the Russian Federation approved a new edition of the Fundamentals of State Policy in the Arctic for the period up to 2035, which defines the goals and objectives of the development of the Arctic territories for the next 15 years [8]. The main instrument for the implementation of state policy should be a new development strategy for the Arctic zone of Russia [2]. Among the main threats to the national security of the Arctic territories, there is a decrease in the resident population. In the context of the growing geopolitical and economic significance of the Arctic zone for Russia, it is especially important to strengthen its demographic potential. And for the Far Eastern Arctic regions, this is important, also from the standpoint of ensuring the country's national security in its strategically important northeastern borders, and the development of the economy of the region with a huge natural resource potential. Other decisions were made to improve the demographic situation - in the

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country as a whole, in the Far East, in its Arctic territories - but they turned out to be insufficiently effective. It can be assumed that the measures taken do not fully solve the problems that have accumulated in this area. And they are based not only on the lack of financial resources in the country to solve them, but also on the lack of understanding of the depth of these problems.

The coastal Arctic regions of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) include 5 municipal districts of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), directly adjacent to the Arctic Ocean - Allaikhovsky, Anabar national (Dolgan-Evenki), Bulunsky, Nizhnekolymsky, Ust-Yansky [7]. The demographic features of the regions under consideration are determined by the small population (26 thousand people, or 38.4% of the total population of the Arctic regions of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), uneven distribution over the territory (36.9% of the area of the Arctic regions of the republic).

The population of the coastal Arctic regions of the Far East, like all regions of the Russian Arctic, was formed to a large extent "according to the needs" of the region being developed. According to Rosstat estimates, the resident population as of January 1, 2019 was 25963 people (of which the urban population was 13,061 people, the rural population was 12902 people). Over the period from 2010 to 2018, it decreased by 2362 people, or 8.3% (tab. 1). The greatest losses of the entire population were noted in Ust-Yansky (12.8%), Allaikhovsky (11.2%). A slight increase in the population is noted in the Anabar national (Dolgan-Evenk) region. This is the only coastal region that has a positive dynamics of socio-economic development [10]. The population in the Anabar region is growing steadily (the only one of the Arctic regions where population growth is observed), the indicators of its economic development are improving, which is associated with the work of three diamond mining enterprises: Anabarsky MPP OJSC AK "ALROSA", OJSC "Nizhnelenskoe", LLC "Almazy Anabara". The age and sex structure of the district's population is distinguished by a high proportion of children and adolescents (32%, with an average republican level - 24.9%) and a low proportion of persons of retirement age (6.9%, with an average republican level - 17%) [2]. In this regard, it can be assumed that positive demographic processes will be observed in this area in the near future, despite the small population (3597 people, 2018).

Table 1

Population dynamics in Arctic coastal regions
Of the Far East in 2010-2018, people [5]

	Year		Population change for 2010-2018	
	2010	2018	people	%
Coastal arctic regions including Allaikhovsky	28325	25963	-2362	-8.3
Anabar	3050	2708	-342	-11.2

Bulunsky	3501	3597	+96	+2.7
Nizhnekolymsky	9054	8340	-714	-7.9
Ust-Yansky	4664	4290	-374	-8.0
	8056	7028	-1028	-12.8

The decline in the population continues, it is taking place against the background of positive natural population growth, which to varying degrees compensates for the migration outflow in individual Arctic regions.

In the coastal Arctic regions, a number of problems have developed that negatively affect their socio-economic development. One of them is the migration loss of the population, which amounted to 3467 people in 2010-2018, which is 2.8 times higher than the natural increase. The greatest migration losses are noted in the Ust-Yansky region (1356 people, or 39.1%), Bulunsky region (795 people, or 22.9%).

Negative migration adversely affects the demographic situation, which manifests itself in a decrease in the birth rate, an aging population, and a decrease in the population in the settlements of the territories under consideration. As a consequence, according to A.I. Pilyasov, the outflow of the population "means a decrease in cultural and intellectual diversity in villages and towns", "a decrease in the total population means a decrease in the number of talented, creative people" [4, p. 294]. Moreover, the negative balance of migration, notes V.N. Lazhentsev, "reduces the hope that these territories will be support bases for the development of the North" [1, p. 44].

In the Arctic territories, the following types of migration are distinguished: intraregional migration (rural population to cities, population movement to more favorable territories of the Russian Federation, nomadic migration of indigenous peoples, etc.), outflow of young people to promising regions, departure of persons of retirement age to favorable climatic zones, rotational method of labor activity.

The coastal Arctic territories are characterized by high migration activity, which increased by 1.5 times over the period under consideration. Among those who left in 2018, 64% of migrants move within the republic (2010 - 51.8%), 33.3% leave for other Russian regions (2010 - 47.0%) (tab. 2), more favorable in natural and climatic terms.

