

Conclusions and recommendations of the study on changing migration trends: Uzbekistan

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General information on the situation of migrants from Uzbekistan



- Uzbekistan is a **country of origin** for a large number of labor migrants.
- According to the Agency for External Labor Migration (AELM) of Uzbekistan, as of December 2023, there were almost **2 million Uzbek labor migrants**:
 - about 1.2 million (**60%**) in Russia,
 - 191,800 (**10%**) – in Kazakhstan,
 - 113,800 (**6%**) – in Turkey,
 - 68,100 (**3%**) – in South Korea,
 - the remaining 424,400 (**21%**) were distributed among other countries.
- AELM of Uzbekistan negotiates with **398 major employer organizations** and recruitment agencies in dozens of countries around the world.
- AELM has facilitated **the employment** of more than **38,000 migrants** through established recruitment programs, mainly **in Russia, South Korea, the United Kingdom, and Kazakhstan**.
- In Uzbekistan, as of February 2024, **14 private employment agencies** were licensed to provide employment services to citizens.
- Recently, there has been **an increase in illegal employment agencies** operating under the guise of consulting companies.

Changing legislative migration policies in Uzbekistan



- The **Labor Migrants Support Fund**, with a **\$26 million** budget, was established to provide legal and social protection as well as material assistance to external labor migrants.
- Presidential Decree No. UP-59 of 4/4/2024 “ **On Additional Measures to Improve Labor Migration Processes and Support for Persons Engaged in Temporary Labor Activities Abroad**” was adopted.
 - Subsidizing salaries of organizations that employ returned migrants;
 - Compensation of migrants' expenses of leaving for organized labor migration;
- Uzbekistan is actively **improving their system of organized recruitment for migration**-The Agency for External Labor Migration opened representative **offices in 4 foreign countries** with the largest number of labor migrants from Uzbekistan:
- **AELM** has been transferred **to the Cabinet of Ministers**;
- **Uzbekistan actively participates** in international efforts to regulate migration by supporting the **Global Compact on Migration** and participating in various regional migration dialogues, including **the Prague Process**.

Portrait of a migrant



- Average age: **34 years**
- **Gender:** the share of **male** migrants is **64%**
- **Education: secondary education - 43%**, incomplete secondary education - almost 29%.
- **45%** of respondents ' households are **on the verge of poverty**, they have enough money only for food.
- **Sector of occupation:**
 - Construction - 28%,
 - Food service - 27%,
 - Hospitality - 12%,
 - Agriculture - 7%,
 - Transportation - 7%;

The difficulties of migrants in destination countries



- A **large number of informally employed migrants** - no guarantees that existing labor rights will be respected:
 - About **54%** of labor migrants **do not have labor contracts**;
- **Low level of awareness of labor rights** of migrant workers and mechanisms for their protection (50%);
- **Inadequate pre-migration training** - risks of forced labor and exploitation in destination countries :
 - **64%** are not aware of migration legislation,
 - **56%** are not aware of the types of forced labor;
 - **22%** of migrants face employers withholding their identification documents.
- **Low level of awareness and trust in government (AELM) and private employment agencies (PEA):**
 - 42% of migrants are aware of PEAs and 56% are aware of AELM,
 - 27% of migrants applied to PEAs and 12% applied to AELM;

Assistance to migrants in protecting their rights - Istiqbolli Avlod



- **Functioning hotline** to provide legal assistance to migrants facing labor rights violations, including forced labor and human trafficking.
- **4 lawyers in Uzbekistan** provided **292 consultations** over the period 2023-2024.
- **Main issues:**
 - **non-payment of wages** - about **34%**,
 - forced labor - about 25%,
 - employment and job search issues - about 13%.
- **In 45 cases**, lawyers provide further **legal support**, including drafting appeals to the labor inspectorate, negotiating with employers, and defending worker interests in court.

Recommendations

- **Information campaigns** to raise awareness of the work of AELMs and licensed PEAs;
- Strengthening efforts **to prevent the operation of illegal employment agencies**, including the fight against online recruitment ;
- Establishing **a system to monitor the work of recruitment agencies, employers, and migrants**. Tracking the situation of migrants even after employment abroad;
- Ensuring **effective enforcement of legislative initiatives** once enacted;
- Improving the **system of certifying PEAs** and their work;
- Adopting the Unified Basic **Law “On External Labor Migration,”** which will systematize the procedure for organizing labor activities of citizens outside Uzbekistan.

“ISTIQBOLLI AWAY”

non-governmental, non-profit organization

- Commencement of operations **in 2001**
- Hotline established in **2004**
- **14 departments** in **13** regions and Tashkent
- Member of **The National Commission** to combat human trafficking and ensure decent work
- Participation in the working group on the development of **Migration policy for the Republic of Uzbekistan**





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attention!