Table 2

Distribution of migrants in the coastal Arctic regions by direction of movement (%) [2]

	Arrived					
	Intra-regional migration		Interregional migration		International migration	
	2010	2018	2010	2018	2010	2018
The Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)	64.5	63.0	29.8	29.6	5.7	7.4
Coastal areas	40.7	61.5	56.8	37.8	2.5	0.7
	Left					
	Intra-regional migration		Interregional migration		International migration	

	2010	2018	2010	2018	2010	2018
The Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)	43.3	59.0	55.1	39.1	1.6	1.9
Coastal areas	51.8	64.0	47.0	33.3	1.2	2.7

The dynamics of migration processes largely depends on economic factors. The growth or decline of the population, the formation of the demographic potential depend on the scale of economic activity, the specifics of production and the prospects for economic development. The determining process in the dynamics of population changes is employment, which includes the need for labor resources and the nature of their use. In the northern regions, including the coastal Arctic regions, an unfavorable combination of natural and climatic conditions with low inhabitedness is one of the obstacles to creating a permanent population. Throughout the entire period of the development of the northern and arctic territories, economic interests were the basis for the policy of forming the population and labor resources. Despite the permanent population in the north, its own demographic base is not enough to provide the branches of the economy with labor resources. The existence of settlements is associated with the development of deposits, the use and depletion of the raw material base of economic activity. This contributed not only to the high mobility of the population forming on this territory, but also to the mobility of the settlement structure being created, which presupposes the creation and subsequent disappearance of both small and larger settlements. The long-term intensive influx of the population significantly influenced the demographic situation.

The age structure of migrants in the Arctic coastal regions has a number of features. The share of children and adolescents is higher here. In Allaikhovsky (22.0%), Bulunsky (20.5%), Anabar (20.0%), this age group exceeds the level in general for the Arctic regions (14.5%) and the average republican level (13.7%) (tab. 3).

Table 3

Age composition of migrants in the Arctic regions in 2017, % [3]

	Age of migrants					
	younger than able-bodied	able-bodied	older than able-bodied	younger than able-bodied	able-bodied	older than able-bodied
	Arrived			Left		
The Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)	13.7	79.4	6.9	13.5	77.0	9.5
Coastal districts	17.5	73.4	9.1	16.5	72.2	11.3
Allaikhovsky	22.0	73.0	5.0	10.7	81.8	7.5
Anabar	20.0	76.5	3.5	17.4	76.1	6.5
Bulunsky	20.5	74.9	4.6	17.3	72.5	10.2
Nizhnekolymsky	19.3	69.1	11.6	16.0	68.1	15.9
Ust-Yansky	13.0	70.6	16.4	15.3	66.8	17.9
Arctic regions	14.5	77.9	7.6	16.0	73.8	10.2

In the structure of the retired persons of working age occupy over 70%, and in some regions and higher: Allaikhovsky - 81.8%, and taking into account persons under the working age - over 90%. There is a destruction of the labor potential of the territory accumulated over many years, which meets the needs of the country's economy in raw materials and foreign exchange resources. In the coastal areas, more people over the working age drop out - Ust-Yansky District (17.9%), Nizhnekolymsky (15.9%).

For the Arctic territories, the problem of not only the outflow of the able-bodied population, but also of young people who are actively leaving these territories, is very relevant, which in the future may have serious consequences, since it is this age group that is important in the demographic and economic development of the Arctic territories of the Far East. There are three main factors in motivating youth migration: personal and family reasons, migration for education in a large city, and labor migration. The main part of the migration flows is made up of young people aged 16-29, heading to cities for education, profession, employment, and family creation [6].

The high potential of youth migration mobility is associated, on the one hand, with the specifics of the Arctic regions themselves - harsh natural and climatic conditions, remoteness from the center, single-industry development of the economy, and on the other hand, with the peculiarity of youth as the most mobile social group ready to implement ambitious life tasks. An analysis of the migration flows of the Arctic regions showed that in most of them there is a negative migration increase in young people, with the exception of the Allaikhovsky and Anabar districts. The development of the Arctic regions largely depends on the perception of the young generation of their own prospects, on the choice to continue living in this territory. This factor for the Arctic territories remains insufficiently studied.

According to Rosstat data on the distribution of migrants according to the circumstances that caused the need to change their residence, the following four main reasons for the migration of the population from the Arctic regions of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) in 2018 are noted: personal and family nature - 26.1%; in connection with studies - 23.9%; in connection with work - 12.7%; return to the previous place of residence - 4.5% [3].

Thus, the identified migration trends in the coastal Arctic territories necessitate the study of factors affecting the migration activity of the population. The prospects for the socio-economic development of this strategically important territory of the Far East depend on the success of measures aimed at reducing the migration outflow of the Arctic population.

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